

REMEMBERING THE NATION,
DISMEMBERING WOMEN? STORIES OF
THE SOUTH AFRICAN TRANSITION

M. A. SAMUELSON

Thesis Presented for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in the Department of English
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

February 2005

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

UT 820 SAMU
776935

ABSTRACT:

The thesis explores the making of nationhood, and its contestation, in narrative representations of women during the South African transition. This temporal span extends across the first decade of democracy and the first two terms of governance following the historic 1994 elections. The transition is a fertile temporal zone in which new myths and symbols are generated. My interest lies in the new national symbols and myths that emerge from this historical moment and the ways in which they have been figured through images and appropriations of women and their bodies. Women's bodies, I argue, are the contested sites upon which nationalism erects its ideological edifices. I engage with the mutually informing productions and performances of gender and nation, and the re-membering of a previously divided and divisive South Africa as a unified 'rainbow' nation. I proceed by tracing narrative acts of memory and repression, with a specific focus on the re-memberings and dismemberings of women's bodies as they are reconstituted as ideal vessels for a national allegory.

The study is roughly divided into two halves. In the first part, I analyse current representations of women who have attained mythic status during the transition, and devote a chapter to each: Krotoa-Eva, Nongqawuse and Sarah Bartmann. The contradictory and contested legacies of these women, I argue, have been flattened out as they have been produced as domestic – usually maternal – figures. I grapple with the symbolic work they have been called on to perform during the nation-building transition, and focus on literary texts that exemplify and complicate such nationalist appropriations. A particular focus of this section is the use of these women's stories to express narratives of national belonging, and a dominant national narrative of sacrificial redemption.

The second half of the thesis is more loosely configured. Across three chapters, I analyse female characters and autobiographical selves that inhabit the transitional present. The chapter organisation follows three stereotypical roles – victim, mother and wife – in which women have been cast, and the particular inflections lent to these roles by the historical moment of national transition. The emphasis is on literary re-enactments of these roles, and the unstable yet productive space between subjecthood and subjection, subversion and co-option, voice and silence.

The fourth chapter engages with representations of sexual violence and traces a path between speech and silence as it explores what is presented as unspeakable. The manifestations of violence presented in the two novels considered here are closely related to the shifting politics of race and gender peculiar to the transition era. In Chapter Five, I return to the subjection of women as domestic subjects and mothers in order to trace the subversions and disruptions that their re-enactments of maternity introduce into the national narrative spun around them. The final chapter focuses on representations of 'political widows,' which provide the lens through which I review ideologies of home and their repercussions in the construction of both nation and gender. These chapters revisit, also, central themes of the first three chapters: sacrificial redemptive narratives and their production through gendered figures, domesticity and the public / private divide and the production of women as speaking subjects.

Throughout the thesis, I take issue with sentimental myths of unity: a unified 'rainbow' nation, on the one hand, and a unified cross-racial sisterhood, on the other. At the same time, I remain keenly aware of the necessity of national reconstruction, and of transnational feminist networks. I conclude the final chapter by considering uncanny productions of home as I search for ways of imagining the rebuilding of a post-traumatic society that do not entail the domestication of women, that remain cognisant of continuities between past and present, and that present a model for transnational feminist practices, which are attentive to location.

The organising principle of the thesis is thematic. Novels and autobiographies were selected on the basis of their provocative and / or contradictory representations of women and engagements with nationalist rhetoric. Alongside my close analyses of these texts, I draw on a broader range of sources. These include the testimonial practices of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, historiography, government rhetoric as presented in speeches and the media, and national spectacles, such as the burial of Bartmann.

My theoretical framework places emphasis on the use of postmodernist literary devices, as I seek to open up the closed discursive field of gender and nationalism. Resisting single reductive meanings, I attempt to restore to the historical and fictional women analysed here a contradictory multivocality often ironed out in nationalist representations of women. Thus, the postmodernist approach developed here is not a weightless one; instead, I have applied it to arrive at profoundly political

and historical conclusions. The cloth I weave across the following pages threads located and historicised understandings of gender, race and nation through a loom constructed out of post-structuralist, postmodernist and psychoanalytic understandings of textuality, subjectivity and historicity in order to arrive at new interpretations of women in and of a nation-under-construction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

My greatest intellectual debts are to Brenda Cooper and Dorothy Driver; Brenda Cooper supervised this thesis and, along with Dorothy Driver, has mentored me since I was an undergraduate student. I owe more to them both than I could ever express. Abdul JanMohamed acted as my adviser during an enriching year at the University of California at Berkeley, and I thank him, along with the Centre for African-American Studies, for showing such warm hospitality. The formative influence of my earlier teachers, particularly Elleke Boehmer, Carli Coetzee, Jack Mapanje and Kelwyn Sole, is still felt and appreciated. Many other friends and colleagues have offered support, advice and discussion during the writing of this thesis. They include: Natasha Distiller, Harry Garuba, Louise Green, John Higgins, Bodhi Kar, the late Phaswane Mpe, Ranka Primorac, Sam Radithlalo, Manas Ray, Tina Steiner, Kylie Thomas, Mary Watson and Maria Wikse. I also wish to thank my examiners – David Attwell, Laura Chrisman and Margaret Daymond – for their attentive reading and constructive commentary. Earlier versions of some of the material included here were presented at a range of workshops and conferences. My thanks to the organisers and participants of each for creating the occasion for stimulating debate, which brought fresh and provocative perspectives to bear on this study. The Faculty of Humanities of the University of Cape Town and the A.W. Mellon Foundation provided financial support at both UCT and UC Berkeley, and SEPHIS enabled me to attend two particularly engaging workshops in their South-South exchange program. The most significant form of support during the writing of this thesis came from Robbie Farquhar, to whom I dedicate this work, with love and appreciation.

CONTENTS:

Introduction – <i>Rememberings and Dismemberings: Female Subjects and a Nation in Transition</i>	1
Chapter 1 – <i>Krotoa-Eva: Translation, Traitor, ‘Rainbow’ Mother</i>	12
Chapter 2 – <i>Nongqawuse: National Time and (Female) Authorship</i>	42
Chapter 3 – <i>Sarah Bartmann: Re-cast and Re-covered in Post-Apartheid South Africa</i>	73
Chapter 4 – <i>Unspeakable Acts (Un)spoken: (Dis)Figured Bodies in <u>David’s Story</u> and <u>Disgrace</u></i>	105
Chapter 5 – <i>The Mother-Witness: <u>Mother to Mother</u>, <u>Bloodlines</u> and <u>Our Generation</u></i>	138
Chapter 6 – <i>(Un)homely Women: ‘Political Widowhood’ in <u>A Life</u> and <u>The Cry of Winnie Mandela</u></i>	171
Conclusion – <i>Stories of the Transition: The Warp and Woof</i>	203
Bibliography	211

INTRODUCTION – REMEMBERINGS AND DISMEMBERINGS: FEMALE SUBJECTS AND A NATION IN TRANSITION

Our country is in that period of time which the seTswana-speaking people of Southern Africa graphically describe as “mahube a naka tsa kgomo” – the dawning of the dawn, when only the tips of the horns of the cattle can be seen etched against the morning sky.

--- Thabo Mbeki, “Inaugural Address” 4.

The morning after is always an ambiguous moment. What just happened? Who benefited? It is not always crystal-clear that today, the day growing out of the morning after, is a fresh, new day.

--- Cynthia Enloe, The Morning After 253.

For the subaltern, and especially the subaltern woman, ‘Empire’ and ‘Nation’ are interchangeable terms, however hard it might be for us to imagine it.

--- Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Outside in the Teaching Machine 78.

The first decade of democracy in South Africa was a transitional moment, a period in which new myths, symbols and political structures were generated. This thesis takes as its object of study the interregnum in South African cultural history and explores the making of nationhood and its consolidation and contestation in representations of women. I consider the ways in which the category of ‘woman’ has been produced during the transitional era and how performances of female subjectivities, in turn, produce and trouble the nation-under-construction. The primary texts I focus on are fictional and autobiographical narratives, which are read alongside transitional testimonial practices, historiography and national spectacles.

The transition heralded a shift away from a nation characterised by division, to one united under the hazy glow of the ‘rainbow.’ It is thus an era in which the South African nation was actively re-invented and re-imagined. “Nationalism,” claims Ernest Gellner, “is *not* the awakening of an old, latent, dormant force”; on the contrary, nationalism “invents” nations (48-49; emphasis in orig.). In the now famous phrase with which Benedict Anderson entitles his study of nationalism, nations are “imagined communities”; and they are imagined, frequently, through gendered tropes. Women bear

the symbolic weight of nationalism; their bodies are the contested sites on which national identities are erected and national unity is forged.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) played an instrumental role in the invention of the 'new' South African nation as 'rainbow' nation. It provided a space in which liminal rituals of incorporation and group cohesion – rituals, in other words, of re-membering – were performed. Due to the pivotal role it accorded memory, the TRC, according to Njabulo S. Ndebele, instigated a national “restoration of narrative” (“Memory” 27). Its project is symptomatic of narrative and historiographical practices in the transition years. Given the quantity and quality of research on the TRC, it provides a useful touchstone for my reading of stories of the transition. These narratives are part of a larger process of which the TRC is a part; the paradigms of memory, mourning, reconciliation and recovery, that formed the basis of the TRC’s operations, loom large in literature produced during the first decade of democracy.

The question with which I approach the transitional cultural moment is one of whether its project of re(-)membering the nation dismembers women. National and ethnic claims commandeer women’s bodies and deny the more messy aspects of their legacies that cannot be neatly enfolded with the nationalist script. Through acts of amnesia and foreclosure, or ‘disrememberings,’ women are shaped into the ideal forms that reflect the desired national body – usually that of mother, or simply ‘womb.’

The thesis falls roughly into two parts. The first cluster of chapters are woven around present manifestations of three historical women – Krotoa-Eva, Nongqawuse and Sarah Bartmann – who have been mediated through the mists of time to take their symbolic place as mythic figures in our present. These chapters engage with the ways in which the past is harnessed to present interests, and explore the alternative histories that emerge when gender is employed as an analytic framework for reading both past and present.¹ Emergent national configurations are established and legitimated through remembering and dismembering of women that consolidate the nation and – in the case of texts that do not place women and their bodies at the service of the national project – disrupt it.

¹ See Helen Bradford (352) and Joan Wallach Scott (46) on the ways in which attention to gender can transform our understandings of the past.

These women are presented as figures of liminality and incorporation, as symbolic threshold figures, through whom the transition is negotiated. In their time, they all inhabited the colonial “contact zone,” which Mary Louise Pratt has described as a space of conflict and encounter (7). Writing of the spatial margin of colonial contact, Anne McClintock finds that such perilous zones are managed through female figures, “planted like fetishes at the ambiguous points of contact, at the borders and orifices of the contest zone” (24). The same pertains to the temporal margin of transitional South Africa, where fetishised female figures are planted at the “ambiguous points of contact” between past and present. ‘Woman’ is the symbolic figurehead of the vehicle of remembrance employed to ferry the nation across the temporal divide.

Chapter One focuses on recreations of the life of Krotoa-Eva, who acted as an interpreter between the Dutch and the Khoikhoi during the early days of the seventeenth-century Dutch settlement at the Cape. I initiate my study of how the ‘rainbow’ nation has been produced and consolidated through historical female figures by exploring the ways in which Krotoa-Eva the translator is transformed into Krotoa-Eva the ‘rainbow’ mother, particularly by those white South Africans eager to claim belonging in the new nation. I have selected for analysis three primary texts that epitomise such appropriations: André Brink’s Imaginations of Sand, Dan Sleigh’s Islands and Trudie Bloem’s Krotoa-Eva: The Woman from Robben Island.

Reading against the grain of current attention to Krotoa-Eva, I review her legacy through the lens of translation theory, in search of more complex understandings of a most contradictory woman. My focus on her legacy as translator and translated subject enables me to highlight and grapple with the domesticating strategies entailed in current remembrance of her and to gesture toward other potential inscriptions shunned in her recuperation as ‘rainbow’ mother. The opening chapter lays the ground for the following two chapters as I draw attention to the act of translation as one of ‘carrying across’ and apply this to historical memory, which translates the three women of the opening chapters into our transitional present.

Carried across time, like Krotoa-Eva, is the nineteenth-century amaXhosa prophet, Nongqawuse. The second chapter explores her legacy in our present through a reading of Zakes Mda’s, The Heart of Redness. Mda’s novel exemplifies the ways in

which she has been inscribed in the present and provides fertile ground for a study of the sacrificial-redemptive narrative dominant during the national transition. This narrative presents women as bearers of redemption and constructs them as empty vessels. Conceptions of historical time as teleological and Janus-faced, which are produced in Mda's story of Nongqawuse, write women out of authorship and citizenship and into motherhood.

In The Heart of Redness, Nongqawuse is deprived of her remarkable historical impact as her contested acts of authorship are appropriated and contained. As is the case in current recreations of Krotoa-Eva, Mda's presentation of Nongqawuse reveals that women as national symbols are imbued with either a tongue or a womb.² The latter is rendered positively, while women as speaking subjects, with tongues, are presented as dangerously unstable leaky vessels. Such women are subject to textual acts of sexual power that seek to manage and restrain them. During the nation-building present, unruly female characters such as Nongqawuse and Krotoa-Eva are domesticated; women's waywardness is repressed and abjected and they are rendered as domestic subjects of nation. The figure of Mother into which these women are cast is evocative of national unity; "mythologies of mothering," notes Desirée Lewis, "are often linked to representations of the nation or community as family" ("Internalized" 167). The Mother is evocative, also, of national origins, which are pivotal to the narration of nation (see Hall, "Question" 294).

In the third chapter, I turn to another women recast as national Mother: Sarah Bartmann. Bartmann was displayed and denigrated in early nineteenth-century England and France as the 'Hottentot Venus.' In 2002, her remains were returned to South Africa, where they were buried in an emotive spectacle of nation building. As in earlier chapters, I continue to note the domestication of women and a flattening out of the complexities of their lives as they are shaped into vessels of a national allegory. The story Bartmann's body is called on to express is one of a nation recovering from a traumatic past. Her remembered body becomes a mirror in which the nation finds reflected its imaginary

² Sandra Messinger Cypress makes a similar point in relation to the Mexican interpreter, La Malinche (see 102); her argument is referred to in some detail in Chapter One.

unity.³ The gendered effects of such renditions of past and present are striking. In stories such as these, women are produced as little more than passive victims.

I counterpoise the rhetoric spun around Bartmann's body with a reading of Zoë Wicomb's David's Story, which offers a fundamental challenge to nationalist uses of women's bodies. David's Story demythologises nationalist imaginings by representing women's bodies as protean, and then presenting these bodies in a fractured and fluid text that prevents narrative meanings from settling into the fixed forms favoured by nationalism.

David's Story articulates many of my preoccupations as it contests figurations of women and of nation. It is thus appropriate that I situate the novel at the heart of the thesis and use it as a hinge between the two parts. The first three chapters focus on women who have become mythic figures in the transitional present; the second half of the thesis engages with fictional female characters and autobiographical selves that inhabit this present. My reading of David's Story provides a bridge between the two and allows me to trace the extent to which current representations of women depart from, or reveal continuities with, those that characterised the apartheid and colonial pasts.

While all the narratives of the first three chapters are concerned with the relation between past and present, David's Story is exceptional in its self-conscious interrogation of what it means to draw on a past, and particularly on historical female figures, during a transitional era of nation building. Its concern with what it calls "recursions" (184) in attitudes to, and representations of, women resonates with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's claim, quoted in my epigraph, that "'Empire' and 'Nation'" may be "interchangeable terms." The issues the novel raises about the violence of representation in relation to Bartmann are pertinent to the question of how to represent contemporary gendered violence, which I take up in Chapter Four.

³ Stuart Hall helpfully draws on the Lacanian notion of the "imaginary" or "mirror" stage in infantile development to account for national culture's presentation of national unity: "Instead of thinking of national cultures as unified, we should think of them as constituting a *discursive device* which represents difference as unity or identity. They are cross-cut by deep internal divisions and differences, and 'unified' only through the exercise of different forms of cultural power. Yet – as in fantasies of the 'whole' self of which Lacanian psychoanalysis speaks – national identities continue to be represented as *unified*" ("Question" 297; emphasis in orig.).

The second cluster of chapters is more loosely configured than the first. Here, I explore the stereotypical roles in which women have been cast and the particular inflections lent to these roles by the historical moment of the transition. The emphasis falls on literary re-enactments of these roles as I grapple with the unstable space between subjecthood and subjection, subversion and co-option, voice and silence. Motherhood and domesticity emerge again as central themes. As Elleke Boehmer observes, “In the iconographies of nation-states, there are few positive roles on offer for women that are not stereotypical and / or connected in some way to woman’s biological capacity for mothering” (“Motherlands” 243).

The three chapters examine, in turn, literary attempts to grapple with and renegotiate the roles of victim, mother and wife. These take on forms peculiar to the transition. The sexual violence inflicted on the fictional characters selected for analysis, and their responses to this violence, are shaped by the racial conflict of the past, and by a post-war re-domestication of women that accompanies a restoration of patriarchal power. The fictional characters and autobiographical selves that enact the role of mother do so within the paradigms set by the TRC. Each take up, reproduce, and subvert, the subject position of the mother-witness. The women of the final chapter are ‘political widows,’ their partners having been incarcerated or killed during the political conflict. As they themselves are simultaneously political activists in their own right, they inhabit a liminal – or what I call (un)homely – space between private and public spheres. The paradoxical positioning of ‘political widows’ between public and private spheres provides an occasion to rethink ideologies of ‘home,’ which pertain to both gendered and nationalist imaginings.

My interest in these chapters is on the production of women as subjects of discourse. Rather than attempting postivist reclamations of women’s voices, I am concerned instead with questions of who gets to speak and be heard, of under what conditions they speak, and of where their authority of authorship begins and ends. I root my analysis in theories of the subject, particularly those of Judith Butler, whose understanding of subjectivity and subjection is developed from the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault proposes that “There are two meanings of the word *subject*: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his [sic] own identity by a

conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to” (351). According to Butler, “the notion of the subject carries with it a doubleness [...]: the subject is one who is presumed to be the presupposition of agency, [...] but the subject is also one who is subjected to a set of rules or laws that precede the subject” (“How” 285). Butler argues that agency lies not in forsaking the position into which one is subjected, but, instead, in inhabiting this position and then destabilising it through iterative performance.⁴

The thesis explores such performances of gender in fiction and autobiography. While I avoid deterministically categorising authors according to gender and race, I am attentive to the locations from which they construct their fictional or autobiographical female characters as speaking or non-speaking subjects. I read male-authored texts, such as J. M. Coetzee’s Disgrace and Ndebele’s The Cry of Winnie Mandela, alongside female-authored texts, such as Zoë Wicomb’s David’s Story, Sindiwe Magona’s Mother to Mother and Elleke Boehmer’s Bloodlines, and fictional constructions of women alongside autobiographical constructions of female selves, such as Zubeida Jaffer’s Our Generation and Mamphela Ramphele’s A Life.

Chapter Four places David’s Story in dialogue with Disgrace, as I step across the bridge that David’s Story provides between contemporary retrievals of historical female figures and contemporary female characters. My attention in this chapter falls on representations of gendered violence, particularly that of rape. Rather than attempting to ‘give voice’ to rape, or demand of writers that they do so, I suggest that recovering a voice may also entail re-covering – covering over – that which remains outside of prevailing discourse. Thus, instead of aiming to retrieve voice, I am more interested in the conditions of its production and of how the unspeakable – that which cannot be uttered – is expressed through the literariness – or self-referential quality – of the text. A productive way of combating stereotypes and nationalist figurations of women is to return to them as language and then unpick or dis-figure the rhetoric in which they are produced. These two novels, I argue, undertake such a project.

⁴ See Debby Bonnin, Roger Deacon, Robert Morrell and Jenny Robinson for a successful use of Butler’s understanding of gendered subjectivity as unstable performative practice in their attempt to grapple with the “changing politics of gender” in South African during the transition (111; see also 113).

David's Story and Disgrace draw attention to what may be silenced in the act of giving voice to rape as they present female characters that refuse to verbalise their abuse. These silences allow us to trace the discursive genealogies of sexual violence and permit other submerged spectres to emerge. Conveyed in the (un)spoken of these texts are the dangerous double-binds in which women are placed during a political transition marked by disjunctures and continuities in racial and gendered power, and the re-domestication of militant women.

Chapter Five continues to trace a path between voice and silence. Here I turn to the subject position of the mother-witness that was produced and performed in what Ciraj Rassool, Lesley Witz and Gary Minkley call "the theatres of memory of the TRC" (118). The first three chapters argue that, when recalled to the transitional present, the diversity of historical women is revised into the single position of mother. The fifth chapter returns to the subject position of mother as it explores how female characters and autobiographical selves constructed by women writers inhabit and explode the category of the mother-witness during the transition. I draw on Butler's understanding of gendered subjectivity as performative practice to propose that the overdetermined subject position of Mother may be subverted from within through iterative performative acts. The fictional characters and autobiographical selves constructed in Magona's Mother to Mother, Boehmer's Bloodlines and Jaffer's Our Generation re-enact the position of the mother-witness and, in so doing, destabilise the dominant national narratives produced through the figure of the Mother.

The national narrative fashioned during the transition years – most strikingly within the TRC – is a teleological script of loss and sacrifice leading to reconciliation and redemption. Women are constrained by this script, their symbolic value reduced to their role as reproducers of sacrificial sons. These constraints are first explored in Chapter Two and revisited in Chapter Five, where I attend to subversive performances of the mother-witness. The relationship between women and nation is a dialectical one. Far from being simply passive symbols, women are subjects and agents of history, and of memory. They comprised the majority of testifiers who appeared before the TRC and thus shaped the national history produced within this institution of memory. That they did so from circumscribed positions is undeniable. However, these limited vantage points created

openings into which women inserted alternative stories of the past, and alternative self-constructions.

Nationalism is a contradictory rather than coherent discourse; its internal contradictions are laid bare in its female figures. Its gendered tropes are inherently unstable. I explore moments at which these tropes are disrupted by drawing attention to eruptions of what Butler, in her book of that title, calls “gender trouble,” into the stable scripts from which the nation produces itself.

Taking up the subject position of the mother-witness, the three narratives analysed in Chapter Five attempt also to develop transnational and cross-racial alliances between women, without producing sentimental fictions of a universal womanhood, a topic addressed also in the final chapter. Moreover, they grapple with the question of what it means to write as a woman within, and without, national discourse. A strategy they present, in the face of nationalism’s determining structures and appropriations of the female reproductive body, is to reclaim the reproductive body as a source of literary production.

In the final chapter, I focus on Ramphele’s autobiographical self-presentation and Ndebele’s fictional representation of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. Both Ramphele’s autobiographical self and Ndebele’s Winnie inhabit the category of the ‘political widow’ and reveal its internal contradictions. ‘Political widowhood’ throws into relief the boundary between public and private. Located between the home and the world, widows guard – and even personify – the home left vacant by political men. Yet, at the same time, they are granted entry into the public sphere as representatives of these men and their political activities. I draw on Sigmund Freud’s notion of the uncanny in order to read Ramphele and Ndebele’s Winnie as (un)homely women. Permitting uncanny affects to enter into their narratives, the two texts grapple productively with the question of how national homes, and hospitality, can be reconstructed in the post-apartheid aftermath, without consigning women to a state of domesticity.

Freud describes the uncanny – or *unheimlich* – as the uncomfortable recognition of the strange as familiar, or of the unfamiliar as a ‘return’ of the repressed. Chapter Six returns to some of the themes of the fourth chapter as it notes the repression of women’s political agency and its uncanny ‘return’ in transitional culture. Here and elsewhere, I

maintain that the re-membering of nation depends on a process of forgetting and, often, repression. My conceptual framework of re(-)membering is indebted to Toni Morrison's Beloved and Homi K. Bhabha's insightful reading of it. Bhabha says of Morrison that:

The act of 'rememoration' (her concept of a creation of popular memory) turns the present of narrative enunciation into the haunting memorial of what has been excluded, excised, evicted, and for that very reason become the *unheimlich* space for the negotiation of identity and history. (198)

I am particularly interested in how two uncanny 'returns' find their way into narratives of the transition, and in how they can be mapped on to one another. The first is the 'return' of repressed female speaking selves and political subjects cast out in the production of the domesticated national Mother. The second is when the disquieting affect of which Freud speaks is provoked from the recognition of remnants of the 'old' South African within the 'new.' The uncanny encourages us to recognise the porous nature of the temporal boundary between past and present and the spectres that continue to defamiliarise the homeliness of nationhood. These spectres are what David Lloyd, in a different but related context, calls the "melancholy survivals" that have not been exorcised in rituals of national mourning, such as that enacted by the TRC ("Colonial" 219). Woman's bodies, as I have argued, are appropriated to represent the integrity and unity of the 'new' nation, and to ferry the nation safely across the hazardous zone of the transition. The recognition of forms of 'living on' across this temporal divide may unseat the gendered paradigms through which nationalism produces itself.

The significance and impact of the changes that have indeed taken place in the South African cultural, social and political arena are indisputable. Yet I adopt a stance of vigilance described by Spivak as "a persistent critique of what we cannot not want" in my response to the celebratory heralding of the South African 'miracle' and the sentimental myth of a 'rainbow' nation (Critique 110). Emerging from the nightmare of apartheid, how can we not want the 'rainbow' nation? How can we not want the miracle of national reconciliation? How can we deny that we have entered a redemptive state? The dreams and desires encoded in the rainbow metaphor are not ones we should want to dispense

with. Nor, however, should we dispense with a persistent critique that would help us to articulate how they can be more fully realised than they currently are. I offer such a critique by attending specifically to narrative productions and performances of female subjectivity in and of the nation during the making of a 'new' South Africa.

CHAPTER ONE – KROTOA-EVA: TRANSLATOR, TRAITOR, 'RAINBOW' MOTHER

Introduction

Quite possibly, Eva, born Krotoa, is the most written about African woman in South African historiography. --- Julia C. Wells, "Eva's Men" 417.

Soon after the arrival at the Cape of Jan van Riebeeck and his party, a young girl of the Goringhaicona Khoikhoi clan was taken into the Dutch East India Company Fort. Her name was Krotoa. The Dutch arrivals renamed her Eva.¹ Aware of the problems in perpetuating what Carli Coetzee identifies as "the myth of 1652 as founding moment" of South Africa (115), I begin my analysis at this juncture as it is an appropriate place to start unpacking the sentimental myth of 'rainbow' nationalism and its consolidation through the use of historical female figures. If 1652 was inscribed as the origin of white rule in Afrikaner nationalist historiography, in the 'new' South Africa it is the moment of first contact from which a multicultural nation emerges. Krotoa-Eva is the most evocative emblem of this cross-cultural contact. In the words of André Brink, she is "the first key woman of South Africa's post-colonisation story" ("Advent" 18). During the transition, Krotoa-Eva has been the subject of an astonishing amount of historical revisionist writing, genealogical claims and fictional reconstructions.² I attend to three representations located on the boundary between history and fiction: Brink's Imaginings of Sand (1996), Dan Sleight's Islands (2002; translated by Brink, 2004) and Trudie Bloem's Krotoa-Eva: The Woman from Robben Island (1999). These three narratives by

¹ She first appears in van Riebeeck's official journal in January 1654, less than two years after his arrival, as "a girl who had lived with us and had been given the name of Eva" (1:208). At the time of this entry she had apparently left the settlement to visit the Gorinhaiqua.

² Post-1994 revisionist historical accounts include Yvette Abrahams's "Was Eva Raped," Christina Landman's "The Religious Krotoa," Mansell Upham's "In a Kind of Custody" and Julia C. Wells's "Eva's Men"; literary texts that focus on Krotoa-Eva's life, or make central references to her, include Trudie Bloem's Krotoa-Eva, Brink's Imaginings of Sand, Dalene Mathee's Pietermella van de Kaap, Antoinette Pienaar's Krotoa (performed in 1995; see C. Coetzee 117-19), Mavis Smallberg's "Recognition," Dan Sleight's Islands and Zoë Wicomb's David's Story; Upham claims to be working on a biography of Krotoa-Eva (see "Kind" 13). In 1990, the year of Nelson Mandela's release and the unbanning of the African National Congress, V. C. Malherbe's Krotoa, Called 'Eva' was published, along with poems by John Hendrickse ("Eva") and Karen Press ("Krotoa's Story") and Press's young reader's novel, Krotoa. For discussions of Krotoa-Eva in colonial and apartheid literature and historiography, see Carli Coetzee (115-17) and Pieter Conradie (55-57).

white writers draw on the legacy of the Khoikhoi woman, Krotoa-Eva, as they renegotiate whiteness in the 'rainbow' nation.

Krotoa-Eva's name is the site on which questions of identification and allegiance are mapped out. I have chosen to refer to her with a hyphenated appellation to highlight my reading of her as an uneasily situated liminal figure. The restless subjectivity with which this reading endows Krotoa-Eva is encapsulated in her vocation as translator. By early 1659, she appears regularly in van Riebeeck's journal as "Eva the interpreter" (3:1).³ Her linguistic skills – which far outshone those of her male counterparts – carved out an important role for her as the first female cultural broker in the colonial contact zone. According to the historian, V. C. Malherbe, "despite her youth and inexperience, Krotoa knew a great deal and spoke her opinions with confidence" (15). During the current political transition, however, her central contribution to national 'togetherness' is understood not in terms of facilitating linguistic transmission or cultural exchange, but rather in terms of genetic transmission. Krotoa-Eva the translator becomes the 'rainbow' mother. The key event now highlighted in her biography by those white South Africans who, through identification with her, aim to assert their own belonging in the nation, is her status as the first indigene to marry a European (the Danish surgeon Pieter van Meerhof) and bear his children.

The mechanisms and metaphors of translation provide an illuminating lens through which to re-view Krotoa-Eva's legacy. I use the term *translation* in both its literal and figurative senses. Krotoa-Eva was a (literal) translator between Khoikhoi and Dutch; she was also the first person to have been (figuratively) 'translated' across the colonial divide. The former marks her as an agent of cultural contact, the latter as its most abiding object and symbol. Etymologically, "translation" refers to "the activity of *carrying across*, for instance, the transportation and relocation of the bones and other remains of saints" (Tymoczko 19-20; emphasis in orig.); it entails being "transported across the borders between one language and another, one country and another, one culture and another" (Miller 207). Translated across the frontier between Khoikhoi and

³ See also entries made on 1 Feb. 1659 (3:8), 20 May 1659 (3:49), June 1659 (3:82), July 1659 (3:91), Sept. 1660 (3:260) and 28 Dec. 1660 (3:308).

Dutch, Krotoa-Eva is also translated across the centuries as icon of the South African contact narrative in the transition era.⁴

Translation is a fitting practise and poetics with which to begin this study. My interest lies in the re-making of a nation across cultural boundaries through a project of historical recovery and revision – the translation of the past into the present – during a period of transition. Later I explore a process of literally “carrying” the bones of a woman “across” the seas and centuries in a charged spectacle of nation building (see Chapter Three).

The Krotoa-Eva we encounter in cultural texts produced during the South African transition, by white South Africans claiming belonging in the ‘rainbow’ nation through identification with her, is a domesticated figure. The domestication of Krotoa-Eva peaks in the translation of her acts of translation into acts of maternity. The temporal translation of historical women into mythic figures of the ‘new’ South Africa persistently domesticates them into the identity of Mother, as the first three chapters of this thesis show. The nation is thus re-membered through women disremembered, and even dismembered, as their wombs are fetishised and detached from their speaking selves.

Two theorists inform my understanding of translation: Walter Benjamin and Lawrence Venuti.⁵ They apply themselves to notions of ‘living on,’ of faithfulness, and of domestication. In “The Task of the Translator,” Benjamin points both to a lingering residue *that cannot be carried across* in the act of translation and to the original’s dependence on translation for its presence in the present: while the “transfer can never be total,” translation grants the original “continued life” (75, 71). Venuti addresses himself to another problematic: the danger of domestication. Domesticating translations assimilate the foreign text to the target language and its cultural norms, erasing the

⁴ Writing in the late 1970s, Stephen Gray finds that the “frontier myth” in South African letters “is most inclusive whenever it coheres about its original and most reliable go-between, the Hottentot Eve. Her presence on the frontier lends the myth a quality of potential interchange” (38). He concludes: “That Eva herself has not become the source of a legend is a comment on how limiting the dominant views of South African history tend to be” (44). Her apotheosis into legendary status in the transition years is thus indicative of the changing political and cultural climate.

⁵ In “Translations in the Yard of Africa,” Zoë Wicomb employs these two theorists in a brief reading of Krotoa-Eva as translator; her study has confirmed my sense of the usefulness of their paradigms for reading the legacy of this historical woman.

difference of the source text, and preventing it from impacting on the target language and culture (see “Translation” 9).

The task of the translator, Tejaswini Niranjana observes in the wake of Benjamin, “is to reveal the original’s instability” (156). In his own ‘translation’ of Benjamin, Jacques Derrida proposes that, far from being entire unto itself, the original “begins by lacking and by pleading for translation” (“Tours” 184). A translation is “neither an image nor a copy” because, through translation, “the original lives on and transforms itself” (“Tours” 180, 188). This notion of “living on,” claims Niranjana, informs Benjamin’s understanding of history as a desire to engage “the present” (129). The concept of the past “living on” through translation speaks to my concern with the use of history during a nation-building transition. Benjamin’s discussions of history and translation offer models for modes of living between past, present and future that avoid some of the pitfalls into which nationalist uses of the past typically stumble. The historical consciousness suggested in Benjamin’s musings on translation supports neither nativist uses of the past (dependent on stable origins), nor that of a seamless multiculturalism such as articulated in ‘rainbow’ nationalism. The primacy of the origin is debunked, and the possibilities for a total transfer into the melting pot denied, by the presence of a residue, sticking to the bottom of the pot or floating to its surface.⁶ Such translations are ‘faithful’ to neither source nor target language. Translation as domestication, in contrast, strains the contents of the pot through a fine sieve, removing all that does not adhere to the consistency of the target culture.

As product and producer of cultural contact, Krotoa-Eva finds her historical echo in ‘La Malinche,’ the Nahuatl interpreter and mistress of Hernán Cortés during the Spanish conquest of Mexico. La Malinche’s story can usefully inform our understanding of Krotoa-Eva’s symbolic significance, given the depth of scholarship on it and Mexico’s prescience in terms of the nation-building discourses we encounter during the South African transition. La Malinche’s contradictory commemoration sees her hailed as “first mother of the Mexican nation,” and reviled as “the Mexican Eve, symbol of national

⁶ I have adapted this metaphor from that used by Mexican performance artist, Guillermo Gomez-Peña: “The bankrupt notion of the melting pot has been replaced by a model that is more germane to the times, that of the *menudo chowder*. According to this model, most of the ingredients do melt, but some stubborn chunks are condemned merely to float” (qtd. in Bhabha 220-21).

betrayal” (Cypress 2). The latter legacy lingers in the term “malinchista,” which describes those who betray the nation to foreign interests (Cypress 7 and 151); the former is popularised in Octavio Paz’s adulation of her as the “first mestizo, origin of the Mexican nation, the union of the Amerindian and European” (Cypress 9). La Malinche’s legacy is thus split between that of the traitorous translator and that of first mother, between “a voice and a womb” (Cypress 102). The womb is rendered positively, while “references to her voice are always negative” (Cypress 102). The negative aspect of La Malinche is given the name “La lengua,” literally “the tongue” (Alarcón 111). A similar act of splitting is at work in inscriptions of Krotoa-Eva. As verbal subject, she is seen as dangerously untrustworthy; as reproductive body, she is recuperated as faithful and domestic subject: the ‘first mother’ of the ‘rainbow’ nation.

Those white South Africans who stake a genetic claim on Krotoa-Eva, as they carve out a sense of national belonging as ‘pale natives,’ take up the project of recuperating her as ‘rainbow’ mother.⁷ A veritable amateur genealogical industry has sprung up around Krotoa-Eva, as white South Africans reconstitute her as foremother in order to “gain what seems like legitimate access to the new rainbow family” (C. Coetzee 115).⁸ A contribution to the Register of Reconciliation by Andries William de Villiers of Cape Town, formerly classified ‘white,’ exemplifies the ways in which past violence is mitigated and sublimated in new genealogical claims. His opening assertion that “I am very aware of my ancestry” leads not to an acknowledgement of apartheid complicity, but

⁷ The phrase is taken from Max du Preez’s memoir, *Pale Native*. Referring to the union between van Meerhoff and “Eva” as the “first documented marriage between a white man and a Khoikhoi woman” (25), du Preez traces his genealogy: “On the Saayman side, my father’s mother’s family, I had more luck – I can even claim Khoikhoi ancestry. Daniel Zaaïman, as the surname was then spelled, married Pieterella Meerhoff, daughter of the Khoi woman Eva and the Dane Pieter van Meerhoff” (30).

⁸ See entries in the “South-Africa-L Archives” listserv (<http://archiver.rootsweb.com/th/read/South-Africa>), A. M. van Rensburg’s “My Genetic Enrichment” and articles by Upham (founder of the Society of the Descendants of Eva Meerhoff) in *Capensis* (listed in the bibliography). All, including Upham, were classified ‘white’ during apartheid. Krotoa-Eva was earlier identified as a progenitor of white South Africans by M. K. Jeffreys in a series of articles published in *Drum* under the title “How White are the Whites” (Aug. 1959-Feb. 1960; see Sept. 1959 44-48, 44; Oct. 1959 47; Nov. 1959 26). Jeffreys’s reference to Krotoa-Eva as what I now call ‘rainbow’ mother well before the advent of the ‘rainbow’ nation obviously has a very different political import to those that follow the fall of apartheid (for further discussion of Jeffreys’s prescience in terms of post-apartheid discourse, see Samuelson, “Hamsi” 229). Assertions of the ‘mixed’ nature of ‘whiteness’ were a radical act during apartheid, undermining, as they did, the notion of race purity central to the classificatory madness of apartheid. In the post-apartheid era, they have the reverse potential to feed amnesia and denial, while simultaneously reiterating apartheid’s discourses of ‘blood,’ if to different purpose.

to an effortless identification with the colonised: “I descend from Krotoa whose people watched van Riebeeck come ashore in Table Bay in 1652” (1). He is then equally effortlessly able to offer his appeal for forgiveness for violations performed in the name of white racial purity and superiority in the more recent past. The current cultural capital accruing to such “impeccable” genealogical credentials (Brink, “Tribute” 1) enables a denial of past conflict that is most marked in Brink’s tribute to publisher Daantjie Saayman, who shares de Villiers’s claim on Krotoa-Eva as foremother. “If land restitution were to be applied to its fullest consequence,” Brink blithely declares, “Daantje’s family could today claim most of the Peninsula, including Robben Island” (“Tribute” 1).

Gyan Prakash issues a valuable caution against such foundationalist histories when he calls for a “new third-world historiography that will resist both nativist romanticization and orientalist distancing” (406). In our context, this would be a historiography that resists both Krotoa-Eva’s inscription as one hovering sickeningly between two worlds and ‘reverting to type’ *and* appropriations of her story and iconic status by white South Africans wishing to reconstitute themselves as authentically African members of the re-membered nation. The positing of the “foundational subject” (Prakash 400), in this case Krotoa-Eva as ‘rainbow’ mother, asserts the naturalness of the current nation and white South Africans’ place therein, and denies their contingency. Krotoa-Eva’s story is inserted into a narrative that, to adapt Prakash’s words to our context, sees all past events “as events in the becoming of the [South African ‘rainbow’] nation” (399-400). Ironically, this validation of the ‘rainbow’ nation becomes embroiled in a poetics of ‘blood’ in the wake of the spectacular failure of apartheid’s politics of ‘blood.’ This may be seen as a ‘return’ of what has been repressed by some white South Africans and suggests the dangers of harnessing women’s reproductive bodies in efforts to imagine a nation radically different from that of the past. In the new national narrative crafted from biological claims on Krotoa-Eva, ‘blood’ remains the determinant of inclusion and exclusion, now in terms of national belonging rather than racist state policy.

Claiming Krotoa-Eva as “foundational subject” of the ‘rainbow’ nation requires an act of amnesia, as Carli Coetzee has persuasively argued in a study that has guided the

approach taken here. The woman “typecast for centuries as an example of her ‘kind’ and as a bad mother is now hailed as an Afrikaner foremother” (114). The repressed text haunting these comforting domestic translations of Krotoa-Eva as ‘rainbow’ mother is her unhappy demise under colonial culture. After the death of van Meerhof in 1667, she fell into disfavour with the Company. She was banished to Robben Island for disorderly behaviour and her children were removed from her care when her maternal practises reportedly became erratic. In the obituary to her delivered by the Governor of the Cape in 1674, her “hovering between” two worlds is described as distasteful, and she is accused of being “like the dogs, always return[ing] to her own vomit” (qtd. in Malherbe 51).

Repressed and forgotten in the new narrative of the ‘rainbow’ nation is the extent to which Krotoa-Eva’s “identity resides in difference,” as Prakash might say (401). Cast out of current memorialisation is her poor treatment in, and exclusion from, the colonial society she helped build; forgotten, too, is her vexed relation to the children through whom present-day descendents now trace their claims of belonging in the nation. “Forgetting, I would even go so far as to say historical error,” Ernest Renan states appositely, “is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation” (11). The ‘return’ of the repressed takes different forms in the three narratives I analyse below, and climaxes in Sleigh’s disquieting recognition of Krotoa-Eva as uncanny mother.

I wish to counter the emphasis on the ‘hybridity’ celebrated in contemporary representations of Krotoa-Eva’s womb as the crucible in which Africa and Europe met, by foregrounding the movements of her wily tongue, as it negotiated a path between two worlds. Homi K. Bhabha’s subversive understanding of hybridity, which dispenses with a racialised discourse of purity and difference in favour of one of cultural translation, is instructive in an attempt to read Krotoa-Eva’s legacy beyond ‘blood.’⁹ The edgy “hither

⁹ See also Stuart Hall: “Hybridity is not a reference to the mixed racial composition of populations. It is really another term for the cultural logic of *translation* [...], which is agonistic because it is never completed, but rests with its undecidability” (“Conclusion” 226; emphasis in orig.). Robert Young argues that a use of the term “hybridity” necessarily reiterates a racialised discourse and that, in using the term, “we are still locked into parts of the ideological network of a culture that we think and presume that we have surpassed” (27). I follow Stuart Hall’s response to Young, which is worth quoting in full: “This is semantic quibbling. Surely terms can be dis-articulated and re-articulated from their originary meanings: what is this pre-post-structuralist conception of language in which meaning is fixed eternally to its racialized referent? Clearly, my concern has been throughout with *cultural* hybridity, which I relate to the novel combination of heterogeneous cultural elements in a new synthesis [...] and which cannot be fixed

and thither” of Krotoa-Eva’s movements to and from the Fort, in and out of her Batavian attire and Khoikhoi skins, from one language to another, “prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities,” in Bhabha’s terms (4). Living at the interface of cultures, with her translating tongue fashioning a new subjectivity between two worlds, Krotoa-Eva located herself, or was located, at what Bhabha calls “the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *in-between* space [... in which] we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves” (38-39).

But it is precisely “primordial polarities” that are drawn on when some white South Africans craft a ‘hybrid’ identity by laying claim to her as ‘foremother’ or ‘stammoeder.’ The stress here is on autochthonous origins, rather than on cultural creolisation, or the forms of self-fashioning the historical Krotoa-Eva may have engaged in. Her domestication into a mother figure simultaneously domesticates her tongue. While the translating tongue suggests a travesty of the metaphysics of authenticity and origin, the translating womb offers her ‘hybrid’ offspring African roots. The body of woman is fragmented between these two possibilities: narratives of ‘blood’ not only reproduce apartheid racial obsessions, but also silence and even dismember women. This is the fate of a character based on Krotoa-Eva in Brink’s Imaginations of Sand.

Women’s Words, Women’s Wombs: André Brink’s *Imaginations of Sand*

A woman ought not to speak, because Adam was formed first and Eve afterwards, and it was not Adam who was led astray but the woman who was led astray and fell into sin.

Nevertheless, she will be saved by childbearing. --- St Paul in 1 Timothy 2:12-15 (qtd. in

Marina Warner, Monuments and Maidens 63).

Translators, interpreters, go-betweens: ambiguous figures all, who court mistrust. While Krotoa-Eva’s remarkable linguistic range did not extend to Italian, no doubt she would have had little difficulty understanding the aphorism “traddutore, traditore” (to translate, to traduce; translator, traitor). Punished for her traitorous tongue, Brink’s Krotoa-Eva is redeemed through the value granted to her childbearing womb.

by, or be dependent on, the so-called racial character of the people whose culture I am discussing” (“Conclusion” 240n21; emphasis in orig.).

Brink's first post-apartheid novel, Imaginings of Sand, is set in the heady days surrounding the first democratic elections of 1994; from this vantage point it reaches back into the distant past. Kristien, the first-person narrator, returns from England to her grandmother's deathbed, where she transcribes the fantastical family narrative Ouma Kristina relates. This takes the form of a matrilineal family history that dispenses with 'Great Men' in order to tell the tale of women. The novel's "herstory" is traced back to a Khoikhoi foremother, Kamma/Maria (Brink, "Interrogating" 23). Brink acknowledges Malherbe's historical study of Krotoa-Eva as the source text from which he mines the raw materials for his Kamma/Maria, who features in two of the novel's seven chapters. While the bulk of her story is told in the third chapter, it is only in the penultimate chapter that this story, previously "a diversion," is "gathered into [the family's] past" (302). Kamma/Maria's primary significance in the novel is highlighted as she is stitched into the genealogical narrative of Kristien's family on the eve of the elections. As foremother, she grants them symbolic legitimacy in the new national 'family.' In the morning following this instalment of the family narrative, Kristien, who has returned to South Africa with no intention of voting or staying, is among the millions queuing to make her mark on the historic ballot slips.

Imaginings of Sand aims to restore women to history and to destabilise the historiographical forms of Afrikaner nationalism. At the same time, the desire articulated in the novel for belonging in the new nation being forged draws it back into foundational politics and exerts ideological pressure on the representation of women and their bodies. Brink claims that the value of the storytelling that takes place in the novel lies in the "telling of these stories by this person at this juncture" rather than in any "'sense,' metaphorical, political or otherwise, the stories may have, taken individually or in a series" ("Stories" 40). What Kamma/Maria's individual story, and its positioning in the series of stories told "at this juncture," suggests is a narrative of becoming orientated towards the national present in ways warned against by Prakash. The narrative of becoming established in the novel leads precisely to *this* present rather than being directed toward an as-yet-unknown future. The cost of such a historiography can be measured in its gendered effects. Traced back to the originary mother, Imaginings of Sand locates female citizenship in women's reproductive capacities. True to form, then,

is Kristien's description of her decision to stay in South Africa as one that takes shape inside her "like a child in the womb" (349).

We first meet Kamma/Maria when Kristien presses her grandmother to "start at the very beginning" in her rendition of the family history (174). "Kamma," as Brink explains elsewhere, is a "Khoikhoi word" that "means 'water,' which refers to a creation myth in which the first woman (in Africa) emerged from water" ("Reinventing" 23n3). Ouma Kristina surmises that she may indeed be the mythical first woman who emerged from water (175, 174). In Afrikaans, in contrast, "kamma" "refers to the realm of the imagination, of illusion, and of fiction" (Brink, "Reinventing" 23n3).

Brink presents a postmodern proliferation of meaning, deferring the site of origin suggested by the Khoikhoi semantics. But the novel is unable to maintain its avowed post-structuralist approach to history, which is undercut by the magnetic pull exerted by the desire for origins and belonging. If we dwell on the choices before us in decoding the word "kamma," we find that Khoikhoi languages are privileged over Afrikaans ones. For instance, Brink names the locale in which the story is set "Outeniqua" rather than "Outshoorn." "Outeniqua" translates as "man bearing honey." In the final instalment of Kamma/Maria's story, her erstwhile Boer consort, Adam, is led to her hiding-place by a honey-bird and Kamma/Maria metamorphoses into a tree. She is the pot of honey sweetening white South Africans' bitter legacy in Africa by rooting them in African soil.

Brink's substitution of "Maria" for "Eva" equally sees one evocative name replacing another. Maria is the archetypal biblical complement of Eva in a polarity that writes woman as either betrayer and bearer of suffering or blessed mother of the messiah. In myth, Eve and Mary are "structurally interconnected" (Turner and Turner 153) in an eschatological narrative central also to nationalist imaginings. African self-writing practices in the nationalist mode, argues Achille Mbembe, depend on the invention of "a narrative of liberation built around the dual temporality of a glorious – albeit fallen past (tradition) and a redeemed future (nationalism)" ("African" 249-50). As 'foremother,' Krotoa-Eva is emblematic of the "fallen past." She opens the national narrative that culminates in images of redemption constructed around women's wombs and figured in the virgin births that become a central motif explored in later chapters of this thesis.

Maria is also the name of van Riebeeck's wife, Maria de la Quellerie.

Kamma/Maria assumes de la Quellerie's position as 'first lady' of the Cape settlement and, at the same time, as the mother of redemption, she draws white South Africans into a newly reconstituted nation. The true African mother replaces the false white mother and belonging is assured to her descendants, regardless of their racial classification and identification during the apartheid past.

Kamma/Maria, as fictionalised version of Krotoa-Eva, both enables and represents a moment of cultural contact in a remote Khoikhoi settlement when a group of trekking Boers arrives. "Language served almost no purpose. Misunderstanding was rife" (176). Trouble soon breaks out as the "randy" Boers eye the Khoikhoi women, abducting one from the menses hut and raping her (176). The Khoikhoi retaliate and the two groups are on the verge of open warfare when "a woman [...] intervenes" (178). Claiming the position of mediator, Kamma/Maria offers her body in exchange for peace between the two parties. Presenting her as the active subject of this exchange, the text attempts to imbue her with a degree of agency that some have found lacking in the historical story. Dorothy Driver, for instance, suggests that Krotoa-Eva "was offered by Oedaso to Jan van Riebeeck as mediator, or informant, between the Dutch and Khoisan: Krotoa was, then, an object of cultural exchange, a woman who functioned as the sign of a certain contract between the two groups" ("Women" 460). While Brink grants agency to Kamma/Maria, he does so in the realm of the body, rather than that of words. He 'translates' Krotoa-Eva from translating subject to the sign exchanged in translation and reproduces the semiotic link, observed by feminist theorists of translation studies, between "the exchange of women" and "the exchange of words in one language for another" (Chamberlain 64). In the process, a woman's words are displaced in favour of the reproductive potential of her womb.

After averting open warfare between Khoikhoi and Boers, Kamma/Maria is ostracised from her clan as a taboo person. She apparently has little option but to follow Adam, the Boer selected to accept her as 'gift.' Like Krotoa-Eva, she periodically sets off to live among the Khoikhoi, then returns to Adam's farm, until he, suspecting her of duplicity, expels her. Her restless movement between these two worlds is presented as one in which loyalties to both are betrayed through a duplicitous use of language: taking

the position of translator, Kamma/Maria participates in Boer cattle raids against the Khoikhoi and is accused of engineering Khoikhoi ambushes against the Boers.

Ultimately, her linguistic agency is the source of her demise. The novel suggests that Krotoa-Eva's tragedy lies in her wily use of language, rather than in the sexual violence the text alludes to as it grants biological legitimacy to white South Africans.¹⁰ As Ouma Kristina says of Kamma/Maria: "She certainly had a way with languages; and in the end it was her downfall" (182).

By the time Kamma/Maria is pressed to declare her allegiance, no answers are forthcoming: "She didn't speak a word. Her tongue had been cut out" (191). Violence against her remains as undecidable as her actions and motivations. Had Adam cut out her tongue "to punish her for her betrayal and ensure that she would never carry gossip to the Khoikhoi again?" Or, had the Khoikhoi done so "to prevent her telling the whites their secrets"? As she "couldn't tell [...], we shall never have an answer: had she devoted her whole life to avenging herself on the Khoikhoi for rejecting her? Or on the boers for what Adam Oosthuizen had done to her?" (191)

Slicing out her tongue, Brink prevents Kamma/Maria from positioning herself either way, or presenting herself as she is positioned. A telling contrast is provided by Karen Press's narrative poem "Krotoa's Story." In "Krotoa's Story" Doman, Krotoa-Eva's interpreting rival, asks her: "whose side are you on?" Avoiding having to answer this question, Brink foregoes the crucial reply Press grants the historical character: "I am where you put me" (58). The novel's nationalist desire redeems Krotoa-Eva as 'foremother' by shifting its focus from her tongue – here excised – to the fruits of her womb. The dismemberment of Kamma/Maria thus mutes what the text aims to reveal: the historical positioning of women as silenced sources and empty vessels.

The textual violence performed on Kamma/Maria as speaking subject raises questions around the assumption of black female voices by a white male author. In her study of translation, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak refers to J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* as a novel that offers a "lesson in the (im)possibility of translation" by dramatising "the impropriety of the dominant's desire to give voice to the native" (*Outside* 196, 194). The ambiguous

¹⁰ Self-identified "Brown" historian, Yvette Abrahams, argues, in contrast, that Krotoa-Eva was raped during her stay at the Dutch settlement and that her later vacillations were a manifestation of rape trauma

agency attributed to Friday's cut out tongue is lost in Imaginings of Sand. Rather than problematising a "desire to give voice to the native," or to women, the cutting out of Kamma/Maria's tongue serves to render her verbally silent so that she can speak, instead, through her womb.

Recall that the negative legacy of La Malinche is encapsulated in the name "La lengua" or "the tongue." With her tongue cut out and questions of her infidelity foreclosed, the path is cleared for "Eva's" recuperation as "Maria" – the mother who unites rather than the translator who speaks with a forked tongue. Kamma/Maria's story reveals that the myth of white belonging in Africa requires the silencing of Krotoa-Eva's traitorous tongue. Though aiming to 'give voice' to women, identified by the author as silenced in and by history (see "Interrogating" 23), the novel offers an impoverished conception of female authorship. Historian Julia C. Wells presents an alternative narrative of Krotoa-Eva to that which casts her "as a helpless victim of cultural clashes" (418). Wells suggests that Krotoa-Eva was "spinning the yarn" (422), weaving together "a little fact and a little fiction to create a plausible story" (428). Krotoa-Eva could thus be seen as the literary rather than merely biological precursor of Ouma Kristina. Imaginings of Sand does not exploit this possibility, thereby undercutting this literary foremother as it focuses instead on her biological legacy, and forsakes the opportunity to locate Kamma/Maria as a site of female authorship.

Brink's 'feminist' message about the silencing of women across the centuries – encapsulated in the title, "Imaginings of Sand" – is traced across the generations, and returns insistently to the reproductive body. Lottie, Kamma/Maria's daughter, loses her shadow. Indefatigably, she inscribes messages "on tracts of sand," which are continually "effaced" by natural forces, in the hope that some creature will convey it to her shadow (305). Her daughter, Samuel, expresses herself by growing and cutting her hair. In the next generation, Wilhelmina, though based on the indomitable historical character Susanna Smit, 'speaks' largely through excessive corpulence. Rachel, Ouma Kristina's mother, paints lurid images that reappear like stigmata – or menstruation – after each white washing. The "eloquent testimony" of Ouma Kristina is a lifetime's store of used sanitary pads; as Kristien declares: "In its silence it becomes the testimony, not of the

syndrome (see "Was" 16-21).

century marked by one woman's life, but of all women, all of us, since Eve first got the blame for seducing Adam" (221).

These are fantasies of female silence that, by fetishising female suffering, produce an essentialised and ahistorical understanding of women in the historical past. Kristien concludes her liturgy on her forebears' silencing with the observation that they were

Dragged across plains and mountains – just like those others, the nameless dark servants – barefoot, helping to preserve the tribe, loading the guns, fighting and dying alongside the men, then returned to the shadows while the men assumed what glory there was. (332)

Ignored here is both women's agency – it was after all Susanna Smit who declared she would rather cross the Drakensberg barefoot than submit to British rule (see Bird 258-59)¹¹ – and white women's complicity in racial oppression. Smit's contemporary, Anna Elizabeth Steenekamp, writes that Boer women were spurred to trek from the Cape into the hinterland when their access to the slave labour of those "nameless dark servants," to which Kristien compares herself, was threatened by British rule: "it is not so much their freedom that drove us to such lengths, as their being placed on an equal footing with Christians, contrary to the laws of God and the natural distinction of race and religion" (459).

The novel is attentive to the historical tribulations endured by women, and makes a concerted effort to 'restore' them to history. Torn between contradictory desires, however, it ultimately denies the extent to which women, across history, spoke to, and of, their predicaments and national aspirations. The novelistic 'retrieval' of historical characters such as Susanna Smit and Krotoa-Eva as fundamentally voiceless both undercuts the roles women have played in South African history and locates them outside of history – outside, particularly, a history of complicity with white male power.

Muted, along with women's voices, and their acts of complicity and resistance, is a story of rape. Again we find the desire to restore the story of women in a state of

¹¹ Elsabe Brink notes that Smit's threat was drawn on by later generations of Afrikaner women to legitimate their presence in the public sphere in the face of male efforts to confine them in the home (289).

tension with nationalist desire. When nationalist desire takes the ascendancy, the rape of women is presented as a foundational act in the making of the 'rainbow' nation, and an ahistorical narrative of female suffering is woven into one of 'racial mixing' that enables Brink's Afrikaner women "to claim a shared past, a shared pain, a shared victimhood, with the indigenous oppressed" (Trapido 31). Norma Alarcón finds in the Mexican narrative of La Malinche a crisis of legitimacy among the "sons of La Malinche" in the wake of the foreign rape of the native mother (126; see also Papastergiadis 259). In Brink's utopian fiction, conversely, rape appears to confer legitimacy on white South Africans. The scene of rape, in this novel, casts women as symbolic objects of exchange and expiation in racial antagonism, as we see in the case of the rapes concerning Kristien's great-grandmother and the domestic servant's mother (see 112-13). These rapes later permit Kristien to claim Trui, the domestic servant, as "family" (346). The "return to origins," as Niranjana claims, "completely obscures the violent history of the colonial encounter" (166).

Rape features, too, in Kamma/Maria's story. Various versions of her incorporation into the Boer camp are related. The first is that of her as willing sacrifice for peace; a second suggests that Adam's desire remained unconsummated until a later point in the narrative. A more elusive story, suggested in the imagery surrounding Kamma/Maria, hints at rape. This story is established through allusions to Ovid's Philomela and its adaptation in Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus. Like that of Shakespeare's Lavinia, Kamma/Maria's wounded mouth 'speaks' the rape she cannot articulate. "But, sure, some Tereus hath deflower'd thee," declares Lavinia's uncle, correctly interpreting the excised tongue as a reference to Philomela (Titus 2.4.26).

In Imaginings of Sand, Adam expels Kamma/Maria when suspecting her of duplicity. Remorseful, later, he pursues her. On his arrival at her camp, she metamorphoses into a tree and is carried away by the birds with which she habitually converses. This is a notable departure from Philomela's story. Philomela is able to convey to her sister, Procne, the name of her rapist by embroidering it. When Procne finds that her husband is the culprit, the sisters plan a spectacular revenge: Procne cooks and feeds to her husband her own son, before turning into a bird and flying away with Philomela. Brink stages the slicing out of Kamma/Maria's tongue and fills his textual

world with birds, but cannot countenance the sisterly revenge enacted through the child: his Kamma/Maria must at all costs retain her maternal identity and provide her white descendents with roots in the African family tree.

Brink claims his story of Kamma/Maria is informed by Driver's "illuminating feminist reading of the Adamastor myth," but he departs from her more provocative conclusions ("Reinventing" 22). The gigantic Boer, Adam, finds his literary source in Luís de Camões's Adamastor. In Camões's The Lusiads, Thetis offers herself to avert war. When Adamastor embraces her, he finds that she has turned into stone. Driver suggests that while she becomes stone in Adamastor's conception of her, she retains a self that eludes his grasp:

Thetis, who has offered herself as a corrective to [Adamastor's brute force and oppression], her 'honour' in exchange for destruction, is devitalised within the bounds of Adamastor's control, but also exists beyond it, as an idea, as a symbol of indestructible nature, unharnessed femininity, the sea. ("Women" 456-57)

Camões's Thetis, according to Driver, fluctuates between sea and stone; Brink's Kamma/Maria is contained between water and tree. Both signs are harnessed to the narrative of origins and roots. While Thetis as sea slowly erodes Adamastor's perception of her as stone, Kamma as water feeds the family tree Brink grows from her legacy. She is contained in the reproductive function allotted to her, and offered no space beyond it.

As women's words are silenced in favour of women's wombs, the narrative reiterates a gendered division of labour grounded in the Christian narrative of genesis to which Krotoa-Eva's Dutch name refers. (Male) productive labour is distinguished from (female) reproductive labour. This conventional division marks authorship as "original and 'masculine'" and translation as "derivative and 'feminine'" (Chamberlain 57), and it is one that Benjamin and Derrida write against.

Having gendered acts of authorship and translation in Imaginings, Brink needs anxiously to reassert the generative power of translation when he takes up the position of translator of yet another narrative of Krotoa-Eva: Sleight's Islands. Brink's review of the

Afrikaans edition, titled Eilande, was gushing: “the Great South African Novel has indeed arrived,” he enthused (“Advent” 18). Persuaded to translate this most wordy novel (the English edition weighs in at 758 pages), which he has declared a master text, Brink is at pains to undo the conventional opposition between productive and reproductive labour established in his own novel.

Speaking of translating Eilande into Islands, he employs metaphors drawn from the “territory of love” (“Brink’s” 18). His act of love is vastly dissimilar to that described by Spivak, for whom translation entails an erotic “surrender” (Outside 183). Brink’s translation is performed within the gendered conventions of “courtship and consorting,” which present the challenge of conquest to the (male) translator: “And so I had to respond to the challenge to find out (borrowing another sexual image) whether I could rise to the occasion” (“Brink’s” 18). Brink here claims what Chamberlain calls “the right of paternity,” the phallus, “because this is the only way, in a patriarchal code, to claim legitimacy for the text” (67).

When the translator “usurps the role of the author,” by figuring himself as “male seducer,” argues Chamberlain, the “metaphorics of translation [reveal] both an anxiety about the myths of paternity (or authorship and authority) and a profound ambivalence about the role of maternity – ranging from the condemnation of *les belles infidèles* to the adulation accorded to the ‘mother tongue’” (59, 63). This ambivalence courses through Imaginations of Sand, where Kamma/Maria is, on the one hand, both “beautiful” (176) and unfaithful and, on the other hand, idealised as the ‘foremother’ of white South Africans. Islands, the novel Brink translates, responds to this ambivalence by displacing Krotoa-Eva as foremother. Unlike Imaginations of Sand, however, Islands draws precise attention to what the earlier novel elided: Krotoa-Eva’s cursing tongue.

“I Know How to Curse”: Residue and Resistance in Dan Sleigh’s *Islands*

You taught me language, and my profit on’t

Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you

For learning me your language! ---- Caliban, The Tempest 1.2.362-64.

Writing of the 'Indian' interpreters who served as intermediaries in the colonisation of the 'New World,' Stephen Greenblatt notes the ever-present possibility troubling the coloniser that "language learning will undermine the exploitative relation": "When will he cease to marvel and begin to curse?" (108). Sleigh's Krotoa-Eva has long ceased marvelling and, instead, utters a slew of curses. She thus challenges what Venuti identifies as translation's propensity to domesticate. But she does so at the expense of her maternal identity. In the closed discursive field of gender and nationalism, women are divided between those who curse (Benjamin's residue of translation) and those who mother (Venuti's translation as domestication). Thus, Sleigh's Krotoa-Eva must be displaced as 'rainbow' mother, and the desires of 'rainbow' nationalism are accordingly transposed onto her demure daughter, Pietermella.¹²

Zoë Wicomb, whose novel is discussed in Chapter Three and Chapter Four, argues that the residue of translation is revealed at an "exquisite moment" in Krotoa-Eva's story when

in a classic Calibanesque gesture, she hurls drunken abuse 'within the hearing of the Commander' [...] Eva-Krotoa offends and transgresses precisely through speech that proclaims her difference, and so asserts her resistance to translation. The scandalous speech-act falls in the space between her two names, pushing them asunder: the assimilated Eva who is admitted to the Governor's presence, and Krotoa, the indigene who asserts her otherness by disturbing the grand event. ("Translations" 213-14).

Krotoa-Eva's "scandalous speech-act" flies in the face of current identifications that marshal either "Krotoa" or "Eva" to their cause. As Derrida suggests, the residue, or "remnant," troubles the distinction between original and translated text, rendering both unstable (192). Spewing expletives, Krotoa-Eva hinders "an imperialistic domestication

¹² Sleigh's investment in Pietermella is evident beyond the pages of the novel in the following comments by Dalene Matthee, who says of her novel, *Pietermella van die Kaap* (not translated into English): "For decades I have felt there's a woman who should be written about. A delicious, sly woman. She is a Hottentot woman, Eva of the Cape. But she has no breath. Every time I start, she dies under my hands" (qtd. in Rautenbach 32; translated by Chandré Carstens). Matthee relates how she phoned Sleigh, who advises her

of a cultural other” (Venuti, Introduction 13); instead, the target ‘language’ is, as Venuti would say, ‘foreignised’ as the rage of the colonised is entered into it (see “Translation” 9).

The contemporary desire to reclaim Krotoa-Eva as ‘rainbow’ mother manages this disruptive moment by expelling it, as Brink does by slicing out the unruly tongue, or re-domesticating it, as I will argue Bloem does. Sleigh follows a different route. His Krotoa-Eva’s most striking feature is her cursing tongue. Attempting to restore to Krotoa-Eva her historical agency, the text stumbles into another pitfall: unable to reconcile voice and womb, it banishes her as ordinary mother. “Eva’s” maternal function is limited to gestating Pieternella, the child who bears the patronym of the European father, and who is granted the accolade “mother of many” (2). “Eva’s” significant maternal act extends no further than the moment of childbirth, at which she enters the ‘blood’ of Africa into this legitimate European line.

Until this point, the Dutch carefully police “Eva’s” tongue and her obedience to them is flaunted: she is presented as a faithful, domesticated and domesticating translator. While the novel’s source text, van Riebeeck’s journal, notes that “she has been caught out telling untruths occasionally” (3:266), Sleigh’s van Riebeeck paternalistically assures himself that “she was always very honest, but of course she could not be sure herself, and I believe she just wanted to keep me happy” (57). In contrast, her betrayal of Autshomoa (her uncle, the interpreter “Herry”) and the Khoikhoi are strongly presented in the novel. For instance, when asked to translate van Riebeeck’s unyielding response to Khoikhoi claims on the grazing lands, she does so “in a triumphant tone of voice” (83), while her male counterpart – Doman – remains silent.

Peter Harvgard (Pieter van Meerhof), who later marries her, describes the young “Eva” as a docile mimic, thoroughly unthreatening and thus radically unlike the Bhabhaian mimic. She “imitates” Maria de la Quellarie, “borrow[ing]” words from her “mouth” (63) and, as translator, allows van Riebeeck to ventriloquize through her. Peter suspects she would flounder in the absence of her source:

that “you won’t get it right if you don’t first look for Eva’s daughter,” Pieternella (qtd. in Rautenbach 32; my translation).

she'd follow the hostess's example and imitate her speech. And if she were untied from her leash one day and left to stand on her own feet, what would she be like? A shallow puddle which would dry up to mud and later to clay, from which nothing further would grow. (62)

The imagery is loaded by the novel's earlier emphasis on the sea as maternal emblem: "the green womb-water in which we drift and drifted once" (2). In this account, far from being the 'foremother' of the 'rainbow' nation, "Eva" is no more than a shallow puddle from which a single sprig – Pieterella – will shoot before she dries into mud.

Peter's desire for "Eva" is expressed as a desire to domesticate. When the militant Doman is injured in battle and brought to him for medical care, Peter detaches the remaining tendons from his bones so that he will never be able to lift his arm again. "This, this was the way in which peace had to come" (135), he reflects. On the occasion when "Eva" conceives Pieterella, Peter takes her by the arm and says: "Come here, then I can show you exactly how I treated Doman's bones" (139). This scene is comparable to that of the excision of Kamma/Maria's tongue in *Imaginations of Sand*, and highlights the symbolic connection between maternity and domestication in these narratives of a wayward wordsmith. Unlike in Brink's novel, Peter's attempt at domesticating "Eva" is shown to fail. Instead of representing the moment at which she is assimilated into the target culture, it coincides with her fall from grace within the Fort, and the beginning of her isolation and exclusion (152). Peter speculates that this must be due to her 'fall' as unwed expectant mother but the narrative does not satisfactorily resolve this point. It stands as an aporia in the text, suggesting a desire to cast off "Eva" as mother and progenitor once the significant act of conceiving and gestating the child of Europe and Africa has been fulfilled, and the failure of domestication recognised.

Following the birth of Pieterella, "Eva" ceases to interpret for the Company. Although she continues to mind the van Riebeeck children, she is now "more like a servant and less like a friend of the family" (152). More significantly in terms of the novel's thematic, her 'fall' takes place within the realm of language: when she steps out of the role of docile mimic to claim her own words, they take the form of curses. She begins to withdraw from "the polite language of the big house, [...] and sometimes swore

in Dutch. [...] Sometimes she wanted to speak only the Koina language, to him and all others" (152-3). The residue of translation that sees Sleigh's Krotoa-Eva bursting out of a containing domesticity and domestication asserts itself in two spheres: language and maternal practice.

When Peter returns from an expedition into the interior, he finds their child, Pietermella, rubbed in fat and washes her with soap (158). "Eva's" use of fat stands as an emblem of the failure of translation: the Khoikhoi practice of rubbing bodies in fat became a marker of dirt and degradation in seventeenth-century colonial discourse. Having rescued her from the fate of 'reverting to type' to which "Eva" appears condemned, Peter focuses all his affective attention on Pietermella; from this point on, her significant act having been completed, "Eva" both fades from his concerns and from the novel's plot, although she continues to erupt into it, spewing curses. If the child of Europe and Africa bears African 'blood,' she is nurtured by the attentive care of the European father and, following his death, a series of male caretakers. "Eva" is cast off as the 'bad' mother and no attempt is made to recuperate her. Her failure to care for her children fulfils two symbolic purposes: it consigns her to the colonial stereotype of the 'idle Hottentot' and casts her beyond the pale of 'rainbow' mother. J. M. Coetzee notes of the early Cape discourse of "idleness" that it "effectively excludes [the 'Hottentot'] from Eden by deciding that, though human, he is not in the line of descent that leads from Adam via a life of toil to civilized man" (White 25). "Eva" is thus displaced from the position of 'foremother,' symbolically erased from the line of descent.

Sleigh self-consciously foregrounds, through Peter, the desire to domesticate Krotoa-Eva, and laudably resists it. But, given the ideological pressures and desires surrounding the text, he cannot accommodate a non-domesticated, cursing Krotoa-Eva as maternal figure. The issue, then, concerns not only the casting of women as mothers, but also the splitting of women between maternal and speaking subjects. When the cursing Krotoa-Eva is split off from the figure of the foremother, the resultant conception of motherhood is a circumscribed one that presents mothers as silent and passive.

Sleigh's "Eva" is widely acknowledged as masterful wielder of the curse; her persistent acts of speaking back and breaking out of the domesticating containment of translation are shown to stand in contradiction to her maternal responsibilities. In the

chapter following that which recounts Peter's death, Bart and Theuntje, who will later adopt Pieterella, wonder who will look after the children. The central reference to "Eva" in this chapter is that "the woman has a sharp tongue" (281). The fourth chapter continues this theme. "Eva" endlessly scolds the children (312), and "rants" at her slave, Jan Vos, who performs the parenting function in the face of her unwillingness or incompetence (313). Generally "listless," she "could scream vociferously at her children" (335), while "sometimes in raging sorrow she lay screaming on the stones" (339). When greeted, she characteristically responds "with a curse" (488). That her cursing is marked as a 'failure' of translation is signified by her parallel resistance to the Dutch language: during her last years, "she had refused to speak anything but Koina" to her children (543).

The scene Wicomb points to in which Krotoa-Eva hurls "drunken abuse" at the Commander is, in Sleight's narrative, tied to her rescinding of maternal "responsibility":

Out of appreciation for master Pieter, the Company had given her a place to live in the disused pottery, six months ago. There, her infant died of the whooping-cough. A few times the commander had invited her to dinner, but what the woman needed was cash, as she was addicted to alcohol. For bread money she invited sailors home. One day, in full daylight, she hurled abuse at the commander in the courtyard of the Fort; in front of the whole colony, one might say. Hackius then warned her: he was going to send her to the island. She must have had a bad fright, because that very day she went off to the veld. The children were famished and half frozen in the pottery, as their mother had left with all their clothes and blankets. In the dunes she exchanged them with some Hottentots for tobacco. (334)

"Eva's" neglect of her children is clearly sketched throughout the narrative. 'Africa' is the mother whose children must be saved by the nurture of Europe. This representation of Krotoa-Eva as reluctant or inadequate mother speaks to the anxiety that the children – with European 'blood' in their veins – will degenerate into their maternal line. Once, when "Eva" takes them into the dunes, Hans Michiel (one of the substitute 'fathers') is horrified to find them "squatt[ing]" with her as though "they were Sonqua" (338). The

removal of her children and their incorporation into Cape Dutch society, which stems from such fears, is justified in the novel by her own unwillingness to care for them. Having recognised the voice that Brink silenced, Sleigh is pressed to deny Krotoa-Eva her position as progenitor.

Although again dividing women into womb and voice, Sleigh's novel, by granting "Eva" the tongue permits her to 'answer back' to her positioning as empty vessel for the 'African' children of Europe. When the fiscal, citing Dutch law in which children are not imprisoned with their parents, enquires into the possibility of removing the children from Robben Island, she retorts: "What are you trying to pretend? I never had any say over my children. So what do you come to discuss today? Take them away if you want to. They're the Company's children already. Everything belongs to the Company" (406). In response to the postmaster's intervention to the effect that they are trying to help her children, she notes "But not me. I can die here for all he cares" (406). She has astutely grasped the issue. While the fiscal accuses her of selfishness, he has earlier pointed out that not only is the incarceration of her children illegal but so too is that of "Eva," exiled for life without a court ruling or legal representation. But it is the cause of her children, rather than her own, that he takes up, and they are lodged with a Dutch family in town. From here forth they will 'pass' back into Dutch society, becoming the forebears of present-day white South Africans.

Cast off as 'foremother,' "Eva" as speaking subject continues to haunt the narrative as uncanny mother, as revealed in the following exchange: "She stood before Hans Michiel and lifted up her dress. 'There, take it, there's your mother'; "Missus van Meerhof," he implores in response, "spare your children" (338). Sigmund Freud defines the uncanny or *unheimlich* as the unsettling recognition of what is apparently unfamiliar as the 'return' of the repressed. The paradigmatic scene he cites is man's uncomfortable recognition of his origins in women's genitals. Hans Michiel's plea – "spare your children" – pertains not only to Pieterella and her siblings, but also to all her white descendants, who claim a comfortable belonging in the post-apartheid nation through an identification with this 'foremother' that depends on a repression of the mistreatment to which she was subject by their European forebears. Krotoa-Eva presents her white descendants with an uncanny reminder of their own complicity in the racist oppressions

of the colonial and apartheid pasts. This unsettling reminder is dispelled in Brink's novel, along with the image of Krotoa-Eva as vociferous curser that Sleigh permits. Sleigh, in contrast, presents Krotoa-Eva as cursing and uncanny mother, while managing the anxiety she provokes by transposing 'foremother' status from Krotoa-Eva to her daughter.

While Brink's Krotoa-Eva figure has her tongue cut out in order to be recuperated as 'rainbow' mother, Sleigh's cursing Krotoa-Eva is set in opposition to the 'good mother' in order to facilitate her abjection from the post-apartheid family. The sharpening of her tongue takes place in concert with her 'descent' from mother to prostitute: the 'unfaithful' translator is unfaithful widow and mother; the 'faithful' translation is the non-resistant one. Sleigh's "Eva" begins her career as the latter: an empty vessel for the words and 'blood' of Europe. Once she has given birth to the child of Europe, the unfaithful movements of her tongue are recognised and she is granted an opportunity to resist her casting as womb. The price to pay for the cursing tongue of the unfaithful translator is the representation of her as unfaithful mother. Bloem's Krotoa-Eva, as we will see, is the most faithful and the least resistant of them all.

"A member of the household": Translation and Domestication in Trudie Bloem's *Krotoa-Eva: The Woman from Robben Island*

Translation forms domestic subjects by enabling a process of 'mirroring' or self-recognition: the foreign text becomes intelligible when the reader recognises him- or herself in the translation --- Lawrence Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation* 77.

Trudie Bloem – the only woman writer of the three considered here – offers a markedly more sympathetic account of Krotoa-Eva than those presented by Brink and Sleigh, as she attempts to present Krotoa-Eva's story from her point of view. Narrative sympathy is produced through a mirroring structure of identification established between women within the text. This introduces a new set of problems as the white woman writer creates scenes of female "self-recognition" across the imposed boundaries of race. The textual mirroring of Krotoa-Eva in her white counterpart – Maria van Riebeeck – cannot

accommodate her alterity. Ultimately, the text's desire for a cross-racial sisterhood domesticates Krotoa-Eva and her unruly tongue.

Declared by van Riebeeck to be a "member of the household" (38), Bloem's "Krotoa" is a docile subject of the Company, "intuitively distrust[ing]" her male counterpart Doman and his "insincer[e ...] servile manner" (63), or what Bhabha would call his "sly civility" (93). Linguistic prowess is granted to van Riebeeck, not to the woman on whom he relies as his translator. As Pieter relates: "It is strange to hear an attractive young aboriginal girl like her speak in perfect emulation of the style and vocabulary of Commander van Riebeeck, who is an accomplished linguist" (188). Speaking in "perfect emulation" of her source text, she is a 'faithful' translator and translation.

Venuti urges that translation ethics should be as concerned with the domestication of the foreign text as with notions of fidelity. Both are at work in the novel: Bloem domesticates Krotoa-Eva in order to present her as faithful translator. On the one hand, the novel aims to establish cross-racial gender affiliation through acts of "mirroring" between Krotoa-Eva and Maria van Riebeeck. Its efforts to recuperate Krotoa-Eva as 'rainbow' mother, on the other hand, require her to be the faithful translator not the betrayer. Thus, while sketching a tight bond between Maria van Riebeeck and Krotoa-Eva, the narrative is equally at pains to assert her primary allegiance to the Khoikhoi. This is evident in the book's subtitle, which yokes Krotoa-Eva to Robben Island, and inscribes her as avatar of the grand history of resistance that culminates in the figure of Nelson Mandela. Her legacy is thus cleansed of the stench of betrayal, and she is rendered fit to bear the title of 'rainbow' mother and stand alongside the father of the 'rainbow' nation.

Contradictorily, however, "Krotoa" domesticates Africa for Maria: "The presence of the bright young Khoikhoi girl in her home, playing with her child, had made the continent to which she had been brought by her husband seem less alien and hostile" (68-69). Faced with this faultline in its argument, the text contains Krotoa-Eva's agency within the domestic realm, thereby excusing what some may perceive as acts of political treachery. Fidelity and domestication thus work hand in hand. The complicated political allegiances and betrayals the historical Krotoa-Eva appears to have engaged in, as

cultural broker between Khoikhoi and Dutch, are domesticated into marriage negotiations. Out of resentment that she has rejected his marriage offer, Doman names “Krotoa” a spy (81); her failure to accept another “betrothal gesture” is “one of a series of choices she had made between the Khoikhoi and the Dutch” (87). Her ultimate fall from grace in her relations with both the Dutch and the Cochoqua stems from disputes concerning her dowry cattle, rather than from her treasonous tongue. In each of these marital negotiations, Bloem’s “Krotoa” is “spoken for” rather than being an active, speaking subject (25, 34).

Bloem is laudably less obsessed with ‘blood’ and the fruits of Krotoa-Eva’s womb than Brink. Her project resembles his, however, in its efforts to recuperate Krotoa-Eva as ‘good mother,’ thereby transforming the colonial contact zone into a space of domestic harmony from which a ‘rainbow’ sisterhood can emerge. As in Imaginations of Sand, then, nationalist desire translates into sentimental renditions of relations between women.

The attempt to claim Krotoa-Eva as ‘good mother,’ which stands in contrast to the cursing figure of Sleigh’s narrative, is at work in the representation of a historical incident revealing Krotoa-Eva’s disintegration before Pieter’s death. Company records indicate that a surgeon was dispatched to Robben Island to treat a fracture in Krotoa-Eva’s cranium. Driven to account for this within a narrative that insists on domestic harmony, Bloem recounts it from two points of view.¹³ The first is Pieter’s. In a series of letters penned to his “esteemed friend” he traces first their courtship and then “Eva’s” gradual ‘reversion to type.’ He does admit the source of her disintegration: her isolation and loneliness, exacerbated by his frequent absences. As he relates it, after informing her of his imminent departure on yet another expedition, she disappears for two days, leaving him to care for the children. She returns drunk, “wearing her skin apparel,” and tries to take her son from Pieter, who pushes her away: “She lunged at me and grabbed the

¹³ Sleigh, in contrast, narrates it solely from Peter’s point of view, showing it to be an act of self-defence as he retaliates when “Eva” strikes him across the cheek with a piece of firewood. The event marks *his* degeneration through contact with her, rather than her decline: “What have you done to yourself, Peter Havgard? What have you done to me, Eva?” (208). Even at the moment of impact, when he strikes her “as hard as he could,” Peter’s thoughts remain centred upon his inner collapse: “He heard something break. It could have been his heart, it could have been her skull” (208).

infant, and I pushed her away again – harder this time. She stumbled and fell, coming into contact with the corner of the staircase and receiving a deep wound above her left eye” (214). Pieter’s violence against her is thus justified, by himself, as an act of protecting their children. The conjugal script that needs to contain him as loving husband and father is not unduly threatened. Now the text needs to recuperate Krotoa-Eva as ‘good mother,’ dispelling this image of her as the unruly mother, ‘reverting to type.’ The version narrated from her point of view serves this purpose. Returning home in search of love and sympathy, she reaches for her crying baby, “longing for the warmth of the small body against hers.” Pieter turns away and, as she lunges towards him, pushes her; “that was when she fell and gashed her head against the corner of the stairs” (218).

This is the final scene before Pieter’s departure and death, although closing sentences are appended to each version in which they reassure one another of their mutual love and concern. The novel then sets about bringing “Krotoa’s” story to conclusion. While Sleight granted a fair proportion of narrative weight to Krotoa-Eva’s existence after Pieter’s death, for Bloem the significant story ends with his life. All that remains is to chart “Krotoa’s” spectacular demise as sympathetically as possible, and without unsettling the text’s efforts to domesticate her.

Rather than wielding the cutting tongue of Sleight’s “Eva,” who curses at her children and all and sundry, Bloem’s “Krotoa” attributes the “insults” to others, associating them with the forced loss of her maternal identity. She recalls how “They insulted her in front of Pieter’s children, and then took the children away from her” (219). When she speaks, she does so to insist on her status as “good mother and respectable widow,” in other words, as ‘faithful’ and ‘domestic’ subject:

When her children dirtied themselves or tore their clothes playing outside she would wash them and change their clothes, and tell them that they always had to be respectably dressed and clean [...] She realised that she had to take the place of the children’s father, and never left them alone, and never went to the beach to dance. (219)

Her loneliness impels her to return to the mainland, where ostracism drives her to drink. But still Bloem domesticates the moment of the drunken curse, inscribing it within 'familial' concern. Employed to wait on guests at an official reception, Krotoa-Eva tipples from the dregs,

when she had had too much to drink, [...] she interrupted Commander Borghorst's conversation with an important visitor to ask him if he had received news of Commander van Riebeeck and his children since the death of *Juffrouw* Maria. The Commander called a guard to take the 'drunk' away, but she resisted, shouting at him '*Mijnheer* Van Riebeeck and *Juffrouw* Maria were like my own father and mother, they would not have treated me like this.' (220)

The spectacular scene having been substantially subdued, and the residue of translation contained within the domestic, Bloem recuperates Krotoa-Eva further by revising the historical scene of her children's abandonment. Terrified of the Commander's threat to take her children from her, she decides to return to her brother-in-law, the chief Oedasoa. She packs their belongings, undressing her children "so that they would not look too different from Khoikhoi children" (221), and goes in search of shelter for them in the dunes, planning to leave for Oedasoa's camp the following day. Unable to find a suitable place for them, she collapses in exhaustion, "decid[ing] to spend the night there and fetch them the following morning" (221). When she returns the next day, she finds the "house empty and locked up" (221). Wandering in the dunes in search of someone who would help her recover her children and return to Oedasoa, she is nearly raped by vagrant Goringaiqua, and then again by sailors. The following morning she is arrested for creating a disturbance. The novel can be credited with attending to such experiences of women in the colonial contact zone. Revealing the complex double-binds in which women like Krotoa-Eva were caught, it offers a welcome departure from the line taken in Brink's novel. However, its conclusion returns to a sentimentally drawn universal conception of womanhood reminiscent of that articulated in *Imaginations of Sand*. What

these textual struggles reveal are the difficulties presented in navigating between nationalist and feminist projects.

In closing, the worlds Krotoa-Eva straddled with such disastrous consequences – signified here by the attempted rapes from both sides of the colonial divide – are united in a prelapsarian memory of first contact:

she sees Maria van Riebeeck's face as vividly as the day she first saw her, the day when little Lambertus was frightened but grasped Krotoa's finger and laughed at her. She [...] hears the Goringhaiqua women and the long-haired women all laughing together because the child grasped her finger.
(225)

Through this "mirroring," domesticating scene, Krotoa-Eva's story becomes a story of a universal womanhood. Maternity provides the common ground on which the scaffolding of this sisterhood is built. Thus, while Bloem appears less interested in the 'African blood' conferred by the womb of the 'rainbow' mother, she deploys motherhood as an essential female experience, which provides the basis for a 'rainbow' sisterhood, and a historical understanding of the ways women have positioned themselves and have been positioned is squandered.

While the novel attempts to shape Krotoa-Eva's story within an overarching narrative of womanhood, it does so at the expense of the historical Krotoa-Eva's challenges to the gendered constructions of translation, and to her positioning as translated subject. The cursing tongue offers not just a reproduction, but also a "living on" through remnants. According to Benjamin, it is in the 'faithful' translation that something is 'lost.' "Lost in translation," to use Eva Hoffman's phrase, is not the original's fullness of presence, but the potential of disrupting both original and target language during the act of transmission from one language to another, such that each is "infiltrated, permeated, and inflected" by the other (Hoffman 273). Eschewing such estranging effects, Bloem's domesticating translation of Krotoa as 'faithful' translator posits a universal womanhood and represses differences between women.

Conclusion:

If Krotoa-Eva is remembered today as 'rainbow' mother more than translator, reading her legacy through a focus on translation renders visible the operations of national desire performed around her current manifestations. Translation theory, when applied to this historical woman, who has been translated across the centuries, highlights both the residue of the active female speaking subject and the anxious dispelling of it through domesticating practices. I suggest that an attempt to recall Krotoa-Eva as interpreting subject destabilises current interpretations of her life.

While Sleigh offers the least sympathetic rendition of the historical woman, his is the only Krotoa-Eva of the three discussed here who continues to utter an unruly slew of curses. Islands reveals explicitly what is implicit in Imaginings of Sand and Krotoa-Eva: that woman in the national imagination can be either womb or voice, mother or speaking subject, but not both. Thus, the nationalist project, in which women are cast as mothers, depends on a silencing of their voices. Brink and Bloem, one literally the other figuratively, excise Krotoa-Eva's tongue in desperate attempts to recuperate her as mother, and exorcise the figure of the translator-traitor that haunts their attempts to remember a divided nation as the 'rainbow' nation, and find belonging therein as white South Africans. Both projects depend on representations of gender that cut across and deny racial, historical and political difference.

Like that of the biblical Eve, the legacy of this South African 'foremother' constructed during the transition is a dangerous one for women as writers and women as citizens. The once divided nation is re-membered as 'rainbow' nation through these inscriptions or abjections of Krotoa-Eva. This narrative of national belonging depends on the fragmentation of women's bodies and reveals a deep-seated unease with women's words. In the following chapter, I trace congruent dismemberings and dis-eases in response to another historical woman, the nineteenth-century prophet, Nongqawuse.

CHAPTER TWO – NONGQAWUSE: NATIONAL TIME AND (FEMALE) AUTHORSHIP

Introduction

I am the child of Nongqause

--- Thabo Mbeki, "I am an African" 1.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the colonial contact zone Krotoa-Eva inhabited two centuries before had shifted to the Eastern Cape. Between 1779 and 1878, nine frontier wars were fought along this boundary. Towards the end of this encounter, a young Xhosa woman, Nongqawuse, stepped into the arena in which history is made. Her verbal entry into the public sphere during this conflict radically altered the face and future of the region. Nongqawuse's prophecies, argues J. B. Peires, "irrevocably transformed the Xhosa nation into South Africans" (321). The nature and cause of the prophecies remains contested to this day. Nongqawuse is the most elusive and elliptical figure to be sketched into this historical landscape. Given the paucity of extant information on her, her story offers a fallow field for the propagation of myth. This chapter traces the contours taken by this myth in the transition years. I focus on Zakes Mda's novel, The Heart of Redness (2000), which is set in two interconnected time zones: the time of Nongqawuse's prophecies, and that of the post-apartheid present. Widely acclaimed as one of the most significant novelists to chart the formation of the 'new' South Africa, Mda delves into the historical past in order to raise pressing questions about the 'new' nation.

Nongqawuse's prophecy has always featured visibly in historical and cultural work. It attracted much attention from writers and artists in colonial and apartheid South Africa, and has been the subject of a sizeable creative and historical output in the years of the political transition.¹ In the spirit of Walter Benjamin, I consider the implications of this particular past "flash[ing] up" before us in the unstable temporal zone of the transition, which could be described in Benjaminian terms as a "moment of danger"

¹ Literary responses to Nongqawuse published prior to 1994 include: H. I. E. Dhlomo's The Girl Who Killed to Save: Nongqause the Liberator, D. L. P. Yali-Manisi's "The Cattle-Killing," Siphosiphiso Sepamla's "To Makana and Nongqawuse," Mtutuzeli Matshoba's "Three Days in the Land of a Dying Illusion," Karen Press's Nongqawuse's Prophecy; selected post-1994 literary texts that focus on or make central reference to Nongqawuse's prophecy are listed in the following note.

(“Theses” 255). Attending to the tropes and themes peculiar to the transition, or this “new present,” I explore the “critical constellation in which precisely this fragment of the past is found with precisely this present” (Benjamin, “Eduard” 352, 351). A survey of recent re-inscriptions of Nongqawuse’s story reveals three central trends: the trope of virgin birth, a framework of sacrifice and redemption that intersects with the national narrative crafted within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and a continued interest in questions of heritage, modernity and development central also in earlier writing on Nongqawuse.² The Heart of Redness provides an exemplary case study in which to analyse contemporary cultural attempts to grapple with the legacy of Nongqawuse.

The constellation that draws together the prophet Nongqawuse and allusions to the biblical story of the conception of the Christ-child is particularly pertinent to the novel’s engagement with historical time and (female) authorship. Given the prevalence of this constellation, the conclusions drawn here pertain not only to this single text, but also to the cultural moment that generates it. I argue that this constellation reflects the extent to which culture of the transition reproduces a narrative of sacrifice and redemption. Richard Wilson has shown that this narrative dominated the hearings of the TRC and the national history it came to write (see 114-19). When virgin births, with their intimations of messianic redemption, are tied to the prophecies of Nongqawuse, with their apparent injunctions for sacrifice, aspects of the historical story are highlighted in accordance with contemporary nation-building concerns. The new national narrative asserts that the sacrifices of the past have been rewarded with a post-apartheid redemptive state.

The recent revival of interest in Nongqawuse can in part be attributed to the publication in 1989 of Peires’s authoritative study, The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7. The Dead Will Arise created fertile ground for new cultural interpretations that draw their symbolism from Christian resurrection theology. Mda cites Peires as the primary source for his fictionalised account of the historical event. Indeed, so closely does he tie his fictional version to Peires’s

² Allusions to the Virgin Mary in accounts of Nongqawuse’s prophecy appear in Mda’s The Heart of Redness, Sindiwe Magona’s Mother to Mother, Mike Nicol’s This Day and Age, Brett Bailey’s The Prophet. The use of the TRC as an explanatory context for Nongqawuse’s story is evident in The Heart of Redness, Mother to Mother, The Prophet, “The Day of the Two Suns: The Trial of Nongqawuse” (dir. John Matshikiza) and Nongqawuse: The Truth Commission (Community Arts Project). Nongqawuse’s prophecy

account that there is little room for interpretative work on the historical narrative in The Heart of Redness. For this reason, I begin with a discussion of Peires and point to alternative versions of the event forsaken in Mda's account, which faithfully follows Peires. The novel's present-day narrative provides an arena in which we can grapple with Mda's exegesis of the historical narrative. Before I do so, I discuss the novel's achievements in countering a linear model of history, and challenging ideologies of development. As its conceptions of time are embodied in female characters, however, the novel's recourse to female fertility as privileged metaphor compels the settling of narrative time into national formations. A focus on the text's representation of women thus allows us to consider the ways in which some of its other projects are compromised and suggests the usefulness of gender as a category of analysis. Moreover, I will argue that the use of the female form as index of national time and container of textual meaning in The Heart of Redness depends on a gendered conception of authorship that presents women as either leaky or empty vessels.

The character Qukezwa is rendered as one such empty vessel for Mda's vision when she bears a son while still a virgin. Qukezwa is a manifestation of what Florence Stratton calls the "Mother Africa Trope." This trope, according to Stratton, "legitimizes the critical practice of excluding women from the creation of culture, of writing them out of the literary tradition" (52). Figuring Qukezwa as Mother Africa, the novel shifts the site of authorship from the female prophet to the male writer. The author function claims the status of the Author-as-God; it claims, in other words, what Roland Barthes terms the "theological" principle in the text ("Death" 146). Such disembodied authorial transcendence is achieved through the identification of women with the physical body, and the embodiment of textual meaning in women's flesh. As Judith Butler argues, masculinity "safeguard[s] its own disembodied status through identifying women generally with the bodily sphere. Masculine disembodiment is only possible on the condition that women occupy their bodies as their essential and enslaving identities" ("Variations" 133). Equated with the body, women are excluded from cultural

is drawn on to provide commentary on 'development' (particularly capitalist development) in The Heart of Redness, Jeremy Cronin's "The Time of Prophets" and Kelwyn Sole's "Miss Nongqawuse 1997."

production. The contested and unruly meanings of Nongqawuse's words are managed and contained when transposed into the 'message' women convey through their wombs.

Historical Controversies: Gender, Cattle and Women's Words

Narratives that subject women to textual abuse while declining to listen to their voices or analyse their lives perhaps deserve a response developed among Xhosa-speakers after the catastrophe.

People who told unbelievable stories could be dismissed in a line: "those who heard him, said: 'You are telling a Nongqawuse tale.'"

--- Helen Bradford, "Women, Gender and Colonialism" 368.

The story of Nongqawuse, in brief, is that, claiming to speak on behalf of the ancestors, she instructed the amaXhosa to kill all their cattle and cease cultivation. Adherence to this injunction, she foretold, would result in the ancestors, along with new cattle, rising from the dead, new grain being available in abundance, and the world returning to its original, pristine state.³ If controversy surrounds the events of 1856-7,⁴ historians agree unanimously on their consequences. Following the failure of the prophecies,

³ According to the historian-poet, William W. Gqoba (1888), Nongqawuse was instructed by the ancestors appearing to her to: "Tell that the whole community will rise from the dead; and that all cattle now living must be slaughtered, for they have been reared by contaminated hands because there are people about who deal in witchcraft. There should be no cultivation, but great new grain pits must be dug, new houses must be built, and great strong cattle enclosures must be erected. Cut out new milksacks and weave many doors from bukka roots [administered to young women to make them pregnant and prevent miscarriages]. So says the chief Napakade, the descendant of Sifuba-Sibanzi. The people must leave their witchcraft, for soon they will be examined by diviners. [...] They [the cattle] were reared by dirty hands that were handling witchcraft and other things such as incests and adulteries" (qtd. in Peires 79 and 126; the full text of a later, adulterated version of Gqoba's account appears in English translation in Jordan 70-75). Peires adds to Gqoba's description of the prophecies from other sources: "On the great day [following full moon], two suns would rise red in the sky over the mountain of Ntaba kaNdodo where they would collide and darkness would cover the earth. There would be a great storm, which only the newly built and thatched houses would be able to withstand. Then the righteous dead [...] and the new cattle would rise out of the earth at the mouth of the Kei, Kwenzurha, Tyhume and Keiskamma rivers. [...] The English and their collaborators ('all who wear trousers' in one account) would retreat into the sea, which would rise up in two walls to engulf them and open a road for them to return to Uhlanga (place of Creation) whence they came" (98).

⁴ A note on terminology: the events of 1856-7 have conventionally been known as "the Xhosa National Suicide" or the "Cattle-Killing movement." Due to significant problems with both these formulations – outlined below – I refer to them as "the events of 1856-7." The phrase "National Suicide" is a discredited one that, today, appears only in tourist brochures, luring visitors to Nongqawuse's Pool or grave. Far from attempting mass suicide, believers in the prophecies, as recent historical literature persuasively argues, sought to save themselves, and their lifestyle, from colonial encroachment. On the other hand, "Cattle Killing," as Jeff Guy points out, "is more than a misnomer. It conflates, distorts and over-simplifies the events to which it refers, thereby excluding a number of the most important elements." Focussing on the male-associated realm of cattle at the expense of female agricultural labour, it conceals the significance of the latter: "As damaging as the killing of cattle and the resultant deprivation was, it was the destruction of crops and the suspension of cultivation which turned deprivation into catastrophe" ("Landmark" 229).

approximately 40,000 amaXhosa died of starvation, another 40,000 had no option but to seek waged-labour in the British colony. Independent Xhosaland had been decimated and the last vestiges of amaXhosa political sovereignty soundly quashed, as the British used the events of 1856-7 as an excuse to confiscate massive tracts of land and round up chiefs, exiling them to Robben Island. From this point onwards, little stood between the amaXhosa and their incorporation into the colonial order.

Nongqawuse was approximately fifteen years of age when she began to prophesise in 1856. She lived in Independent Xhosaland under the guardianship of her uncle, Mhlakaza. At this time, the amaXhosa had already suffered severe losses in the face of imperial aggression. Their social and political organisation had been placed under intolerable strain by a near century of colonial incursion and conflict, and their final substantial military challenge to colonial encroachment, the War of Mlanjeni of 1850-3, had failed. The situation was exacerbated by a lungsickness epizootic, spreading rampantly through British Kaffraria and Independent Xhosaland in the mid-1850s. Peires's great contribution to scholarship on the events of 1856-7 was to draw attention to the impact of the lungsickness epizootic in an argument claiming that the "cattle-killing" was a rational and logical response to colonial pressures and unprecedented livestock mortality. However, while he has enriched our understanding of the events of 1856-7 through his attention to lungsickness, his failure to draw gendered conclusions about cattle-dearth and cattle-killing has left a palpable blind spot in his narrative. This lacuna then finds its way into Mda's novel.

Gender provides a useful frame through which to read this contentious historical event; its explanatory potential is evident in the intimate economic and symbolic links between cattle and the female reproductive body in amaXhosa society. Cattle were the glue of amaXhosa society, and the primary markers of status and wealth. Their central function was that of *lobola*, or bride-wealth, used to appropriate the reproductive potential of women. Through the payment of *lobola*, future offspring were incorporated into the patrilineal line of the husband's clan. Human capital was central to the social organisation of the agrarian amaXhosa and cattle, as the means to the reproduction of human capital, were pivotal (see Guy, "Gender" 39-41). AmaXhosa social organisation underwent a period of startling disruption in the 1850s. To refer again to Judith Bulter's

evocative phrase, it was a time of “gender trouble” as cattle, the means through which gender was produced and performed, were in increasingly short supply. Young men were unable to raise sufficient cattle for *lobola*; patriarchs were unable to sue men who engaged in extra-marital sexual relations with their female kin; chiefs lost power along with their herds. The cattle dearth was “wrecking havoc with older ways of regulating sexuality,” and thus with the regulation of reproduction and legitimacy (Bradford 362).

The cattle kraal was the sanctuary of men. Women were taboo in relation to cattle and forbidden entry to cattle kraals, which provided meeting places for male political forums. It is remarkable that Nongqawuse, a young unmarried woman, should have claimed authority on the subject of cattle. That her prophecies were addressed to the resource through which female fertility and labour was controlled seems most suggestive. Helen Bradford points out that the prophecies – with their injunctions against cultivation and their order for cattle to be killed – freed women from the onerous task of cultivation that fell to them within the gendered division of labour, while demanding that men destroy the very currency through which “male power over women” was symbolised and practised (366).

Peires records claims that the prophecies and their staunch female following had a gendered agenda, but then hastily dismisses them, along with what he calls the “dubious cliché” that “women’s oppression in male dominated societies such as that of the Xhosa predisposes [them] to participate in ecstatic religious movements” (172). Extrapolating from a mere three examples of women who did not support the prophetic movement (including one Mfengu and one royal woman), he concludes categorically: “Clearly, the believer / unbeliever divide followed no set pattern of kinship, age or even gender” (174). Jeff Guy, in contrast, proposes that the prophecies and their broad female support base constituted “an attack by women on existing male structures and power bases weakened by cattle losses” (“Landmark” 231).

At one point in the novel, Mda appears willing to admit what Peires denies: “Women became the staunchest supporters of the prophets. Many of them left their husbands and went to live with their parents. Women were the leaders of the cattle-killing movement” (Heart 126). Context is everything, however, and this bold statement is undercut by its positioning in the novel. The reference to women’s support of the

movement is inserted to highlight the surprise of one character, Twin, when his wife shows doubts about the wisdom of following it too faithfully, rather than to emphasise the gendered characteristics of the movement. For the first time in their marriage, Twin goes “against the wishes of his wife” (125). The statement that women were the leaders and supporters of the movement is undermined by juxtaposition. What the novel shows rather than tells is men supporting the prophetic movement in opposition to their wives. Thus does Mda remain true to Peires’s version, and inattentive to the gendered implications of the events of 1856-7. This surface denial is, however, belied by strong undercurrents of gendered anxiety that become the focus of my analysis later in the chapter.

Another of Peires’s conclusions taken up by Mda is the attempt to account for the apparent influence of Christian resurrection theology on the prophecies. Forging “historical links” out of no more than “hints in the sources” (Guy, “Landmark” 227), Peires argues that Nongqawuse’s guardian, Mhlakaza, was the disenchanted gospel-man, Wilhelm Goliath, who had toured the Eastern Cape with the Anglican archdeacon, Nathaniel Merriman, previous to Nongqawuse’s prophecies. By way of this claim, which is poorly substantiated in his text and disputed by historians such as Guy, Peires is able to conclude that the prophecies were strongly influenced by the theological discourses Wilhelm Goliath had preached. The unspoken implication with which my reading is concerned is the attribution of the prophecies’ authorship to Mhlakaza, rather than Nongqawuse. As Bradford observes, “Peires places a black man who, on his own confession, mouthed the words of a woman, centre-stage”; he “has awarded [Nongqawuse’s] words and historical significance to a man” (366).

A recurrent theme in Nongqawuse’s legacy is that of her as an empty vessel for the words of others – or ‘faithful’ translator, to return to the concerns of the previous chapter. Most historical and cultural interpretations of Nongqawuse’s prophecy, including Mda’s, join Peires in going to considerable lengths to work around the female authorship of the prophecies. Convoluting plots are constructed, by way of which, Nongqawuse’s authorship – both her message and its authority – is ascribed to a range of male historical actors: Grey, the Chiefs, Mhlakaza or amaXhosa paramount, Sarhili. Another androcentric strategy at work in both Peires’s and Mda’s accounts is the

portrayal of Nongqawuse as one offering little more than a pastiche of previous prophecies by Nxele and Ntsikana.⁵ At issue is not the originality of Nongqawuse's prophecy, but its authority: Nongqawuse's speech acts achieved widespread adherence where previous prophecies had failed to do so.

If Nongqawuse is the figure around which the narrative of The Heart of Redness circles, her presence is like the eye of a textual storm: she is little more than a cipher in the novel based on her. Mda imports into his text Peires's narrative of Mhlakaza as Wilhelm Goliath, foregrounding Mhlakaza at the expense of Nongqawuse. Bradford's critique of Peires's interpretation is equally pertinent to The Heart of Redness, wherein Mhlakaza's story precedes and shapes that of Nongqawuse, and Nongqawuse's prophecies are authorised by him.

While denying the authority of female authorship, Peires's Mhlakaza narrative anticipates the kind of redemptive story prevalent during the transition. This narrative, replete as it obviously is with hope and desire, exerts a powerful influence over cultural work produced during the transition. The Heart of Redness, which refuses a linear narrative structure, challenges a redemptive scripting of history. But the symbolic baggage bearing down on women's bodies proves overwhelming. Ultimately, the novel's representation of the female reproductive body draws it in line with the dominant national narrative.

Writing non-linear histories: Time as "entanglement"

The concept of the historical progress of mankind cannot be sundered from the concept of its progression through a homogenous, empty time. A critique of the concept of such a progression must be the basis of any criticism of the concept of progress itself.

--- Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" 261.

In The Heart of Redness, Mda 'writes back' to the ur-text of colonial discourse alluded to in his title, Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness. This reply to empire, conventional within

⁵ In this regard, see also Nongqawuse: The Truth Commission. Bailey's The Prophet, which represents women as the main supporters driving the movement, evokes a more terrifying Nongqawuse than any other transition text, and reaches its resolution in a ritual exorcism of the spirits possessing Nongqawuse.

postcolonial literature, celebrates what was once denigrated. The novel's reference to "redness" is specific to the Eastern Cape, where "red" denotes the ochre used as ornamentation by 'traditional' amaXhosa, and the terms "school people" and "red people" are used to differentiate between those who have embraced 'modernity,' and those who have not.

The presence of the past is palpable in the twentieth-century narrative of the novel, most notably in the social division between Believers and Unbelievers (from which stems that between "red people" and "school people"). This division is inherited from the time of Nongqawuse, where it distinguished between those who obeyed the prophecies (the Believers), and those who did not (the Unbelievers). Strong antagonisms developed between the two groups, as each blamed the other for the unhappy fate of the amaXhosa nation following the failure of the prophecies. Enmity between Believers and Unbelievers is reinvigorated in Mda's present-day narrative, as Qolorha-by-Sea, the site of the prophecies, faces a new crisis in the late twentieth century. Believers and Unbelievers quarrel over the merits of 'progress' in the form of a proposed tourist development. The Unbelievers campaign in favour of the development, arguing that it "will bring modernity to our lives, and will rid us of our redness" (105). The Believers resist it, because it will destroy the local ecology, in the interests of national and global capital, and alienate them from their natural surroundings. Insisting also on the contemporaneity of their 'non modern' cultural practices, they reject the attempt to package this culture for tourist consumption.

The proposed development, vaunted as being of "national importance"(230), promises to modernise the village while retaining vestiges of "redness" in the fixed format of the tourist spectacle. As such, it reiterates the colonial imposition of the nineteenth century, which aimed to consign a lived present to the static past of the museum exhibit, while transforming the amaXhosa into a waged-labour underclass servicing colonial capital. The complicity between nationalist and colonial programmes is revealed through the novel's interpenetrating time zones and reiterated crises. Both aim to produce 'modern' subjects in the interests of economic 'progress' by fixing in the 'past' any identified 'non-modern' attributes. David Lloyd notes how, under colonial

rule, “No space remains for the unfolding of the capacities of the colonized that are out of kilter with modernity.” In the post-colonial period,

state-oriented nationalisms respond to this paralysing sense of loss therapeutically by seeking to constitute a new culture and subjecthood around a reinvention of tradition. In doing so, they reproduce the effects of colonial modernity by selecting and canonizing elements of the colonized culture that can be refunctioned within the terms of the modern state. (“Colonial” 219)

Those elements of culture “incommensurable with modernity” are relegated to an incorrigible “backwardness” (“Colonial” 219).

Resistant to the time of origin and telos, to the linear movement through past, present and future, Mda responds to such colonial and national projects, and gives literary voice to the preoccupations of theorists such as Partha Chatterjee, Achille Mbembe and Dipesh Chakrabarty. Chatterjee and Mbembe argue for an understanding of time in the postcolony as “heterogenous, unevenly dense” (Chatterjee, “Anderson’s” 131) and “fundamentally fractured” (Mbembe, “African” 272); in short, as an “entanglement [...] of multiple dureés made up of discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another, and envelope one another” (Mbembe, Postcolony 14). These conceptions of time in the postcolony are antithetical to what Benedict Anderson terms the “homogenous, empty time” of nationalism (31). “Homogenous, empty time,” notes Chatterjee, is not only the time of nationalism, it is also “the utopian time of capital,” with its attendant discourses of linear progress and development (“Anderson’s” 131).

Mda’s return to Nongqawuse is thus radically different from Thabo Mbeki’s in his “I am an African” speech.⁶ Mbeki states: “I am the child of Nongqause. I am *he* who made it possible to trade in world markets in diamonds, in gold, in the same food for

⁶ Presented on the occasion of the adoption by the Constitutional Assembly of The Republic of South Africa Constitution Bill in 1996, when he was Deputy-President, this has become Mbeki’s signature speech and was performed by John Kani at the “We are Finally Free” concert celebrating Mbeki’s inauguration for a second presidential term on 27 April 2004.

which my stomach yearns” (1; emphasis added). Evoking Nongqawuse in order to speak a narrative of progressive modernisation, Mbeki lays an overtly teleological claim on the historical story. His reference to Nongqawuse is presumably based on the interpretation of the early twentieth-century African moderniser, H. I. E. Dhlomo, in The Girl Who Killed to Save: Nongqause the Liberator (1936). For Dhlomo, as for Mbeki, Nongqawuse was a “liberator” in that the unwitting result of her prophecies was the enforced modernisation of ‘traditional’ society. The losses incurred in the wake of the prophecy, Dhlomo proposed, were a necessary evil to be endured on the painful but rewarding journey towards modernity.⁷ Mda shares with Mbeki a gendering of the child of the future as male, which draws his narrative closer to the national one that may be readily apparent. Yet the meaning Nongqawuse holds for Mda is quite different.

My reading of The Heart of Redness finds Chakrabarty’s discussion of “subaltern pasts” or pasts that “resist historicisation” particularly suggestive (18). Chakrabarty proposes that the historian approach “subaltern pasts” in a manner that allows them to “stand as our contemporary, [...] throwing light on a possibility for the present” rather than historicising or anthropologising them (24). Such a history, or literature for that matter, “puts us in touch with the heterogeneities, the plural ways of being, that make up our own present [...] and] helps to bring to view the disjointed nature of our own times” (24).

The blending of time periods and exploration of disjunctures in the present that we find in The Heart of Redness undo the imposed binary of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ (or, in our context, “red” and “school”) through the assertion of what Chakrabarty terms “a shared ‘now’” or “a relation of contemporaneity between the non modern and the modern” (28). The entanglement of past and present and the insistence on the contemporaneity of “redness” found in the novel is radically antithetical to colonial culture’s “denial of co-evalness,” to use Johannes Fabian’s expression (55). The colonial “denial of co-evalness” is exemplified in the novella to which Mda’s title alludes, in which Conrad’s Marlow likens his spatial movement up the Congo to “travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world” (48). Mda’s inscription of time is equally antithetical

⁷ For a useful commentary on Dhlomo’s play, see David Attwell (277-78).

to the progressive, modernising temporalities espoused by new nationalist discourses, such as that spoken by Mbeki.

The text's temporality asserts not only the contemporaneity of the "modern" and "non modern" but also foregrounds vestiges of the colonial past in the post-apartheid present. When a character suggests that this past, metonymically figured in trophy-heads housed in metropolitan museums, is "best left forgotten," another responds emphatically: "It is not the past. [...] It is the present. These trophies are still there ... today ... as we speak" (194). Thus, the novel's production of heterogenous time captures both creative creolisation and colonial coercion: "Simultaneity is the restless product of a long history of miscegenation, assimilation, and syncretization *as well as* of conflict, contradiction, and cultural violence," claims Kumkum Sangari in a similar context (217; emphasis in orig.).

Heterogenous, entangled time forgoes the discourse of closure on the past so prevalent during the transition.⁸ As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak points out, a historicist imagination that places "colonialism / imperialism securely in the past, and / or [suggests] a continuous line from that past to our present," threatens to serve neo-colonial interests by absolving us of our own foldedness with these pasts (Critique 1). The "epistemic story of imperialism," says Spivak, "is the story of a series of interruptions, a repeated tearing of time that cannot be sutured. [...] Today's cultural studies should think at least twice before acting on a wish to achieve that impossible seam" (Critique 208).

The novel's formal structure, which sees the past erupting into the present, notes continuities between past and present and foregrounds unsutured and inconsolable tears in each. Thus does it contest the "homogenous empty time" of nation and capital. On the thematic level, Mda fends off the threat posed by 'development' to his fictionalised village by attempting to take the "subaltern past" seriously, allowing it to disrupt the present rather than fixing it in the past. The Believers triumph when the valley – the place of Nongqawuse's visions – is declared a heritage site. The prophecies, which promised to restore the world to its original state, are fulfilled as Nongqawuse finally saves the village

⁸ In "Cracked Vases and Untidy Seams," I discuss in greater detail the rhetoric of closure in the TRC and post-apartheid fiction.

from the impingement of 'modernity,' whether as part of the colonial or nationalist project.

The symbolic weight placed on women's bodies during the nation-building transition exerts a new set of pressures on the text. We are again confronted with contradictory textual desires and a fissured textual politics. The novel's embodiment of time in women and its reliance on a set of gendered tropes spawned in both colonial and nationalist discourses hamper its ability to escape the poetic logic of nationalist and colonial temporality. While Conrad uses female figures to exemplify his "heart of darkness," Mda equally depends on the female form to house his "heart of redness." The question then arises of whether it is possible to destabilise colonial and nationalist edifices, while leaving intact the gendered representations that prop them up. I suggest not. In the following section, I attend to the use of women as temporal figures. This focus renders visible the operations of what Svetlana Boym terms "restorative nostalgia" in the text. "Restorative nostalgia" expresses a nation-orientated memory that "tends to make a teleological plot" by suturing the "gaps and discontinuities" of memory with "a coherent and inspiring tale of recovered identity" (53). Structured according to this nation-oriented memory, time settles into a Janus-faced structure, its heterogeneity divided into two homogenous parts: "modern" progressive movement and "non modern" repasts.

Embodied Time: Women as Temporal Figures

[T]he temporal anomaly within nationalism – veering between nostalgia for the past and the impatient, progressive sloughing off of the past – is typically resolved by figuring the contradiction in representation of time as a natural division of gender. Women are represented as the atavistic and authentic body of national tradition (inert, backward-looking and natural), embodying nationalism's conservative principle of continuity. Men, by contrast, represent the progressive agent of national modernity (forward-thrusting, potent and historic), embodying nationalism's progressive, or revolutionary principle of discontinuity. Nationalism's anomalous relation to time is thus managed as a natural relation to gender.

--- Anne McClintock, Imperial Leather 358-59.

The Heart of Redness grapples with Nongqawuse's contradictory and contested legacy in the present-day drama by twice splitting it between three female characters, on whom my

reading will focus: Qukezwa, Xoliswa Ximiya and NomaRussia. All three women enter the plot as love interests of Camagu, the character most closely associated with the author.⁹ Like Mda, Camagu returns to South Africa after the democratic elections following an extended period in exile. Camagu is quickly disabused of any idealised notions of the South African 'miracle,' as his attempts to secure a job fail dismally. His reflections on his time in Johannesburg present Mda's biting satire on the 'new' South Africa, which points to nepotism and notes the hollowness of Black Economic Empowerment programmes. This strongly worded critique begins to flounder when the text becomes entrapped in representations of the female reproductive body: nationalist desire is re-ignited on the pyre of an essentialised gender politics.

Disillusioned by his experience in Johannesburg, Camagu prepares to return to America. On the eve of his departure, he encounters NomaRussia, from the rural Eastern Cape village of Qolorha-by-Sea, singing at a Hillbrow wake. Captivated by her "heartly beauty," and her song, which conjures images of "a folktale dreamland" (27), Camagu delays his departure in order to make a spontaneous trip to the village in search of her. This will be where Mda sets his "African renaissance," and, as the renaissance is figured through a literal re-birth, female bodies become implicated in a nostalgic restoration of an 'African identity.'¹⁰

Following Camagu's arrival in Qolorha-by-Sea, NomaRussia, the object of his quest, eludes him, and he finds himself oscillating instead between the favours of Xoliswa Ximiya and Qukezwa. This is the text's first attempt at splitting Nongqawuse's ambiguous legacy. Xoliswa Ximiya and Qukezwa are, respectively, the only living descendants of the Unbelieving and Believing branches of the family on whom the novel centres, and are emblematic of the social division of the amaXhosa into "red" and "school" people (or "non modern" and "modern"). The dichotomy drawn between the two female characters reveals the extent to which the novel defines women – and that which they represent – according to their fertility. Elsewhere it commendably smudges

⁹ As Maureen Isaacson relates, "Mda says he identifies with Camagu" (3). Camagu and Mda both return from exile to a democratic South Africa, having received advanced degrees in communication, and, significantly, both share the clan totem of the Majola. In his interview with Isaacson, Mda tells of his two encounters with Majola, and Isaacson quotes him instructing her: "You must say I have seen it" (4). I will soon discuss Camagu's encounter with Majola.

the boundary between “red” and “school.” For instance, the “non modern” Believer, Zim, inhabits a “newfangled” hexagon hut while his Unbelieving, “modern” counterpart, Bhonco, rejects such encroachments on “tried and tested” (i.e. ‘traditional’) styles of living (5-6). However, this boundary becomes rigid in representations of the female reproductive body, as the novel is weighed down by the symbolic baggage placed on women’s bodies: the Unbelieving Xoliswa Ximiya is childless; the womb of the Believing Qukezwa is the site of miraculous fertility. Each woman’s reproductive body provides an emblem, respectively, of the “modern” and “non modern.”

Xoliswa Ximiya represents the “school people.” She is the principal of Qolorha-by-Sea Secondary School, and is an embarrassingly effusive supporter of American-style ‘civilisation.’ She epitomises the legacy of Nongqawuse celebrated by Mbeki, one that ushered the time of nation and capital into the precapitalist world of the amaXhosa. Chatterjee claims that “resistances to capital (or to nationalist modernity) are always thought of as coming out of humanity’s past, something people should have left behind but somehow haven’t” (“Anderson’s” 131). Any attempts to maintain the “history of redness,” or the cultural traditions of the amaXhosa, are accordingly dismissed by Xoliswa Ximiya as “backward movement” (184). Through its association with Xoliswa Ximiya, whose first mention in the novel refers to her childless state, the developmental discourse of capital is rendered barren.

In contrast to Xoliswa Ximiya, Qukezwa gives birth to a son in extraordinary circumstances. The only surviving child of the Believing line, Qukezwa is closely associated with heritage. She provides the novel’s most persistent gateway to the world of the past, as she speaks, sings and dreams herself into the body of her ancestral namesake, Qukezwa the first, who lived in the time of Nongqawuse. Taking Camagu to Nongqawuse’s Pool, Qukezwa the second, “her voice full of nostalgia,” says: “We stood here with the multitudes. We stood here and saw the wonders” (120). She expresses this nostalgia in the scene following Camagu’s symbolic ‘homecoming.’

Having failed to find a ‘home’ in Johannesburg and unsuccessful in his efforts to locate NomaRussia in Qolorha-by-Sea, Camagu regretfully plans his return “to Xoliswa

¹⁰ See the novel’s direct reference to “the African Renaissance movement spearheaded by the president of the country” (185).

Ximiya's U.S. of A." (111). He is interrupted by the screams of a hotel cleaner, who has discovered in his blankets a brown mole snake, the Majola clan totem. Camagu is returned to a cultural tradition when he is visited by, and in turn acknowledges, his totem. Up to this point, Camagu has been courting Xoliswa Ximiya. Following the visitation by Majola, she is summarily dismissed from his attentions, and replaced by Qukezwa, who is finally able to convince Camagu that the proposed development will have a negative impact on the village. As Qukezwa begins to dominate the plot, the sharp fragments of heterogenous time begin to melt under the soft glow of nostalgia.

Following the visitation by Majola, Camagu "follows [Qukezwa] unquestioningly" (118) as she leads him to Nongqawuse's Pool, where he is "mesmerised by the romance of the place and the girl's passion for the prophets," and by the "girl" herself (121). This epiphany concludes with Qukezwa instructing Camagu about the Khoikhoi prophet-god Heitsi Eibib, and, in a symbolically charged moment the significance of which will become clearer, with Camagu placing a stone on one of Heitsi Eibib's graves. Their second trip to Nongqawuse's Pool sees Qukezwa 'miraculously' impregnated.

Mda admits to being a romantic, drawn to Nongqawuse's beautiful dream of a better world (see Isaacson 3). The authorial voice is openly sympathetic to her when it states: "In reality [... all she] wanted was to save the amaXhosa nation" (182). At the same time, it is keenly aware of the devastation that followed in the prophecies' wake, of the unspeakable sufferings of the "Middle Generations," in the novel's genealogy. The dis-ease introduced into the text by this awareness of immeasurable loss is enhanced by a latent disquiet concerning the gendered power struggle historians such as Bradford have found in the prophecies. Such contestation is anxiously denied in the above quote, with its insistence on amaXhosa unity and the altruistic, nation-centred motives of Nongqawuse.

Torn between the romantic dream of a better world and the horrifying consequences of this act of female authorship, the text manages its ambivalence by again splitting aspects of Nongqawuse's legacy. This second split is embodied in NomaRussia and Qukezwa. The duality established between them is a duality between the maimed and

the miraculous reproductive body (a duality constructed also in Mda's earlier novel, Ways of Dying).

NomaRussia ("Mother of the Russians") is a popular name in Qolorha-by-Sea, dating back to the time of the prophecies, and locating its bearer within this legacy as maternal figure. When the former Governor of the Cape, Sir George Cathcart, was killed in the Crimean War, the Believers assume that Russians are "the spirits of amaXhosa soldiers" (93), and thus the awaited ancestors of Nongqawuse's prophecy. After disappearing for much of the novel, NomaRussia reappears near the end, once marriage negotiations for Camagu and Qukezwa's union have concluded. She is dying of cervical cancer, and a stream of blood gushes from her reproductive organs. Temporal juxtaposition is used to powerful effect when the narrative cuts back to the past, and the devastating effects of the prophetic movement are revealed in all their horror:

People were dying. Thousands of them. At first it was mostly old people and children. Then men and women in their prime. Dying everywhere. Corpses and skeletons were a common sight. In the dongas. On the veld. Even around the homesteads. No one had the strength to bury them. (292)

This aspect of Nongqawuse – a terrifying harbinger of death – is embodied in NomaRussia. Her diseased reproductive organs provide the vehicle through which the horrors of the failed prophetic movement are exposed. We are reminded of her entry into the novel, when Camagu was seduced by her singing at a wake: then and now she is a figure presiding over death.

If NomaRussia's body figures authorial anxieties, Qukezwa's figures authorial desires in at least two respects: claims of autochthony and dreams of redemption. Qukezwa's body is marked by her Khoikhoi heritage. Her ancestral namesake (Qukezwa the first) was a Khoikhoi woman and the two Qukezwas carry much of the novel's symbolic weight. The emphasis placed on them constitutes a textual celebration of autochthony and reveals an investment in the politics of origins. As Twin asserts, Qukezwa the first is "the original owner of this land" (124). Qukezwa the second inherits from her predecessor both her Khoisan features – her "yellow thighs," for instance (64) –

and her entitlement to the land, which she in turn passes on to her son. Such claims are established through women's bodies and conferred to men.

Elleke Boehmer accounts for the prevalence of mothers in nationalist symbolism by noting that the "image of the mother invites connotations of origins" ("Motherlands" 232). The novel bears this out by making the maternal line that which confers autochthony. We are told that Qukezwa's "Khoikhoi features were enhanced by [her] mother," who is of the clan "that came into existence from the intermarriages of the amaXhosa and the Khoikhoi" (40). The novel's deployment of autochthony is troubling both in terms of its investment in the figuration of women as mothers, and in the extent to which it untangles the text's temporality. According to Mbembe, celebrations of autochthony belong to an impoverished African nationalist tradition that "has come to conceive politics either along the lines of a recovery of an essential but lost nature – the liberation of an essence – or as a sacrificial process" ("African" 272).

Autochthony and sacrificial redemption, origin and telos, meet in the body of Qukezwa the second. In contrast to NomaRussia's oozing, diseased body, it expresses the integrity of parthenogenesis, or virgin birth, and alludes to Christian redemption myths. When Qukezwa is found to be pregnant, the grandmothers attest that she is still a virgin, "that she has not known a man – in the biblical sense" (250). Qukezwa occupies the Marian archetype of Theotokos, "the God-bearer, the mother of God" (Warner, Alone 65); in Chapter Five I consider representations of women following the Marian archetype of Mater Dolorosa, or mother of sorrows.

The reader might assume, as Camagu does, that Qukezwa was impregnated during their mystical midnight horse-ride. Camagu, seated behind Qukezwa, with his thighs wrapped around her, is enraptured by her singing. Afterwards he discovers that his pants are wet. Impregnation without penetration is the 'rational' explanation for Qukezwa's conception. Little weight is attached to this explanation, as the novel positions the conception as a 'miraculous' event. Qukezwa and Camagu pass Nongqawuse's Pool, and narrative splicing between past and present suggests that Qukezwa's conception is a fulfilment of the redemptive longings of her Believing ancestors, Qukezwa the first and Twin. A comparison with Sindiwe Magona's Mother to Mother, discussed further in Chapter Five, is illuminating: virgin birth, in Mother to

Mother, carries no 'magical' implications, but comments instead on the social positioning of women within and between South African patriarchies.

AmaXhosa, Christian, and Khoikhoi cosmologies are drawn together in Qukezwa's virgin birth, with Khoikhoi beliefs taking ascendancy, as syncreticism gives way to a politics of autochthony. The child born from these unusual circumstances is called Heitsi – after the Khoikhoi prophet-god in whose honour Qukezwa the first named her own son. Heitsi Eibib, as both Qukezwas relate, is the son of the storytelling creator, Tsiqwa ("Tsiqwa is the one who tells his stories in heaven. He created the Khoikhoi and all the world" [23]). Heitsi Eibib is both "the earliest prophet of the Khoikhoi" (24) and saviour: "He lived and died for all the Khoikhoi" (24).

The turn to the autochthonous thus sees the female prophet-woman displaced in favour of the male prophet-god. A parallel displacement occurs in Mda's article on Qolorha-by-Sea. The article notes the "cloud of shame [that] hovers over the heads of the descendants of the cattle killers," and concludes by giving the final word to a village elder: "Heitsi Eibib [...] was a true prophet. Unlike Nongqawuse, who killed her own people, Heitsi Eibib saved his people" ("Valley" 1, 5). Recall the journey Camagu takes when he is first enraptured by Qukezwa: past Nongqawuse's Pool and culminating in an act of homage before one of Heitsi Eibib's graves. 'Miraculously' conceived and named after Heitsi Eibib, Heitsi the second (the son of Qukezwa the second) is encoded as a messianic figure, and the text's romantic dream of a better world is deflected from Nongqawuse onto him.

Again Peires's contested Mhlakaza narrative proves invaluable to Mda, for it permits him to account for the transfusion of Christian resurrection theology into Nongqawuse's prophecies without troubling the politics of autochthony established in the text. Historians argue that the redemptive symbols of resurrection were introduced to the amaXhosa by the Khoikhoi (who had earlier imbibed them from missionaries).¹¹ Mda, in

¹¹ Elizabeth Elbourne claims that "It is striking how much faster mission Christianity was adopted by the battered remnants of Khoikhoi communities of the eastern and western Cape in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries than it was by less politically and economically damaged African societies outside the colony" ("Early" 65). She finds that their "interaction with Christianity was shaped by existing Khoisan beliefs," with often syncretic results ("Early" 72). Thus, far from inviolable, Elbourne points to the "permeability of Khoisan religiosity" at this time, along with its "readiness to turn outside influences to 'national' ends" ("Early" 74; see also Crais 207).

contrast, keeps Khoikhoi beliefs inviolable. A didactic exposition is offered when Camagu thinks of his son:

He who is named after Heitsi Eibib, the earliest prophet of the Khoikhoi.
Heitsi. The son of Tsiqwa. Tsiqwa. He who tells his stories in heaven.
Heitsi. The one who parted the waters of the Great River so that his people
could cross when the enemy was chasing them. When his people had
crossed, and the enemy was trying to pass through the opening, the Great
River closed upon the enemy. And the enemy all died.

Camagu smiles to himself when he remembers how he learnt all
this from Qukezwa when she was teaching him about the sacred cairns. He
also learnt that the Khoikhoi people were singing the story of Heitsi Eibib
long before the white missionaries came to these shores with their similar
story of Moses and the crossing of the Red Sea. (287-88)

Spiritual syncretism is located in Nongqawuse's uncle, Mhlakaza, while the Khoikhoi women – Qukezwa the first and second – stand for a 'pure' and 'uncontaminated' African cultural tradition; between the two Qukezwas, the novel traces an 'unbroken string' from past to present, and onward to the future embodied in Heitsi. Myths of authenticity and origin are given full rein, and the rupture of colonialism is denied. The colonial rupture is poignantly portrayed in Stephen Watson's poem, "Song of the Broken String," adapted from /Xam orature collected by W. H. Bleek and Lucy Lloyd in the nineteenth century (the narrator of this piece was Dia!kwain). "Song of the Broken String" speaks the inconsolable loss resulting from the colonial encounter. Redemptive narratives recuperate such losses, claiming them as necessary sacrifices on the path to national regeneration, and thus legitimate the post-apartheid state.

The sublimated sexuality of Qukezwa's virgin birth is equally telling. Qukezwa the first, as a guerrilla during the War of Mlanjeni, is among the "Khoikhoi women [who] sold their bodies to the British soldiers in order to smuggle canisters of gunpowder to their fighting men, [...] prostituting themselves" to save "the amaXhosa nation from utter defeat" (22-23). Stratton claims that prostitution provides a metaphor of national

degradation under colonial conquest. In this context, it speaks of an anxiety about women taking part in the national struggle, rather than guarding the home and cultural tradition nationalist discourse calls on them to represent. According to Stratton, the prostitute finds her post-colonial counterpart in the figure of Mother Africa, symbol of national recovery (see 48-50). Qukezwa the second is cleansed and reclaimed as a Mother Africa figure, her body uncontaminated and whole. The shift from prostitute to virgin-mother that we find in The Heart of Redness is one from the nation penetrated by foreign incursion, to the nation redeemed through its recovery of an authentic cultural tradition. This trajectory is followed also in Mda's previous novel, Ways of Dying, where redemption is signalled by the movement of the central female character, Noria, from prostitute to ascetic.

Mda can apparently find no space for the gritty, physical female body in his conceptual schema. If woman is to bear his message, she must be untainted. A similar trajectory is traced in the following chapter, which explores Sarah Bartmann's recuperation from violated body – at times rendered as 'prostitute' – to Mother of the Nation, symbol of the nation restored. The story told through these women's bodies follows a linear structure. Thus the representation of female reproductive bodies untangles the narrative's temporality, rearranging it into a teleological formation that stretches from colonial loss to post-colonial recovery.

Given the textual value laid on Qukezwa's body, it comes as no surprise that, of the three women, she is the one Camagu chooses for his wife. The closing paragraph of the novel retains an emphasis on Qukezwa as the figure of heritage. Here, the binary of "modern" and "non modern" settles into the twin poles of Janus-faced national time, conventionally expressed through a troubling gendered configuration. Marked as conserving figures, women protect the spiritual and cultural identity sloughed off by their menfolk, who follow colonial and nationalist narratives of progress outside the sanctuary of the home, or, in our context, the cultural tradition to which Camagu is returned in a symbolic act of homecoming. Women, as Chatterjee notes in his discussion of Indian nationalism, represent the "inner sanctum" where no encroachment by the coloniser is permitted ("Nationalist" 239). In The Heart of Redness, Qukezwa guards, and even personifies, this sanctum.

Throughout the novel, shoreline and sea are associated with Qukezwa's Khoikhoi heritage and the amaXhosa ancestors awaited in the time of Nongqawuse. When Heitsi refuses to swim in the sea, Qukezwa is stunned:

How will he survive without the sea? How will he carry out the business of saving his people? Qukezwa grabs him by his hand and drags him into the water. [...] Heitsi screams even louder, pulling away from her grip, 'No, mama! No! This boy does not belong in the sea! This boy belongs in the man village!' (320)

In the closing words of the novel, Heitsi rejects both his autochthonous heritage and (apparently) his messianic destiny. But the gendered split is indicative. As Anne McClintock has shown, nationalism's "temporal anomaly" – with its one face gazing back into a primordial past, its other into an infinite future – is managed by having women embody "nationalism's conservative principle of continuity," while the national sons act out its "progressive, or revolutionary principle of discontinuity" (358-59). As national son-citizen, Heitsi assumes for himself the principle of temporal discontinuity, while also laying a specific claim on the village space as male (the "man village"). Unlike Xoliswa Ximiya, Heitsi is not subject to textual censure for taking this stance and is, moreover, given the last words in a novel that has expelled Xoliswa Ximiya. Qukezwa, who is embraced by the narrative, continues to play her female role as the conserving and conservative temporal aspect of nationalism, as the "repository of the national archaic" (McClintock 359).

Qukezwa's relation to the nation is metaphoric rather than metonymic; she is symbol rather than citizen. Within the "symbolic economy of nationalism," argues Boehmer, male roles "may be characterised as metonymic: as author and subject of nationalism, the male is part of the nation, or contiguous with it; his place is alongside that of his brother citizens." Women's "form swells into a trope closer to metaphor," which "stands for the national territory and for national values: symbolically she is ranged above men; in reality she is kept below them" (Boehmer, "Motherlands" 233; see also "Stories" 6).

The Heart of Redness contradicts its own attempts to write time as “entangled” by shifting instead into a teleological historical narrative of autochthony, sacrifice and redemption. This not only undercuts its more radical inscription of time but also offers a limited script for women to inhabit. Women embody heritage, and carry redemption in their wombs. Moreover, the text’s dependence on Peires’s assertion that Mhlakaza was previously a gospel-man presents an androcentric appropriation of women’s authorship and authority. The alacrity with which the novel – itself located in literate culture – dismisses Xoliswa Ximiya, the only highly literate woman in the story, is revealing. Women bear men’s messages through their bodies and are firmly discouraged from seizing the tools of writing themselves.

Leaky Vessels, Empty Vessels: Gender and Authorship

The disorder brought about by women in charge, who dominate their husbands by preventing them from leaving home to work, or rise up to murder them, leads only to emptiness, to barrenness and death, and finds its appropriate imagery in effluvia, leaky vessels, and sieves. --- Marina Warner, Monuments and Maidens 249.

NomaRussia’s and Qukezwa’s bodies can be described respectively, in Bakhtinian terms, as grotesque and classical bodies (see Bakhtin 42 and 44). The grotesque body, leaking through its orifices, threatens established order, while the classical body reflects imaginary social cohesion; the former personifies incontinence, the latter exemplifies control. The extract quoted in my epigraph is taken from Marina Warner’s commentary on Greek myths about “female misrule” (Monuments 248). Warner refers to the Danaids, who murdered their husbands and were condemned to carry water in leaky pots, and to Hippotes, who was sent on an expedition but could not find a crew: “The men made excuses: that their wives were not well, that their boats leaked. So Hippotes cursed them, that they would always suffer from leaky boats, that they would always be ruled by women” (Monuments 248-49).

Leaky vessels provide an image of female (mis)rule, of women’s lack of control and of a lack of control over women. Warner observes: “the ideal female body, fitting container of high and virtuous meanings, should be an impossible object, like a sieve

which does not leak” (Monuments 266). The sieve that does not leak is a symbol of continence that has passed from the Vestal Virgin Tuccia of ancient Rome, to early modern England, and has infused the iconography of the Virgin Mary. The “impossible object” of the virgin mother’s body is an empty vessel or container – empty of women’s own desires. Unlike leaky vessels, which flow with such lack of restraint, the pregnant virgin body is whole and sealed: “The Virgin Mary is a ‘closed gate,’ a ‘spring shut up,’ a ‘fountain sealed’” (Warner, Alone 73). It provides an appropriately uncontaminated vessel for the divine seed, either godly or authorial.

NomaRussia’s condition alludes to what Bradford, in an earlier version of her paper, has called the “reproductive imagery” of Nongqawuse’s prophecies – their references to blood-red suns and moons, to milksacks and to bukka roots, fed to young women to prevent miscarriages.¹² These elements of the prophecies mark them as explicitly female – to some, intrinsically female – and have been read, moreover, as pointing to a female, even a “proto-feminist,” agenda (Bradford 366). The failure of the romantic dream of the prophecies is thus ascribed in part, by the novel, to their gendered nature, to their female authorship and reproductive imagery.

Through NomaRussia, the novel offers anxious commentary on female assumptions to authorial power, and women’s entry into the public sphere. NomaRussia, who first introduces the subject of Nongqawuse into the narrative, when she tells Camagu she hails from Qholorha-by-Sea, represents Nongqawuse’s legacy as, in the later words of Xoliswa Ximiya, a “shameful past” (99). When she reappears late in the narrative, NomaRussia’s “eyes are downcast and speak only of shame” (289).

NomaRussia’s story is also used to deflect what Bradford identifies as Nongqawuse’s most “original contribution” in an era of prophecy (363). A substantial portion of Nongqawuse’s prophecy concerns the sexual indiscretions of promiscuous men. This aspect of her prophecy, along with the authority her utterances achieved, distinguishes Nongqawuse from a legion of prophets. Yet it has been largely ignored in historiography, and is displaced in the novel. The Heart of Redness shifts the emphasis from containing promiscuous men to punishing promiscuous women. The cause of

¹² This phrase was used in the version of Bradford’s paper presented in the Africa Seminar Series, Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town in 1995 (38n139).

NomaRussia's cancer, she insists, is witchcraft. Years before, she had an affair with Qukezwa's father, Zim. When she tried to secure his attentions by having an *iqhirha* cast a spell on Zim's wife, the *iqhirha*, who was himself having an affair with Zim's wife, inflicts disease on NomaRussia instead.

NomaRussia's travails are traced back to women's sexual incontinence, which is in turn symbolically linked to the devastation following the prophecies that stem from women's verbal incontinence. Her leaky body thus suggests a conception of female authorship as disruptive, its meaning unstable as it spills out uncontrollably, and its effects disastrous. In Renaissance English drama, Gail Kern Paster finds that "the female body's moisture, secretions, and productions" are marked as "shameful tokens of uncontrol" (52). Menstrual blood, in particular, serves as a sign "of woman's inability to control the workings of her own body" (83). In the African Renaissance represented in Mda's novel, a similar symbolic field holds sway: NomaRussia's inability to stop bleeding provides a visible reminder of women's incontinence.

Mda responds to Nongqawuse's verbal incontinence by asserting what Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar describe as "the patriarchal notion that the writer 'fathers' his text just as God fathered the world" (4). This can be compared to Dan Sleight's response to Krotoa-Eva's profane speech, discussed in the previous chapter, which sees the maternal function usurped by paternal figures. Speaking from outside the text, Mda describes writing as a process of being "in control" (qtd. in Robertson 2). When asked about his use of fictional devices associated with magical realism, he replies: "The world that I was writing about was the world that I created. [...] I am the God of that world, so I can make things happen the way I want them to happen" ("Interview" 250). Rather than enabling the "subaltern past" to disrupt meaning, magical realist devices allow this author to claim the function of creator and controller of meaning, and to exclude women from authorship. This gendered conception of authorship is first suggested in Ways of Dying.

In Ways of Dying, Noria's mother, That Mountain Woman, who offers a fundamental challenge to patriarchy, is killed off with cancer of the womb. Mda strikes at the centre of her matriarchal power and, thus disabling her, turns his attentions to the

reproductive body of her daughter.¹³ Noria bears what the Yoruba call an *abiku* child, “who masquerades as a human baby, only to recurrently ‘die’ and be ‘re-born’” (Cooper 50). Like Qukezwa’s womb, Noria’s is also the site of a miraculous conception. Discussing *abiku* children in West African fiction, Brenda Cooper finds that they represent the plight of a nation that refuses to be born, and that spirals through bloody cycles of violence. This is an image of birth that emphasises “circularity” and “repetition,” rather than change (Cooper 88). Thus, Noria’s reproductive body becomes a vessel for the author’s message about the nation: it is made to speak both the terrible cycle of violence gripping the transitional state, and messianic hopes for a redemptive future. Revealingly, the young Noria plays the part of muse to Toloki’s father.¹⁴ Her later shift from prostitution (suggesting incontinence) to asceticism (the “sealed fountain”) sees her resuming the role of muse, now to Toloki himself, whose artistic products inspired by Noria are declared “the work of a genius” (*Ways* 187). And genius, as Christine Battersby shows in *Gender and Genius*, is a conventionally male condition.

The troubling, leaky secretions of the reproductive body – symbolic of an uncontrolled and uncontrollable act of female authorship – are displaced onto the unfortunate NomaRussia and That Mountain Woman, both of whom are emblems of disease. Qukezwa’s virgin body, in contrast, avails itself to authorial penetration. The virgin female body, argues Susan Gubar, is a “blank page” on which male authors inscribe their messages: “[the] model of the pen-penis writing on the virgin page participates in a long tradition identifying the author as a male who is primary and the female as his passive creation” (295). Mda tellingly describes his acts of authorship as being “in the God business,” when he talks of the importance of commanding control over the texts he writes (“Interview” 250 and qtd. in Robertson 2). He thus casts himself in the mould of the storytelling Khoikhoi God, Tsiwqa (father of Heitsi Eibib), and we are left to ponder the implications of Qukezwa’s miraculous conception of the child Heitsi. Stratton notes numerous instances in African fiction in which female characters bear their male author’s

¹³ My reading of That Mountain Woman’s unfortunate fate developed out of a dialogue between myself and Nokuthula Mazibuko at the “Postcolonialism: South / Africa” conference (Durban, 5-7 July 2004), at which we presented papers on gender in *Ways of Dying* and *The Heart of Redness* respectively.

¹⁴ By inscribing woman as muse and bearer of his message, Mda misses an opportunity to allude to the renowned artist Noria Mabasa, who is more reminiscent of That (indomitable) Mountain Woman than of

interpretation of history like a baby in the womb (52). When Qukezwa bears Heitsi (named after Tsiqwa's mythical son), she bears Mda's message, transforming his words into flesh and bringing the text's desires to life. As Stratton states, in a different context: "He is the subject-artist, she is the aesthetic object, the repository of his meaning [...], her function is to embody his vision" (Stratton 52).

The Author-as-God fixes the meaning of an undecidable text. We are returned again to an androcentric historiography that attempts to manage the unruly words of a female prophet. Nongqawuse has been pathologised in oral and written historical traditions as sexually frustrated. Mda represents this position in his Unbelieving Twin-Twin, a largely unsympathetic character who says:

bring that foolish girl Nongqawuse to me so that I may sleep [with] her. I will give it to her so hard that she will stop spreading lies! She is telling all these lies, dreaming all these dreams, seeing all these imaginary visions, because she is starved of men! (99)

While explicitly critical of the position voiced by Twin-Twin, the novel, riven as it is with contradictory desires, finds itself reiterating this stance on another level: the Author-as-God silences Nongqawuse, or harnesses her voice to his purposes, when he transposes her verbal acts onto the reproductive ones of Qukezwa. Bradford exposes the historical tradition – both oral and written – as one characterised by men responding to Nongqawuse through "exercising sexual power," as Twin-Twin does in the above quote (Bradford 367n100). Mda metaphorically wields such power when he impregnates Qukezwa with his redemptive message.

As a young woman of marriageable age in a time of cattle dearth that threatened to deprive her of the authorising subject position of legitimate motherhood, Nongqawuse may have laid claim to the voice of the ancestors as a means to enter the public sphere to which she, as an unmarried woman, had no access. Qukezwa's relation to cattle, in contrast, is that of bride rather than prophet; like Trudie Bloem's Krotoa-Eva, she is

the character who bears her name in the novel. Mabasa's significance in South African culture is signalled, among other things, by the naming of a street in her honour in Johannesburg's new inner city precinct.

spoken for rather than speaker. Qukezwa welcomes the customary exchange of cattle that transfers her miraculous fertility from her father to Camagu. We are again reminded of the significance of the cattle killed in the prophetic movement: cattle are the currency through which women's reproductive potential is appropriated by the clan. Magona's Mother to Mother once more provides a useful intertext as the female writer, who draws on a similar symbolic and historical field to Mda, offers a very different response to the institution of customary marriage. Unlike Qukezwa, Magona's Mandisa deeply resents the exchange of cattle that bequeaths her fertility to the head patriarch and his ancestral line; she experiences this moment as the "death of the me that I was ... and the me I would have become" (2).

Bradford points also to Nongqawuse's injunctions against incest and extramarital sexual relations as intimations that Nongqawuse may have claimed the voice of male ancestors in order to counter her female vulnerability, and voice her female rage (363-64). Her insistence on the female signature of the prophecies offers a useful counterweight to Peires's and Mda's gender-blind readings, as, indeed, the comparison with Magona reveals. I, however, wish to chart a route between the two positions. If Mda marshals the "subaltern past" to express his meaning, so too does Bradford: the white feminist historian appropriates Nongqawuse as "proto-feminist" in a act of female recognition arguably similar to that observed in Bloem's recreation of the life of Krotoa-Eva in the previous chapter. I am reluctant to rely on woman's signature as transparent sign that renders invisible differences within the category 'women,' and am equally keen to unseat the authorial authority Mda asserts over the text of the novel, and over Nongqawuse herself. It may be more productive to situate Nongqawuse's utterances at the juncture of feminist and postmodernist practices. While foregoing the full presence of female speech, an anti-phallogocentric postmodernism may productively displace the authority and legitimacy of male authorship.

In a fascinating reading of Nongqawuse that predates Mda's novel, writer and critic Lewis Nkosi points to her assumption of ancestral voices as an instance in which, far from being disabling, speech-acts associated with the postmodern can have "subversive and discomposing effects not only on the hegemonic discourse of the imperial centre but also those created by traditions to underpin hierarchical structures of

age and patriarchy” (“Postmodernism” 89). He reads Nongqawuse’s authorship as decentred *through* men rather than inhering *in* men and points to her

‘narcissism,’ her specular self-identification when she peers into a pool of water and thinks she can hear voices of the ancestral spirits speaking to her. Was claiming to have seen visions and to have heard voices of the ancestral spirits not perhaps Nongqawuse’s attempt – not fully conscious to be sure – to clear space for herself in which as a woman, traditionally forbidden to participate in political discourse, she could then speak with some authority and be listened to? (“Postmodernism” 88)

The scene of Nongqawuse’s “specular self-identification” is of particular pertinence. Evocative of the Lacanian “mirror stage,” it suggests the imaginary process of identification by which the fragmented, or leaky, body is projected as unified subject (see Lacan 1-8). The imaginary unity of the ‘I’ – in this case the speaking subject – is achieved through an act of mis-recognition, a projection of the (lacking or leaky) ‘I’ onto the ancestors. As Nkosi concludes, “what passes for the ‘subject of discourse’ is speaking from many places at once” (“Postmodernism” 88). In this reading, Nongqawuse’s authorship is dispersed and decentred through ancestral voices, which reflect back to her an ideal image as authoritative author.

While The Heart of Redness retains Nongqawuse’s Pool as heritage site, the scenes in which she ‘hears voices’ are transferred to misty fields and choppy seas. Her “specular self-identification” is erased from the novel. Furthermore, by depicting Nongqawuse as little more than a mouthpiece for the ancestors or Mhlakaza, Mda avoids taking up Nkosi’s challenge to consider the implications of Nongqawuse’s ‘voice throwing’ regarding questions of authorship. Instead, he persistently shows her availing herself as a receptacle for other voices. The spectre of women as leaky vessels is dispelled, and they are posited, instead, as empty vessels: uncontaminated containers for the words of men.

Splitting off all anxiety with regard to the troubling legacies of the prophecies’ female authorship, and unrecoverable losses, the novel posits Qukezwa’s virginal and

maternal body as the site of the text's desire. She reveals the 'ideal' Nongqawuse of masculinist and nationalist fantasy: one who was no more than a mouthpiece for the patrilineal ancestors, one who wished for no more than to save the amaXhosa nation. Cast out is an image of Nongqawuse as a woman who entered the public sphere with her own gendered agenda. While the Nongqawuse of male nationalist fantasies transmits the male-authored message through her mouth, Qukezwa, her representative figure in Mda's present-day narrative, transmits it through her body.

Qukezwa's parthenogenesis thus sees Mda reasserting the author function that Nongqawuse both claimed and destabilised. The novel shows no interest in reading Nongqawuse as one engaged in granting authority to the female self through a cunning act of displacement. Rather than grappling with the implications of Nongqawuse's assumption of the ancestral voice – the most authoritative in the patriarchal and patrilineal hierarchy – Mda, curiously, reduces it to a weak analogy. Faced with the disturbing claim that Nongqawuse was “a little girl who craved attention,” and “concoct[ed] her own theology” (283), Camagu accounts for the prophecies as follows: “young girls are prone to seeing visions. [...] Who's always seeing visions of the Virgin Mary? Your girls. Our Lady of Fatima ... our lady of this and that ... all places where young virgins saw visions of the Virgin!” (283). Compared to a virgin seeing visions of the Virgin, Nongqawuse's authority is multiply mediated, and can be achieved only through woman's relation to the blessed son. Lost is her “specular self-identification” with authorising male ancestors. In her discussion of the male historiographic tradition, Bradford suggests that “gender imperialism” of this nature is a compensatory response to the “strength of Nongqawuse's challenge to patriarchal power” (366). Her observation applies equally to The Heart of Redness, in which the author-function reasserts an androcentric power that Nongqawuse challenged in her decentred acts of female authorship.

Conclusion

By splitting Nongqawuse's legacy, The Heart of Redness manages to dispel the uncomfortable fact of female authorship and the unrecuperable loss of a devastating

historical event. Women are cast as vessels for the messages of men. In The Heart of Redness, women speak loudest through their bodies, which stand in symbolic contradiction to the novel's efforts to inscribe time as entangled and heterogenous. Qukezwa's virgin body becomes the site of the text's desire as the splintered and non-linear time of the inconsolable is overwritten by the redemptive. Fractured time settles into Janus-faced national time: Qukezwa stands as a figure of heritage, the temporal index set up between her body and that of her son expresses the splitting off of the "non-modern" from the "modern." The packaging of the novel is instructive here. The first South African edition depicts an amaXhosa woman, cloaked in the 'traditional' red blanket, with a baby on her back. The "red" woman, with baby in tow, signifies on the pregnant promises of a recovered cultural identity and, with the Madonna as interchangeable signifier, its redemptive quality.

Qukezwa is simultaneously proposed as a domesticated Nongqawuse, her obedient womb replacing Nongqawuse's unruly voice. Thus does Mda assert the "theological" author-function as he fixes the unstable text of Nongqawuse's speech-acts, harnessing it to express his univocal message about the heritage and the national future. In the novel, the "heart of redness" beats within the breast, or womb, of a woman; the future and the pen are the preserve of men. As in Brink's fantastical narrative, magical realism in this novel does not serve women well. I have suggested that the interface between feminism and postmodernism might provide a more productive space for attempts to write women outside determining nationalist scripts. In the following chapter, I turn to Zoë Wicomb's David's Story, which is located at precisely this juncture.

CHAPTER THREE - SARAH BARTMANN: RE-CAST AND RE-COVERED IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

The story of Sarah Bartmann is the story of the African people of our country in all their echelons. --- Thabo Mbeki, "Internment of Sarah Bartmann" 3.

Sarah Bartmann is undoubtedly the most famous of the three historical women considered in this thesis.¹ Her body – already cast as ‘sexualised savage’ – was re-cast and re-covered, in service to the project of legitimating the ‘new’ South Africa, as it traversed a route from the imperial stage of the early nineteenth century to the nation-building theatre of transitional South Africa. This, then, is an exemplary case of the use of a woman’s body in both imperial and national projects. It permits us to trace disjunctures and continuities between the two, and to grapple with the question I raised in the previous chapter: what are the implications when decolonising, nation-building discourses depend on gendered representations previously employed to support the colonial endeavour?

The body of Bartmann bears a burden of representation far exceeding that placed on Krotoa-Eva and Nongqawuse. Indeed, few bodies have been exposed to the degree of scrutiny or overwritten with others’ desires to the extent that Bartmann’s has. Historical knowledge about her is, however, sketchy and easily slips into the realm of myth. It is this myth-making process during the years of South Africa’s transition that concerns me. The object of my study is not Bartmann herself but the discourses spun around her in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries as her land of origin refashions itself – around her body – into the ‘new’ South Africa.

Bartmann first enters recorded history in early 1810. At that time, she was living in a shack in Cape Town, employed by a Dutch farmer, Pieter Cezar, and about to depart for England with Cezar’s brother and a ship’s surgeon, Alexander Dunlop. Once in

¹ I use the name “Sarah Bartmann,” as institutionalised by the South African government in August 2002, but have maintained other naming practices (Saartjie, Sara, Saartje and Baartman) in quotations from other sources. In the sections on David’s Story in this and the following chapter, I use “Saartje Baartman” throughout for the sake of consistency and, in Chapter Six, I follow Njabulo S. Ndebele’s use of “Sara Baartman.”

London, she was displayed in Piccadilly as the “Hottentot Venus,” her steatopygous buttocks becoming the object of prurient fascination. According to a contemporary spectator, her act consisted of being “exhibited on a stage two feet high, along which she was led by her keeper, and exhibited like a wild beast; being obliged to walk, stand, or sit as he ordered her.” The same witness observed that she was often heard “to heave deep sighs in the course of the exhibition, and displayed great sullenness of temper” (qtd. in Kirby 53). Her exhibition sparked something of a controversy when the African Association took up her case, arguing that she was being exhibited in a state of slavery. Questioned under oath in Dutch, she apparently responded that she had come to England of her own free will, and shared in the income generated by her exhibition.² This mediated piece of evidence is the closest we come to hearing her actual ‘voice.’ A central feature of Bartmann’s textualisation and iconography is that she is always represented by others.³

The trial generated negative publicity; although the African Association lost its case, the Piccadilly exhibition closed soon after. In December 1811 Bartmann was baptised in Manchester and, three years later, was contracted to a Parisian showman and animal tamer, who paraded her as a partially clad exotic diversion at society balls. Already a spectacle, in Paris she became also a scientific artefact. Three of France’s leading scientific scholars – Étienne Saint-Hillaire, Henri de Blainville and Georges Cuvier – examined her body in 1815. Their attempts to inspect her pudendum and view what Carlus Linnaeus termed the *sinus pudonis* (‘curtain / veil of shame’), otherwise known as the “Hottentot Apron” (see Gould 23), were thwarted by Bartmann’s “modesty,” to use de Blainville’s term.⁴ They had to satisfy themselves with an examination of her buttocks. Bartmann died soon after of disputed causes (smallpox, alcohol poisoning or pleurisy according to contemporary accounts). Cuvier gained access

² See Z. S. Strother’s Appendix for transcripts from the court case; Yvette Abrahams (“Disempowered” 99-112) and Rosemary Wiss (16-19) offer useful commentary on the trial.

³ According to Anne Fausto-Sterling, “We never see her except through the eyes of the white men who describe her” (31). Wiss reports that the “only ‘voice’ [she has] been able to find for Saartjie Baartman has come through colonial narratives” (17).

⁴ According to de Blainville’s report of the examination, “She appears to have a sense of modesty or at least we had a difficult time convincing her to allow herself to be seen nude, and she scarcely wished to remove for even a moment the handkerchief with which she hid her organs of generation” (qtd. in Fausto-Sterling: 32). Cuvier complained: “she carefully hid her apron [*sic*] either between her thighs or more deeply” (qtd. in Fausto-Sterling 36).

to her previously hidden parts, which he dissected and preserved in formaldehyde after making a plaster cast of her body. His victory is represented in the cast itself, which sees her standing through the centuries with splayed legs. This conquest is evident, too, in his resultant report, which inscribed her as the iconic figure of African womanhood: as fundamentally primitive and lascivious (see Fausto-Sterling 35-38).

Sander L. Gilman claims that Bartmann's anatomy was displayed as self-evident proof of the deviance and pathology of black female sexuality (213, 216). Casting her body in plaster and dissecting her remains, nineteenth-century science denied Bartmann burial, and ensured that her demeaning display would continue for 187 years after her death. Casting her as icon of black female hypersexuality within the imperial theatre, scientific and popular discourses underwrote the imperial 'penetration' and plunder her body supposedly 'invited.'⁵ The colonial endeavour was imagined through racialised gendered binaries that were consolidated with reference to Bartmann's cast and Cuvier's inscription of her as 'sexualised savage.' As Yvette Abrahams argues, "The image of civilization that [colonial agents] were called upon to spread became increasingly symbolized by their 'fair countrywomen.' This image was created and disseminated in a dialogue with the image of the sexualised savage" ("Images" 227). The casting of Bartmann was central in the construction of a dichotomy that counterpoised a domesticated white female sexuality to a 'savage' black female sexuality.⁶ Bartmann's represented body thus became the site over which Europeans articulated their difference from Africans and justified their imperial excesses, the latter under the guise of the 'civilising' or 'domesticating' mission.

Bartmann's skeleton, bottled genitals and brain, and the plaster cast of her body, remained on display in the Musée de l'Homme until late in the twentieth century, after which they were transferred into the bowels of the museum. These bodily remains were repatriated to South Africa in May 2002, following extended negotiations between the South African government, the Griqua National Council, the Musée de l'Homme and the

⁵ Abrahams suggests that Bartmann's dismembered "body in the glass case epitomises the way white men were trying to see Khoisan women at this time, as unresisting objects open to exploitation" ("Great" 44-45).

⁶ See Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* for an exemplary instance of this dichotomy, which is revisited in Ndebele's *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* (discussed in Chapter Six).

French government. On the 9th of August they were interned in the Eastern Cape town of Hankey, on the banks of the Gamtoos River.

In the postcolonial era, imperial voices cease to have the last word. It is now Cuvier whose humanity is under question, while Bartmann has been reclaimed as national icon. Bartmann's case thus offers an instance in which woman's body becomes the magic writing pad on which nationalist and ethnic movements 'write back' to the imperial past. I suggest that this retort, while ostensibly clearing the page by overwriting the imperial past, remains haunted by the script of another time and place, which shines through and even dictates that of the national present.

My trope of casting refers both to the plaster cast in which Bartmann's body was fixed and, more obliquely, to Judith Butler's understanding of gendered and sexualised identity as performative practice, as developed in her books Gender Trouble and Bodies that Matter. The chapter traces states of continuity and discontinuity between the colonial and national theatres of imperial Europe and transitional South Africa in which Bartmann has been scripted. What roles have been set for her, and what has been produced in her performance of them? I consider three interrelated national projects articulated through Bartmann's re-casting in post-apartheid South Africa. The first is that of *recovering* her remains from the Musée de l'Homme, and burying them in "warm, embracing African soil" (Oppelt 3). The second concerns the *re-covering* of a body that has been gazed at for nearly two centuries. The third is the claim that the process of recovering and re-covering Bartmann's violated body with national soil will contribute to national *recovery*.

I begin with an analysis of the rhetoric of national and ethnic groups during Bartmann's repatriation and funeral. The primary texts drawn on here are speeches, reports and images from the national media, and the funeral itself, which was televised live by the national broadcaster. I then explore the unmasking of this rhetoric in Zoë Wicomb's David's Story. Published in 2000, David's Story predates the French agreement to return Bartmann's remains for burial, but is attentive to the growing national and Griqua demand for her repatriation and burial. This demand is met by Wicomb's critical retort as she presents more complex representations of women, and of nation.

Recovering Remains: Bringing Bartmann Back Home

the return of a lost body to its 'native soil' allegorizes nationalism's aspirations to the kind of absolute return by which a foundationalist identity is produced

--- David L. Eng and David Kazanjian, "Mourning Remains" 12.

Bartmann occupies a prominent place in the national imaginary during the transition. Two successive State Presidents – Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki – championed her return to South Africa. Her burial may have been the most significant state funeral of the transition years. The coffin housing her remains was draped in the national flag; miniature replicas distributed among the crowd were waved to the tune of the national anthem. Mbeki himself presided over the funeral and ended his oration by declaring Bartmann's final resting-place a national heritage site. The burial was a spectacle of nation building, which received widespread coverage in the national media. In the words of Mbeki, the funeral was an "important day and occasion in our national life" ("Internment" 4).

Bartmann's funeral was performed as an instance of national – decolonising – self-writing. As SABC2 presenter Redi Dineko proclaimed, "History is being made today as Sarah Bartmann is being laid to rest." The nation has seized the tools of representation in order to fulfil what David Scott refers to as the "task of decolonization," with its demand for "*self-representation*" (11; emphasis in orig.). This decolonising self-writing was exemplified in Mbeki's eulogy, a large part of which was dedicated to unveiling and countering the misrepresentation, or miscasting, of Africa in Europe's scientific, philosophical and literary traditions.

The redemptive trajectory of Bartmann's story stretches from her victimisation in imperial representations of her as savage and lascivious Other, to her 'rescue' by Diana Ferris's poem "I've come to take you home." Ferris's poem was credited with drawing French attention to Bartmann's plight and thus literarily bringing her 'home.' The poet establishes a strong identification with Bartmann, blurring the boundary between her own acute homesickness while studying abroad and that which she imagines Bartmann to have endured.⁷ The poem is thus staged as an instance of self-definition that counters the

⁷ Explaining how she came to write the poem, Ferris says: "the really big thing was how acutely homesick I was [...] My heart just went out to Sara, and I thought, 'Oh, God, she died of heartbreak, she longed for her

pervasive inscription of Bartmann through the voices and eyes of others. The 'self' it presents is one who desires to return 'home.' Longing for home was also projected as the cause of Bartmann's early demise by many speakers at the funeral and was the emotive point around which her repatriation was engineered.⁸

This emphasis on bringing Bartmann back *home* speaks to three central concerns. The first is the naturalisation of the nation as a domestic, familiar unit. The rhetoric of the nation as family legitimates gendered hierarchal structures and casts women as mothers, who reflect national unity. Secondly, the narrative of a return home shapes Bartmann's story in accordance with one of the defining narratives of the movement from apartheid to post-apartheid South Africa: exile and the return home. This is the redemptive story of the political elite, whose loss of home during the years of resistance was repaid with the political victory of 1994. Finally, for Khoisan leaders, Bartmann's return 'home' marks a return to 'lost' identities. 'Home' is here defined as a cultural tradition and primordial identity from which those with Khoisan origins have been 'exiled.' Bartmann, as new national Mother, restores primordial status to descendents of the Khoisan and, simultaneously, draws them into a unified national fold.

It may be more productive to read Bartmann's story through the lens of diaspora – or routes – rather than in terms of belonging – or roots. Such narratives do not depend on her casting as Mother. I locate her story in the African slave diaspora. This reading foregrounds the political economy in which black bodies, and specifically black female bodies, were produced, and thus turns from the essentialist discourses at work both in Bartmann's display as "sexualised savage" and in her restoration as Mother of a multi-ethnic nation. Shifting from the redemptive national narrative, this reading also enables us to trace continuities in the exploitation and abuse of women's bodies, from the colonial past to the post-apartheid present. The following chapter argues that the slave past continues to shape the discourse and practice of rape in transitional South Africa and modulates understandings of home by pointing to the violent intimacies of the slave-

country [...].' That's why the first line of the poem was 'I've come to take you home'" (qtd. in Setshwaelo 3).

⁸ A brief survey of media headlines reveals the primacy placed on the 'return home.' Speaking at the funeral, Eastern Cape MEC Patrick Mckenzie surmised: "Saartjie on her dying bed all alone in a foreign country had one wish and that was to be buried one day in the country of her birth and that wish has today been granted" (Funeral Broadcast, SABC2, 9 Aug. 2002).

holding household. Ideologies of home are returned to again, and further complicated, in Chapter Six.

Bartmann's funeral celebrations were replete with references to her as "Mama" or "Ouma," and staged performances of 'indigenous tradition.' Both substitute the story of rupture that Bartmann's undoubtedly was with a comforting narrative of biological and cultural continuity, from primordial origins into the present. In such deployments of 'tradition,' David Scott notes in his reading of Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic*, "slavery – that irreducible link to modernity – gets elided or erased and in its place is invoked an old and anterior black civilization" (120). The historical routes and multiple roots constituting identities fixed as "coloured" in apartheid nomenclature are denied in claims of 'pure,' aboriginal status through identification with Bartmann. Those who privilege only Khoisan origins repress the entanglement of these with slave ancestors and, inevitably, slave owners.⁹

While I part way with Abrahams in her own assertion of such continuities,¹⁰ I take from her the useful point that Bartmann's experience should be placed within the economy of slavery dominant at the time that she lived in the Cape ("Images" 223; "Disempowered" 89-99; see also Erasmus "Some" 188). Slavery shaped the ways in which bodies such as Bartmann's were viewed. As Abrahams notes, following Hortense Spillers, "there is a causal connection between slavery and the creation of racially based sexual metaphors" ("Disempowered" 113). The performance of 'savage sexuality' enacted by Bartmann and the discursive construction of "racialised sexualities" – described by Abdul R. JanMohamed as "the point where the deployment of sexuality intersects with the deployment of race" (112) – follows upon the commodification of her body within an objectifying slave economy. Gilman's study of the "Hottentot" as icon has not taken this into account and it is crucial if we are to break the 'self-evident' status of bodily 'difference' and embed our discussions of discursive constructions and

⁹ The language of this sentence is largely borrowed from Zimitri Erasmus's insightful discussion of 'coloured identity' ("Some" 197-200).

¹⁰ See, for instance, her references to Bartmann as "auntie Sara" ("Ambiguity" 12) and "Auntie Sarah" ("Colonialism" 13-24). See Erasmus for a useful critique of Abrahams's position that is equally attentive to the "violence of whiteness" ("Some" 187-89).

performative castings in the social relations spawned out of a distinct political economy.¹¹

Rather than providing an occasion to engage with the historical routes of slavery, Bartmann has been fashioned as a “symbol to unite all South Africans” (Mansell Upham, qtd. in Horler 13) and, simultaneously, mobilised to provide “new impetus to the struggle of the Khoisan population in South Africa” (Willa Boesak, qtd. in “Welcome Home” 1). Tensions between the rights-based civic nationalism enshrined in the new Constitution and the ethnic interests of Khoisan groups had been brewing since Bartmann first became an item on the national agenda in 1995. The interests of both constituencies – at times overlapping, at times conflicting – were addressed in the single event of Bartmann’s repatriation and burial.

These tensions were managed in the staging of the funeral as a multicultural, ‘rainbow’ event, which presented Khoisan groups as cultural rather than political entities, and cast Bartmann as unifying mother. Spectators were invited on a tour through the cultural ethnoscape of the Eastern Cape as troops – largely comprised of women – took to the stage to perform a range of identities. In the display, cultures were constructed as timeless, fixed and discrete, rather than dynamic and interacting.¹² “Multiculturalism,” suggests Barnor Hesse, “is the return of the national repressed” (384). Displayed in this particular “return” is the extent to which the ‘rainbow’ nation has absorbed and reproduced the categories of the colonial and apartheid past. Inscribing ethnicity as the realm of discrete, untrammelled identities, the funeral split asunder the mutually-informing categories of ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’: political leadership was imbued with

¹¹ See Zine Magubane, who makes a similar case against Gilman and studies influenced by him. Magubane argues that most post-structuralist readings of Baartmann undertaken in the Gilman-mode “valorize the very ground of biological essentialism they purport to deconstruct.” Following “Gilman’s theoretical lead,” these studies have “focused obsessively on Baartmann’s body and its difference” rather than asking “what social relations determined which people counted as Black, and for which people did Blacks become icons of sexual difference and why?” (817). She proceeds to point out that, “Despite that popularity of contemporary claims that Baartman was seen ‘only in terms of her buttocks’ (Wiss 1994, 31), a substantial portion of the British public actually saw her as representing much more. When many people looked at Baartmann, they saw not only racial and sexual alterity but also a personification of current debates about the right to liberty versus the right to property” (827). In other words, her performance as ‘sexualised savage’ was seen as an arena in which to stage debates about slavery and abolition, private property and waged labour.

¹² See Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis on “multiculturalism” as assuming “definite, static, ahistorical and essentialist units of ‘culture’ with fixed boundaries and with no space for growth or change” (*Racialized* 38).

modern citizenship while cultural leadership was invested with tradition. The project of remaking the nation as home, which was enacted around Bartmann's body, is one that cannot acknowledge such continuities and complicities between the colonial past and the national present. Njabulo S. Ndebele's novel, The Cry of Winnie Mandela, discussed in Chapter Six, returns to trouble such constructions of nation and home, and he does so in part through a visual reference to Bartmann.

During the repatriation and burial of her remains, Bartmann's legacy came to articulate the bifurcated claims of citizens' rights and ethnic culture.¹³ A banner of her image emblazoned with the legend "Restore her human rights, respect her dignity" was displayed at the funeral. It performed a different task when it appeared four days earlier in the Cape Times. There, self-fashioned Hancumqua chief and Chairperson of the National Khoisan Council, Joseph Little, reclines beneath the larger-than-life effigy, which hovers over him ancestral-like, and clasps a smaller version to his chest (Ntabazalila and Damon 5). Attired in 'traditional' gear, Little conveys the point that by claiming Bartmann as ancestor he is able to throw off the label of "coloured" and cloak himself, instead, in his Khoisan heritage.

The claiming of 'pure' Khoisan identities, facilitated by identification with Bartmann, is undertaken, in part, to counter stereotypical constructions of colouredness: "Black people have no respect for us because we have no ancestral roots" (Little qtd. in G. Davis 2).¹⁴ Enacted around Bartmann's return and burial is a shift away from an identity variously understood as biologically or culturally creole, towards one that asserts its aboriginal, autochthonous and 'pure' status. Lost in this refashioning of identity is an appreciation of the effect of historical ruptures, not least those of slavery, on the constitution of South Africa and South African identities. Slave routes complicate efforts to recuperate Baartmann as the root of present-day Khoisan identities, or the originary mother/mirror in whose reconstituted unity – or re-memberment – the nation finds reflected its own "imaginary" wholeness.

¹³ This bifurcated state is inherited from colonial and apartheid administration, as Mahmood Mamdani has shown in Citizen and Subject (16-18).

¹⁴ See also the statement by Jean Burgess (named "chiefness" of the Gonaqua tribe by Little): "I was part of the Black Consciousness Movement and always saw myself as black," but while celebrating Heritage Day, "a Xhosa man asked me, in front of all the people in the hall, where my culture and heritage was ... It

The decision to move the site of Bartmann's funeral from Cape Town to the Eastern Cape displaced her story from the cusp of the Atlantic rim – the furthest reach of the “black Atlantic” (Gilroy) or “circum-Atlantic” (Roach) – to the heartland of the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid resistance movement. The advertisement circulating in London during Bartmann's exhibition claimed that she hailed from “the banks of the River Gamtoos, on the borders of Kaffraria” (qtd. in Lindfors 169). Inattentive to the performative aspects of the advertisement and its production of a liminal subject – on the banks, on the borders – in the colonial contact zone, the majority of government and Khoisan spokespersons have accepted this as compelling-enough evidence on which to base their claim that Bartmann was born along the Gamtoos River. Mired in foundationalist thought, they identified the Gamtoos Valley as the most fitting site for her burial. Less than two weeks before her burial, official sources admitted that her natal site could not be conclusively determined.¹⁵ By the time of her funeral, government and most Khoisan representatives rallied to declare that she had been born in the Gamtoos River Valley. Dissenting voices, such as those of the Korana First Nation of the Northern Cape, were drowned out by the hegemonic consensus, and the Gamtoos Valley was chosen over the initial proposition of the Dutch East India Company Gardens in Cape Town.

The Cape Town Gardens fed passing ships during the age of high imperialism and were the *raison d'être* for the early Dutch settlement that led to the colonisation of what is now South Africa; the Gamtoos, as we were informed during the funeral, is fondly referred to as “the pantry of the Eastern Cape” and is a Khoisan word meaning “place of fertile earth.” This fertile valley thus mirrors Bartmann's new iconography as Mother Africa, providing sustenance to the nation rather than opening it up to colonial penetration. While the Company Gardens are emblematic of the shameful penetration of which Bartmann's violated, displayed and unburied body is equally a symbol, the fertile Gamtoos River Valley, located in the heartland of anti-colonial resistance and the

made me feel like nothing. I couldn't answer him.” Burgess has since taken up a “spiritual responsibility to make coloured people see they aren't just a mixture of black and white” (qtd. in G. Davis 3).

¹⁵ On the 24th July 2002, Andile Xaba, spokesperson for the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, admitted that “no one knew exactly where Saartje was born” (Government Communication and Information System 1). Griqua spokesperson Roderick Williams had earlier stated that the Dutch East India Company Gardens in Cape Town would be the most appropriate resting place for her remains: “We are absolutely sure that contrary to the belief (that she was born in the Gamtoos River Valley in the Eastern Cape), she lived on the Cape Flats” (qtd. in Oliver 2).

stronghold of the African National Congress (ANC), suggests instead the landscape of the nation redeemed and recovered, which is in turn figured in the internment of Bartmann in national soil.

Bartmann's 'return' to South African soil is not only an act of bringing her home, but also one in which both the nation-state and primordial identities are produced as 'home.' Both perform acts of amnesia whereby the history of slavery and of unrecuperable loss is 'forgotten' or cast out. Such forgettings and repressions are produced in the re-memberment of Bartmann as a maternal figure, who, dispelling the ghosts of a restless past, will render the national or ethnic 'home' homely, by taking her place in a teleological narrative of redemptive closure. In the process, she is presented as domestic subject rather than 'sexualised savage.'

Re-covering the body: decency and domesticity

Gould describes the 'Hottentot Apron' or 'sinus pudonis' – translated from Latin as the 'curtain of shame' – as a 'veil covering the private parts' [...]. These associations of aprons, veils, curtains and privacy encoded female Hottentot bodies with combinations of shame and domesticity. In a biblical analogy, the original woman (this time the Hottentot as lascivious Eve), is required to cover her shame and condemned to a world of domestic labour.

--- Rosemary Wiss, "Lipreading" 31.

Cuvier identified the cause of Bartmann's death as smallpox aggravated by alcohol poisoning. South African media and government spokespersons during the transition have almost consistently claimed that she died of syphilis contracted through sex-work, in the face of strong historical evidence to the contrary.¹⁶ De Blainville, for instance, complained after his thwarted attempt to examine her genitals that, "although she loved money, she refused what he offered her in an effort to make her more docile" (qtd. in Fausto-Sterling 32). What is at stake in the ahistorical remembrance of Bartmann as prostitute, which renders literal the iconographic link between nineteenth-century

¹⁶ The examples are numerous. I will cite a few representative cases: "Baartman was forced into prostitution to survive. She died at 25, an alcoholic and possibly suffering from syphilis and tuberculosis" (Setshwaelo 2); "She died in 1816, a pauper and a prostitute" (Jeter 3); she "died an impoverished prostitute" ("Hottentot Venus" 1); and "Baartman drifted into prostitution and died in poverty" ("Dignity" 1).

representations of “the Hottentot” and “the prostitute” observed by Gilman (see 206)? The metaphor of prostitution is an evocative symbol of the shame of colonial ‘penetration.’ The ritualistic covering of Bartmann’s ‘body’ re-figures her from icon of national degradation to Mother of the Nation, symbol of the nation redeemed, and of national wholeness. The trajectory of Bartmann’s story – from ‘prostitute’ to ‘mother’ – is cast in the mould of the redemptive national narrative discussed in the previous chapter.

This trajectory is dramatised in the award-winning documentary, The Life and Times of Sara Baartman, directed by Zola Maseko. The Life and Times was released four years before Bartmann’s remains were returned to South Africa and locates itself firmly within the repatriation movement. The film opens in the Musée de l’Homme, with the camera panning over the expressionless plaster cast. In the penultimate scene, the camera again comes to rest on the cast, which is now located in a passageway, cloaked in a sheet, and facing the light at the end of the passage. The closing scene sees it being packed into a box, while the voice-over speaks of attempts to return Bartmann’s remains to South Africa. As this sequence indicates, Bartmann’s return is imagined as fundamentally linked to the movement through the transitional space of the South African interregnum into the light of the ‘new’ South Africa. The crucial signifier of the changed status of both nation and Bartmann-as-its-icon is the act of covering her ‘body.’

Revealing the remarkable prescience of Maseko’s documentary, the South African delegation sent to collect Bartmann’s remains from Paris “quickly” covered her cast with a “leopard skin sarong” (Crook 1). Here decency is still articulated within an indigenous field of signs: the “leopard skin sarong.” However, the white sheet of Maseko’s film remains a dominant motif, and one that inflects decency with the domesticity into which colonial agents attempted to mould African women, and which was defined precisely through its difference from the ‘sexualised savagery’ Bartmann was called on to represent. The sheet speaks both of covering the body and of homemaking, while its whiteness plays on tropes of innocence and purity. At no point was it used to reflect on the encasing of Bartmann’s body within the psychic and physical racial violence exerted by whiteness during the colonial encounter.

“Domestic,” as Karen Hansen reminds us, means being “of the home, household, or family”; to “domesticate” is to “civilize (savages)” (1). Within this cluster of semantics, women are associated with both the familial home and the rhetoric with which imperialism justified itself. The two are indelibly linked. Jacklyn Cock finds that colonial mission institutions linked “an ideology of domesticity that was rooted in European gender roles to an ideology of domestication generated by the problems of controlling a colonised people” (“Domestic” 85). And, as Elizabeth Elbourne notes, “ideas about domesticity and respectability were frequently used as weapons in the colonial power struggles between and among Europeans and Africans” (“Domesticity” 27). As a consequence, “Those whose political rights were tied to their domesticity [...] often tried in return to assert their own respectability” as, “without domesticity, they did not have rights” (“Domesticity” 27, 51). Rather than rejecting the terms of struggle established by the colonial encounter, the rhetoric of Bartmann’s return suggests that rights continue to be marshalled around claims of respectability and decency (and, by extension, domesticity). These are the key words around which the return and burial of Bartmann’s remains have been enacted, and the gendered implications are striking.

A media image circulated during the funeral coverage was particularly illustrative of the extent to which dignity – a central right in the new Constitution – is framed in terms of domesticity. Published in the Sunday Independent alongside an article headlined “Burial finally restores dignity of exiled Sarah” (Jeter 3), it featured two women, of pale complexion, clad in white dresses replete with little white *doekies* and pearl necklaces. Incredibly, the photograph was captioned “Khoisan women [...] in traditional dress.” Their “traditional dress” is reminiscent of the Victorian attire imported to South Africa to aid in the colonial missionary endeavour of remaking ‘savage’ subjects as decorous ‘domestic’ ones. According to J. L. Comaroff, the “civilizing mission was intended to effect a ‘revolution in the habits’ of Africans” by, among other strategies, “clothing them ‘properly,’ so that their bodies would be covered and enclosed” (116).

The rhetoric of Bartmann’s burial thus reveals the extent to which decolonising nationalism is indeed a “derivative discourse,” as the subtitle of Partha Chatterjee’s study, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, claims. Post-colonial nationalism reiterates the colonial demand for unified, “enclosed” and covered bodies to reflect the unified

subject of nation; it thus reiterates colonialism's shameful and shame-filled responses to the un-covered female body. Rather than deconstructing the binaries of "racialised sexuality" through which Bartmann's body was read and produced in the imperial theatre, national discourses have merely rewritten her as domestic and maternal. The binary remains in place; its terms have simply been reversed. 'Writing back' to empire, the nation finds itself entrapped within the discourses to which it responds, as the desire for national unity and authenticity is expressed through the figure of the domesticated Mother. The point is not to deny the violence entailed in metropolitan fetishisation of the naked body; rather, I am concerned with noting how the fervent act of covering the body both replicates other acts of violence – those of the missionary endeavour – and covers over continuities between past and present violations of female bodies.

Bartmann's burial is an analogous cultural site to another significant transitional event: Pippa Skotnes's controversial exhibition, Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture (1996). My governing trope of re-casting evokes this exhibition, which, according to Carmel Schrire, "takes its title from the proposition that the Khoisan folk have long been misrepresented, or miscast, as timeless people in an unchanging landscape" ("Miscast" 13). Telling the story of rupture, rather than the myth of biological and cultural continuity, the exhibition caused a furore among Khoisan activists.

The most urgently articulated critiques point to the exhibition's lack of "decency." Abrahams says of the displayed casts that "those highlighted genitals got on our nerves" ("Miscast" 15). The "Brown" response to the exhibition leads her to conclude that what "united us from the most rural dweller of the northern Kalahari to the most urbanised middle class [...] was our sense of decency" ("Miscast" 15). Both the displayed casts and the living 'displays' of Khoisan visitors who arrived in 'traditional' states of (un)dress offended this "sense of decency," which seems to owe much to the colonial missionary endeavour. The insistence by Mario Mahongo (a Dutch Reformed Minister and representative of the !Xu of Schmidtsdrift) that the Kagga Kamma delegation "ought to have dressed in western clothing" may be read, Steven Robins suggests, as "a desire to cover bodies, for reasons similar to those missionaries in Africa who sought to transform the naked heathen body through the civilizing cover of clothing" (135).

Schrire's far more positive encounter with the naked bodies exhibited in *Miscast* stems from her recognition of agency in a scene where Abrahams finds only a denial of "African empowerment and agency" ("Miscast" 15). In contrast to Abrahams, Schrire hopes that the exhibition will force viewers "to conclude that there is nothing inherently indecent" in the display of naked bodies ("Miscast" 14). Her essay in the companion book publication is attentive to the performative aspect of Bartmann's casting as "sexualised savage" – "this was all part of her show" ("Native" 348), she asserts – and even reads agency back into the display of Bartmann's genitals: "Showing their genitals was the rudest insult the natives knew" ("Native" 351). In various parts of Africa, baring their genitals has long been a political act performed by women.¹⁷ The demand for decency thus threatens to cover-over and cast out what may be interpreted as unseemly displays of female militancy. We may tentatively conclude, then, that what is concealed beneath the re-recovery of Bartmann as domestic maternal symbol are her performative acts of agency. However, this should not blind us to the extent to which such performances are, as Butler suggests, acts that take place within the confines of subjection and subjugation.

National Recovery: Wounded Subjects and National Healing

[Bartmann's] burial will be part of a healing process for all, and should encourage us to recommit ourselves to working towards reconciliation, national unity and togetherness as a nation. --- Jacob Zuma, qtd. in "Baartman Burial Heals Legacy of Inhumanity" 8.

Healing, recovery and national wholeness were the eagerly sought results of Bartmann's return. A press release issued by Minister Ben Ngubane on efforts to retrieve Bartmann's remains asserts that "the process of healing and restoring our national dignity and humanity [...] would not be complete while Saartjie Baartman's remains were still kept in a museum" ("Discussions" 1). Rhetorically figured as a metaphor of the country's fate

¹⁷ Shirley Ardener claims that the "deliberate exhibition of the private parts" by African women has functioned as a militant insult directed at offending men and has been used or evoked in colonial and post-colonial contexts of struggle (41).

under colonialism, Bartmann is not only drawn from that sad past, she *is* the country: she is Mother Africa, once defiled by colonialism, now cleansed and restored. Her internment in national soil renders the nation whole. As Nomathamsanqa Tisani, member of the ministerial committee for history, writes:

Her return heals us, her children, who have been spiritually deprived of an ancestor. She symbolises all the women who were wrenched from their families and could never provide the warmth and comfort mothers give. We are at peace as she comes home to live, forever, in the embrace of Mother Africa, with the Gamtoos singing her to sleep. (17)

Bartmann's funeral, which – like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) – returns to a traumatic past in search of present healing, was a ritual event through which the transitional narrative of national redemption was performed. This ritual gave birth to a nation as it buried Bartmann. Her burial is symbolic of South Africa's political transition as, in the words SABC2 presenter, Vuyo Mbuli, it marks "the beginning of an end and an end of a beginning" (Funeral Broadcast, 9 August 2002). As in the political funerals of the struggle years and the testimonies of loss recounted in the TRC, Bartmann's funeral was an instance in which individual suffering was appropriated by the collective to express a redemptive national narrative.

Critiquing a discourse of the subject that draws an analogy between individual and social suffering, David Lloyd considers "the implications of the injunction to mourn as a means to decolonization" when "the overcoming of loss is achieved by the direction of the subject towards identification with the state [...] as the representation of a restored wholeness and harmony" ("Colonial" 218). He suggests that the "function of a public period of commemoration becomes that of letting the dead slip away without the trace of a wake behind them," as the emphasis falls less on loss per se than on "mourning as socially healing for the present" ("Colonial" 221). Lloyd finds a paradoxical ethical failure at work in national mourning rituals: "If we allow commemoration of the dead to become a means to enter more lightly into the new world order," we may be "reproducing the attitudes of colonialism that destroyed them" ("Colonial" 222). Calling for "a non-therapeutic relation to the past, structured around the notion of survival or living on rather

than recovery,” Lloyd proposes “a chronic narrative rather than one of crisis and recovery” in the writing of decolonisation (“Colonial” 219-20, 226).

The narrative trajectory of “colonial trauma” to “postcolonial recovery” depends on a notion of closure, and culminates in efforts to lay the past to rest. National rhetoric insists that Bartmann’s homecoming brings to an end the ordeal of sexual exploitation and abuse she experienced during, and after, her life. However, these professions of closure in a time and place where (often sexual) violence against women is on the upsurge are projections in the past tense that dangerously deflect women’s lived experiences in the transitional present.

The official memorialisation of Bartmann fails to grapple with the violence encountered by women in this present, which forms the focus of the following chapter. Moreover, by spinning a narrative of the female victim ‘saved’ by (male) political leaders, it elides women’s agency and resistance during the years of colonial oppression and anti-colonial struggle. This forecloses ways of imagining women in the nation beyond the binaries of ‘sexualised savage’ and ‘domestic mother.’ Instead, it calls on us to imagine Bartmann as, in the words of Ngubane, a “tragic victim” (“Efforts” 1), rescued and recovered by the nation, which in the process recovers from its own traumatic past.

Cast in this role, Bartmann exemplifies what Mbembe calls the “cult of victimisation” in decolonising discourses that mobilise “the figure of the African as victimized and wounded subject” (“African” 244, 251). The wound inflicted on Africa during its encounter with the West is conceived as one “that cannot heal until the ex-colonized rediscover their own being and their own past” (Mbembe, “Power” 635). Thus the “cult of victimization” works hand in hand with “the assertion of the African’s cultural uniqueness. Both require a profound investment in the idea of race and a radicalization of difference itself” (“African” 251). This is what I have noted, following Hesse, as the “return of the repressed” enacted in the funeral rites, in which we find both an ascendance of ethnic identification and the fashioning of national subjectivity.

National independence is conceptualised as healing and recovering the body / land raped and violated (or forced to prostitute itself) under colonialism. In the process, Bartmann is reinscribed as the fecund and bountiful Mother, symbol of wholeness and unity, nurture and sustenance, whose re-membered body reflects both the rich land of the

Gamtoos River Valley and the unified national body. It is precisely this nation-building rhetoric and its appropriation of a woman's body that Wicomb's David's Story contests.

Protean Bodies, Unstable Texts: Zoë Wicomb's *David's Story*

One cannot write nowadays, he said, without a little monograph on Baartman; it would be like excluding history itself. And perhaps he is right, although I do believe it a pity always to be gazing into a dim and hallowed past as they do in the Old World

--- Zoë Wicomb, David's Story 1.

On display, the Hottentot Venus may well on a good sunny day have snarled or giggled at her plane-backed viewers. It was the shame in print, in perpetuity, the thought of the reader turning to that page, that refreshed David's outrage.

--- Zoë Wicomb, David's Story 33.

David's Story is set in the transitional moment of 1991: "the edge of a new era" (184). Political prisoners have been released and liberation movements unbanned; F. W. de Klerk has coined the phrase the "new South Africa" to describe the emergent political entity. But the future is uncertain and mutual suspicions pervasive. The atmosphere of distrust and dissemblance is conveyed in David's occupation: he is tasked with ostensibly dismantling the ANC's armed wing while effectively retaining it. At the same time, for reasons not clear even to himself, David embarks on a quest for a Griqua past. This sees him undertaking research on the historical figure of A. A. S. Le Fleur (from whom he may / may not be descended) and attempting to root his story in the foundational female figures of Krotoa-Eva and Saartje Baartman through whom Khoisan nationalists now trace "biological and cultural continuity" to a pre-colonial Khoisan past (Robins 131).

Wicomb first raises the spectre of Baartman in an earlier essay, "Shame and Identity: The Case of the Coloured in South Africa" (1998), in which she adopts Baartman as icon

because of the nasty, unspoken question of concupiscence that haunts coloured identity, the issue of nation-building implicit in the matter of her

return, her contested ethnicity (Black, Khoi or 'coloured'?) and the vexed question of representation. (93)

These questions surrounding representation, nation-building, ethnic identification and shameful silences are all central to David's Story.

The novel's metafictional commentary and formal properties counter the foundational politics to which Robins refers. Dispensing with an understanding of identity rooted in 'blood' and origin, the opening pages – the 'narrator's preface' – complicate notions of narrative beginnings and authenticity, as we are alerted to the unreliability of both the storyteller and his scribe. We are informed at the outset that David's story has been mediated through a narrator who admits to errors in David's material, to David's refusal/unwillingness to "disclose all" (2), and that she "took liberties and revised considerably" (3). David's story is completed, we learn at the end, after David's demise.

The narrative proper continues to satirise the fixation on roots and the (re)invention of tradition that so exasperate Sally, David's wife, when she declares that the "nonsense about roots and ancestors" is no more than "fashionable rubbish" (27). The opening scene finds Ouma Sarie, Sally's mother, setting off to inspect the revamped foyer of the hotel where she used to work. She is put out to find that rather than being modernised it has been re-traditionalised. Sarie notes the impracticalities of such nostalgic returns: "what a business it would be keeping that clean [...] just thinking of it made her tired" (6). The musty cobwebs of the past exhaust her; like the narrator when speaking on the subject of Baartman's presence in the present, Sarie also clearly finds "it a pity always to be gazing into a dim and hallowed past" (1).

While making Sarie the vehicle of its irony, the text simultaneously satirises her assumption that the debris of a dusty history can be efficiently swept away. Sarie expresses a utopian belief in fresh, clean starts: "the Boers have all these years kept Mandela clean and fresh on the island so that when everything had gone stinking rotten, there was someone clean and ready to take things in hand. Yes, everything is going to be just so nice-nice" (8). But her hopes are belied by the narrative, which reveals the extent to which the abuses and betrayals of the past have seeped into the new era (see

Samuelson, "Cracked" 72). Thus does David's Story mock Janus-faced nationalism's nostalgic repasts and discontinuous futures.

The novel's destabilisation of origins speaks to the two interrelated concerns of this thesis: nationalism and gender. The Griqua nationalist, Oom Paulse, is dependent on myths of origin around which to spin his narrative of national destiny:

He started, as usual, at the beginning, where any Griqua would start. There was no other place from which to speak, he said, than from the beginning, when God spoke to His servant, Chief le Fleur, and showed him the lost mules so that the people could be led out of the wilderness and turned into the proud Griquas they were today. (130).

This is, indeed, where a recent history of the Le Fleur family begins. Apparently immune to Wicomb's irony, it does so by quoting her version of Le Fleur's vision (see Bredekamp 133).

Literalising the metaphoric language of nationalism, the narrator of David's Story notes how such myths of origin harness women's reproductive bodies to their cause and, in a self-conscious commentary, rejects narrative beginnings:

This is no place to start. But let us not claim a beginning for this mixed-up tale. Beginnings are too redolent of origins, of the sweaty and negligible act of physical union which will not be tolerated on these pages and which we all know comes to nought but for an alien, unwilling little thing propelled damp and screaming into this world to be bound in madam's old, yet still good, terry cloths.

Saartjie arrived like any other baby born in the airless rhomboid of a coloured house. (8-9).

"Saartjie" is the character that will later take the name "Sally." She, however, has not yet been introduced into the text, so that for a tantalising few moments we are

encouraged to read this as a reference to Baartman – as an ordinary baby rather than foundational subject.

David is “adamant about including a piece on Saartje Baartman” in his story (1). The narrator of David’s story proves “untrustworthy indeed” (Driver, Afterword 230),¹⁸ for the piece on Baartman is not, after all, included in the book that bears the title David’s Story. The body and name of Baartman, however, are reproduced in dizzying proportions across the pages of the novel. Her steatopygia (or “spectacular buttocks” [135]) attaches itself to all the female characters, including the narrator, while her name echoes across the text: “Sarie” and “Sally” are both, like “Saartjie,” diminutive forms of “Sarah” (see Driver, Afterword 263n38). As we will see, Baartman is linked also to the elusive character of Dulcie, an uMkhonto we Sizwe commander subject to unspeakable and ambiguous violence, and who enters the plot as object of David’s unconsummated desire.

As a highly self-reflexive text, David’s Story is keenly aware of the powers and dangers of representation, and of what is risked in writing about women like Baartman and Dulcie. The novel partially negotiates this minefield by shifting its focus from the representation of bodies to the ‘body’ of representation itself, from Dulcie’s flesh, “Marinated in pain” (180), to the act of “flesh[ing] out the narrative” (1). In my second epigraph, it suggests that the living Baartman may have introduced a range of improvisations into her performance as steatopygous “sexualised savage,” but the Baartman passed down to us in representation is a woman violated “in print.” Juxtaposed with the description of Baartman fixed “in print” (33) is that of Dulcie as unstable text, “a protean subject that slithers *hither and thither*, out of reach, repeating, replacing, transforming itself ...” (35; emphasis added). A few lines earlier, as David battles to name the subject of his narrative, the narrator notes how, like the story they construct,

[they] skirt about a subject that slithers out of reach, and I am reminded of the new screen saver on my computer that tosses the text *hither and thither*, prettily rearranging and replacing, until the letters, transformed,

¹⁸ I am broadly indebted to Driver’s reading of David’s Story, having been her research assistant when she prepared her Afterword to the US edition of the novel.

slip into fluid, abstract shapes of mesmerising colour. (34-35; emphasis added)

Dulcie, then, is a figure for the slippery text itself; as Driver suggests, “Dulcie represents a kind of flux and flexibility that both represents the chaotic act of writing and charts the contradictions and difficulties of her representation” (Afterword 252). Dulcie is thus granted the restless subjectivity that, as suggested in Chapter One, is denied Krotoa-Eva in accounts that locate her as foundational figure, or ‘rainbow’ mother.

David’s preoccupation with Baartman is, in part, a displacement of other concerns. His attempts to write about her are described as “an exercise in avoidance” (33) and “a digression from the real subject of his narrative” (34). The “real subject” of his narrative is the unspeakable space inhabited by Dulcie; Dulcie and her story present a vortex into which the text is drawn, only to be buffeted “hither and thither.”

Earlier in this chapter I discussed Baartman’s appropriation in ethnic nationalist discourses that adopt her as ancestor in order to marshal an ethnic purity against the ‘shameful’ origins of colouredness. Baartman’s unburied, un-covered and gazed-upon steatopygous form symbolises the concupiscence that haunts coloured identity constructed as ‘mixed race.’¹⁹ Responding to the call by the Griqua National Council for the ‘decent’ burial of Baartman’s remains, Wicomb questions

whether her burial would also bury black woman as icon of concupiscence, which is to say bury the shame of having had our bodies stared at, but also the shame invested in those (females) who have mated with the colonizer. Miscegenation, the origins of which lie within a discourse of ‘race’, concupiscence, and degeneracy, continues to be bound up with shame, a pervasive shame exploited in apartheid’s strategy of the naming of a Coloured race, and recurring in the current attempts by coloureds to establish brownness as a pure category. (“Shame” 91-92)

¹⁹ See Gilman for a discussion of the links drawn between steatopygia and concupiscence in nineteenth-century European discourse (219).

Shame requires the subject's participation in the discourse of shame – their complicity, in other words. The recuperation of 'pure' identities (Griqua, Khoisan, etc.) through identification with Baartman and the attendant disavowal of slave ancestry, referred to earlier in this chapter, are shame-filled responses to apartheid's racial ideologies and policies.

Wicomb's engagement with shame and complicity is multilayered. It outlines coloured complicity with apartheid categories, Griqua complicity in naming themselves 'pure,' and the complicities of the anti-apartheid resistance movement itself. Pointing to torture in ANC camps and a general abuse of women within the movement, the novel reveals the contamination of the anti-apartheid struggle by the very structures against which it set itself. As Mark Sanders says, in a different though related context, "When opposition takes the form of demarcation *from* something, it cannot, it follows, be untouched by that to which it opposes itself. Opposition takes its first steps from a footing of complicity" (*Complicities* 9; emphasis in orig.).

The contamination of the liberation movement by that which it fought against is revealed in at least three respects: continuities in the uses and abuses of women's bodies, the liberation movement's adoption of the oppressor's methods of torture and intimidation and, in the early 1990s, subtle shifts within segments of the party regarding its avowed stance of non-racialism. According to Zimitri Erasmus, the transition years saw "an emerging africanist lobby [...] and the resultant marginalization of coloured-africans within the party" ("Some" 186). This may partially explain David's return to the Griqua past in search of a heritage of anti-colonial resistance that he could insert into the master narrative of the liberation struggle.

It is in this milieu, marked partially by liberation from and return to racialised discourse, that David gazes into the mirror and is shamed by his green eyes, which fray the seamless 'I' he has woven for himself as anti-apartheid guerrilla:

turning an eye inward he finds *a gash, a festering wound* [...], something that had stared him in the eye all his life: his very own eyes are a green of sorts – hazel, slate-quarry, parkside, foliage, soft fern, whatever the colour

chart may choose to call it, but greenish for God's sake – and that, to his surprise, he finds distasteful, if not horrible (12; emphasis added)

Remarkably, the “festering wound” David identifies on his body is not from the scars incurred in the ANC's Quatro Camp, which speak a legacy of mistrust, betrayal and torture within the movement, but his eyes.²⁰ Described as a “feminine” “gash” in his face, David's eyes suggest a ‘penetration’ of whiteness into his being (98, 12). On the one hand, this points to a legacy of ‘racial mixing.’ On the other hand, the novel suggests that David shares a gaze – and identifies – with Cuvier (see Driver, Afterword 231).

David's “meticulously researched monograph” on Baartman, though not included in David's Story, does receive an elliptical gloss. His story about Baartman focuses on “the treachery of white men,” yet it also notes Baartman's “foolish vanity,” or complicity, in her exhibition (134). And, the novel points to what David disavows, which is his own complicity with the manner in which Cuvier perceived women's bodies. As David's Story expresses it, his intention to revise Cuvier's shameful representation of Baartman fails in part because “he found his interest deflected from outrage on Baartman's behalf to fascination with Cuvier's mind” (33).

Two oddities in the plot – the loss of a century and a parthenogenic birth – hint at genealogical links between David, Le Fleur and Georges Cuvier. As Driver notes, this “allow[s] us to ask [...] what David inherits” (Afterword 227). The sign of his inheritance is his green eyes and the novel encourages us to wonder whether he shares with Cuvier a gaze that objectifies and fragments women's bodies, and with Le Fleur one that impregnates women's bodies with his meaning.

David's great-grandmother, Antjie, is selected by Le Fleur to be a “Rain Sister” on account of her “bountiful” behind, “shaped by God into perfect vessels for collecting and carrying back radical moisture from the rain-soaked Cape peninsula” (153). The “Rain Sisters” are Le Fleur's invented tradition, drawn from muddled memories of Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy. With her steatopygous form rendering her an appropriate vessel for Le Fleur's prophetic messages, Antjie, barren for many years,

²⁰ The first hint of David's torture immediately precedes this scene (see Driver for a discussion of the novel's allusions to Quatro Camp [Afterword 236-37]).

fulfils her “duty as a Rain Sister” (157) by conceiving Le Fleur’s child under the force of his emerald gaze:

Improbable as that was, she had known at once, and marvelled at the miracle of the eyes that had penetrated her body, lapped at every cell, probed every cavity [....]. And her womb having been filled in that fire, she felt at last at peace with God, who had taken charge and translated the locked gaze, the whispered syllables, this time into the substance of flesh. (156-57)

Wicomb thus alludes to the motif of virgin birth employed by writers such as Zakes Mda as a means by which to appropriate female bodies to express their authorial message. That the occasion of Le Fleur’s first prophetic vision sees his organs of sight described as “stylus eyes” reveals the gender of his inscribing gaze (41). The “stylus,” says Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, belongs to the “masculine style of possession” (Preface xxxvi).

The green eyes, passed on to Antjie’s child – David’s grandmother Ragel – and later David himself, find their source in Eduard Le Fleur, the French ancestor of A. A. S. Le Fleur (and, Driver suggests, illegitimate son of Cuvier [Afterword 227]). Eduard exemplifies Cuvier’s fragmenting gaze when, on the ship to South Africa, he recalls Cuvier’s

grotesque drawings of a woman’s vast buttocks and other parts that he knew were sinful to look at. There were also sketches of a delicate face with cheekbones, shell-like ears and slanted eyes, but these were severed from the bodies. It was the buttocks that made the boy sigh deeply. (38)

Wicomb’s brief but suggestive rendition of Baartman’s story, with its layers of shameful complicity – Baartman’s “foolish vanity,” the “identity” between David, Le Fleur, Eduard and Cuvier – is at odds with current nationalist myth making.

David’s writing on Baartman takes place when the narrator asks him to prepare notes on Dulcie, to pin down her “protean” form in representation (35). David, “having

tried and failed,” chooses “to displace her by working on the historical figure of Saartje Baartman instead” (134). Thus is the fictional character symbolically yoked to her historical counterpart. We are encouraged to ask whether one of the things David is displacing is his own treachery onto white men. The novel raises the question of whether David is in some sense complicit with Dulcie’s torture, and whether his ‘use’ of her steatopygous form as a vessel for his meaning approximates the ‘use’ of Baartman’s in both imperial and nation-building projects. Drawing her into the frame of complicity, the text points also to the narrator’s insatiable “need to know more” about Dulcie (79). No space of innocence is posited within the overdetermined field of representation.

Antjie and Dulcie are implicitly compared in a description of the former before she is transformed into Le Fleur’s empty vessel: “In the growing darkness her silhouette is that of a mythical creature, which she transforms again and again with movements of her wiry torso, snaking *hither and thither* as she builds the fire” (96; emphasis added). Le Fleur, the ethnic nationalist, fixes her fluid form into an immaculate container for his message. David’s own desire for a genealogical narrative through which to trace his Griqua heritage, that sees Antjie’s parthenogenesis drawn into the novel’s plot, suggests the extent to which such national and ethnic claims commandeer women’s bodies. Keen to unseat such claims, the novel presents itself with the challenge of not pinning Dulcie down as interpretable subject, of permitting the discordance her unstable presence introduces into the text, and thus frustrating claims of biological continuity.

The very attempt to write Dulcie imposes violence on her body. David’s final entry in the text is “a page without words,” which the narrator, revealing again her unreliability, admits she has had “right from the start:”

There are geometrical shapes [...] especially diamonds. The cartoonist’s oblique lines that indicate sparkling are arranged about each diamond, but I now see that these have been done in another pen, perhaps added later.

There are the dismembered shapes of a body: an asexual torso, like a dressmaker’s dummy; arms bent the wrong way at the elbows; legs; swollen feet; hands like claws.

There is a head, an upside-down smiling head, which admittedly does not resemble her, except for the outline of bushy hair.

I have no doubt that it is Dulcie who lies mutilated on the page.

(205)

Dulcie's body, mutilated on David's page, points to the violence of representation and asks us to consider what similarities exist between David's relationship with Dulcie and that between Dulcie and the night visitors who torture her body. And, perhaps more pertinently, whether David's writing of Dulcie replicates Cuvier's violation of Baartman "in print."

Attention is paid to a conspicuous change of pen, which links this act of representation with the scene of torture. Earlier, we are told how Dulcie's back is "meticulously staked out with *blue ballpoint* before the insertion of a red-hot poker between the bones" (19; emphasis added). Later, finding Dulcie's name on a hit list, David

scores out her name with a pen, repeatedly, so that it can no longer be recognised. The terror mounts with each stroke of the *blue ballpoint*. When the name is completely obliterated, he shudders at what he has done. Has he, the intended, been directed into acting, into becoming the agent for others? (117; emphasis added)

Is scoring out her name akin to torture? Does David's silence – about his feelings for Dulcie, about his and Dulcie's experiences of torture at Quatro, about what is happening to Dulcie in the present – render him complicit with ongoing violations? The refusal to speak of what has happened, the covering up, the scratching out of a name – are these all forms of violence? Yet, how to speak them, when writing the body, fixing it in representation, imposes another violation? These are among the difficult questions David's Story poses, and which I return to in the following chapter.

If we continue taking up the novel's invitation to link Baartman and Dulcie, we can read into its penultimate scene a riposte to nationalist movements that would consign

Baartman's remains to the earth, hidden from view. The narrator finds Dulcie's "sturdy steatopygous form" sunbathing in her garden:

She is covered with goggas crawling and buzzing all over her syrup sweetness, exploring her orifices, plunging into her wounds; she makes no attempt to wipe the insects away, to shake them off. Instead, she seems grateful for the cover of creatures in the blinding light and under the scorching sun. (212)

The "scorching sun" belongs to a "day without nuances" (212). Dulcie, we note, seeks temporary cover from a lack of nuance rather than from a violating gaze probing the unburied body. Oozing from its orifices onto the lawn, her body is inscribed in the ambivalent mode of the Bakhtinian grotesque; its lack of closure stands in counterpoint to the official national body, with its united form, sealed borders and "one single meaning" (Bakhtin 101) that the re-covered and "enclosed" (Comaroff 116) body is called upon to represent. Dulcie is an unstable figure of excess, a leaky sieve, unlike the virgin bodies or empty vessels writers such as Mda, and ethnic nationalist leaders like Wicomb's Le Fleur, depend on to express their stable meanings,

As avatar of Baartman, Dulcie is also a figure of what Lloyd would call "living on"; her story is a "chronic narrative, rather than one of crisis and recovery." The narrator comes to accept that "Dulcie and the events surrounding her cannot be cast as story. [...] There is no progression in time, no beginning and no end. Only a middle that is infinitely repeated, that remains in an eternal, inescapable present" (150). Wicomb's inscription of her story thus resists what Dominick LaCapra finds to be the redemptive structure of narrative itself, with its beginning, middle and end (156). Writing against the redemptive national narrative of the transition, David's Story refuses to participate in the re-covering of Baartman's remains. At the same time, muddling and disrupting what Edward Said calls the "genealogical connections" that maintain "the unity or integrity of the text," such as "author-text, beginning-middle-end," the text dispenses with "the imagery of succession, of paternity, or hierarchy" (162) that, in the previous chapter, I found to be a central feature of The Heart of Redness.

In a novel that is as much about writing as anything else, Wicomb grapples with questions of representation, authorship and the authorial signature. She thus returns us to some of the issues raised in the previous chapter. Her aesthetic politics are located at the interface of feminism and postmodernism. She attributes her ability “to speak and write” to both black consciousness and feminism, and her critical writing develops postmodernist readings of women’s texts (“Interviewed by Eva Hunter” 88; see, for instance, “Hear” 43-44).²¹ When asked to write under the title “An Author’s Agenda,” she rephrases the topic first as the “writer’s” agenda and then as the “reader’s agenda” (14): from what Roland Barthes terms the “readerly” text to the “writerly” text (*S/Z* 4-5).

Postmodernism and post-structuralism have celebrated the “death of the author” (Barthes “Death” 142). Feminism literary theory, in contrast, has, according to Sara Ahmed, been ambivalent about “authorship as recoverable intentionality” and departs from the postmodern position “through its enquiry into the gendering of the authorship function and effect” (120):

The universalism of the masculine perspective relies precisely on being disembodied, on lacking the contingency of a body. A feminist perspective would surely emphasise the implication of writing in embodiment, in order to re-historicise this supposed universalism, to locate it, and to expose the violence of its contingency and particularity (by declaring some-body wrote this text, by asking which-body wrote this text) (123)

David’s Story dramatises questions of authorial (dis)embodiment. It takes its epigraph from Frantz Fanon: “My final prayer: O my body, make of me always a man who questions!” Raised throughout the novel is the question of whose story this is (“which-body” does it belong to?): “This is and is not David’s story” (1). Posed, also is the question of whether the female signature of the narrator is, to quote Ahmed’s title, a “difference that matters.” Drawing attention to that which she denies, the narrator comments: “I would hate a reader to think that my failure to provide facts, to bridge the

²¹ The discussion in this chapter focuses on feminism and postmodernism; the following chapter comments on some of the intersections and tensions between black consciousness and feminism in David’s Story.

gaps in the narrative, has something to do with the nature of our relations. Or with my gender” (2).

Searching for a third way between the transparent signature of ‘woman’ and the transcendental (male) Author, Ahmed proposes a way of reading “the difference of women’s writing” that “keeps the author in place as a formation, at the same time as it challenges notions of authorial and sexual identity.” This approach “takes us beyond the opposition between the author as living (modern) and the author as dead (postmodern). The author is in-between life and death” (134). This precisely is the space from which authorship is constructed in David’s Story, and, as I suggested in the previous chapter, where Nongqawuse’s utterances could productively be located. Wicomb admits to there being “a connection” between her and the narrator (“Conversation” 149); at the same time, she shares pertinent biographical details with David.²² The story is produced in-between the living female amanuensis-narrator and the dead male narrator-subject.

David’s Story’s unsettling engagement with narrative form – embodied in Dulcie as disruptive figure – draws on both feminist and postmodernist aesthetic politics as it issues its critique of a post-revolutionary nationalism. Its use of postmodernist devices – self-reflexivity, a fragmented form and unreliable narrators – mocks nationalist aesthetics, which typically privilege unitary, stable and enclosed forms. Lloyd’s comments on James Joyce’s Ulysses are equally applicable to David’s Story (not least given the latter’s references to Bloomsday, the “day of the revolution of the word” [35]): “its anti-representational mode of writing clashes with nationalist orders of verisimilitude precisely by allowing the writing out of the effects of colonialism that nationalism seeks to eradicate socially and psychically” (Anomalous 110). Among the effects of colonialism and apartheid, and the struggles against them, written out in David’s Story, are the layers of complicity, betrayal and treachery emerging from the oppositional struggle and the apartheid state’s counter-intelligence tactics. David’s Story explores, largely through Dulcie in the present-day narrative, the extent to which these effects ‘live on’ during the transition, and the gendered shapes they have taken.

²² Rob Gaylard points out that her mother maiden name was Rachel Le Fleur and that she grew up in Le Fleur’s Beeswater settlement (450-51).

Dulcie is a figure for what Holocaust theorist Lawrence L. Langer calls “deep memory” and “durational time” – where the experience of trauma does not relinquish its hold but plays out repeatedly, never entering “what we call the stream of time” (see Samuelson, “Cracked” 72; Langer, “Alarmed” 55). “Deep memory” is anti-redemptive and challenges the notion of the ‘talking cure,’ which was granted a central position in transitional society during the TRC hearings. Similarly, “durational time” “mock[s] the very idea that traumas can be healed” (“Alarmed” 55). Elsewhere, Langer says:

Simulated recovery belongs to the realm of chronological time. In the realm of durational time, no one recovers because nothing is recovered, only uncovered and then re-covered, buried again beneath the fruitless struggle to expose ‘the way it was.’ (“Memory’s” 265)

Dulcie’s body becomes a figure for such a ‘truth.’ Unlike Baartman’s body – the recovery of which belongs to the chronological time of nationalist teleology – Dulcie’s body is not re-coverable.

Misreading Dulcie as naturalistic subject, Gillian Gane bemoans the final scene of Dulcie lounging on the narrator’s lawn. It is posed, she says, as an epiphany in which Dulcie’s body is “metamorphosed into [an emblem] of the land, the wounded nation that yet endures and carries within it the seeds of the future” (110). Her conclusion is based on the revealing clustering of goggas “not around the flowers but around Dulcie’s body, feasting on its ‘syrup sweetness.’ Her wounds are ‘orifices,’ *entrances into her body*, like mouths or vaginas” (110; emphasis added). However, it is precisely the metonymic slippage between Dulcie and the flowers, which Gane regrets, that prevents us from reading Dulcie as naturalistic body, and inscribes her instead as a ‘body of writing,’²³ as yet another text “delet[ing] itself” (David’s Story 212). The narrator sees Dulcie’s body *not* when she takes “a turn” in the garden, but “Only when [she] turns to go back to work” (212). The flowers Gane points to are black-eyed Suzies:

²³ The phrase is taken from M. J. Daymond’s article, “Bodies of Writing,” though used in a slightly different sense here.

Look into any one of those brilliant black eyes and you will find that you have been fooled. Instead of the apparent protrusion of a fleshy cushion of stamens and stigmas, there is only a dark hole, an absence burnt into that bright face, an empty black cone that tapers towards a dark point of invisibility, of nothing. (David's Story 212)

Peering into Dulcie's "orifices" in search of the 'black eye / I,' we find we have been fooled; thinking that we are gazing into the inner recesses of the violated female body, what we discover instead is "an absence." Thus are nationalist and ethnic efforts to recuperate and restore through reference to the female form frustrated.

Conclusion

Bartmann has been granted a privileged space in the national imagination. Her story has been shaped to express the national allegory encapsulated in the claims of the national media and funeral orators that "she was of us and we, of her" (Mbeki, "Interment" 1). The discursive route of Bartmann's re-casting and re-covering raises the question of why and how we remember and re-member whom we do, and how these acts of remembrance construct a particular identity for the nation and its citizens during this time of transition. Robins notes that "ethnic-nationalist discourses [...] draw on metaphors of the body" (122). Women such as Krotoa-Eva and Sarah Bartmann have been "appropriated and reclaimed" in ways that reveal "the symbolic potency of links between the corporeal body and the body politic" (131). Wicomb transposes this body into writing, and then self-reflexively turns it in upon itself, hampering its reference to an external referent, disturbing its seamless totality. The body of Dulcie and the materiality of the 'body of the text' are presented as fundamentally unstable, frustrating the nationalist desire for recovery and closure, and allowing us to trace, instead, continuities and disjunctures in the making of nation and the inscription of women's bodies.

CHAPTER FOUR – UNSPEAKABLE ACTS (UN)SPOKEN: (DIS)FIGURED
BODIES IN DAVID'S STORY AND DISGRACE

Introduction

writing is also a means of saying that which you can't utter

--- Zoë Wicomb, "Interviewed on Writing and Nation" 183.

*the critic must attempt to fully realize, and take responsibility for, the unspoken,
unrepresented pasts that haunt the political present*

--- Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture 12.

In this and the following chapters I turn from the legacy of historical women to the representation of contemporary female characters and autobiographical selves in literature of the transition. Zoë Wicomb's David's Story provides the hinge linking the two halves of the thesis. It juxtaposes a historical past and the contemporary transition, revealing what it calls "recursions" in attitudes to, and inscriptions of, women (184). As such, it articulates some of the central concerns of this thesis. This chapter focuses on the characters of Dulcie (Wicomb's David's Story) and Lucy (J. M. Coetzee's Disgrace), who are subject to sexualised violence during the transition. Each encourages us to revise stereotypical conceptions of female victimhood, as they negotiate between a politics of gender and a politics of race. Lucy's rape and her response to it are shaped by the racial politics that characterised the white South African past, while the violence against Dulcie is in large part a post-revolutionary backlash against a powerful female militant. The women are differently positioned according to race – Lucy being white, and Dulcie coloured – but both opt for silence in the wake of violence. They thus provide fertile ground on which to reconceptualise rape, victimhood and silence.

In my exploration of representations of rape, and women's responses to rape, I shift attention away from the ritualistic act of 'giving voice' that has dominated the transition moment – most notably in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) – to chart, instead, the meanings produced in the space between voice and silence. Given the "recursions" traced in this thesis, I question also the claim that the end of apartheid necessarily provides an opening in which the previously silenced voices of women can be

heard. This claim has been widely articulated by André Brink, particularly in his essay “Interrogating Silence.” I have shown the significant problems that emerge in the fictional text in which he puts this into practice. The issues at stake here are not the same as those that preoccupied me in the first chapter: choosing or ‘speaking through’ silence is not equivalent to being rendered mute.

Questions of speech and silence are both pertinent and urgent in relation to sexual violence. Sexual violence is a ‘shaming’ act that imposes forms of silence on its victims, hence the value granted to ‘breaking the silence.’ However, the positivist practice of ‘giving voice,’ or recuperating obscured voices, has its own dangers, as Sabine Sielke points out: “in its attempt to break the silence on sexual violence, the (feminist) deployment of rape has nurtured its own silences that are as meaningful as the silences with which dominant culture has veiled sexual violence” (4). And speaking rape within prevailing discourses may obscure the genealogy of these discourses. Slavery, for instance, is largely elided in current discourse on rape in South Africa, yet is central to the constitution of racialised rape that holds sway in the public imagination.

The national discourse of sexual violence during the transition was shaped by the TRC. David’s Story and Disgrace complicate some of the issues that emerge from the TRC’s engagement, or lack thereof, with sexual violence. Sexual violence, as the TRC itself admits, remains one of the “silences” in the story of the past that it relates (4:10 par. 44); Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjes concur when pointing to a dearth of testimony by female victims of sexual violence: “violence against women is one of the hidden sides to the story of our past” (“Dealing” 7). Attempts to counter this silence with speech raise other concerns. As the TRC became increasingly anxious about its failure to capture the story of women and the story of sexual violence, it began to conflate the two: ‘woman’s story’ was reduced to one of sexual violence, and sexual violence was identified as a defining female experience (see Ross 20-26, 87-93). While only forty per cent of the TRC’s cases of sexual abuse, where the victim’s sex was specified, concerned women, “Sexual Abuse” is a central category in the chapter dedicated to the Special Hearings on Women in the Final Report (see 4:10 par. 44-69). Sexual violence is thus produced as an experience peculiar to women. According to Antjie Krog, who recounts her experience of reporting on the TRC,

Men don't use the word 'rape' when they testify. They talk about being sodomized, or about iron rods being inserted into them. In so doing they make rape a women's issue. By denying their own sexual subjugation to male brutality, they form a brotherhood with rapists which conspires against their own wives, mothers and daughters, say some of those who testify. (182)

One of the silences "nurtured" in efforts to 'give voice' to rape is thus the gendering of rape as something that happens only to women, which, in turn, produces women as victims of a special kind. If a failure to speak rape is a matter of concern, perhaps so too are attempts to speak the raped body.¹

The problems of speaking "rape" are readily evident in that the word itself is etymologically compromised; in early usage it referred to "the theft of goods or the abduction of a woman [...] rape was generally conceptualized as the theft of male property" (Paxton 8). When rape is spoken in currently prevailing discourses of gender, nation and political transition, women are produced as vulnerable victims in need of male protection, as objects of property and exchange, as reproducers of the future, and as markers of the national boundary.²

Without disputing the need for new discourses on rape, my reading of David's Story and Disgrace explores contexts in which speaking rape can be as problematic as a failure to speak of rape. Entering language to speak rape, for the characters of these novels, may entail being weighed down with the rhetoric that has been spun around rape. If the available discourse on rape reduces women to victims or objects of exchange, then, when rape is spoken, the subjects of rape may be re-objectified. Speaking rape thus potentially reiterates the primary violation. Thus, it is necessary to deconstruct the binary

¹ In "Survivor Discourse: Transgression or Recuperation?", Linda Martin Alcoff and Laura Gray-Rosendale provide a useful analysis of this double-bind, and of the losses and gains of "breaking the silence" on rape in confessional contexts such as talk shows.

² Floya Anthias and Nira Yuval-Davis point out, in their ground-breaking study of gendered nationalism, that among the five major parts women play or are called upon to play in nationalism are, firstly, the requirement that women reproduce the national group and, secondly, that women act as the boundary markers of the national collective (Introduction 7).

of voice and silence (or visibility and invisibility).³ This binary proposes that the movement from silence to voice is a liberatory one. However, as post-structuralist theory maintains, subjects are constituted in language. Language speaks through us, rather than vice versa. Those who speak may thus be ‘silenced’ by language itself.

Fiction published during the transition has been vocal on the subject of rape. As I have argued elsewhere, much of this fiction remains fixated on ‘inter-racial’ rape (see “Rainbow” 88 and “Fictional” n.pag.).⁴ Magnetically drawn to the scene of ‘inter-racial’ rape, it departs from a social reality in which rape is overwhelmingly ‘intra-racial.’⁵ Thus, while the literary output on rape has matched the spiralling statistics besetting transitional South Africa, it largely reduces rape to an allegorical seme within a narrative of race. Yet rape is more than a metaphor in South African society of the transition. It is an endemic social disorder. The available language on rape in South Africa appears unable to express the experiences of those subject to rape. The gap between the social reality and the rhetoric of rape is evident in the racialised structures of literary rape in the transition years.

These fictions culminate in the swelling *figures* of raped bodies: raped women are transformed into mothers, who, through the ‘mixed race’ issue of rape, procreate the ‘rainbow’ nation. The trajectory mapped out from rape victim to maternal figure pregnant with authorial meaning is similar to that implicit in nationalist representations of Sarah Bartmann. The raped body is in the process ‘covered’ by metaphorical conventions that shift the body from the tenor to the vehicle of meaning. In our context, these conventions ‘cover’ rape by speaking it only to signify on the politics of ‘blood’ that dominated

³ This project is fruitfully taken up by the editors of Deep hiStories: Gender and Colonialism in Southern Africa, who propose “a theoretical move beyond the unquestioning and undifferentiating use of the voice / silence binary” (Woodward, Hayes and Minkley xxi); see also Ross, regarding women, voice and silence in the TRC (165).

⁴ ‘Inter-racial’ rape features centrally in a wide range of texts, including: Brink’s Imaginations of Sand and Rights of Desire, Coetzee’s Disgrace, Achmat Dangor’s Bitter Fruit, K. Sello Duiker’s Thirteen Cents and The Quiet Violence of Dreams, Farida Karodia’s Other Secrets, Arthur Maimane’s Hate No More and Jo-Anne Richards, The Innocence of Roast Chicken.

⁵ Here literature falls in line with a broader cultural inscription of rape during the transition that is prevalent, too, in the media. Carmine Rustin notes that, while ‘inter-racial’ rape continues to receive more prominence in the media, it constitutes a statistically negligible percentage of rape cases (4). Citing statistics provided by the South African Police, the Crime Management Information Centre and the National Crime Investigation Service, Rustin shows that the percentage of reported ‘inter-racial’ rapes declined from comprising 2.57% of total cases in 1992 to a mere 1.65% in 1996 (77). Sujata Moorti’s study of racialised representations of rape on US television offers a useful case study of a comparable context.

apartheid ideology and practice. That is, rape is written as the means through which to explore the possibilities of 'mixing,' as the boundaries established by apartheid begin to crumble.

I have elsewhere traced the disturbing disjuncture between the social reality of rape and the metaphoric plots spawned in fiction of the transition (see "Rainbow" 88). Here I grapple with the possibility that rendering the unspeakable act of rape (un)spoken may offer a representational means by which rape paradoxically 'speaks.' Rape has been broadly theorised as the unrepresentable. Lynn A. Higgins and Brenda R. Silver identify the "rhetoric of elision" as a recurrent feature in the writing of rape (6). On the one hand, this rhetoric can be understood as cloaking rape beneath a blanket of silence. On the other hand, it may offer a means by which texts are able to 'speak,' if in a different 'language,' the violence performed on women's bodies:

The term *elision* [...], deriving from the Latin *laedere*, to hurt or damage, and relating to *lesion*, suggests [...] the secret ways in which representation is linked to the physical, and damaged stories can represent damaged bodies. (Higgins and Silver 6; emphasis in orig.)

Thus does writing offer "a means of saying that which you can't utter," to return to Wicomb's words quoted in my epigraph. Unspeakable violence may be represented through forms of textual violence, that is, violence performed on the formal unities of the text. The materiality of the text itself, when rent with the unspeakable, expresses precisely what it cannot utter.

Disfigured raped bodies that, as Wicomb says, "cannot with any measure of decency be cast as texts" ("Translations" 217), call for a dis-figuring of representation and a problematisation of what Sielke terms "the rhetoric of rape" that transforms rape into a figurative scene in which the violated body slips from view. These rhetorical structures are revealed in texts through an interplay of speech and silence, or what I call the (un)spoken. If rape is employed as a figure of speech, dis-figuring rape shifts attention from the figure of the body to the materiality of language and text.

My earlier work on representations of rape noted the importance of countering symbolic registers with historicised representations that grapple with social forces such as slavery, regulatory regimes such as the “black peril” and women’s vulnerability in militarised and de-militarising contexts. This chapter argues that unspoken histories can be sought in the very textual elisions ostensibly silencing them. I focus on two novels concerned with re-figuration; novels, in other words, that wrestle with rhetoric itself and encourage the reader to engage with the ways in which rape has been figured. Far from de-historicising rape, the use of postmodernist devices in the writing of rape can return to the surface the historical subtexts that haunt the scene of rape in transitional South Africa.

Listening to the “buzz of bluebottles”: Zoë Wicomb’s *David’s Story*

Dulcie and the events surrounding her cannot be cast as story. [...] Yes, he confesses, even if a full story were to be figured out by someone, it would be a story that cannot be told, that cannot be translated into words, into language we use for everyday matters. --- Zoë Wicomb, *David’s Story* 150-51.

Keeping your hands clean is a luxury that no revolutionary can afford; there’s corruption in every institution. It’s only you arty types who think of such problems as something special, something freakish that can bring about a climax to a story. Stick to the real world and you’ll find the buzz of bluebottles deafening. --- David in *David’s Story* 196.

The previous chapter read Dulcie as avatar of Saartje Baartman’s story and noted how her persistence in the text – and her unburied body – contests the nation-building and ethnic discourses that have harnessed Baartman to their cause. Through Dulcie, I argued, Wicomb measures the dangers of representation and its potential violence. This chapter continues to attend to issues of representation. My focus here falls on the violence against Dulcie presented in the novel, and the violence Wicomb enacts on the text in order to render these acts of abuse (un)spoken.

Dulcie has unspeakable violence perpetrated against her in the 1980s at Quatro, the African National Congress (ANC) detention camp in Angola, and again in the transitional present. The novel is less concerned with giving Dulcie a voice to speak her

violations than with tracing the ways in which she is subjectified – produced as subject and subjected to violence. Moreover, it reveals how “truth,” rather waiting to be discovered or un-covered, is produced, as “rumours [... take] root” (180). As Dorothy Driver notes, Wicomb’s self-consciously postmodern narrative “does not try to simply ‘give voice’ to those who were marginalised, oppressed, and disinherited [...] Instead, David’s Story dramatises the literary, political, philosophical, and ethical issues at stake in any attempt at retrieval of history and voice” (Afterword 216). On the one hand, Wicomb’s portrayal of Dulcie asserts, as she herself puts it, “that abominable things happen in the name of freedom”; on the other hand, the “cast[ing] of [Dulcie] in mythological terms” is a strategy to “open up the idea of truth, to wrest it from the pieties of liberal humanism and to assert a measure of unknowableness about that past” (“Interviewed on Writing” 194).

Refraining from fixing Dulcie’s story in representation, Wicomb instead inscribes her as a disruptive figure in the text, fragmenting and destabilising the secure meanings David and the narrator attempt to construct. At one point, the narrator muses that Dulcie’s story would be best rendered in the middle voice, that is, between active and passive voices (197). The middle voice permits a play of *différance* between dichotomies – such as those of active and passive, past and present, masculine and feminine, or speech and silence (see Derrida, Speech 130). It is thus appropriate to Dulcie, who confounds the dichotomies through which we might attempt to make sense of her experiences. Dulcie is an active subject – a powerful uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) commander – who is subject to violence inflicted on her passive form; she is a ‘masculine’ woman, habitually clothed in an androgynous khaki uniform; she flits between past and present, suggesting “recursions” of Bartmann’s violation in our transitional present, while preventing us from establishing a clear temporal vantage. Is she actually abused in the narrative present, or are we instead witness to post-traumatic returns of her violations? Writing in the middle voice, says Dominick LaCapra, entails engaging with an “anxiety-ridden area of undecidability and the unavailability or radical ambivalence of clear-cut positions” (20). This is the disorientating space in which David’s Story, and the story of Dulcie, unfolds. And the (un)spoken is its mode of expression. The novel marks the (un)spoken with an

indefinite buzzing that hovers between speech and silence: the “buzz of bluebottles” referred to in my epigraph.

Dulcie’s story is described by David as “a scream somehow echoing through my story” (134). Thus does Wicomb chart a path between voice and silence, and thus does she answer to the conundrum raised in the previous chapter, where both the writing of Dulcie and the scoring out of her name (or the response of silence) are equally noted as forms of violence. Like the description of Dulcie as a “scream,” the “buzz of bluebottles” is the ‘noise’ from the “real world,” a world of nuance, ambiguity, complicity and betrayal that is disruptive of narrative order. This buzzing is what Ouma Sarie must swat “aside decisively” in order to imagine the arrival of the ‘new’ South Africa as a fairytale ending (208).

Exploring the deceitful operations of memory, *David’s Story* suggests that silence cannot be replaced by the full presence of speech, but can more productively be marked by the slippery textuality of the (un)spoken. Buzzing bluebottles – the textual motif through which I approach the novel – are linked to the slippery, mutating shapes taken by truth and memory. David’s childhood memory of a scene of recognition between himself and a black man, around which he builds his sense of self in the struggle for a non-racial democracy, is replaced by a second version in which there is “just a child and a fly hovering about an insensible figure” (142). Rather than instilling a belief in the possibility of memory to correct itself, the replacement of one version by another leaves David wondering whether the second version is accurate, and distrusting both memory and the truth it is assumed to produce. Like the fly of David’s shifting memory, Dulcie “hover[s] somewhere between fact and fiction” (198). Both the deceitful operations of memory, and Dulcie as figure for the (un)spoken, frustrate positivist reclamations of the past and of the ‘truth’ of what is happening to Dulcie, and to David.

Dulcie’s presence in the text might disrupt David’s story, but it also validates and supports it. Given the violations they share, which seem to stem in part from the fact that they are perceived as coming “from the same Cape community” (a euphemism for “coloured”), one could read the narrative as splitting its central character between David and Dulcie (200). In the composite character of David-Dulcie, Wicomb explores what she elsewhere describes as the unspeakable figure of the coloured (female) activist (see

“Shame” 103). Through David, she grapples with a growing ambivalence towards coloureds within the ANC and, through Dulcie, she extends this enquiry into questions of gender.

The carefully positioned ‘buzzing’ in the narrative creates reverberations that permit us to map disturbing connections, and even to catch sight of the unspoken, unrepresented pasts to which Bhabha refers in my opening epigraph. Thus the very silences of the text become sites where submerged and suppressed histories enter the plot. Among other things, the “buzz of bluebottles” offers a textual trace of David’s torture in Quatro, which has left him with tinnitus, a persistent ringing in the ears.⁶ Through David’s torture, the text approaches Dulcie’s. The novel, *Driver* contends, “asks us to think about two current issues, and – if we dare – the relation between them: first, about what happened in the African National Congress (ANC) detention camps; and, second, about the sanctioned treatment of ANC women” (Afterword 217). Thus, in Sally’s story we encounter the “unspoken part of girl’s training” in the anti-apartheid struggle, the adjective “unspoken” retaining its valence in the TRC’s era of witnessing (123). And Dulcie quickly works out that “fucking women was a way of preventing them from rising in the Movement” (179).

Dulcie will never be understood by those who cannot bear to put together ambiguity and freedom, David insists, as indeed is appropriate to a character rendered in the middle voice. Some of the text’s most terrifying ambiguities concern Dulcie’s “night visitors,” who are “both friend and foe,” and who torture and then doctor her body (179). Trying to recognise them, turning them into “friends; family, comrades [, ...] brings a moment of pure terror, of looking into the abyss. [...] Never again does she try to identify them” (179). The novel thus draws attention to the fragile and all-too-permeable boundary between “friend and foe,” lover and torturer, and the depth of horror that lies in contemplating its permeability. This terror is present in the relationship between Dulcie and David, as the novel pushes us to ask whether their (unspoken) relationship is yet

⁶ *Driver* notes that “his tinnitus must partly refer to the practice at Quatro of *ukumpompa*, blows and claps on inflated cheeks which often caused ear damage” (Afterword 237). The TRC failed to break the silence on abuses committed within ANC camps, such as Quatro, deeming it unnecessary for those responsible for such human rights abuses to testify publicly (see Amupadhi 1). For further information on Quatro, see Stephen Ellis and Tsepo Sechaba (132-36). For an early exposé of the sexual abuse of women in ANC

another “variant” on torture (184). If torture remains unspoken by David in the text, so too does love. According to M. J. Daymond, the novel proposes that the “lover’s caress is no different from the torturer’s intimacy” (“Bodies” 32; see also Driver, Afterword 240).

What happens to Dulcie’s body – presumably during the transition years, or as post-traumatic returns following her experience in Quatro – is pointedly described as “not rape”:

On the very first visit, one of them, the wiry one who seems to be in charge, spoke: Not rape, that will teach her nothing, leave nothing; rape’s too good for her kind, waving the electrodes as another took off her nightclothes. (178)

The words – “not rape” – cover over the sexualised nature of the abuse, evident in the removal of Dulcie’s nightclothes. This scene highlights the inadequacy of available language in speaking what happens to Dulcie. A textual system of internal cross-referencing conveys the unspeakable, as connections are drawn between the raped body and the reduction to flesh of the tortured body.

During her torture, Dulcie “run[s] through the vocabulary of recipe books, that which is done to food, to flesh – tenderize, baste, sear, seal, sizzle, score, chop” as her own flesh is seared with hot pokers (178). The torturers encourage her to commit suicide by driving off Chapman’s Peak, which is a path David later follows. Dulcie imagines feeling “that macerated flesh grown weightless in the water, dissolve in the white spray that beats against the rock. Atomised at Chapman’s peak” (180). Her thoughts resonate with the description of Sally after coercive sex with an MK comrade: she “found her body dissolving, changing its solid state in the water through which she then moved effortlessly” (123). (Un)speaking rape, while mapping its echoes across the text, Wicomb complicates the concept of ‘rape,’ and draws attention to the unspeakable things that are done to bodies, both male and female, in the name of freedom.

camps, with specific mention of Quatro, see the report compiled by Olefile Samuel Mngqibisa, who presented evidence before an internal ANC Commission of Inquiry in 1993 (11-15).

Dulcie's story suggests that women who have fought for freedom may not themselves experience that freedom. The betrayal and appropriation of her labour are pointed to in the only passage Dulcie narrates herself (given to us second-hand, as David retells it to the narrator). Dulcie had told David about an incident during the liberation war when, in the face of shrinking rations, she suggests taking honey from a bees' nest. Her comrades ridicule her, "wondering if she were man enough to do it by herself." Dulcie does, persisting through the stings "since it was a matter of honour, and manages to fill a basket with dripping honeycombs":

She swelled up into a roly-poly, hands like loaves of risen dough, eyes buried beneath layers of swellings, mouth a drunken pout, face an undulating hillock of yellow-brown flesh. For several days she writhed in agony, unable to take anything except water. When she recovered sufficiently to try a honeycomb, she found that the others had eaten every scrap of it, had left her nothing. (82-3)

Earlier in this chapter I referred to the "swelling figures" in fictions of rape penned during the transition, punning on the pregnant meanings of tropic representations of 'inter-racial' rape that culminate in childbirth. Wicomb embellishes this pun as Dulcie, whose comrades have devoured her share of the honey, who knows that "fucking women was a way of preventing them from rising in the Movement" (179), who takes up the challenge of being "man enough" to gather honey, is stung by bees until her figure swells, rising like dough. Covered in stretch marks and swelling into a "roly-poly," Dulcie's body, its honey stolen, offers a grotesque parody of pregnancy. While the language of the passage obliquely insinuates a rape narrative, the 'swelling figures' of the rhetoric of rape are written here in terms only of the damage done to Dulcie's body. Thus rape, in this novel, does not become a metaphor through which to address race, or 'blood.' Instead, we are asked to consider the kinds of violence entailed for those who have to prove themselves "man enough" to step out of discursive productions of women as fragile victims, in need of male protection, while remaining embodied, sexed and raced subjects.

Wicomb has said that Dulcie's story is

about the betrayal, about a faction in the Movement no longer requiring powerful coloured women. And the problem of representing her is twofold: first, she is in a sense the necessary silence in the text; she can't be fleshed out precisely because of her shameful treatment which those committed to the Movement would rather not talk about, and her gender is not unconnected with this treatment. ("Interviewed on Writing" 190-91)

Dulcie is the necessary silence in the text, the silence that allows us to hear the "buzz of bluebottles" congregating on her dis-figured body, the "goggas crawling and buzzing all over [Dulcie's] sweetness, exploring her orifices, plunging into her wounds" (213). If the "buzz of bluebottles" suggests here a form of covering over, it is one that plunges into the dark centre of Dulcie's ambiguously rendered body, which can be read both as brutalised body and as a textual figure with a hollow centre. As textual figure, Dulcie shifts our attention from the bodies of women to the body of the text, from their physical absence to "meaning in the margin, or absence as an aspect of writing" (2). And thus, her body is an absence that draws attention to other absences, spoken through the silences of the text, such as that of the history of slavery, through which I've suggested that Bartmann's story may usefully be read.

Dispensing with an understanding of identity rooted in notions of 'blood' and origin, Wicomb foregrounds the historical routes that have shaped identity.⁷ During his visit to Glasgow, David comes across a painting of a tobacco lord, John Glassford, and his family. The composition also includes a family slave, whose face – "the distinct face of a bald black man in red livery" (192) – suddenly appears to him through the layer of paint that now covers it. The painting-over of the slave is emblematic of the literal covering-up, international and local, of the slave past. David is surprised to find "the

⁷ Her understanding of coloured identity is thus similar to that articulated by Zimitri Erasmus in her introduction to *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place*. Erasmus suggests the importance of reading 'coloured' as "coloured by history" rather than 'coloured by blood.' The chief historical institution to which she refers is that of Cape slavery (21-23). Erasmus's argument is anticipated by Mohamed Adhikari, who, in 1992, noted that "the influence of slavery on the making of coloured identity merits serious consideration," which it was yet to receive (96)

effacement of slavery to be betrayed in representation, as an actual absence” (193). The recognition of the slave in the painting sparks another set of memories, which lead David back to his torture in Quatro and, in turn, call to mind the torture and abuse of Dulcie. A set of silences is established across the text, each echoing and evoking the other.

Like the painted-over face of the slave, the wounds on Dulcie’s body, hidden beneath her habitual khaki outfit, are placed precisely where they will not be seen. Dulcie complies, veiling them in clothing that symbolises her dedication to the cause of freedom and her belief in the necessity of violent struggle to effect it. Tellingly, she associates the subterfuge entailed in concealing her wounds with that of women who hide AK-47s under their dresses:

Her own body, always in trousers and shirt, lives in the curious present tense of the Venda dress, taking its aspect from the gaze of the viewer who cannot undress it, who cannot imagine the criss-cross cuts on each of her naturally bolstered buttocks (19).

Questions of concealment are central to the novel. Wicomb says elsewhere:

“Concealment [...] becomes a trope for the woman writer who has to negotiate the conflicting loyalties of race and gender” (“Hear” 41). As a black woman in the resistance movement, Dulcie partially colludes with her gendered oppression, while resisting both gender and race oppression. The positioning of women in a struggle fought along sharply drawn racial lines may mean that resistance is to be found in forms of collusion, as I will also argue in my reading of Lucy’s response to her rape in *Disgrace*.

Wicomb, as mentioned in the previous chapter, credits both feminism and black consciousness with shaping her political and aesthetic voice. The two positions – one focused on race, the other on gender – at times support each other and are, at other times, presented as “conflicting loyalties.” Informed by black consciousness, Wicomb’s feminism differs from what has come to be known as “western feminism.” But she is not swayed by arguments in favour of replacing a feminist consciousness with a “womanist” one (see “Hear” 35-43). Womanism, notes Desirée Lewis, “urges women in their conventional supportive roles to assist in male-centred struggles against white

oppression”; what it obscures is “the contradiction between women’s frequently powerful roles, and their inferior status” (“Women” 162, 163). Again the novel charts a middle path between conventional oppositions: it represents women fighting shoulder to shoulder with men, and also their betrayal by male compatriots.

Both David and Dulcie are known for their commitment and loyalty to the struggle. Were they to speak the violence to which they have been, and are, subjected, they would betray not only the Movement in which they worked, but also the revolutionary subjectivities they have fashioned for themselves. The khaki outfit that covers and conceals the violence performed on Dulcie’s body stands for this commitment to the struggle, which also silences David and prevents him from revealing unspeakable horrors.⁸ Both David and Dulcie are sketched as complicit in their violation, each hiding and covering the wounds on their bodies. They do so out of loyalty to the anti-colonial struggle, which partially cuts across gender difference. As Lewis suggests, the exigency of apartheid imposed various silences on black women, namely, it introduced “a tacit acceptance of the need to confirm an organic national or racial solidarity in the face of white racism. From this perspective, airing stories about subjects like sexual violence [...] seems to betray the spirit of communal or racial unity” (“Gender” 42-43).

Similarly, when unable to find women willing to testify to sexual abuse in the ANC camps, Goldblatt and Meintjes surmise: “they are afraid that their evidence could be used to equate *individual* human rights violations by ANC cadres with the *systemic* violations of apartheid” (“South” 48; emphasis in orig.). This, then, is the double-bind, which we can crudely describe as one between race and gender. Loyalty to one struggle requires the silencing of another. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s comments on the *sati* debate in colonial India are pertinent to how Dulcie has positioned herself, and has been positioned: “There is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak” (“Can” 307). Wicomb’s achievement is to reveal rather than ameliorate this condition.

Dulcie’s subterfuge, which is projected onto women in Venda hiding AK 47s under their traditional dresses, may be illuminated by Frantz Fanon’s “Algeria Unveiled.”

⁸ Gane points to the telling phrase “he mentally clicked his heels” when David submerges an unspeakable truth about to be spoken (112).

Fanon's essay traces the veiling and unveiling of Algerian women during the anti-colonial struggle and resonates with Dulcie's recollections of the Venda women:

They came in traditional dress, gaudy green shifts under pink crossover pinafores draped over straw bolsters for buttressing the hips and buttocks into exotic insect shapes. When they left days later with piles of wood balanced on their heads, they filed past her searching gaze, their bodies a mere hint of movement within the sculpted shapes, the AK-47s perfectly concealed. (19)

In Fanon's example, the veil was at first a marker of tradition and culture, frustrating the surveillance of the colonial gaze. When women joined the Algerian independence struggle as revolutionaries, they unveiled themselves. Their bare faces, heads and limbs created the disguise enabling them to pass unnoticed in the French quarters. Once the French became wise to this tactic, the women again veiled themselves, concealing weapons beneath their customary covering, as do the Venda women whom Dulcie recalls. In Fanon's account, according to Diana Fuss, "the woman's body is the contested ideological battleground, overburdened and saturated with meaning" (150). That Dulcie's body is similarly posed as "saturated" with meaning is suggested in the novel's penultimate scene, when it literally oozes its excess on the narrator's lawn. This scene, in which goggas crawl and buzz over Dulcie's body, is prefigured in the "exotic insect shapes" of the women.

Wicomb encourages us to rethink Fanon's mapping of gender liberation upon the topography of an anti-colonial revolution. In Dulcie, Wicomb collapses the second and third stages of revolution he describes. Khaki uniform rather than traditional garb provides the veil that screens her body from surveying eyes. Caught between two systems of surveillance – apartheid and ANC intelligence – Dulcie must 'assent' to the covering of her wounds in order to align herself with one power, even as she is violated by both. The collusion with her own violation, suggested in her silence and the covering of her wounds, is her means of resistance.

Again the narrator's intention to cast Dulcie in the middle voice is revealing, along with her rueful admission that it is "so unfashionably linked with the sixties and with French letters" (197). The allusion, one assumes, is to Roland Barthes's essay, "To Write: An Intransitive Verb." Distinguishing between middle and active voices, Barthes refers to "the verb *to sacrifice*": "*to sacrifice* (ritually) is active if the priest sacrifices the victim in my place for me, and it is middle voice if, taking the knife from the priest's hands, I make the sacrifice for myself" ("Write" 142). Writing Dulcie, Wicomb frequently turns to the motif of sacrifice, particularly in the narrative fragment on Bronwyn the Brown Witch. Dulcie, as the text shows, makes the sacrifice of and for herself, and it is this that renders the novel as ethically complex as it is. Dulcie cannot be slotted into a simplistic division between victim and perpetrator. The first reference to her shows her washing blood from her hands *and* rubbing balm into the wounds incurred during torture. The text thus proposes a more complex representation of women that departs from current inscriptions of historical figures such as Bartmann and Krotoa-Eva as tragic victims.

At the same time, the image of Dulcie washing blood off her hands returns us to the materiality of the text: the final words of the novel, spoken by the narrator, are "I wash my hands of this story" (213). Its engagement with the middle voice is yet another point at which the text doubles back to reflect upon itself. The middle voice, according to Barthes, "corresponds exactly to the state of the verb *to write*" ("Write" 142). This self-reflexivity is evident, too, in the Venda women's "sculpted shapes." As Dulcie's attention falls on the marks of torture, the diamonds burnt "into her flesh," her thoughts turn

to a peaceful village where the earth is red and tea grows in bright green rows and where sculptors recruit suggestive shapes of wood, turn them into human figures with knives, carve life into them, chisel out the eyes in their shallow sockets, produce the new through gouging and stabbing at wood. Not flesh. (18-19)

Dulcie yearns for a displacement from the body to art – from flesh to wood. But she also betrays a refusal to separate art from war: the sculptors "recruit" suggestive pieces of

wood, while Dulcie recruits gun-runners, who conceal their arsenal within their “sculpted shapes.” Both representation and revolution “produce the new through gouging and stabbing” with hands steeped in blood. Representation, which depends on metaphorical figures for its rhetorical power, creates bodies of writing through violent dis-figurations of female bodies.

Thus does the novel turn back upon itself to consider its own complicity in representing women like Baartman, and like Dulcie, and to mark the limits of the liberal humanist discourse of the narrator, just as it has marked the limits of the military discourse espoused by David. The narrator, washing her hands of the story and bemoaning, “Will I ever be heard above the rude buzz of bluebottles” (213), suggests to us her own inability to retain the nuance and complexity of the world she represents. “Keeping your hands clean,” as David points out, “is a luxury no revolutionary can afford” (196). Can representation ever adequately represent the “real world,” in which “you’ll find the buzz of bluebottles deafening” (196)?

Dulcie, whose body is covered not in nationalist rhetoric, but in bluebottles, is a figure of such complexities. Her hand washing distinguishes her from stereotypical representations of women as victims, without obscuring the violence enacted upon her. Dulcie’s sacrifice in the middle voice can be read both as a complicit silence and as a refusal to abandon her revolutionary subject position in exchange for male ‘protection.’ It could be understood, in other words, as a refusal to assent to the domesticity into which previously militant women, such as David’s wife, Sally, have been subsumed during a post-war backlash against women. The source of this backlash is suggested in Fanon’s own anxious phrasing, when he says of the (unveiled) Algerian woman that she “penetrates a little further into the flesh of the Revolution” (54). As Anne McClintock notes, this “odd image suggests an unbidden fear of emasculation, a dread that the arming of women might entail a fatal unmaning of Algerian men” (367). Re-veiling themselves in a revolutionary gesture, the Algerian women of whom Fanon writes ‘consented’ to their de-militarisation and re-domestication after independence, when violence against unveiled women created “a climate of fear that was designed to force women’s return to the household and thus make available more employment opportunities for men” (Hatem

31). Wicomb's complicated use of Fanon foregrounds the dangers to women that he was unable to see, as he extolled the Algerian struggle as a site of gender liberation.

The re-domestication of Sally is described in similar terms to the torture of Dulcie. When David and Sally, who met as comrades, marry, Sally learns the "extent of [David's] influence" in the Movement: she is summarily released from underground work and returned to the domestic sphere of community matters, household management and, of course, reproduction (14). Re-domesticated, Sally becomes "an emaciated scarecrow of a woman with uneven, vegetal tufts of hair and liverish spots on her brown skin" (14), while the torture marks burnt into Dulcie's skin leave behind "a liverish red crinkled surface of flesh" (19). One explanation for Dulcie's silence in the text, then, is that both torture and domestication impose forms of violence on women's sense of self. Prevailing discourses of rape threaten to domesticate Dulcie should she speak within them. The available language is inadequate for speaking Dulcie's predicament, which is instead conveyed through the "buzz of bluebottles." For a woman like Dulcie to speak 'rape' would entail her participation in the de-militarisation and re-domestication of women,⁹ which is in part the "shameful treatment" of women in the Movement to which Wicomb refers. To speak rape within currently available discourses would be to cast herself as womanly victim, in need of male protection, and would thus further the cause of new post-liberatory, but fundamentally unliberatory, productions of women.

Nonetheless, silence is not fetishised in the novel; Dulcie is, after all, silenced by a political movement that no longer needs her – she must be sacrificed in order to "make way for the big men" (204) – and that does not recognise its betrayal of her. Former MK Commander, Thandi Modise, has spoken of the attitude to military women after the

⁹ Jacklyn Cock, writing a couple of years after the transitional period in which *David's Story* is set, finds that "Since 1990, hundreds of MK recruits have been sent abroad to receive training in regular warfare," which would prepare them for leadership positions in the new, post-apartheid national army. "To date, no woman has been involved in such training" ("Women" 163-164). To this we can compare the fate of the spirit medium of Nehanda in neighbouring Zimbabwe. The Nehanda spirit medium led the 1896-7 *Chimurenga* against British occupation before being captured and hanged. She died uttering a prophecy that her bones would rise again. This became the rallying cry of the *Second Chimurenga* of 1965-79, in which the Nehanda medium of the time also played a significant role (see Lan 5-7, 217-18). Post-independence Zimbabwe has, however, memorialised her as a maternal icon rather than as a military strategist and leader. Instead of commemorating her in Heroes' Acre or another appropriate site, the government named a maternity hospital in her honour (see Gaidzanwa 116-17; see also the discussion of Nehanda as represented by Zimbabwean novelist Yvonne Vera in Driver and Samuelson 193-95). Thus are the multiplicity of women's roles domesticated into the single one of Mother.

struggle in terms reminiscent of the discourse of rape as an act of dishonouring men who have failed to protect 'their' women:

Whether it is that they cannot accept that you fought with them, whether it is guilt or whether it is denial that women shouldn't have been forced to do this. I don't know. But somehow you become something they do not want to face, something that must be pushed outside. In the ANC this has started... (qtd. in Curnow 40)

The 'shame' of women's participation in the struggle – which is discursively equivalent to the 'shame' of one's woman being raped – is projected onto women: "When it comes to men, it's heroism. When it comes to women it's almost like you should be ashamed" (Modise qtd. in Curnow 36).

Tracing recursions, disjunctures and continuities between past and present, Wicomb offers a complicated response to nationalist discourse and attitudes to military women in the wake of conflict. The 'veil' beneath which Dulcie conceals her wounds – or silences her 'rape' – is the khaki uniform of the revolutionary soldier, rather than 'traditional' markers of domesticity or modesty. These "traditional modesty markers," according to Deniz Kandiyoti signify a "patriarchal bargain" by which women indicate to men that they are "worthy of protection" (283). In Wicomb's complex negotiation of the trope of concealment, military garb is compared to the 'traditional' covering that encases the female body, and is simultaneously distinguished from it. For Dulcie, speaking rape – revealing the wounds concealed beneath her khaki – might entail that she acquiesce to the demand that she "give up her power, hand over her uniform" (204).

Writing Rape “in this place, at this time”: J. M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*

over the body of the woman silence is being drawn like a blanket.

--- J. M. Coetzee, *Disgrace*: 110

what happened to me is a purely private matter. In another time and place it might be held to be a public matter. But in this place, at this time, it is not. It is my business alone

--- Lucy in *Disgrace*: 112.

Disgrace speaks of rape, yet the raped character, Lucy, chooses silence over disclosure. In *David’s Story*, Dulcie’s experience of, and response to, violence was inflected by the social context of the political transition. It remains (un)spoken in order to dramatise the paradoxical position inhabited by a militant woman subject to abuse in an era of demilitarisation and re-domestication. What is unspeakable is not only the violence against her, but the figure of the female militant herself and, equally, that of the coloured activist. The carefully positioned textual silences allow (un)spoken subtexts – such as that of the submerged slave past – to be heard. In *Disgrace*, the experience and discourse of rape is inflected by race. Lucy (‘the light’), a white woman, is raped by three black men; her father, David, has been dismissed from his academic post following his sexual harassment of a coloured student (“Meláni: the dark one” [18]).

Lucy points explicitly to her milieu when explaining her decision to treat her rape as a silent – private – matter: “In another time and place it may be held to be a public matter. But in this place, at this time, it is not.” When pressed to define “this place,” Lucy enumerates: “This place being South Africa” (112). The novel narrows it down further by mapping itself onto specific locations: Cape Town, Salem and Grahamstown. “This time” is delineated as the years of political transition.

When David pronounces ‘rape,’ “the word we have avoided hitherto,” Lucy’s response is disquieting: “What if ... what if *that* is the price one has to pay for staying on?” (158; emphasis in orig.), she asks, using the diectic to avoid, once again, articulating

'rape.' Frustrated by what he perceives as Lucy's passive response to rape, which sees her drawing silence over her body "like a blanket," David asserts: "If they had been white you wouldn't talk about them in this way" (159). Racial politics are thus highlighted in terms of the unspeakability of rape.

Disgrace's self-reflexivity situates it in (post)modernist traditions, while its attention to geographical and temporal location historicises the text. According to Sielke, the "'realist' rhetoric of rape" employs "the figure of the racialized 'rapist' other and project[s] sexual aggression and aggressive sexuality as interracial or interethnic encounters" in order to produce a "discourse of difference" (8). Disgrace, in contrast, takes up what Sielke identifies as (post)modern preoccupations; it is concerned with "the ways in which the rhetoric of sexual violence informs and structures our perspectives on real rape, and with how 'rape myths' and rape as a social fact have become inseparably intertwined" (10). Playing on its awareness of rhetorical renditions of rape, it turns them back on themselves, dis-figuring rape.

Through the (un)spoken, Disgrace traces at least two dominant strands of "rape myths." The first springs from the institution of slavery and pertains largely to the positioning of black female bodies in the discourse of rape; the second is the myth of the "black peril," and pertains to both black men and white women. Both rape myths have shaped the ways in which racialised gendered bodies have been produced and regulated, the ways in which sexual violence has been conceptualised, and the political projects to which rape has been harnessed. Colonial slavery created conditions authorising the rape of black women and the "black peril," in turn, authorised colonial and apartheid subjugations. I thus read the rhetoric of rape in a manner suggested by Ann Laura Stoler. Rape is here understood not only as a discursive practice legitimating empire, nor simply "as a metaphor for colonial inequities," but as a regulatory practice "foundational to the material terms in which colonial projects were carried out" (14). In slavery and the "black peril" we find the intertwining of "rape myths" and "rape as a social fact"; Disgrace's attention to these historical subtexts traces the mutation of colonial and apartheid projects into post-apartheid ones.

Colonialism and apartheid operated in terms grouped simultaneously around 'race' and the reproductive female body. Their fantasies of 'blood' purity, and their

manufacturing of white consensus, depended on the portrayal of the white female body as racial boundary marker, a boundary under attack by the threat of “black peril” offensives. The discourse of the “black peril” operated as a regulatory regime by which black men were cast as rapists, and white women were marked as fragile and threatened bearers of race purity, dependent on white male protection. Black women were constructed as ‘unrapable,’ and thus were written out of this scene of sexual violence altogether; their abjection from the discourse of rape was established within the institution of slavery, and reiterated in the display of women such as Sarah Bartmann.

Disgrace’s spatial setting encourages us to rethink these plots. Both Cape Town and the Eastern Cape region of Grahamstown and Salem were key sites in the colonisation of what is now South Africa. The setting of Cape Town creates the opportunity to recall the legacy of slavery and to explore how it has shaped racialised rape; the Eastern Cape is overwritten with a history of frontier conflict. Each settlement bears its unique imprint but, as Robert Shell argues, relations on the frontier were based on an intensification of a colonial structure whose mores were forged in the slave-holding households of the Cape (395, 419).¹⁰ The movement within the novel, from Cape Town to the Eastern Cape, thus re-enacts a historical shift from the torturous intimacies between slave woman and slave master, to the violent clash “across the sights of the gun” between the amaXhosa and European settlers on the Eastern Cape frontier (Shell 415).¹¹ The violent rape of Lucy, with her rapists wielding a shotgun, both literalises the “black peril,” and reiterates, on another level, the social relations re-enacted between David and Soraya and Melanie in Cape Town.

Embedded beneath the surface of the plot, then, is the history of slavery, which informs the novel’s inscription of racialised rape as “a purely private matter,” as that which cannot be spoken in available public discourse. Slave women had little recourse to

¹⁰ See also Mohamed Adhikari, who argues that “the legacy of slavery was significant in shaping white domination in modern South Africa. The norms and values of the master-servant relationship and those governing interaction between black and white were first formulated under the influence of slavery in the south-western part of the Cape” (98).

¹¹ Shell’s argument is based on the shaky hypothesis that Cape slavery was of a milder order than its variants in the ‘New World’ (see van der Spuy 186). It is, however, possible to make use of his notion of “intimacy” without reiterating these flaws in his argument; intimacy does not necessarily imply a cosy proximity, but can equally suggest a terrifying one, as David’s Story shows.

the word “rape.”¹² Lucy’s voluntary silence reminds us of historical silences imposed by coercion, and of the production of slave bodies as the property of white men. Attention to gender allows such historical iterations and subtexts to emerge.

According to Stoler, “black peril” discourse proliferated across the British empire with “virtually no correlations [to] actual incidents of rape of European women by men of color” (58). What it did correlate to were “fear of insurgence, and of perceived nonacquiescence to colonial control more generally. Concern over protection of white women intensified during real and perceived crises of control” (58). The myth of the “black peril” legitimated violence against black men when settler power was unsettled, and reined in wayward women. At pertinent historical moments, white men exercised their property rights over white women’s bodies in order to enforce control over black men. “The myth of the Black rapist,” Angela Davis argues, “has been methodically conjured up whenever recurrent waves of violence and terror against the Black community have required convincing justifications” (173).

Significantly, in the American South the “myth of the Black rapist” and the concomitant rape of black women manifested themselves as *post-emancipatory* tactics to regain white control over black bodies recently freed from legal bondage: “emancipation meant that white men lost their vested interests in the body of the Negro [...] lynching and the rape of black women were attempts to regain control” (Carby 269). Rape and lynching were the means by which black Americans were regulated and controlled. The net cast by the “myth of the black rapist” fell also on white women: the “right of the Southern lady to protection presupposed her obligation to obey,” observes Jacquelyn Dowd Hall (64).¹³

The ideological work performed by the “black peril” is the very stuff of imperial fantasy de-mythologised in Coetzee’s earlier novel, Waiting for the Barbarians, where rape-scares are the topos of a charged frontier imagination:

¹² Writing of the pre-and post-antebellum American South, Moorti notes that the “argument forwarded was that a white man would not have to force a black woman to have sex, because she was always willing” (55; see also 204).

¹³ See also Sielke on the myth of the “black beast” violating the “white beauty” in the US South during the Reconstruction: it both legitimised ‘retaliation’ against black men through lynching and “inflicted a fear of

There is no woman living along the frontier who has not dreamt of a dark barbarian hand coming from under the bed to grip her ankle, no man who has not frightened himself with visions of barbarians carousing in his home, breaking the plates, setting fire to the curtains, raping his daughters.

(8)

If not the curtains, then in Disgrace it is David who is set on fire while three black men rape his daughter. What does it mean for Coetzee to actualise this frontier fear on the erstwhile Eastern Cape frontier? Is it a statement that the barbarians have indeed arrived? The answer resides in representation. Laden with irony, Disgrace returns to the earlier novel's task of dismantling the binaries of colonial discourse. If Lucy's rapists erupt into the text as the quintessential barbarians, the novel's more radical offering is to expose our urbane focaliser as equally barbarian. If we rub beneath the surface of David's free indirect speech, we find the profound double standard on which "black peril" scares operated, and the far more prevalent yet unspoken "white peril" Sol T. Plaatje bitterly pointed to in his 1921 pamphlet, "The Mote and the Beam: An Epic on Sex-Relationship 'twixt Black and White in British South Africa"(283).¹⁴ The experience of the women in Cape Town with whom David carries out his sexual relations recalls a time in which white men debauched black women with impunity. In the novel, this time has come to pass – David is hauled before a disciplinary committee for his actions – yet the past continues to shape the practice and rhetoric of rape, "haunt[ing] the political present."

Both Melanie and Soraya are cast by the history of slavery as sexualised women, a subject position, if we follow Judith Butler, performatively produced "through a ritualized repetition of norms" (Bodies x). Coetzee's understanding of 'race' as performative practice is evident in a comment made elsewhere, where the "'Coloured' community" is described as one "created by the common fate of being forced to behave [...] as 'Coloured'" (Stranger 253). Twice in the novel we see Melanie literally *performing* her racialised sexuality as coloured "meid" (192), that is, in the rehearsal and then the production of "Sunset at the Globe Salon" (23-24, 191).

rape that, like the threat of lynching, kept a subordinate group – women just in the process of fighting for suffrage – subjugated" (2).

David's performance of white masculinity is equally repetitive and ritualised. After watching Melanie's rehearsal of her role as coloured "meid," he "thrusts himself upon her" (24), ignoring her resistance:

'No, not now!', she says, struggling. [...]

But nothing will stop him. He carries her to the bedroom, [...] astonished by the feeling she evokes. Something to do with the apparition on the stage: the wig, the wiggling bottom, the crude talk. (25)

What follows is indistinguishable from rape (that is, non-consensual sexual intercourse), David's protestations to the contrary aside: "She does not resist. All she does is avert herself [...] Not rape, not quite that, but undesired nevertheless, undesired to the core" (25).

David's rapacious desire, the novel takes care to show, is stoked by Melanie's performance of gendered and raced subservience. Later, even after the rape of his daughter, Melanie's performance in "Sunset at the Globe Salon" still spurs David to think "*Mine!*" (191; emphasis in orig.). What takes place in Melanie's bedroom is an iterative performance, now off-stage, of the subjectivities forged under slavery: the inability to resist, the muted and unheard "no," and the claiming of possession ("*Mine!*") by the 'master.' The line Melanie delivers in her on-stage performance – "*My gats* ['My hole'], why must everything always be my fault?" (24) – resounds as the cry of slave women and their descendants, who have been produced as 'promiscuous' and 'wanton,' who have been subjectified as 'unrapable,' and have, therefore, always been subject to rape (see Scully *Liberating* 28). David, typically, misses the point, reading these as lascivious lines, or "crude talk," lubricating his desire (25).

When David is hauled before a disciplinary hearing convened to address Melanie's sexual harassment charge, one committee member, Farodia Rassool, insists that David recognise "the long history of exploitation of which [what transpired between him and Melanie] is a part" (35). Her words take on resonance in a reading that attends to

¹⁴ I am indebted to Lucy Graham for the reference to *Plaatje* (see "Yes" 5; "Reading" 437).

what Bhabha calls “the unspoken, unrepresented pasts that haunt the political present.”¹⁵ So, too, does David’s arrangement with the sex-worker, Soraya. Half of David’s remittance for his weekly appointment goes to Discrete Escorts who “own Soraya [...], this part of her, this function” (2; emphasis added). In the agency catalogue from which David selects her, Soraya is labelled “Exotic.” After her departure, David settles for a replacement, who has also taken the name Soraya, “a popular *nom de commerce*” (8), he concludes. Soraya thus functions as a category of woman: she is the “exotic” sex worker of white men’s orientalisising fantasies.

The sexual harassment and rape of Melanie, and the casting of Soraya as “exotic” operate within the same symbolic economy, and testify to the continued shaping of racialised sexuality and sexual abuse by the history of slavery. Referring to both South Africa and the US, Tanya Katerí Hernández argues that the over-representation of women of colour in sexual harassment cases, and the racial dynamics of sex tourism, have their roots in slavery, where slave women were constructed as objects of commerce (184-85). The “politics of the exotic,” to which David subscribes, produces women of colour as “inherently sexual” (Hernández 214). If David, our focaliser, insists on the innocuous nature of his relations with these women, the spatial locations of the text add layers of history to them, rendering them ominously vocal on the subject of what Plaatje incisively termed “the white peril” (283). David’s silence replicates, and thus draws attention to, a historical silence surrounding the actions of white men. Historian Pamela Scully, for instance, suggests that scholars might

fruitfully examine the silences that pertained to the sexual violence of white men against both white and black women and interrogate the constitution of the archives as productive of the historical subjects of the ‘violent slave man’ and the ‘sexual slave women.’ (“Rape” 356)

The unreliability of David’s focalisation of events is rendered explicit through his pointed silences and the historicising act of spatial setting. While recognising the

¹⁵ See Mark Sanders on Rassool’s comment as being an “invitat[ation to the] reader to interpret Lurie’s acts as *historical*” (“Disgrace”: 370; emphasis in orig.)

violence performed on his daughter's body as rape (and being the one to name it as rape), he is fundamentally unable to categorise himself as a rapist. David elides and displaces his acts of sexual exploitation. To his mind, violence inheres only in the black rapists and is erased from his trysts. While he does not recognise the echoes between his actions and those of the rapists, the language of the text alerts us to them, as do its carefully placed silences, which produce an acoustic space in which such echoes can be heard. The women – Melanie and Lucy – experience their violations in notably similar terms. Despite himself, David admits that during his “almost” rape of Melanie it was “As though she had decided to go slack, die within herself for the duration, like a rabbit when the jaws of a fox close on its neck” (25). After her rape by the “jackal-boy” (202), Lucy describes herself as “a dead person” (161).

Lucy's refusal to say more than this allows other submerged texts to surface, such as Melanie's experience of her 'seduction' as a rape. What Lucy's silence does not silence, then, is “the long history of exploitation” experienced by black women. Grappling with the racialisation of rape, Disgrace subverts through iteration the discursive construct described by Angela Davis in which the image of the black woman as lascivious finds its conceptual counterpart in the “myth of the Black rapist.” This myth, says Maud Ellman, “is an ‘inversion’ of the historical fact that black slave women were regularly raped by their white owners” (42).

Lucy's rape accrues meaning not only in terms of race, but also in terms of sexuality: not only is she a white woman raped by black men, but she is also a gay woman raped in a violent reassertion of what Adrienne Rich has termed “compulsory heterosexuality” (“Compulsory” 632). As David ponders, “Did they know what they were up to, those men? Had the word got around?” (105). The laws of exogamy and descent construct women as vessel for the patriarchal line and the gift that may or may not be exchanged between men, or, in Driver's words, “the coin that establishes connection between different groups, sometimes spent, sometimes hoarded, sometimes stolen” (“Women” 461). These social laws secure racial boundaries and enforce the heterosexual imperative. The two are closely bound, according to Butler: “compulsory heterosexuality works in the service of maintaining hegemonic forms of racial purity” (Bodies 18).

The (un)spoken response to her rape Coetzee grants Lucy may be read as an attempt to negotiate the treacherous ground of a patriarchal society that names woman as the fundamental unit of exchange or foundational gift, that is polarised along racial lines, and that is decidedly rape-prone. Her police report studiously avoids all reference to rape and race: "There were three men, she recites, or two men and a boy. They tricked their way into the house, took (she lists the items) money, clothes, a television set, a CD player, a rifle with ammunition" (108). David is confounded by her refusal to tell what he calls "the whole story" (110). But is not the elision in her narrative an attempt to evade the inscription of her as white woman within a racialised patriarchy? By detailing only the theft of property and not that of her bodily integrity, Lucy drives a wedge between her body and property. Excising her body from the list of property stolen, she both highlights and refuses the construction of white women's bodies as "property to be defended" through the ritualised "black peril" panics, which cast black men as rapists, white men as protectors, and white women as bounty (Etherington 36). Reciting her lines on what has been stolen, she eludes the script that would cast her as the object of theft.

Her silence constitutes a refusal to contribute to the ideological work performed by the circulation of the "myth of the black rapist."¹⁶ Thus Lucy's refusal to press charges may not be the abject script some have suggested it is.¹⁷ To speak her rape – *in this time, at this place* – would encode her body as the property of white men, to be used to "circumscribe the actions of black males" (Carby 210). This is the subtext of Lucy's reminder to David, when he wishes "to have [...] it out with Petrus" as in the "old days [when] one could have had it out to the extent of losing one's temper and sending him packing" (116): Petrus "is not some hired labourer whom I can sack because in my opinion he is mixed up with the wrong people. That's all gone, *gone with the wind*" (133;

¹⁶ Alice Walker's short story, "Advancing Luna ... and Ida B. Wells," is a salient intertext here, as Mary Eagleton shows (see 191-95). Writing of "Advancing Luna" and *A Passage to India*, Ellman notes that "Adela's words almost destroy Aziz, and terrorize the Indian community; while Luna's words are tantamount to genocide. Given these powers of destruction, it is not surprising that these women resort to silence" (44-45).

¹⁷ See, particularly, Athol Fugard's comments on the novel (qtd. in Marais 32) and Michael Marais's convincing retort that the "reading of Lucy Lurie's abasement is staged as a misreading *in* the novel" (33; emphasis in orig.). In a reading attentive to the gender implications of Lucy's silence, Elleke Boehmer concludes by registering her disappointment that "the woman – the white Lucy, or indeed the black wife of Petrus – is as ever biting her lip" ("Not" 350). Boehmer's reading marks the limits of the approach taken here.

emphasis added). Thus Lucy rejects the quintessential white woman's role of Scarlet O'Hara.¹⁸

The attempt to evade what Gayle Rubin calls the "traffic in women" is evident in Lucy's sexuality and emerges again at Petrus's party, when she presents his wife with a gift: an Ashanti-design bedspread. This gesture sees her asserting her status as giver rather than gift. Coetzee thus has Lucy gesture towards another possible world that feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray speculates about in "When the Goods Get Together": "*But what if the 'goods' refused to go to market? What if they maintained among themselves 'another' kind of trade?*" (110; emphasis in orig.). In the act of giving, Lucy attempts to negotiate a relationship with another woman that is embedded in Africa and subtly suggestive of sexual love.

Writing elsewhere of rape in South Africa, Coetzee has referred to the work of anthropologist Peggy Reeves Sanday, who distinguishes between rape-prone and rape-free societies (see *Giving* 246n27). Unlike David, who seems to concur with "the familiar assumption that male nature is programmed for rape," *Disgrace* follows Sanday in positing rape as "an act that illuminates a larger social scenario" ("Social" 540). In rape-prone societies, claims Sanday, "the theme of the dominant male group [may be] joined with a system of economic exchange in which men act as exchange agents and women comprise the medium of exchange" ("Socio-cultural" 15). In rape-free societies, in contrast, "women are treated with considerable respect. Prestige is granted to female reproductive and productive roles" ("Social" 542). Sanday identifies the Ashanti as an exemplary rape-free society. Ashanti matrilineal social organisation, she argues, offers an alternative model to that of Christian cosmology, which relegates women to the position of Eve or Mary: sinning mother of humanity or holy but empty vessel for the deity's seed – or, for that matter, to relate it to our context, southern African patriarchies, whose gendered values are evidenced, in the novel, by Petrus's stated preference for sons (130). Among the Ashanti, according to Sanday, women are valued as 'sole contributors' to future generations. Lucy's gift thus expresses a yearning for a world in which she would not be prey to rape and in which Petrus's wife would not be positioned as vessel for the patrilineal line and, concomitantly, carrier of sons. While David urges her to flee her rape

¹⁸ See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick on rape and race in *Gone with the Wind* (8-10).

by leaving Africa, Lucy's gift points to ways of living in "this place" that do not expose women to violence.

However, "in this time," in which racial power and privilege persists, the novel shows that Lucy's gesture is, for now, doomed to fail. As Mark Sanders observes, Disgrace "denies itself and its reader the capacity to say: these acts and events are over" ("Disgrace" 371). Hence Petrus's proclamation on receipt of the gift: "Lucy is our benefactor" (129). "A distasteful word," as David recognises, "double-edged, souring the moment" (129). Attempting to evade being the gift, through acts of giving, Lucy resists the term of 'woman' in the construction of 'white woman,' but reiterates the power of whiteness by taking the stance of 'benefactor.'

Chirevo V. Kwenda argues that the post-apartheid re-construction of civil society depends on both giving *and* receiving. He shifts the ethical focus from "give and take" ("a kind of giving which refuses to receive but takes what it wants by force or guile" [10]). The "'sin'" of patronage – or the stance of the benefactor – Kwenda declares, "is not *that* it gives, but that it *only* gives; it does not receive" (1; emphasis in orig.). To give without receiving, Kwenda proposes, is effectively to take; as a refusal of reciprocity, it constitutes an act of domination. This is the colonial relationship, in which "the conquerors of southern Africa cling to a cultural stylistic of spurning hospitality while taking what they want" (4). And it is one that finds its uncanny reverberations in the rape 'visited' upon Lucy, where the rapists 'take what they want' and give what Lucy has not asked for but which she will nonetheless accept as gift, her awaited child. Receiving the child, preparing to love it, Lucy begins to forge a new ethic of hospitality. But it is one limited by the violence in which it is wrought.

Kwenda suggests that a reconstituted ethic of hospitality needs to recognise the uncanny and abjected stranger within. Njabulo S. Ndebele takes up this ethical project in The Cry of Winnie Mandela, discussed in Chapter Six. Disgrace is also engaged with the ethic of hospitality, as it portrays a terrifying mutation in which the rapists, who arrive as 'visitors,' like the three wild geese, force themselves into Lucy's home, and into her body; David's daughter is "in the hands of strangers" (94). "Who are the guests? Who are kin? Who are the strangers and the invaders?" asks Rita Barnard, who concludes that "A crisis of definitions, relationships, and responsibilities lies at the heart of Coetzee's

troubling new novel” (385). The “distinction between strangers and kin” is “under threat of collapse,” “confounded as it is by the act of rape” (Barnard 389). Disgrace undoes such distinctions in order to create the possibility for their reconfiguration. While it begins to reconstitute a discourse of hospitality – in David’s new relationship to his daughter as a visitor (218), for instance, or in Lucy’s ‘giving up’ of her land – the time and place militates against this, revealing the impossibility of gift giving and receiving outside dominating structures, both racialised and gendered.

Disgrace’s attention falls not only on the continuities of racial privilege, but also on the continuities and transmutations of androcentric power in an era of political transition. If, as lesbian, Lucy has attempted to step outside masculine claims of proprietorship over female bodies, the double bind imposed on her by ‘inter-racial’ rape “in this time, at this place” re-articulates the impossibility of escaping from the proprietorial power that thrust itself into her body. Even while evading the white woman’s script in response to rape, Lucy is still forced to seek male protection, from Petrus if not her father, while what Petrus offers can hardly be termed hospitality: when they visit his home, Petrus “does not play the eager host” (129), and his new house “cast[s] a long shadow” over Lucy’s dwelling (197).

Lucy’s refusal to speak or describe her rape asserts both belonging in, and radical alterity to, the new social order being forged: belonging to a society in which rape will cease to be read within a racialised discourse, and alterity from one in which a new patriarchy is being forged out of the detritus of the old. In “Speech and Silence in the Fictions of J. M. Coetzee,” Benita Parry notes that in Coetzee’s earlier novels (published in and before 1994), speech is invested in white women (Magda, Susan Barton and Mrs Curren), in contrast to the “scripted silence of the lowly and the outcast” (Friday, in particular, whose story is described as “a hole in the narrative” [Foe 121]). She points to Coetzee’s comment in White Writing about “‘the baffling and silencing of any counter-voice to the farmer / father’ (WW: 135) in the South African farm romance” as that which his fictions register and repeat (158). While Parry remains critical of Coetzee’s strategy of ‘repeating’ a colonial “silencing of the other” (158), what is of interest to me is the evident shift from the earlier fiction that her comments allow us to chart.

In Disgrace it is Lucy's story that is unspoken *and* unspeakable (Petrus's unspoken story *could* be spoken, suggests the novel, though preferably not in English [117]). Thus, while the novel allows us to read Lucy's response to the rape as disabling "black peril" myths, it equally allows us to read Petrus as the new "farmer / father," who silences the counter-voices of women. On David's return to Lucy's house, he finds that Petrus has "erected" (the verb is carefully chosen, no doubt) a wire fence to mark the boundary of his land, in an expressive gesture of private ownership that contrasts with Lucy's shift from ownership to 'giving up' her land (197). Turning back to Lucy as silent subject, we are shown, flitting across the silence of rape, one patriarchy replacing another.

Pointing to the nightmarish quality of a 'time and place' that has not yet ended, the novel leaves us to ponder what forms life will take in times to come. Until then, we are shown a world uncomfortably familiar. While the novel offers murmurings of 'another time and place' in which things would be otherwise, such as that signified in Lucy's gift, these murmurings cannot yet be spoken. Nor can Lucy speak her rape. At the same time, Disgrace measures the costs of women's silence on rape. Melanie, in the wake of her declaration that she has been sexually harassed, is "altogether more sure of herself than before" (191); Lucy, who remains silent, is pasty and wan when David returns to Salem.

Conclusion:

David's Story and Disgrace present violence against women as (un)spoken. Doing so, they probe not only the unspeakability of rape, but also the ways in which rape is heard in prevailing discourse. If Dulcie cried 'rape,' she would run the risk of compromising the cause for which she has fought and the revolutionary subjectivity she has crafted for herself as militant woman. If Lucy spoke 'rape,' she would be heard as a white woman circulating in a racialised system of exchange, requiring white male protection, rather than asserting her right to bodily integrity and autonomy. The silences of both narratives proffer a powerful reminder of what has long been silenced during the anti-apartheid struggle: the psychic and sexual victimisation of black women. Both suggest, also, that

the racial violence of the past has mutated, in the transitional present, into violence against women.

Charting the (un)spoken, the novels forgo also a discourse of closure; each traces forms of “recursion” between past and present in terms of both race and gender. As Heidi Grunebaum-Ralph suggests, acts of witnessing presented as “a perpetual speaking of unspeakability [...] may be unable to reach closure” (18). Teleological plotting is thus forsaken in both novels. Happy endings, Wicomb’s narrative shows, require the swatting aside of the (un)spoken subtexts that haunt the political present.

CHAPTER FIVE – THE MOTHER-WITNESS: MOTHER TO MOTHER, BLOODLINES AND OUR GENERATION

Introduction

The task is not whether to repeat, but how to repeat or, indeed, to repeat, and through a radical proliferation of gender, to displace the very gender norms that enable the repetition itself

--- Judith Butler, Gender Trouble 148.

The figure of the mother is a highly charged one in nationalist discourse, and is the most stereotypical role in which women find themselves cast. The opening chapters of this thesis have shown how it is the subject position into which the diversity of women is written. Women inhabiting the transitional present were again produced as mothers, this time as mother-witnesses, by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the chief nation-building technology of the transition.¹ The role of the mother-witness was performed by women testifying to the loss of their children, which in turn produced a dominant national narrative of sacrificial-redemption. Yet motherhood is also a subject position that grants considerable power to women. It thus provides an arena in which to explore the unstable space between subjecthood and subjection, or, in the terms established in the previous chapter, ‘voice’ and ‘silence.’

In this chapter, I analyse re-stagings of the mother-witness in three narratives written by women in the wake of the TRC: Sindiwe Magona’s Mother to Mother (1998), Elleke Boehmer’s Bloodlines (2000) and Zubeida Jaffer’s Our Generation (2003). The two novels – Mother to Mother and Bloodlines – present similar scenarios. Both feature a woman bearing witness on behalf of her son, who has perpetrated acts of violence from the position of the dispossessed. While engaging with the TRC’s thematic of bearing witness, forging reconciliation and promoting (national) healing, they locate the act of witnessing outside TRC structures through both content and form. Magona’s protagonist bears witness to the mother of the child her son has slain, Boehmer’s to the lover of her

¹ I focus here on two intersecting aspects of the TRC: its production of gendered norms and its redemptive scripting of history. For commentary on other aspects of its work, see essays in Wilmot James and Linda van der Vijver’s After the TRC and in Deborah Posel and Graeme Simpson’s Commissioning the Past, as well as the seven volume Final Report; Antjie Krog’s personal reflections of her experience of covering the hearings for national radio in Country of My Skull offers a useful introduction to the TRC’s aims and processes.

son's victim; neither directly address the nation, or the TRC.

Magona writes from a close sense of identification with the fictional witnessing mother,² while Boehmer does so from across the racial divide as she, a white woman, imagines the agonies of witnessing experienced by a coloured protagonist. Jaffer's memoir represents her own appearance before the TRC in the Special Women's Hearings – which sought to tell the story of women submerged in other TRC forums. The memoir presents itself as the testimony she was unable to tell within the structures of the TRC, or even the Women's Hearings. Seeking to fuse the identities of 'mother' and 'activist,' she achieves this feat only within the pages of the memoir.

Producing and Performing Maternity in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Truth commissions are not [...] mere conduits for stories; rather they wield an important influence on which stories are told and how they are to be interpreted. Thus they both produce and are produced by grand national narratives, and must be understood in the particular context(s) in which they emerge and the particular goals, either implicit or explicit, which guide their work.

--- Molly Andrews, "Grand National Narratives and the Project of Truth Commissions" 46.

Women comprised the majority of testifiers at the TRC's Human Rights Hearings. As they testified, they not only bore witness to the nation's traumatic past but also performed gendered subjectivities. These were overwhelmingly those of mothers and wives. The latter are the focus of the following chapter; here I attend to the figure of the mother-witness. Women were cast in this role through the TRC's narrow definition of "victimhood" and "harm." Limiting its focus to embodied harms, the TRC excluded the

² Magona claims that her motivation for writing the novel arose from her identification with Evelyn Manqina, fictionalised as Mandisa in Mother to Mother. Manqina and Magona grew up together and the author is thus keenly aware of the conditions of Manqina / Mandisa's existence: "I know what kind of a life she must have had as a poor African woman. Because that's a situation I have been in ... And I imagined the rest of her life. The horror, the poverty" ("Interview" 284-85). Her acute sense of having narrowly escaped this fate – "it could so easily have happened to me" ("Interview" 287) – adds an empathetic dimension to the fictional recreation of her childhood friend's story. Additionally, as I have argued elsewhere, Magona excavates the details of Mandisa's childhood from her own autobiography, recounted in To My Children's Children, such that the story of Mandisa's early years is, in effect, Magona's story ("Reading" 227-28, 242n2).

more quotidian harms experienced by women and men on a day-to-day basis, and attended instead to heroic acts of resistance and their violent suppression.³ As the previous chapter noted, the story of the harms suffered by women was largely reduced to that of sexual violence. Fiona C. Ross, who observed patterns of witnessing during the first twelve weeks of hearings, found that a mere fourteen per cent of women testified to their own experiences of apartheid violations while an overwhelming forty per cent testified on behalf of their sons (17). The TRC acknowledged that “this pattern” in which “women spoke as relatives and dependants” while “men spoke as direct victims [...] persisted over the full period of the hearings” (4:10 par. 6).

The TRC’s production of ‘woman’ as the mother-witness was both constraining and enabling.⁴ It presented women with a subject position from which to speak, while that speaking voice was always already produced as that of the suffering mother. At the same time, it consolidated a grand national narrative of sacrifice and redemption, and underwrote its goals of reconciliation and nation building. The aim of this chapter is to trace how the iterative performativity of the subject position mother-witness both reproduces *and* subverts the grand narrative of nationalism.

As a public theatre of memorialisation and the re-making of nationhood, the TRC provides a compelling arena in which to explore the subjectification of the mother-witness in performance. My reading of it as such makes use of Judith Butler’s theorising of gender as a “ritualized repetition of norms” (*Bodies* x). Butler initiates her enquiry with Michel Foucault’s insight that “judicial systems of power *produce* the subjects they subsequently come to represent” (*Gender* 2; emphasis in orig.). As a ritual venue for national mourning, the TRC was equally a theatre in which national subjectivity was produced through the performance of testimony.

The gender norms of the TRC interpellated women as secondary victims bearing

³ Reporting on the landmark conference, “The TRC: Commissioning the Past” (1999), Katie Mooney notes that “most contributors agreed that the TRC’s discourse of ‘gross human rights’ violations and upholding of the perpetrator-victim dichotomy contributed to the TRC’s inability to deal sensitively with the experience of black women under apartheid both at the TRC hearings as well as in the TRC report” (216).

⁴ See Julie Peteet’s “Icons and Maidens” for a comparable case study to the South African one that focuses on Palestinian women. Peteet “investigate[s] how the practice of maternal activism and the discourse of sacrifice carved out a space of political validation” and claims that the discourse and practice of maternity has been “mobilized to empower and constrain women” (104). She concludes that mothering grants “agency but simultaneously embodies and delimits its space and meaning” (127).

witness to the loss of others; “hailed” as mothers, women who answered to the call of this subject position were offered a platform from which to address the nation.⁵ The TRC’s production of the mother-witness enabled women to become the subjects of discourse – to take to the stand and ‘make history’ through bearing witness – at the same time as it subjected them to the gendered norms of what Adrienne Rich calls the “institution of motherhood” (Woman 13). Speaking of this “paradox of subjectification,” in which subjectivity is produced through subjection to a set of regulatory norms, Butler argues that “this constitutive constraint [...] locate[s] agency as a reiterative or rearticulatory practice, immanent to power, and not a relation of external opposition to power” (Psychic 83, Bodies 15).⁶ Returning us to the issue of complicity explored in earlier chapters, she suggests that the “subject might yet be thought as deriving its agency from precisely the power it opposes, as awkward and embarrassing as such a formulation might be” (Psychic 17).

If the possibility of agency is located in “reiterative or rearticulatory practice,” the question becomes not one of whether to repeat, but one of how to repeat *and displace*, as Butler claims in the extract quoted in my opening epigraph. Butler refutes the efficacy of stepping outside the subject position into which one has been interpellated in search of agency; to do so would be to step outside of subjecthood and forego the possibility of agency altogether. Agency is located in the iterability of the subject position into and through which one has been produced. Thus, rather than turning from nationalism’s favoured female figure – the mother – I focus on three texts that re-present mothers as witnesses, while enfolding their plots with those of the TRC. Assuming the subject position of motherhood and offering witness from it, as did the majority of female testifiers at the Human Rights Violation Hearings, they operate in a space both constrained and unstable. In the act of repetition, the fictional characters and autobiographical selves of these texts fluctuate between co-option and subversion, between what we might want to call ‘voice’ and ‘silence.’

The instability generated in these fluctuations destabilises the subject position of

⁵ See Louis Althusser on the interpellation or “hailing” of the subject (170-77).

⁶ Butler expands on the paradox as follows: “The term ‘subjectification’ carries the paradox in itself: *assujettissement* denotes both the becoming of the subject and the process of subjectification – one inhabits the figure of autonomy only by becoming subjected to a power” (Psychic 83).

the mother-witness. Butler's thesis is that gender – in this case the gendered identity of motherhood – is a stable category only in so far as it is performatively constituted as such. The possibility for subversion lies not outside subjectification but in the instabilities of performance, which always threaten to stage disruption alongside consolidation:

it is only *within* the practices of repetitive signifying that a subversion of identity becomes possible. The injunction *to be* a particular gender produces necessary failures, a variety of incoherent configurations that in their multiplicity exceed and defy the injunction by which they are generated. (Gender 145; emphases in orig.)

The nationalist injunction to women is to be the mother. What failures, slippages and incoherent configurations emerge from the performance and proliferation of the mother-witness in the texts considered here? And, what are the effects on the national symbolic when subjectification is “destabilized in the course of [...] reiteration” (Bodies 10)? Is the sacrificial-redemptive national narrative itself subverted? These questions are explored in the following pages.

The national narrative, producing, and in turn produced by, the mother-witness, is a teleological narrative of sacrifice and loss that culminates in redemption and healing. The TRC was saturated with theological, particularly Christian discourse (see Chidester 134-35), which consolidated the national narrative and inflected the production of gender: women bearing witness on behalf of their sons were absorbed into imagery of the mourning mother of Christ – the Mater Dolorosa or Mother of Sorrows.⁷ The image of the weeping mother became visual shorthand for the TRC. As in biblical tradition, women enter the story of the past through their tears. Invested in the biblical narrative, the TRC reiterates its “identification of maternal speech with maternal suffering”: “only the woman of sorrow, bound in a uniquely painful relation with her offspring, may give tongue” (Bruzelius 216, 217). The Mater Dolorosa's “power as speaking mother,” notes

⁷ On the Mater Dolorosa in biblical tradition, see Marina Warner (Alone 206-23). Mark Sanders offers a pre-Christian, classical Greek reading of female testimony in the TRC made with reference to Antigone (“Ambiguities” 116). His argument is useful. However, as Antigone bears witness as a sister not a mother, I find it unable to account fully for the phenomena of the mother-witness.

Margaret Bruzelius, “is inaugurated by her tears” (218). Similarly, within the TRC, the tearful act of bearing witness became the mode of performance through which women gained a ‘voice,’ and female testifiers were conventionally depicted weeping.

Subjected to the gender ideal of the *Mater Dolorosa*, women were able to enter and speak within the public realm while being produced as passive, weeping, secondary victims, and producing national history – the narrative of the sacrificial son – as redemptive. Ross notes that in the Human Rights Violations Hearings

the experience of violation was often recast as ‘sacrifice.’ [...] Women testifiers were thanked for the ‘sacrifice’ of their dead or injured kin and told that their sacrifices [...] had redemptive power for the national body. Suffering and sacrifice, heavily predicated on a Christian model, were depicted as constitutive of the foundational order of ‘the new South Africa.’ (154)⁸

Thus did the TRC influence the kinds of stories told within its structures and, as importantly, the modes of telling. And, thus did it shape both the subjects who bore witness before it and the nation produced during its hearings. The moral framework in which the TRC worked, and the closure sought in its rendition of the past, depends on the gendered subjectivities it produced and represented. The Christian subtext of the mother-son pairing underwrote the national narrative of sacrifice leading to redemption.

Mother and son play divergent roles within this story of suffering and rebirth. The son’s role is to offer himself as willing sacrifice to the redemptive cause; the mother’s is to bear witness to the son through her tears, symbolising, in his absence, his sacrifice, and the regeneration that will follow in its wake. According to Marina Warner’s influential study of the cult of the Virgin Mary:

⁸ Mariatte C. Denman notes a similar phenomenon in acts of memorialisation in post-war Germany, that likewise depend on the representation of women as *Mater Dolorosa* (see particularly 191 and 199). Another pertinent comparison is provided by the *Madres de la Plaza de Mayo* of Argentina. Brandon Hamber and Richard Wilson’s comments on the *Madres* are revealing in terms of the divergence from the dominant forms of maternal witnessing in transitional South Africa that they pinpoint: “The *Madres* did not accept the sacrifice of their children or husbands for the new civilian order. They refused to be embodied symbols of the contrast between the old repressive regime and the new benevolent political order” (10).

Mary's tears do not simply flow in sorrow at the historical event of the Crucifixion, a mother's grief at the death of her child. They course down her cheeks as a symbol of the purifying sacrifice of the Cross, which washes sinners of all stain and gives them new life. [... The] tears that gush from her eyes belong to a universal language of cleansing and rebirth. (Alone 222-23)

In the TRC, meaning was bestowed on individual suffering and loss by inserting it into a teleological narrative of sacrificial national liberation that "created heroes and martyrs in a new mythology of the state" (Wilson 110). The narrative consolidated in the production and performance of the mother-witness culminates in forgiveness, reconciliation and national unity. Reading its reiteration and proliferation across three post-TRC texts, I explore instances in which it is subverted and substantiated.

Virgin-Mother and "Sister-Mother": Sindiwe Magona's *Mother to Mother*⁹

Called by an injurious name, I come into social being [; ...] only by occupying – being occupied by – that injurious term can I resist and oppose it

--- Judith Butler, The Psychic Life of Power 105.

Mother to Mother is loosely based on the killing of American student, Amy Biehl, in Guguletu in August 1993. Given the media coverage of Biehl's death, her story is by now a familiar one. Magona's sensitive account is unique in its attention to the seldom-glimpsed world of the fictionalised killer's mother, who traces her life-story as she reveals the formation of her son as killer. Four youths were convicted and later granted amnesty for Biehl's death; in the novel there is just one killer, Mxolisi, based on Mongezi Manqina, whose story is told by his mother, Mandisa, in an extended "lament" addressed to the mother of the slain (1). Mandisa's anomalous conception of Mxolisi – a virgin birth – locates the lament with which Magona opens the novel within the tradition of the Mater Dolorosa.

⁹ I have published parts of the argument presented in this section, in an earlier form, in "The Mother as Witness."

The exceptional conception takes place when the young Mandisa is “jumped into” while practising non-penetrative sexual play (112). On examination, her hymen is found to be intact. Mandisa’s conception is situated in the religious register when it is likened to the Virgin Mary’s conception of Christ. The allusion is established when the discovery of Mandisa’s pregnancy follows close upon the unexpected conception of her aunt, which is heralded as “Biblical Elizabeth’s story all over again (103). In biblical tradition, the late-in-life conception by Elizabeth, sister of Mary, preceded the miraculous one by her sister.

Magona employs the virgin birth motif to grapple with, rather than underwrite, a discourse of sacrifice, of which she is profoundly suspicious. Speaking of her novel and the milieu in which it is set, she bemoans the squandered future of the youth who formed the vanguard of the struggle: “To allow children, to let our children sacrifice so much, who is going to ever give them that back?” she asks (“Interview” 290). In an iterative performance of the Mater Dolorosa – gestured to in the virgin mother motif and Mandisa’s mode of address, the lament – Magona subverts the production of both women and the official narrative of national history. At the same time by marking Mandisa’s son the issue of a virgin birth (and thus a saviour figure), she simultaneously deconstructs the stark oppositions of the past reproduced in the TRC’s bifurcating logic of perpetrator and victim. Instead, Magona explores what Deborah Posel and Graeme Simpson identify as the “moral ambiguities” and “complexities of social causation” foreclosed in the TRC’s dependence on binary structures (10). *Mother to Mother* thus offers a more nuanced picture of the past than that emerging from the confines of the TRC’s quasi-judicial, quasi-religious, nation-building mandate. Furthermore, laying bare Mandisa’s unhappy experiences as virgin-mother, it de-romanticises the archetype that cast its shadow over the TRC.

The narrative focus on Mandisa as virgin-mother addresses two central critiques levelled against the TRC: the Centre for Applied Legal Studies’ (CALS) submission (prepared by Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjes) that highlighted its inscription of women as secondary victims, and Mahmood Mamdani’s claim that its focus on perpetrator and victim produced a “diminished truth” established through “narrow lenses” (“Diminished” 58, 59). This “diminished truth” failed to expose the systemic violence of apartheid that struck at “entire communities” (59; see also Bundy 18-19). Drawing on

Njabulo S. Ndebele's Rediscovery of the Ordinary (discussed further in the following chapter), which pre-dates the TRC, I argue that the elision pointed to in both these critiques is the realm of the "ordinary" (Rediscovery 37).¹⁰

Magona's narrative device of the remembering mother fleshes out the story of the past in memories that focus on the 'everyday'; Mandisa's story becomes a liturgy of the "ordinary" violence inflicted on her being by *both* the apartheid state and local patriarchies.¹¹ The accumulation of 'everyday' horrors in her narrative bears out the claim made in the CALS submission:

The history of apartheid, just as it can be told by a man tortured in detention, could be told by almost any black woman in describing her life. It would be a tale of families torn apart, land taken away, schooling denied, movement and speech curtailed, of fear, harassment and poverty. (Goldblatt and Meintjes, "Women" 3)

The gendered impact of apartheid is most keenly felt in apartheid legislation and practice surrounding group areas, forced removals, migrant labour and the limiting of employment opportunities according to gender.

The TRC's focus on what Ndebele would call "spectacular" bifurcated conflict (Rediscovery 50) – the conflict between comrades and security police – thus wrote women's experiences of apartheid out of the national history it fashioned. Working within the assigned position of the mother-witness, Magona inserts her character into a subject position that authorises women's speech but limits its authority to the domestic domain. Subverting through repeating this constraining and enabling position, she reinscribes women's stories of violation by rendering visible the "ordinary" structural violence underpinning the "spectacular" event of Biehl's death.

Mandisa's 'testimony' becomes an act through which she both reconstitutes her own subjectivity and the community shattered by systemic apartheid. Like the TRC, the

¹⁰ Ross also draws on Ndebele to present a similar argument (see 140-41).

¹¹ Elsewhere, Magona says that she does not write about "the heroes of the struggle," but focuses on the "ordinary men, women and children, under the yoke of apartheid and trying in their quiet ways to lead ordinary human lives" ("Stories" 176).

narrative proposes the humanist values of *ubuntu* as central to the reconstruction of post-apartheid South Africa.¹² However, Mandisa's troubled maternal identity – foregrounded in the virgin-mother trope – resists a temptation to idealise communal values *tout force*. Instead, the systemic, “ordinary” violence of apartheid is persistently likened to that inflicted on the gendered self from within the family and community.

Realising the impact that her child – born into the patriarchal institution of motherhood – will have on her life, Mandisa states: “Everything I had ever known had been *bulldozed*, extinguished, pulverized. Everything was no more” (114; emphasis added). Her suggestive metaphor links the cataclysm of Mxolisi's conception to that of the forced removals that marred her youth and fragmented the idyllic community of her childhood. But, if the fragmentation of community is held responsible for many of her woes, so, too, is the patriarchal clan, the basic unit out of which communities are constructed. While indicting apartheid, Mandisa's story does not shy away from a critique of patriarchy in its various manifestations. It reveals the gendered schisms and faultlines in romanticised notions of communal unity.

Rather than being the occasion of untold joy, Mandisa's virgin birth inserts her into a relentless cycle of poverty, deprivation and loss of self. The narrative draws sharp distinctions between the experience and the institution of motherhood.¹³ Mandisa initially greets the foetus quickening inside her with a “wide, wide smile in [her] heart” (113). But, faced with her mother's reproof, this smile is fast replaced with “Fear. Shame. Anger” (113) and, later, hatred (127), as she realises that her son's birth will bring her life to “an abrupt halt” (114). The patriarchies of apartheid, the clan and the church (perpetuated also by her mother) have aligned themselves against her, rendering the effects of her premature pregnancy far-reaching and permanent.

Although her immediate family first agree that she be allowed to continue her schooling, her father later retracts this concession, when his clan insists that Mandisa marry the father of the child, and renounce her own aspirations. This decision will henceforth dictate her existence and consign her to domestic labour without the scholastic

¹² See Samuelson for a discussion of the re-establishment of community in the novel's concluding chapters (“Mother” 141-43).

¹³ This distinction has been noted and theorised by Rich in *Of Woman Born: Mother as Experience and Institution*.

qualifications necessary to escape this pervasive trap. The virgin-mother trope thus functions as a devastating indictment of communal values that prove inflexible to the female individual when her father insists she sacrifice her sense of self – “the me that I was ... and the me I would have become” (2) – for the sake of clan negotiations. As she states with chilling finality:

it was brought home to me what turmoil the coming of this child had brought into my life. Were it not for him, of course, I would still be in school. Instead I was forced into being a wife, forever abandoning my dreams, hopes and aspirations. For ever. (132-3)

Magona thus employs the trope of virgin-mother, in which the girl-woman is stripped of her sense of self through unplanned pregnancy, to reflect on the constricting of women’s subjecthood by their “hailing” as mother within the patriarchal institution. As Dorothy Driver has found in another context – the Black Consciousness era of the 1970s and 1980s – “the call of *ubuntu* has placed a constraining hand on the development of aspects of self that cannot be justified by their link with the idea of family” (“M’a-Ngoana” 249). In the transitional era of witnessing, some feared that the TRC’s production of women as “grieving mothers” threatened to reduce them to the status of “mere ‘vessels of reproduction’” (Olckers 65). Mandisa’s performative reiteration of this subject position highlights this danger and offers a powerful critique of patriarchal structures that position women as vessel for the patrilineal line. The *excess* of her gender performance in the novel – which stages a literal virgin birth, as she acts out the archetype of Mater Dolorosa – destabilises the gender norms that produce it. Her iterative impersonation of the ideal woman – the Virgin Mary – subverts the gender norms that locate women’s voices within domestic roles. And her relegation to the domestic sphere as exploited domestic worker following the life-shattering impact of her virgin birth does not permit us to romanticise this sphere.

Mandisa’s act of witnessing is one that, though ostensibly centred on her son, provides an occasion to tell her own story, as she takes up the authorising subject position of the mother-witness. The witnessing stance taken up by this virgin-mother gestures not

only to the archetype of the *Mater Dolorosa* but also to the story of the girl-woman. By the close of the narrative, we have traced Mandisa's life story from early childhood until the hours before Mxolisi's arrest. No such sustained narrative attention is paid to the son. Rather than centring Mandisa on her son, the virgin-mother trope creates fluidity between her subject positions as mother and girl-child, and enables the narrating voice to fluctuate between these, placing her life story centre stage.

Mandisa's account is thus similar to those of many women testifying before the TRC: ostensibly documenting the "spectacular" violence enacted upon their kin, these women simultaneously describe "the penetration of violence into everyday life" (Ross 48). Their agency inheres in the acceptance of a subjectivity into which they have been "hailed"; their performance of this subjectivity destabilises the gender norms producing them and produced by their taking up of motherhood as a position from which to speak. The gender norms surrounding motherhood are ones of self-effacement, which are subverted when women, enabled to speak through their relationship to a son, turn to speak of their own experiences, or represent a loss of self consequent on the birth of a son.

The turn to the gendered self is also a turn away from the national allegory encapsulated in the figure of the sacrificial son. Instead of standing in for the nation – as symbolic Mother of the Nation – the mother of this novel, to quote Boehmer, "expresses deep bitterness at the nationalist rhetoric that has engulfed her son" ("Without" 161). When Mandisa, in exasperation, breaks her name into syllables – "MA – NDI – SA" – she both points to schisms between black and white woman (the white 'madam' who claims that her name is unpronounceable) and inserts her personal pronoun or 'I' (ndi-) between the terms 'Mother' (Ma) and 'Nation' (SA), pushing them asunder to foreground the self muted in the formula 'mother of the nation,' and within the TRC's production of women as the mother-witness (20).

The 'I' that splits asunder the maternal self and the nation turns then to produce itself in an inter-subjective dialogue with another mother when Mandisa addresses Biehl's mother as one who shares in her sorrow, as one who is her "Sister-Mother" (198, 201). Rather than symbolically marking the boundaries of the national body, this mother reaches across them in a transnational address to another suffering mother (see Boehmer,

“Without” 164). In the process, she revises both the production of the mother as a subject oriented towards the son and, by extension, the national narrative of sacrificial redemption. Iteratively performing the identity of Mater Dolorosa, Mandisa evokes also the Virgin Mary’s function “as a bridge-builder to other traditions, other cultures” (Warner, Alone 67). In this respect, she moves beyond the national allegory spun around the Mater Dolorosa, or the patriarchal one established through the Virgin’s role as “intercessor,” as one who acts “only through Christ” (Warner, Alone 323). Boehmer, who applauds the transnational address established in Mother to Mother, follows a similar strategy in her own novel, which crosses temporal and geographical boundaries as it grapples with the figure of the mother-witness.

The “Mother as Witness” and the Mother of the Book: Elleke Boehmer’s *Bloodlines*

the nationalist ideology or ideologies which inform African literature (especially that of the immediately pre- and post-independence periods) have worked to limit representations of and by women.

--- Elleke Boehmer, “Motherlands, Mothers and Nationalist Sons” 229.

Through writing, [...] through claiming a text – or a narrative territory – women sign into and at the same time subvert a nationalist narrative that excluded them as negativity, as corporeal and unclean.

--- Elleke Boehmer, “Stories of Women and Mothers” 10.

Bloodlines maps maternal politics and nationalist tropes of maternity and follows a zig-zagging path between the two, moving in and out of the nationalist script as it grapples with the figuration of women and the ways in which they have enacted the role of mother. The key nodal points of its historical map include the Anglo-Boer / South African War of 1899-1902, the Irish nationalist struggle, the anti-apartheid struggle and the transitional era of witnessing. The novel thus provides fertile ground for an exploration of the iterability of the subject position of ‘mother.’ Extending the domain of its inquiry to the act of writing itself, it re-appropriates reproductive imagery to theorise women’s writing in, and beyond, the nation.

The catalyst for the narrative is a bomb blast in the early 1990s. Five white

civilians perish in the fictionalised event. Anthea, the bereaved lover of one, makes contact with the bomber's mother, Dora, and the two piece together a narrative of Dora's family history, as Anthea attempts to ascribe meaning to an apparently random act of violence. The story they construct traces the "bloodlines" of the bomber, Joseph Makken, back to the 1899-1902 war. In the war narrative, Dora's grandmother, Dollie, falls in love with Joseph Macken, a dashing soldier in the Irish Transvaal Brigade.¹⁴ Dollie bears his son in a British concentration camp and calls him Sam Makken. His grandson, the bomber Joseph Makken, is thus located in a transnational "intertwined history of resistance" (175).

The Irish Joseph Macken is partially based on John MacBride;¹⁵ his modern day descendent, Joseph Makken, is a composite character based on two anti-apartheid bombers of the 1980s: Sibusiso Andrew Zondo (executed in 1986) and Robert John McBride (granted amnesty by the TRC in 2001).¹⁶ Boehmer shifts the bombing forward in time to evoke the forms of witnessing peculiar to the transition years. The explosion introduces the temporal rupture associated with transitions as it shatters through the "Right Now Superette" in a "searing white instant" in which "past and future collide" (1, 3).

Temporal collision provides the narrative principle through which the novel addresses questions of violence, sacrifice and redemption; the mother-witness is the figure through whom these questions are posed. As a theorist, Boehmer has been at the forefront of critiques of the figure of Mother in nationalist discourse;¹⁷ as novelist, she re-enters this territory, its danger marked in her acknowledgement that nationalist ideologies "limit representations of and by women" ("Motherlands" 229; emphasis added).

Joining a host of *fin-de-siècle* texts revisiting the South African conflict of a century before, Bloodlines follows current trends that record a black presence in the war,

¹⁴ See Donal McCracken for historical background on the Irish Transvaal Brigade (particularly Irish 44-169).

¹⁵ See McCracken on John MacBride's Transvaal Brigade ("Irish" 54-58).

¹⁶ For information on Zondo, see Fatima Meer, The Trial of Andrew Zondo and the TRC Final Report (2:3 par. 28-31; 2:4 par. 19-21); for information on McBride, see Meer, Robert McBride and Greta Apelgren; Claris, "Robert McBride"; Gomolemo Mokae, Robert McBride: A Coloured Life; the TRC Final Report (2:4 par. 23-28) and the documentary film Long Night's Journey in Day.

¹⁷ See, particularly, her articles "Stories of Women and Mothers" and "Motherlands, Mothers and Nationalist Sons."

bleached out of the Afrikaner nationalist narrative.¹⁸ As one of Boehmer's characters asserts, "The Afrikaner's war was a black people's war too" (133). Unusually, even within the revisionist literature (see van Heyningen 22n2), it focuses on the experiences of a black woman, Dollie. Much of the war narrative is set in the British concentration camp in which Dollie and Kathleen, an Irish-English Red Cross nurse, meet. Yet the novel exceeds the currently-popular claims of 'shared suffering' between black and Boer interns by revealing both a lack of empathy on the part of white women for their black counterparts and the even more deplorable housing conditions allotted to the latter. Boehmer's account of the war is notable, also, in its attention to what she elsewhere calls a "particularly illustrative instance of cross-national solidarity," as she weaves into her plot the Irish nationalists who supported the Boer cause in order to strike a blow at the British Empire (*Empire* 23).

Revising her historical source-material, Boehmer has Joseph Makken's bomb explode on Easter Thursday, rather than on the day on which Zondo's bomb exploded, the day before Christmas Eve. The revision shifts the symbolic field from birth to post-sacrificial redemption, and tightens the links being forged between the South African and Irish struggles as it evokes the 1916 Irish Easter Uprising, for which John MacBride was executed. (The two events share also a locale, each taking place in or near a post-office.) Using iteration as a means by which to grapple with nationalism's gendered tropes and dominant narratives, the novel evokes sacrificial-redemptive stories by repeating, with a difference, Zondo's and McBride's explosions, which in turn repeat the Irish Uprising. In its iterability, the narrative of sacrifice is rendered both horrifying and banal, as blood mingles with sweaty hot cross buns on a sweltering Easter morning south of Durban.

The sacrificial-redemptive narrative is propped up by the figure of the Mater Dolorosa. C. L. Innes notes that the final poem penned by Padriac Pearce, leader of the 1916 Uprising, links mother, Mother Ireland and the Mother of Christ to express such a national narrative (see 23-24). The active figure in this narrative is the son; the M/mother passively "accepts the sacrifice of her sons" (Innes 60). As David Lloyd points out, the

¹⁸ For recent revisionist histories, see, among others, S. V. Kessler's "The Black Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902"; B. E. Mongalo and K. du Pisani's "Victims of a White Man's War"; Bill Nasson's *Abraham Esau's War* and *Uyadela Wen'osulapho*. A. H. M. Scholtz's novel, *A Place Called Vatmaar*, tells of Griqua involvement in the war and the effects of the war on a Griqua community.

masculine sphere is one of “action and production but also of martyrdom,” while “the nationalist ethos as well as the sons of the nation are literally and figuratively reproduced” in the feminine sphere (Anomalous 85-85n25).

Like Innes, Boehmer cites W. B. Yeats’s Cathleen Ni Houlihan as exemplifying the idealised Mother of Irish nationalism (see Innes 23; Boehmer, Empire 21 and Colonial 120). Naming her Irish character after this archetypal figure then muddling her national identity with English paternity, Boehmer evokes the nationalist Mother while introducing slippages of difference by inserting a hyphen (Irish-English) into the scene of national unity. The hyphen, similar to that employed by Magona in her construction of the “Sister-Mother,” suggests a constant crossing of the national border, which the mother’s body is called on to represent as absolute and inviolable in nationalist discourse. Rather than representing the national border as sealed, Boehmer’s women mark the sites at which such boundaries are transgressed.

Moving between past and present, in order to destabilise the dominant narrative of nationalism, Bloodlines turns to the transitional present and its production of the “mother as witness” (84). Speaking as the mother-witness, notes the text, is a “performance” (84). When Dora bears witness, she both traces transnational and trans-racial connections and offers a supplement to the TRC Human Rights Violation Hearings, which produced female testifiers like Lephina Zondo as the mother-ventriloquist of the son.¹⁹ Boehmer’s supplement takes the form of asking us to consider “What does it mean for a mother” to occupy that subject position (35). In lieu of a TRC-type forum, the novel presents a scenario of inter-subjective cross-racial witnessing, similar to that of Magona’s novel. Anthea “[hears] the testimony that the judge didn’t let [Dora] give” (129). As Mother to Mother implicitly does, Bloodlines stages the establishment of a dialogical truth, produced in the to-and-fro between two perspectives. Anthea’s initial understanding of the bombing expands to encompass that of the bomber’s mother, “from the other side of the story” (51). Thus does the novel move in and out of the national script. On the one

¹⁹ Analysing the TRC’s summary of her testimony, Premesh Lalu and Brent Harris argue that she “is rendered voiceless [...] and is simultaneously produced as the voice of Andrew Zondo or, at best, of his ‘parents.’ We learn very little of her pain and personal trauma, of her concerns with tradition, of her belief systems or of her attitudes towards the power of dominant groups and her possible solidarity with the dominated” (35). In “Ambiguities of Mourning,” Sanders offers a different reading of her testimony by likening it to the position taken by Antigone (see note 6).

hand, it reproduces this script in the figure of the mother who both “weep[s]” for her son and reaches out in reconciliation to the white girlfriend of one of her son’s victims, because “She’s a mother after all, isn’t she?” (36, 66). And, on the other hand, it subverts the national narrative by entering Dora’s own loss into the story and locating redemption in transnationality.

Boehmer focuses on historical moments in which the saturation of women’s body with nationalist meaning is heightened, as she explores a contradictory production of women as both symbols and actors, through figures such as the Irish Maud Gonne or women in the Boer war. As Paula M. Krebs notes “women influenced the course of the Boer War and South African history through a curious set of circumstances whereby they were simultaneously victims, symbols, and political actors, sometimes all in the same person” (56). While they are largely remembered as national symbols, Boer women acted with intractable militancy during the war. Bloodlines points to the militant roles they performed by staging a scene in which a British camp superintendent complains: “We burn the farms because they won’t be subdued [...] Once the women give in, the men will” (169). In the wake of the conflict, however, these women were inscribed as passive symbols of others’ suffering, as mute witnesses, or empty vessels, for nationalist allegories of loss.

The Women’s Monument, opened in 1913 to commemorate the Boer women who died or lost their children in the British concentration camps, “enshrined Afrikaner womanhood as neither militant nor political, but as suffering, stoical and self-sacrificing” (McClintock 378). Jenny de Reuck finds that the war memorialisation translated private suffering into discursive formations that consolidated and legitimated political strategies. These included the dispossession of the black majority. Appropriating the suffering of women in the concentration camps, Afrikanerdom portrayed itself as a wounded nation and was thus “able to mobilise political and moral sympathies that obliterated any such empathy for the Black peoples of South Africa” (93). This, then, is a troubling use to which mother-as-symbol has been put.

Bloodlines returns to (white) women their agency and, consequently, their responsibility for, and complicity with, the racist policies that followed the war. In Chapter One, I suggested that a-historical representations of South African women –

across racial and political divides – as silenced victims of patriarchy deny their complicity with apartheid. Anne McClintock makes a similar point: “Erasing Afrikaner women’s historic agency also erases their historic complicity in the annals of apartheid” (379). *Bloodlines* navigates between the historical conditions of racial and gendered oppression as it attempts to avoid such a flattening out of women’s history. Among the questions it raises is that of how to transgress national boundaries, and forge alliances and exchanges between women, without producing sentimental fictions of a universal womanhood, such as those identified in Chapter One.

Such sentimental fictions found their way into the TRC, as it desperately set about forging a united, reconciled nation. The novelistic links drawn between the events that flank the last century feature prominently in the TRC’s Report, and were highlighted when it convened in Bloemfontein in 1996 (see 1:1 par. 65; 1:2 par. 7). Archbishop Desmond Tutu, chairperson of the TRC, paid homage at the Women’s Monument and emphasised the shared suffering of blacks and Boers. He tightened his claim of shared suffering by referring to the biological commonality of women across racial and political boundaries: “There is a wonderful symmetry in the suffering of childbirth which could be turned into the suffering of the birth pangs of a truly united country” (qtd. in R. Friedman 6). The memorialisation of past suffering in both the TRC and the earlier Women’s Monument are figured through the maternal body and its economy of suffering. In the wake of both conflicts, the national future is located in women’s wombs. Both forums of memorialisation produce ‘woman’ as Mater Dolorosa: the suffering mother who weeps for her son and gives birth to a redemptive future. When Boehmer reiterates these historical links, she steps into this treacherous terrain, which gestures to women’s reproductive capacities in order to re-member the nation. In the following pages, I detail the strategies by which *Bloodlines* navigates this terrain, and the pitfalls into which it stumbles.

Set in the transitional present, which again evokes the notion of a wounded nation,²⁰ *Bloodlines* encourages us to wonder what future consequences might emerge from such constructions, produced from performances of the mourning mother. It

²⁰ Tutu, for instance, declares: “we are a wounded people ... We all stand in need of healing” (qtd. in Wilson). In Chapter Three, I proposed, also, that the body of Sarah Bartmann has been harnessed to express the allegory of a wounded nation.

suggests, moreover, that nationalist productions of maternal suffering contribute to a cycle of violence and retribution. Joseph motivates his act of violence by imagining himself the sacrificial victim mourned by his mother. Explaining that he was “derailed” by the bombing of an ANC crèche, he says: “I thought what my mother will do if it was me as a small boy caught in that place” (29). And so the wheel turns again, as new victims fall and new bereavements are mourned. As the novel expresses it, when Joseph receives an uncompromising sentence: “the trial swinging round once more the deathly cycle of retaliation and sorrowing, of mourning calling out further mourning, and weeping weeping” (128).²¹ The suggestion is that violence will continue to spiral until tropes of the Mater Dolorosa are revised or revoked.

Making her two central characters of the war narrative a black woman and an Irish-English woman, Boehmer returns to the war without reinforcing the nationalist identifications that developed around incarcerated Boer women. Moreover, her character, Dora, is made to speak her reluctance at rooting the family history in the war narrative. She bitterly notes that, though a survivor of the camps, Dollie was evicted from the land she farmed by the 1913 Native Land Act. Race cuts across the commonality of gendered experience in the camps, as white South Africans – both Boer and English – close ranks against their black counterparts: “A concentration camp survivor, but it didn’t matter, the new act said get out” (181). Similarly, columnist John Matshikiza rejects the claims of shared suffering presented during the war centenary commemorations by pointing out that the war was closely followed by the “final dispossession of the native [...] effected by the mono-racial Land Act” (176). Not surprising, then, is Dora’s reluctance to root her family narrative in the war and her attention, instead, to the dispossessions that followed. Thus does Boehmer record the limits of a nationhood based on conceptions of shared suffering or of maternity as bridge-building identity.²²

²¹ Meer claims that Zondo planted his bomb after being “derailed” by news of a South African Defence Force (SADF) raid on Maseru. He was particularly affected by an image of a woman who was shot, leaving behind a nine-month-old baby. He had earlier decided to join uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) after the SADF targeted a crèche in Mozambique, killing two children (*Trial* 45). She finds the cycle of violence turning again in the actions of McBride: “The SADF raid into Maseru in December 1985 temporarily derailed Andrew Zondo and he exploded a bomb that killed five people in Amanzintoti. The hanging of the young Andrew Zondo temporarily derailed Robert” (*Robert* 50).

²² On the limits to maternity as a bridge-builder across the racialised divide of apartheid South Africa in *Mother to Mother*, see Samuelson (“Reading” 233; “Mother” 139).

While destabilising the figure of the Mater Dolorosa as intercessor and emblem of sacrificial suffering, Bloodlines keeps in view the burdens women as mothers have indeed borne. Evicted from the land she farmed, Dollie dies of exposure on a roadside, protecting her son Sam from the cold with her body. Maternity is thus noted as self-sacrificing and self-effacing (a death of self, as Magona suggests). The dominant narrative is that martyrdom is a male position, and women bear sacrifice in their wombs. The novel counters this with reminders of the sacrifices women have made, and the struggles they have fought, during a century of conflict. Political agency is thus restored to women as mothers.

While women have been subjected to the ideology of motherhood, they have become political subjects by ‘assenting’ to their interpellation as mothers. Motherhood has been a central theme in both nationalist iconography and in women’s political organisation in South Africa (see Walker, “Conceptualising” 417). Thus maternity is not only an iconic emblem around which nationalist movements have been marshalled, but it has also been the subject position from which women have organised themselves as political agents. As McClintock notes, this has involved “working strategically within traditional ideology to justify untraditional public militancy” (281).

Critics have differed as to the efficacy of such strategies. Julia C. Wells claims that “Maternal politics are clearly not to be confused with feminism”: “Women swept up in mother-centred movements are not fighting for their own personal rights as women but for their custodial rights as mothers.” While their appeal to the “traditional discourse on motherhood” presented women with “an unusual amount of political space in which to organize,” these movements, she proposes, “must be recognized as limited in scope, duration, and success in achieving their goals and, above all, should not be mistaken for political maturity” (“Maternal” 481).

Both Mother to Mother and Bloodlines encourage us to revise this understanding of “maternal politics” by showing how it revolves not only around the relationship of mother to child, or wife to husband, but also that of woman to woman, or “mother to mother.” A “maternal politics” that establishes alliances between women can certainly be understood as a viable variant of feminism. Yet, “maternal politics” remains a minefield, not least due to its propensity to abject non-mothers or racial others, as was the case

following the war. *Bloodlines*'s stereotypical presentation of white women as inadequate nurturers presents a striking example of the pitfalls facing those who write within the closed discursive field of South African cultural studies, with its rigid racial distinctions.

The extent to which nationalist ideologies "limit representations of and by women" is evident, also, in the novel's apparent inability to represent female activism outside or beyond "maternal politics," and thus to unseat the mother-son pairing on which the sacrificial-redemptive script is based. As mentioned, Joseph's biography is partially based on that of the real-life saboteur Robert McBride. A key divergence in their life stories can be found in Boehmer's representation of Joseph's family, and in the elision of his female comrade, Greta Appelgren (who later changed her name to Zahrah Narkedien).²³ McBride's father, though known for his heavy drinking, was party to his son's political activities and accompanied him on key missions.²⁴ Joseph's father, in contrast, is a pitiful drunk whose function in the novel is limited to that of foil to the strong and steadfast mother. The symbolic centrality of the mother is thus established in the text and the national narrative and its production of women consolidated.

Likewise, the elision of Appelgren helps to produce the figure of the activist as sacrificial son. While Joseph stands trial alone, Appelgren was in the dock beside McBride. She was imprisoned for five years and later, now as Narkedien, gave testimony before the TRC. In her testimony, Narkedien located her psychological trauma in having to share an isolation prison cell with rats (see TRC 2:7 par. 41). Her testimony recalls that of Elaine Mohamed, who spoke of rats devouring her sanitary pads, and associatively linked this with the experience of another woman who had rats pushed into her vagina. Both Mohamed's and Narkedien's testimonies – similarly to the story of Dulcie in *David's Story* – point to the specific forms of torture endured by women, and also to the ways in which women perpetrate torture on other women (see TRC 4: 10 par. 63; Mohamed 36, 38). No such associative chains are established in Boehmer's novel. However, Dora recalls that her drunken husband, "imprisoned once for disturbing the peace, has mentioned rats" (73). The experiences recounted by Narkedien and Mohamed

²³ There are variations on the spelling of her names in different sources (Appelgren, Apelgren; Narkadien; Narkedien; Nakadien); I have used the versions that appear in the TRC Report.

²⁴ Derrick McBride and Greta Appelgren were cadres in a MK cell under McBride's leadership; both received prison sentences for their political activities, and Appelgren spent seven months in solitary confinement. Zondo's father was a pastor and strict teetotal (see Meer, *Trial* 22).

remain unspoken in the novel, and are perhaps flagged as unspeakable in the possible textual trace suggested in the reference to rats. These are the things the novel points to – wittingly or unwittingly – as that which must be forgotten or remain unspoken in the dominant national narrative that insists on the suffering mother-sacrificial son couple as its guiding narrative principle, or in the feminist narrative that insists on women’s unity.

Fearful that the national narrative perpetuates a cycle of retribution, the novel searches for “a different script [...] a different pattern of connection; a web not a cycle. A ravelling web, a thicker story” (128). *Bloodlines* then aspires to such a pattern. The realm of redemption is shifted from the represented world to the act of representation. This is articulated in terms of both content and form. Anthea convinces Dora to participate in the project of researching and writing the family “bloodlines” by suggesting that such ‘proof’ of Joseph’s Irish ancestry would provide grounds for a mitigation of his sentence and would thus break the cycle of violence and retribution sustained by the figure of the suffering mother. The result is the narrative of Dollie, Joseph Macken and Kathleen. Anthea’s plan is ultimately implausible: Joseph’s ancestry is not likely to carry any judicial weight. What this textual contradiction points to is the difficulty the novel faces in moving out of the cycle and developing new webby connections that speak to Dora’s needs, without appropriating her story to Anthea’s purpose.

More successful is the attempt to produce a new pattern on the formal level. Moving in and out of nationalism’s symbolic register, the novel presents its challenge to nationalist discourse in the materiality of the text itself, which is produced as a patchwork quilt of different styles and genres, and of different voices. The formal properties of the text stand in opposition to the symbolic work performed by the mother figure of nationalism, who represents the homogenous unity of the national ‘family.’

Boehmer has elsewhere grappled with the question of how women writers can work within and against the patriarchal values embedded in nationalism. Since “nationalism, in its past and current interpretations, is monologic, single-voiced,” she proposes that one path out of this conundrum entails “simply giving voice: women speaking for themselves, telling their own histories, countering the monologic with multi-voicedness” (“Motherlands” 244). As novelist, she situates herself in a tradition of postcolonial women’s writing (the author’s acknowledgement in *Bloodlines* mentions

“the presence, throughout, of Bessie Head”). As critic, she describes this tradition as one characterised by “its mosaic or composite quality: the intermingling of forms derived from indigenous, nationalist, and European literary traditions” resulting in “cross-hatched, fragmented, and choric forms” (*Colonial* 227). This description speaks to the formal properties of *Bloodlines*, which endeavours also to “retrieve suppressed oral traditions, half-forgotten histories, unrecorded private languages, moments of understated or unrecognised women’s resistance” (*Colonial* 227). In *Bloodlines*, Joseph’s acts of resistance are largely overshadowed by the heroic temerity displayed by characters such as Dollie and Kathleen, the “half-forgotten histories” of whom are recovered from the “private” domain of journals and letters, and conceived out of the partnership between Dora and Anthea.

As I have argued in relation to Zoë Wicomb’s *David’s Story*, one answer to the problems posed by nationalism for the woman writer lies in fragmenting the formal unities of the text. In contrast to Wicomb, Boehmer is more optimistic about the possibilities of “simply giving voice” and posits the act of rewriting the past as redemptive rather than deadly (see Daymond, “Bodies” 29). Her efforts to retrieve an authentic female voice draw her back into metaphors of maternity that are both disruptive and constraining. The final instalments of Dollie’s story are “conceived by Dora,” whose feelings on completing the story are euphoric: “She can’t remember a sensation like this [...] Like putting a new baby to your breast” (275, 240).

In Chapter Two I discussed a case in which women were excluded from authorship, and the reproductive imagery of a female prophet ignored in accounts attentive only to her sacrificial-redemptive message. I concluded that women’s reproductive bodies have been appropriated as empty vessels for male-authored messages. Here we have a diametrically opposed instance of women claiming and validating their authorship by re-appropriating procreative metaphors, “unifying their mental and physical labor into (pro)creativity” (S. Friedman 73). Women writers, according to Susan Stanford Friedman, “have often risked the metaphor’s dangerous biologism in order to challenge fundamental binary oppositions of patriarchal ideology between word and flesh, creativity and procreativity, mind and body” (74). Their use of the childbirth metaphor challenges the symbolic primacy of the sacrificial son – the

'word made flesh' – that women conventionally carry in their wombs, rather than in their mouths.

I do not, however, want to overstate the case for the subversive potential of the childbirth metaphor in women's writing within and against nationalist discourse. In this novel, it skirts dangerously close to a conservative inscription of maternity. If we return to the implausible claim that the story of "bloodlines" will see Joseph's sentence commuted, we find that redemption is located not so much in the act of writing as in the reproduced and reproducing womb of Dollie. The womb as crucible of a common post-apartheid identity is a representational scheme fraught with danger, evoking, as it does, a politics of 'blood.' Disturbingly, we find that Dora manages to "conceive" the end of Dollie's story walking along the Cape Town docks, "at the very shoreline where the country's black and white first met, first fatefully mixed" (241). We are thus returned to what Susan Friedman identifies as the risks of the childbirth metaphor's "dangerous biologism." Taking such risks, the novel challenges the gender norms produced and performed within the arena of transitional witnessing. But it may do so at some cost. The womb has been re-claimed from nationalist appropriations, or those of male authorship, in order to present a model of female authorship. Yet, the writing produced from this womb is fixated on "bloodlines." The discursive field of maternity and nation is dangerous ground indeed.

Bloodlines tills the minefield women are presented with when writing in nationalist and nation-building contexts. It reveals the extent to which women are turned into reproducers: reproducing the 'voices' of others as witnesses, reproducing the sons who drive the sacrificial narrative, and, as symbols, reproducing a cycle of victimisation and violence. Rather than stepping onto safer ground, it enters the closed discursive field of nationalism and gender in order to destabilise the scripts spun around women as mothers. It does so, partially, by revising the meanings attached to the procreative reproductive body, and including creative literary production in its symbolic field. Taking such risks, it is bound to stumble, and even set off a few explosions of its own. But it does clear ground for new forays into the field. Jaffer's use of the childbirth metaphor takes this a step further.

The Mother-Activist: Zubeida Jaffer's *Our Generation*

I think that that unborn baby inside of me made it possible for me to be strong enough not to give in to their threats

--- Zubeida Jaffer, qtd. in Antjie Krog, Country of My Skull 185.

Jaffer's memoir of her activism during the struggle years and the transition to democracy is literally encased in her maternity. Motherhood is the privileged identity on which she draws as she reconstitutes subjectivity through the act of writing. The front cover depicts her holding her young daughter, Ruschka, and the childbirth metaphor is central to her autobiographical act. The memoir opens with Jaffer in labour, and concludes with a "Thank you" to the daughter born in this opening scene:

Through the months of work, my daughter, Ruschka, displayed a sense of patience without which I would have had much greater difficulty in giving birth to 'Our Generation.' Instead it slid out as easily as a fish slithering smoothly through the deep ocean. (164)

These words, the final ones in the book, recall the earlier description of the birth of Ruschka: "I push and push with ease, I bring my daughter into this world. There is no pain as she slides out of me like a fish slithering through water" (15). The assertion of achievement – "I bring my daughter into this world" – provides the authorial confidence to write a life.

Bracketed between these two descriptions of birth, the narrative marks the opening scene of labour as one in which Jaffer not only gives birth to her daughter, but also, through the process of writing her life, to a post-traumatic narrating self. Jaffer, who testified at the TRC's Special Women's Hearings, recounts her experience of bearing witness in the memoir, but her testimony comprises a surprisingly insubstantial portion of her narrative, and structurally precedes a nervous breakdown. Rather than the TRC being marked as a therapeutic site, the memoir is granted this function. It supplements the work of the TRC, which failed to provide the desired end of healing that, for Jaffer, entails the

integration of two potentially contradictory subject positions: mother and activist. The TRC is shown to be inadequate to the task it has set itself; its gender norms forestall its potential as a therapeutic venue for women's self-integration. The memoir takes up this task of re-membering a fragmented gendered self.

Re-presenting her testimony, Jaffer uses the trope of constricted throat – this is in fact the memoir's most enduring trope – to convey her sense of inhabiting a split self and being constrained by the position granted her from which to speak. Her throat constricts at the moment when the TRC presents her with a platform to 'give voice': "I am stuttering and my neck constricts. It feels as if a leather belt is being tightened around my throat" (128). Far from offering the "cathartic process" of bringing "closure" to past trauma, giving testimony re-enacts it, and Jaffer feels herself "falling to pieces" (125). The disintegrated or 'dismembered' self is split along two faultlines: between activist (public) and mother (private), on the one hand, and between daughterly and maternal selves, on the other hand.

The memoir's title – Our Generation – suggests a subject located between two generations: between daughterhood (the daughter of her biological, political and religious 'fathers') and motherhood (the mother of her daughter). Anxieties of political failure are located in her daughterly self. Motherhood, in contrast, authorises her political voice in an iteration of maternity that – despite the TRC's representation of women as mothers – departs from the TRC script.

Taking up the witnessing position of activist – one who witnesses on behalf of herself rather than one who bears witness on behalf of her son – calls forth the subjectivity of the daughter rather than that of the mother. Motherhood is where Jaffer locates her political, and writerly, authority, but she finds herself unable to perform in hyphenated form what the TRC produced as contradictory subject positions – the mother versus the activist – within its structures. Departing from the kind of problematic identified in the two novels, Jaffer needs not insert the story of her own harms into the scene of witnessing, but instead seeks to insert the authorising subject position of mother into the scene of daughterly vulnerability that she recounts and re-experiences.

The daughterly self resurfaces during the TRC hearing. Only by working through it – rewriting it – in the wake of her testimony is Jaffer able to reconstitute herself as

mother-activist, and 'give birth' to the narrating self, who in turn 'gives birth' to the book. The trauma of the daughterly self is located in her first detention; her second detention is the point at which the experiencing self first produces the hyphenated subject position of mother-activist. Thus, she regrets "having ended so abruptly," noting that she "needed to complete the story of the second detention. For the sake of all who were listening but mainly for my own sake" (135). Her abridged testimony focuses on the daughterly self; the maternal self, located in her second detention, is muted within the structures of the TRC.

Maternal authority is displaced by the return of her daughterly self, in which the TRC locates her activism. Her testimony before the TRC opens with her fraught identity as her father's daughter when she revisits her first incarceration. She was drugged during interrogation and handed a phone, only to hear her father's voice on the other side of the line. He had been arrested in a cynical ploy to strike at Jaffer's private identity as daughter. The memoir's prevailing trope reappears: "My throat constricts. I have difficulty in speaking" (131), she recalls, and her resistance is shattered: "I told them whatever I could and lost my self-respect in the process" (131).

A dizzying temporal structure conveys her post-TRC breakdown. The narrative jumps forward to the 10th May 2000, the anniversary of Mandela's inauguration, and then back to the inauguration itself, which Jaffer attended with her father six years previously. Returning to the narrative present, Jaffer stops to visit her father in hospital, only to find that he has passed away. She has an acute asthma attack and is diagnosed as suffering from depression. Again we find the motif of the constricted throat employed to express anxiety in her daughterly identity (the narrating self has earlier notified us of her hysterical tendency to speak through the body [see 13]).

Her sense of having failed her father returns to her after his death. Walking into her kitchen, she crumples onto the floor:

'I am so sorry, dad. I am so sorry. I am so sorry.' Am I going mad? I am on the floor. What am I sorry about? I am so sorry to hear you on the other end of the telephone. So sorry that you are enduring such indignity on my behalf. I sob and sob and sob. For the first time I unwrap the pain that

engulfed my heart twenty years ago. (145)

Traumatised by betraying both her father and her cause, she has lost her self-respect as an activist, because of the daughterly fear of failing the father. Her sense of guilt soon shifts to one of resentment, and it is in allowing herself to experience this resentment that her healing lies.

The advice offered to her as the mother of a daughter is what finally enables her to 'give birth' to the maternal self and de-link the chains that bind her to the daughterly self. It is a process that runs counter to that suggested by the TRC, which emphasises forgiveness. When Jaffer seeks advice in dealing with Ruschka's pent-up rage at her father – Jaffer's ex-husband – she is urged to allow Ruschka to express her anger. The child psychologist explains: "The more you are telling her to forgive and understand, the angrier she is becoming" (124). It is only once she, like her daughter, permits herself to express her anger at the fathers that healing becomes possible:

I went to school just a few weeks before turning five. I remember having to keep up, keep up, trying too hard to please. I don't want to do it anymore. To please my father.

A small group of men around me in the interrogating room. A small group insulting, swearing, pushing me beyond my limits. Pushing, hitting, threatening, beating. Shaking, shuddering in terror. My husband's intense demands. A small group of men who finally press all the buttons that unleash an extreme reaction to the intricate chain of circumstances determining my destiny. (146)

Shockingly, her father and husband are linked with her interrogators. As Jaffer's sense of self is increasingly shot through with flashbacks to her first detention and her fears of failing the fathers, she turns increasingly to her identity as mother, which prevents her from "distintegrat[ing] completely" (144).

Her maternal identity is, moreover, the site of political resistance. During her second incarceration, her interrogator threatened her with a chemical concoction to "burn

the baby from her body” (11). Jaffer realises that “Not only am I a woman but a pregnant woman, and he is going to use this to his advantage” (11). But Jaffer turns her maternal identity to her *own* advantage, *and* to the advantage of the revolutionary struggle: “I want to cooperate for my baby’s sake. I want her so much. [...] But what if I get off and the others are sent to jail? How would I face Ruschka one day and tell her that in order to give her life, I betrayed my comrades?” (36).²⁵ While her daughterly self is associated with political failure and a loss of self, maternity is presented as empowering the self.

Her identities as mother and activist mesh. She conceives of motherhood in terms of activism, of fighting for a better world in which to raise her daughter, rather than in terms of simply giving life to her child. When she reluctantly agrees to testify before the TRC, she draws again on her maternal identity, for she hopes to help to end the cycle of violence and create a better world “for our daughters” (90). She thus breaks the gendered temporal index of nationalism, discussed in previous chapters, which locates the future in sons. Focusing on her experience of motherhood and her relationship to her reproductive body, her writing of maternity does not entrench its symbolic valence in the national imaginary. Not romanticised, motherhood does not come to stand as a symbol of the ideal nation.

The conflicting autobiographical strands of daughter, mother and activist are returned to in the closing pages of the text. The final event that takes place in the narrated world is Govan Mbeki’s funeral. The death of a second father figure functions as a crucial catalyst in her psychic life, as did the death of her biological father. The narrative emblem of choking and constrictions in the throat returns when VIPs are separated from the rest of the mourners and presented with an ostentatious feast. “Why could we all not have eaten a simple meal together?” she asks; “A democracy that has deracialised an extreme inequality mocks me wherever I go” (156). She eats “with great difficulty” – “The food chokes me” – as the sense of having failed to live up to the ‘father’s’ political dream of a nation free from oppression and exploitation weighs down on her (156).

Again flashback breaks chronology, this time to different purpose. Rather than revealing the eruption of daughterly anxiety into her maternal identity, narrative

²⁵ For other cases in which women were targeted as mothers by security police see the TRC Report (4:10 par. 31-32) and Goldblatt and Meintjes (“South” 40-41); for cases of women who responded to these threats in similar ways to Jaffer, see the TRC Report (4: 10 par. 33) and Ross (67-69).

flashback here concludes the memoir on a note of maternal authority. The final event to be narrated occurs during Jaffer's arrival in Port Elizabeth the previous day. The lump in her throat subsides as the thoughts of her experiencing self drift back to this event preceding the funeral. Jaffer recalls talking to a young black woman who "says something that jolts loose the last of the hardened shells encasing my emotional memory, popping open the crucial link in the intricate chain. 'I must thank you and the other older people like you for doing what you did so that we can have a different life.'" (157). The young woman unwittingly returns to Jaffer her maternal self, while yoking it securely to her activist self.

Reminded of how she has helped to bring the future into being, as mother-activist, Jaffer stops to remember where she was on this day, twenty-one years previously. It is her first detention and she is fearful for her life. Her parents visit to tell her that her sister has given birth. Jaffer opens her Qur'an and finds the Arabic word " 'Junaid,' meaning little fighter for truth and justice" (158) and sends word to her sister recommending this name for her son. Every year since then, repressing the memory of her detention, she has forgotten her nephew's birthday. However, in the final words of the memoir, she remembers:

I see Junaid in my mind's eye, handsome, a young man who has come of age today [...] Behind him, I see my sweet daughter Ruschka, fifteen years old, running towards me, [...] making me happier than I have ever been, with a feeling of exultation like something growing and swelling inside of me, joy, wanting to burst out of my throat in singing, out of my eyes in light, out of my heart in love and out of my soul in freedom. I [...] call my sister Julie, so that I can wish Junaid happy birthday. (159)

Now Jaffer is able to *sing through the throat* and recover memory by re-membering herself as mother-activist.

In contrast to the TRC and the two novels previously discussed, in which maternity is inflected by a Christian subtext, in Our Generation the reproductive body is framed by Islam. Faith and her immersion in a religious community is of pivotal

importance to Jaffer's sense of self, but she is deeply critical of secondary religious practices that reveal an "obsession with controlling women" (30). Her greatest point of conflict with Islam lies in the forms of control it exerts over the female reproductive body.

An incident concerning her mother highlights some of the issues at stake. Her mother observes the practice of wearing a headscarf, but Jaffer recalls "the one time when she did feel compelled to take off her scarf, loosen her hair, don a sun-hat and walk into the centre of the city" (114). Removing her scarf constitutes a disguise: the security police should not recognise her as she tries to contact her daughter in hiding. In the eyes of the police, Jaffer's mother would seem to be a generic Muslim woman, a 'woman in a scarf.' They do not in fact recognise her in the body that saunters down the street with loose hair and sun hat. Jaffer gives echoes here of Frantz Fanon's Algerian women, discussed in Chapter Four, who donned and then cast off the trappings of culture to confound police surveillance.

Like Wicomb, then, Jaffer recalls women's increased mobility in conflict zones and notes the impact of this on the gendered division of labour in the liberation struggle: "In many instances, the burden fell more heavily on the women as they often could move around more freely and were less easily detected by police" (68). With some rancour, she points to their re-domestication in times of peace, observing that, as the apartheid edifice begins to crumble, male leaders become increasingly prominent. Female mobility may increase in the war zone but is monitored more stringently in times of peace, both within the family and without. When women's mobility is constrained, this is often with attention to their reproductive roles. Thus Jaffer recalls having to stop playing soccer in the street after her menses commence and she critiques Islamic divorce proceedings that stipulate a period of seclusion for women alone, "so that the man can determine whether she is carrying his child or not" (93).

Rather than simply rejecting religion, or her own reproductive potential, Jaffer draws on the aspects of Islam that bring "a certain calmness to my mind" and bind her to her child (147). This balancing act is performed through the hyphenated mother-activist self, which counters a post-war re-domestication of women by reconstituting the domestic and maternal as a space of activism, and which claims the fruits of the

reproductive body as empowering to the public female self.

Jaffer's memoir takes an additional step in revising Wells's understanding of "maternal politics." The autobiographical self is not contained within the patriarchal institution of motherhood. Instead, she is located in a community of women: her daughter, her mother and Rushka's "other mother" (or caretaker). In fact, this redefinition of motherhood beyond the patriarchal institution is evident in the memoir's cover itself, in which the identity of mother is foregrounded, while that of wife is literally excised (we later learn that the photo originally included Jaffer's (ex)husband, who has been cut out of the frame). Jaffer makes strategic use of patriarchal institutions, such as motherhood and religion, by first redefining them and then drawing on them to strengthen her experiential bond with her daughter. However, the figure of the "other mother" (39) continues to suggest the difficulties women face in negotiating between the private and public spheres. This is a topic I return to in the following chapter.

Conclusion

Motherhood is a subject position saturated with nationalist desire. Rather than turning from maternity, these three narratives re-enact it. In doing so, they reclaim the experience of motherhood from the patriarchal institution of motherhood. Motherhood is reconceptualised as a site of political activism and as an identity that, far from consolidating national boundaries, flows out beyond them in cross-border alliances. The dominant national narrative of sacrificial redemption established with reference to the figure of the Mater Dolorosa is destabilised when women take up the subject position of the mother-witness and perform it in subversive ways. These narratives reinsert women's experiences of apartheid, and of anti-apartheid activism, into the national script and thus revise its conclusions. The following chapter takes up another stereotypical, relational identity – that of wife – into which women have been subjected, and explores its re-articulation in two narratives of "political widowhood."

CHAPTER SIX – (UN)HOMELY WOMEN: POLITICAL WIDOWHOOD IN A LIFE AND THE CRY OF WINNIE MANDELA

Introduction

The recesses of the domestic space become sites for history's most intricate invasions. In that displacement, the borders between home and the world become confused; and, uncannily, the private and public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorientating.

--- Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture 9.

Mamphela Ramphela and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela have been associated with the two most significant men in the national narrative of sacrificial liberation and reconciliation: Steve Biko, the sacrificial son, and Nelson Mandela, the “founding father” of the ‘new’ South Africa (Ahluwalia and McEachern 83; see also Wilson 115).¹ Separated from these men by death and detention, respectively, each of them both occupies and subverts the category of “political widow,” which in turn disrupts the imaginary construction of the nation as a home for all. This chapter focuses on their respective representations as “political widows” in an autobiography – Ramphela’s A Life – and a novel – Njabulo S. Ndebele’s The Cry of Winnie Mandela. The figure of the “political widow” provides me with an illuminating lens through which to review ideologies of home and their repercussions in the construction of both nation and gender.

Ramphela’s definition of “political widowhood,” in her article of that title, is central to her self-presentation in A Life. According to Ramphela, “political widows” enter the public – ‘political’ – realm as ‘stand ins’ for fallen or incarcerated men. Their entry into the public sphere is founded on a private, homely relationship (“Political” 112). “Political widowhood” locates the subject in a “liminal” zone between the social dichotomies of male and female, public and private, and entails “both an acknowledgement and a denial of women as social and political actors in their own rights” (“Political” 99, 101-02). Shifting in and out of private and public, “political widowhood” is a fundamentally (un)homely category that throws into relief the social

¹ To distinguish between the living woman and Ndebele’s fictionalised character, I use the name “Winnie Madikizela-Mandela” for the former, and “Winnie Mandela” or “Winnie” for the latter.

division between private and public – home and the world – and the points at which it dissolves.

Ndebele, who followed in Ramphela's footsteps to take over the Vice Chancellorship of the University of Cape Town, builds also on her study of widowhood. Ndebele ranks among South Africa's most prominent literary and cultural commentators.² I draw on his oeuvre to consider how the value he grants to the "ordinary," and to "intimacy," inflects his writing of widowhood. His calls in the 1980s for a movement away from the "spectacle" of protest literature towards a "rediscovery of the ordinary" inform The Cry of Winnie Mandela (Rediscovery 37), as does his more recent work, which interrogates the meaning of reconciliation, and yet finds in the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) a welcome shift from the confrontations of protest to the intimacies of negotiation. Through the figure of Winnie Mandela, Ndebele considers the costs of what he elsewhere calls "spectacular" culture (Rediscovery 50), while offering a nuanced response to this woman writ large on the South African canvas. He measures the agonies of waiting and articulates a desire for a restoration of home by engaging with Madikizela-Mandela's historical predicament as "political widow."

In 1996 Ndebele published a short article titled "A Home for Intimacy," parts of which are repeated verbatim in the novel (68-70). There he speaks of returning from exile in a frustrated search for a home. The lack of home – unhomeliness, in one sense of the word – he finds on his return to South Africa is ascribed, in the novel, to the dissolution of the Mandela marriage, which had encapsulated the dream of a national family home. Ndebele is sensitive to the social positioning of women as waiting widows, as those who maintain the home while their mobile men traverse the world. Yet, at the same time, he locates his hope for the future in the restoration of home. He mediates through Winnie his own nostalgic longing on his return to a liberated South Africa. But his choice of such a patently unhomely figure through whom to articulate this desire disrupts it, and the novel avoids the psychic repression that would permit it to continue naming Madikizela-Mandela, in the face of all odds, as Mother of the Nation.

² Kelwyn Sole points out that since the mid-1980s, "no one has held the attention of South African culture quite to the extent of Njabulo Ndebele" ("Reading" 20).

Ramphela likewise mediates through Madikizela-Mandela her own experience and interpretation of 'widowhood,' which centre on contested spheres. She suggests that the conflicts leading to the Mandela divorce spring from Madikizela-Mandela's double liminality as the widow of an imprisoned man and her refusal to cede the public sphere following the release of her husband:

The rhetoric of liberation [...] was particularly focused on Mandela's release, and yet the process by which one so publicly visible as Winnie Mandela could be made to retreat back into the private space reserved for women was not thought through. [...] The public sphere became contested territory between the hero and his erstwhile stand-in. It is difficult to imagine how one so publicly visible as Winnie Mandela could acquiesce to the demands to retreat into the invisibility of the private sphere.
(“Political” 113-14)

The essence of Ramphela's quarrel with the title “political widow” is that it regulates and delimits women's presence in the public sphere. Her attraction to it lies in the partial acknowledgement of women's political agency that it promises. This conflict is heightened in Ndebele's novel, where the desire to restore 'home' exerts its pull.

My epigraph from Homi K. Bhabha draws attention to the infiltration of destructive social forces, such as colonialism and apartheid, into the private recesses of the domestic. The post-apartheid project aims to redress this unhomely condition, restoring homes that had been shattered, and naming the nation itself a new 'home.' A question that preoccupies both texts, and myself as reader, is that of how the restoration of homes can be achieved without fixing women in the private sphere or calling on them to embody the home. I propose that a textual recognition of the uncanny provides a means by which this circumvention can be negotiated.

Freud describes the uncanny as the disquieting recognition of the familiar as unfamiliar and vice versa. The uncanny is a product of repression: “this uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien [foreign], but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated [estranged] from it only through

the process of repression” (241).³ Having been repressed, the previously familiar re-emerges as an anxiety-provoking strangeness. The *unheimlich* (‘uncanny’ or ‘unhomely’) appears to be the opposite of the *heimlich* (‘homely’) and *heimisch* (‘native’) (220). However, “*heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*” (225). Among the definitions of *heimlich* are: “belonging to the house, not strange, familiar, tame, intimate,” “belonging to the house or the family” and domestic (222). But, as it begins to shade into the *unheimlich*, it can also refer to what is “Concealed, kept from sight, [...] or withheld from others” (223).

The concept of the uncanny has been productively employed by theorists writing of (post)colonial landscapes of terror, trauma and testimony.⁴ For Bhabha, it is the defining condition of (post)coloniality, of the “double-lives” and “transcultural narratives” of the (post)colonial world (215, 212). He employs it to theorise the liminal internal margin that fissures the imagined unity and homogeneity of nation. The uncanny, then, is a useful concept through which to address my critique of ‘rainbow’ nationalism. It speaks, moreover, to the positioning of women in the nation, as it raises questions about the social division of public and private spheres, and the role this division plays in the production of gendered subjectivities.

Bhabha suggests that “the ‘unhomely’ [cannot] be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and public spheres.” Instead, it is found in those displacements in which “the private and the public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorientating” (9). The uncanny returns to us what has been repressed in the gendered ordering of society: “the ‘unhomely’ [...] dramatizes – in the figure of woman – the ambivalent structure of the civil State as it draws its rather paradoxical boundary between the private and the public spheres” (10). The “political widow’s” liminal subjectivity, poised between private and public spheres,

³ I supply, in square brackets, terms used in other translations that resonate with my discussion.

⁴ See, for instance, Pal Ahluwalia (30-31) and Ato Quayson (194-97). Ahluwalia concludes that the “uncanny must be overcome if any genuine process of reconciliation is to take place” in post-conflict environments (45). My conclusions are closer in tone to those reached by Quayson, who suggests that “In the context of post-apartheid South Africa it might seem necessary, in setting up a public discourse, to resist the protocols of working through trauma that generate normative limits” (209), such as the closure arrived at in national narratives of sacrifice, salvation and redemption, or the homeliness suggested in the metaphor of the ‘rainbow’ nation.

offers an uncanny iteration of the liminality of the private and domestic. “Women are incorporated into a sphere that both is and is not in civil society,” argues Carole Pateman in The Sexual Contract: “The private sphere is part of civil society but is separated from the ‘civic’ sphere” (11).

I make use of the psychoanalytic concept of the uncanny in order to grapple with discourses of the remaking of nationhood – or the re-membering of nation – and the positioning of women within, and in relation to, the nation. The metaphor of the nation as home suggests a concomitant metaphor of the national polity as family. As shown throughout this thesis, these metaphors carry a load of gendered baggage. The imaginary unity of nation, in particular, is imagined through tropes of women, particularly that of the unifying mother. Women’s waywardness is repressed and abjected in order to reconstitute them as domestic subjects who will re-make the nation as ‘home.’ The ‘return’ of the repressed takes the form of images of monstrous maternity or of women as witches, which attach themselves to these two most famous “political widows.”

Beyond the realm of representation, one might also argue that a resurgence of violence against women within the home is yet another symptom of the repression of past violence and the contaminations and complicities inevitable in oppositional struggles. Freud relates the uncanny specifically to repressed anxieties of castration and dismemberment (231, 244). Current violence against women, referred to in Chapter Four, can partially be understood as negative affects arising from such anxieties. These take on horrifying proportions in post-apartheid South Africa, where women are subject to rape at one of the highest rates in the world (with a majority of rapes performed by non-strangers), and where more than half of women murdered are killed at the hands of their intimate partners. Dispensing with the desire for unity – or a restoration of ‘home’ – that dismemberment threatens would dispense, too, with a need to domesticate women so that, as mother, they can reflect the imaginary wholeness of the imaged nation.

The home is a site of danger to women, a place of both psychic and physical gendered violence. Recognising the uncanny, rather than attempting to repress it again, allows us to keep this unpleasant fact in mind and modulates our understandings of home accordingly. Far from being the inclusive space it purports to be, ‘home’ is moreover “a

way of establishing difference,” as Rosemary Marangoly George argues in The Politics of Home:

if any common pattern can be traced in the many versions of home that contemporary cultures provide us with, it is one of exclusions. Homes are not about inclusions and wide open arms as much as they are about places carved out of closed doors, closed borders and screening apparatuses. (2, 18)

Developing from Freud an ethics with which to respond to the closed doors of nationalism, Julia Kristeva writes: “Uncanny, foreignness is within us: we are our own foreigners, we are divided” (181). The uncanny, in that it suggests the instability of boundaries, creates the possibility of understanding collectivities in different terms to those based on exclusion, which are produced in a poetics of ‘home.’ Kristeva, according to Ewa Ziarek, proposes that the “difficult recognition of the irreconcilable alterity within the self is precisely what enables a non-violent relation to the other” (11). In the concluding section of the chapter, I discuss how the two texts engage with the foreigner within, and without, and use this as a point from which to begin theorising feminisms in (trans)national contexts. Given the centrality of this problematic across the thesis, the section concluding this chapter does so in greater detail than do my earlier summations.

“A Political Widow Who Could Never Be”: Mamphela Ramphele’s *A Life*

We shared not only a passionate love affair but also a commitment to the liberation of the oppressed in South Africa. Ours was a complete relationship

--- Mamphela Ramphele, *A Life*: 117.

The family is still a major sphere in which the domination of men is secured at the expense of women. Each family is a site for individual men to oppress women in their own particular way.

--- Mamphela Ramphele, “The Dynamics of Gender Politics in the Hostels of Cape Town” 395.

Ramphele’s self-presentation in *A Life* exhibits an ambivalent negotiation around the title ‘Biko’s widow.’ On the one hand, she crafts the text as a bildungsroman of one of South Africa’s most successful women, forging within its pages an unencumbered professional self – the female executive depicted on the front cover – and excising Biko from the story of her success. On the other hand, she writes herself into Biko’s story as the “widow [she] could never be” (179). In part, then, the autobiography is written precisely to claim an identity she then disavows by foregrounding her own achievements. This representational seesaw is produced out of the autobiography’s double repartee, as it ‘writes back’ to two dominant depictions of her relationship to Biko. The first is the version disseminated in the film *Cry Freedom*. “[C]asting her in a peripheral role” in Biko’s life-story (*Life* 136), *Cry Freedom* erases from its script the story of their love affair, along with that of Ramphele’s political activism and banishment. On the other side of the axis are representations that tie her too closely to Biko, ascribing her accomplishments to her association with him, and encasing her within the identity “mother of Steve Biko’s son” (179). Both repress women’s political agency and the active public roles they played during the anti-apartheid struggle.

One motivation behind Ramphele’s self-writing is to correct what she perceives to be the falsification of Biko’s story, so that she may take her rightful place as his widow. Autobiography allows her to insert into the public sphere her version of the private events that took place before Biko’s death. Ramphele claims that Biko had initiated divorce proceedings with his wife and that she and Biko had begun to plan their marriage. His

family's installation of Ntsiki Biko as his legitimate widow after his death is bemoaned as a "reversal of Steve's own wishes," and one that "has run like a thread through the continuing confusion about his life" (135-6). The autobiography sets about unpicking this thread as Ramphele stitches herself into the position of widow. In doing so, she presents a relationship in which personal passion and public activism were fused: "Ours was a complete relationship" (117). As in Zubeida Jaffer's memoir, this complementary harmony between public and private spheres is mimetically presented as a "song" in Ramphele's heart (118).

But the harmonious complementarity of private and public is lost as "the borders between home and the world become confused," and private and public are relocated in a disorientating, uncanny configuration in which history invades the "recesses of the domestic space," to return to my epigraph from Bhabha. "[T]hunder clouds" gather on the political front (118), and the storm unleashed on their love affair culminates in Ramphele's banishment to the distant Tzaneen district and Biko's murder in detention. Far from being a realm beyond, or complimentary to, the political conflict, the home is recognised as a site in which "power and police" operate: "the personal-*is*-the-political; the world-*in*-the home" (Bhabha 10-11).

These textual observations of the uncanny are salient to the position of women in post-apartheid South Africa, where the home remains a site of violence. A Life recounts the failure of two marriages, and ascribes this largely to Ramphele's refusal to acquiesce to her husbands' demands and attempts to dominate her. Her autobiography is thus also concerned with the psychic violence that occurs within the home. In her academic publications, she exposes the ways in which oppressed men repress their own subjugations by claiming sovereignty in the home through dominating women (see "Dynamics" 394). These are the routes and recursions by which violence mutates from racial oppression to its uncanny returns within the home.

Repressed also in productions of home and of women as homemakers are women's agency and activism in the anti-apartheid struggle. Those who label her 'Biko's widow,' Ramphele claims, do so in an anxious attempt to transfer "transgressives from the liminal unknown to the liminal known" (Life 179; "Political" 111). Her 'transgression' is doubly marked in the narrative: she is the unmarried lover and a black

female executive. Both find her situated as an “honorary male” (Life 175) in a patriarchal society in search of a “male connection” to resolve “the enigma of a successful woman.” The enigma is resolved when she is understood as “acting because of, or on behalf of, him” (Life 178). Biko, she claims, is summoned “from the grave” to “accompany me and clothe my nakedness.” His shade shrouds her in “respectability” and domesticates her, denying her “own discomfiting agency” (Life 180, 178; “Political” 111-12). Concealed beneath Biko’s shade – which presents her as a ‘homely’ figure – is her agency as his fellow activist, which is submerged in accounts that dwell only “on the aspect of our relationship that presents me as an instrument of his nurture and bearer of his son” (Life 180; “Political” 112). Ramphele’s presence in the public sphere is constituted as (un)homely, as that which has to be “kept from sight” (Freud 223), and thus that which marks the point at which the *heimlich* “develops in the direction of ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*,” and unsettles the divisions between public and private (Freud 225).

The institution of “political widowhood” manages this disorienting merger of public and private by subordinating the private to the public, and allowing the public to appropriate the private. The female body – on the basis of its private connection to the dead husband – is commandeered as “a metaphor for suffering” in the “political theatre enacted in funeral rites” (“Political” 99, 107). Ramphele claims that “the body politic depicts and treats the female body as incomplete and inadequate to the task of representing nobility, heroism, and public office”; the female body “requires a male body to render it whole and acceptable” (“Political” 103). But it is adequate to the task of representing suffering and loss, as we saw in the case of the Mater Dolorosa of the previous chapter: “when the man’s body, having lost its vitality, lies helplessly without form, its helplessness and lifelessness acquire meaning from the proximity of the relatively frail body of the widow” (“Political” 103). This resonates with Ramphele’s autobiographical self-presentation, which makes pointed reference to her “small frame” and “frail body” (41, 69; see also 42 and 128).

How does Ramphele navigate the threatened requisition of her body implicit in her own self-naming? The toll of the public appropriation of the private is measured on her “frail body,” which is shown to be at odds with the pressured life of the activist, its

needs forsaken in the face of political demands. Its frailty, which displays its suitability as a symbol of public suffering, paradoxically forces her to retrieve the private from the political. Before she does so, her neglect of the “frail body” results in two breakdowns, each accompanied by a “splitting headache” (85) that suggests the (un)homely subjectivity of the “political widow,” who is torn between two competing realms. Ramphele attributes her breakdowns to a “failure to draw a clearer line between the personal and the political” (188). By the end of the narrative, the project of re-establishing boundaries between private and public is abandoned in favour of what we might want to call one of coming to terms with a restless past – living with ghosts – and a restless future – unconstrained by the social division of spheres.

As mentioned, Ramphele’s point of identification with Madikizela-Mandela lies in the latter’s refusal to be contained within the defined boundaries of “political widowhood,” which allows women into the public sphere only as ‘stand-in’ for the fallen man. Ramphele’s circumstances are of course quite different. While Madikizela-Mandela was the wife of an imprisoned man, Ramphele was the lover of a man murdered by apartheid agents. The identity of mother rather than a return of the male hero is what threatens to drag her back into the private sphere.

Motherhood, intimately connected to Ramphele’s identity as “political widow,” thus becomes another site of conflict as she negotiates her path between ‘home and the world.’ The description of the “telepathy” that occurs during Biko’s interrogation and death is among the more poignant moments in the text. Ramphele relates how a “threatened abortion coincided with the beginning of Steve’s brutal interrogation” and how, a few hours later, “His death coincided with the intensification of the threat to the life of my expected baby” (134). Her conception of motherhood is thus closely tied to her ambivalent negotiations around the title ‘Biko’s widow.’

Ramphele cherishes her son, Hlumelo, as “the embodiment” of her memories of Biko (128). At the same time, she is ‘writing back’ to the naming of her primary identity as “mother of Steve Biko’s son” (179), and to the celebration of maternity as women’s ‘natural’ vocation. Her body is again presented as a key textual sign when her physical

frailty and difficult births debunk idealisations of motherhood.⁵ Motherhood and “political widowhood” are both indicted for the self-sacrifice they demand and for the ways in which they appropriate the female body. Refusing a romanticised discourse of motherhood, Ramphele revolts against the relegation of women to the private sphere, and the denial of their citizenship in the public sphere.

Late in her self-presentation, Ramphele begins to reconfigure motherhood and widowhood in ways that ameliorate and enhance the ambivalences exhibited in the text. She employs a child-minder, comparing this to ‘taking a wife.’ Taking a wife, according to Prina Werbner and Nira Yuval-Davis, grants men “the right to be active citizens in the public sphere” from which women were excluded by virtue of their “naturalisation as embodiments of the private, the familial and the emotional” (6). Retaining a woman to fulfil the ‘wifely’ duties associated with the private sphere, Ramphele frees herself to operate unhampered in the public sphere and prevents herself from being re-produced as an embodiment of the home. She usurps what she identifies as the “privileged access to the services of their wives,” that has “freed men to succeed outside the domestic arena” (*Life* 175), and even to write (black women, she says elsewhere, “don’t create space for themselves to write because they don’t have wives” [“Little” 96]).

Ramphele manages this resolution of her ambivalent positioning as (un)homely woman by attaining a degree of affluence that permits her to step out of the private and enter the civic sphere, without destabilising the gendered paradigm of the separation of spheres. In effect, she simply transfers the difficulties she experiences in negotiating the separate spheres onto another woman. This move – which may be read as a betrayal of both feminist and black consciousness ideals – is justified through recourse to the subject position of ‘widowhood.’ The transgressive refusal to be contained within the private is cunningly made through appeal to ‘traditional’ practice: “Widowed well-to-do African matriarchs in the Pietersburg region, where my parents come from, used to marry wives late in life to secure essential support in their old age” (175).⁶ Thus, as a ‘widow,’

⁵ As Desirée Lewis observes, “she demystifies the romantic abstraction that maternity confers the natural dignity of women citizens, that women’s socially-valued reproductive powers can be separated from individual women’s actual experiences or memories of pregnancy, labour, postnatal trauma or the difficulties of raising children” (“Internalized” 166-67); see also Samuelson (“Braided” 52).

⁶ Elsewhere, Ramphele notes that men deploy ‘tradition’ to legitimate their domination over women, but that strategic appeals to ‘tradition’ can also be a “useful tool” for women (“Dynamics” 404; see also 394).

Ramphela claims the right to employ a wife. This deployment of the identity of widowhood refers to her own successes rather than to her connection to Biko: as a successful executive, she is sufficiently “well-to-do” to “afford” a wife (174). The seeming solution to her contradictory positioning within the gendered division of spheres is, however, haunted by structures of anxiety. Such anxiety marks the extent to which she has maintained the gendered division of spheres by locating herself in the public sphere without deconstructing the division itself.

The uncanny “spectre” of “honorary male status,” we are told, “looms large” for the black female executive and “political widow” (175), and troubles Ramphela’s construction of “a life” “across boundaries” (the latter is the title of her memoir in its US imprint). A month after Nelson Mandela’s release, it erupts into her consciousness in the form of a dream. The timing is salient: Ramphela later identifies Mandela’s release as the moment of contestation over the public and private spheres between him and his erstwhile stand-in, Winnie Mandela. The dream precipitates her nervous breakdown and is positioned in the narrative to follow a discussion of the tensions between her public and private lives as her son, Hlumelo, complains, “It is not nice, Mum, when people ask you if your mother is away *again*” (188; emphasis in orig.).

Describing her dream as a nightmare, Ramphela locates it within the terrifying domain of the uncanny. It merits quoting in full:

I dreamt that I had been walking through a farming district in some unknown rural area in South Africa. Suddenly as I was passing a homestead, a pack of vicious dogs charged me. I tried to run, but they closed in on me. They pinned me against a thornbush fence. I resigned myself to being killed. Just before the dogs could maul me, an old woman whose sight I had caught with the corner of my frightened eye, came to my rescue. She was half person and half donkey. She asked me to get onto her back and then carried me to safety over the thorn fence by leaping over it. She vanished as mysteriously as she had appeared. (188)

The “rural area in South Africa” through which she walks is described as “unknown,” though the landscape is evocative of that of her childhood: the familiar is received as unfamiliar and, moreover, as profoundly menacing when a pack of dogs pin her against a thornbush fence. Significantly, this threat arises when she *passes* the homestead, refusing containment in the domestic domicile. The old woman who comes to her rescue inhabits the witch archetype, and thus mirrors Ramphele’s sense of self. “Black women executives,” she says a few pages earlier, “fit the role of the witch perfectly: they are the ultimate transgressor” (178). The language of the dream reveals that the old woman represents an aspect of Ramphele’s self, as Ramphele talks of catching her sight “with the corner of *my* frightened eye.”

The dream recapitulates the central themes of Ramphele’s autobiographical self-presentation. Indeed, the autobiography itself can be read as a return of the socially repressed as Ramphele insistently points to herself as female activist and executive, returning to the surface that which has been repressed both in the naming of her as “political widow” and in her excision from Biko’s story. In this respect, the autobiographical subject is a similar figure to Zoë Wicomb’s Dulcie. Ramphele herself notes how her refusal to be contained within the social roles allotted to women has seen her named as a witch: “You’re a woman. You’re powerful, you’re successful. If you’re not a mother, you must be a witch” (qtd. in Gevisser 12). Hailed as a “witch,” she is seen as a terrifying manifestation of repressed anxieties about women in the public realm.

Identifying with the old woman in her dream, Ramphele ‘accepts’ the naming of herself as ‘witch,’ rather than moulding herself to patriarchal expectations. Instead of retreating to the protection promised by the homestead, she allows the old woman to save her. This enables her to relinquish her anxieties of dismemberment – the negative affect of the uncanny – that are represented in the dream by her fear of being torn to pieces on the thornbush fence. The hybridity of the old woman in the dream – “half person and half donkey” – is what enables her to rescue Ramphele, to save her from the fate of self-fragmentation, as she carries her to safety, “leaping over” the thorn fence. Embracing the uncanny, hybrid state of being – symbolically rendered as the unfamiliar “donkey” in the familiar “woman” – holds at bay the fears of dismemberment the uncanny typically provokes. At the same time, the dream reveals another layer of anxiety: we can read the

woman-donkey as an alter-ego of the overworked “superwoman,” which Ramphele identifies as an “ever-present danger” to women in her position who are torn – dismembered – between the demands of home and the world (172).

Ramphele’s project had initially been one of producing a self who is capable of “stretching across boundaries” (200), but she admits that this feat threatens to rupture – or dismember – the self (153). The narrative sees her coming to welcome, instead, the collapse of boundaries. Her desire to restore her internal balance by redrawing the boundary between the “home and the world” gives way to an identity, produced within the pages of the text, that “transcend[s] artificial boundaries” and even “derive[s] great pleasure in doing so” (224).

In the final chapter, we find Ramphele on a speaking tour in New York. She cannot find time to explore the city with her son. Hlumelo responds to this appropriation of private time by public demands by heckling her while she addresses meetings. Inviting him to join her on stage, she forgoes attempting to separate public and private spheres and allows them to merge. The narrative then shifts abruptly to her induction into “American decadence” when a friend takes her for a pedicure: “What bliss! I have never looked back. I have learnt to enjoy paying attention to my body. This I believe is a necessary part of the healing process I personally have to undergo” (223). In closure, the autobiography finds her reclaiming the “frail body” from the demands of activism, widowhood and motherhood, from both public and private spheres.

Whereas earlier the lack of distinction between public and private spheres was marked as disorientating and dislocating, Ramphele approaches the end of her self-presentation with the claim that “I feel at home in the global village” (222): the home-in-the-world, rather than the world-in-the-home. The uncanny eruptions into the domestic Bhabha refers to, quoted in my opening epigraph, which speak to Ramphele’s experience of loss that locates her as a “political widow,” are reversed by moving beyond the internal and external boundaries of the nation, and embracing her characterisation as “witch,” in favour of being the “political widow who could never be.”

Rediscovering “A Home for Intimacy”: Njabulo S. Ndebele’s *The Cry of
Winnie Mandela*

I haven't got [a home]. None of us women have one ... You men come back home. We are the home. --- Anna Godwilling, the ‘village prostitute,’ in Mia Couto’s The Last Flight of the Flamingo 60.

home is an ambiguous site where you belong and feel comfortable but where you also encounter revulsion or horror, perhaps the most revolting aspect of horror is that it is comfortable in the home. --- Zoë Wicomb, “Comment on Return to South Africa” 575.

In The Cry of Winnie Mandela, Ndebele explores women’s experiences of widowhood during the long durée of colonialism and apartheid that saw the destruction of homes and the break-up of families. Like Ramphele, Ndebele departs from standard definitions of widowhood. In his novel, widowhood is essentially a state of waiting. Widows guard the home left vacant by wandering men, their stasis thrown into relief by male mobility. Identifying the experience of waiting as a significant one in the lives of South African women, Ndebele depicts with sensitivity the uncertainties and agonies, the “endurance without consolation” (6), of this state of “limbo” (14).

Winnie Mandela is presented as the archetypal “political widow,” the “ultimate public symbol of women-in-waiting” (61): “You stood in for him. [...] You held onto your husband by absorbing his political image into yourself” (60). Ndebele places her story at the heart of a narrative that includes four “ordinary” women who encircle Winnie’s spectacular experience of widowhood with their quotidian experiences. The novel moves between the “ordinary” lives of “*four unknown women*” and “*that of South Africa’s most famous woman*” (1) as it responds to the challenge it sets itself: “to build a bridge between the public clamour in [Winnie’s] life and the intimate secrets deep inside [her]” (52). In search of Winnie’s “intimate secrets,” the novel hones in on the point at which the homely becomes unhomely.

Rita Felski’s reading of the philosophical history of the “everyday” is instructive regarding Ndebele’s notion of the “ordinary.” According to Felski, women are considered “the quintessential representatives and victims of the quotidian” and are associated with

the home (17). Like Ndebele, Felski contests the “negative view of the quotidian” as “something to be transcended” (17). She suggests, moreover, that the notion “that women represent daily life” problematically presents

a romantic view of both everyday life and women by associating them with the natural, authentic and primitive. This nostalgia feeds into a long chain of dichotomies – society versus community, modernity versus tradition, public versus private – which do not help us to understand the social organisation of gender and which deny women’s contemporaneity, self-consciousness and agency. (31)

Women’s contemporaneity is denied in the temporal structures of Janus-faced nationalism, which nostalgically renders them as custodians of tradition (see McClintock 358-59; Ogunidipe-Leslie 7). Zakes Mda’s The Heart of Redness, as I argued in Chapter Two, reveals such nostalgia. The Cry of Winnie Mandela also articulates a form of nostalgia, but it is of a different order from that of The Heart of Redness. If the latter exhibits “restorative nostalgia,” in Svetlana Boym’s terms, the former displays “reflective nostalgia”:

Restorative nostalgia stresses *nostos* and attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home. Reflective nostalgia thrives in *algia*, the longing itself, and delays the homecoming – wistfully, ironically, desperately. Restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather as truth and tradition. Reflective nostalgia dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradictions of modernity. (xviii)

The ambivalences to which Boym refers are manifest in the divided vision of the book. I suggest that two narratives are at work, each with competing agendas. The first is a story of waiting women, which critiques the production of women as guardians or embodiments of home, and the second is a story of the restoration of home. The Cry of

Winnie Mandela declares itself to be “*a great South African story not yet told*” about women who have “*endured the uncertainties of waiting*” (1; emphases in orig.). At the same time, it fulfils a mandate set forth in “A Home for Intimacy” in which the “greatest of South African stories yet to be told” are those of the “loss of homes [and the] demise of intimacy” (29). While exploring the effects of the same historical conditions – the brutal modernities of colonialism and apartheid – the two ‘great South African stories’ pull in different directions. One aims to free women from the burden of waiting in the home, and the other longs for a home that, it seems, only women can provide.

Winnie is the fulcrum on which the two narratives balance uneasily. The binary of waiting women and mobile men collapses around her, the “political widow” and “mobile girl” (29). Her story is embedded at the heart of this chinese-box text. The four ‘widows’ frame her story, their stories in turn encased by two outer frames: Homer’s Penelope and Sara Baartman. Baartman is represented on the cover and the dedication is to her, “who endured the horrors of European eyes, was desecrated beyond her death, and finally returned home to rest.” This unexpected paratext for a novel ostensibly about women waiting for travelling men points to a tension between the book’s purported and subliminal aims. The return of Baartman’s remains to South Africa, as I argued in Chapter Three, was presented as an attempt to remake the nation as home. The rhetorical power of her burial was in large part achieved through the casting of her as domestic, maternal figure.

Penelope provides the narrative’s second frame. The story of her “exemplary fidelity” strikes “a special cord” in South Africa, where “powerful social forces” have caused men “to wander away from home for prolonged periods of time” (5). Penelope, the wife of the wandering Odysseus, spurned a spate of suitors as she waited for her husband’s return, securing “her place in world literature as the ultimate symbol of a wife ‘so loyal and so true’” (2). Her unfortunate legacy, from which Ndebele wishes to free his women, is that the waiting wife should be “eternally faithful to her husband” (2).

Penelope’s story certainly resonates with those of the novel’s four “ordinary” women. But it jars as a frame for the story of Madikizela-Mandela. Ndebele evokes Penelope as part of his project of ‘rediscovering the ordinary’ but, in doing so, threatens to tie women too closely to the “everyday.” The framing myth of Penelope and Odysseus

– questing hero and faithful, homebound wife – evokes the kind of dichotomy Felski warns against:

[to] affirm women’s special grounding in everyday life is to take at face value a mythic ideal of heroic male transcendence and to ignore the fact that men are also embodied, embedded subjects, who live, for the most part, repetitive, familiar and ordinary lives. (31)

Ndebele, himself returned from exile, is clearly drawn to the *Odyssey*, “the most classical Western tale of homecoming” (Boym 8). The exile’s desire for a homecoming threatens to detract from the novel’s otherwise sensitively drawn representation of waiting women. As M. J. Daymond suggests with reference to his earlier work, Ndebele “can be thought of as blinded by his exile from the terrain which black women have had to occupy” (“Inventing” 227). The preoccupations of the returnee introduce similar blind spots, not least of which being a potential idealisation of home and the “ordinary.”

Behind the narrative screen of waiting women is a story of the returnee in search of a home. A longing for belonging infuses the narrative, and the notion of the “ordinary” is inflected by the desire for a home and the bitter disappointment consequent on being unable to find one. The novel’s central treatise repeats almost verbatim that outlined in “A Home for Intimacy.” This article opens by foregrounding the desire for “home” that permeates the argument as it speaks of Ndebele’s return “after “some 20 years of absence” (28). He and his family set out to revisit the house in which he was born, only to find that no trace of it has survived apartheid demolitions. The authorial voice circles around its absence in a circuitous movement mirrored by his waiting women as they muse on their state of limbo, “Waiting. Not waiting. But waiting” (14): “Returning home, I did not find my home. But then again, I have returned home. Yet, it is true that I am still looking for a home to stay.” The country is “vast” and fails to provide the interior intimacies of the sought-after home (“Home” 28). The critic has come face to face with the unhomely, in the prosaic sense of the term, which is inflected by its psychoanalytic meanings, as he becomes “uncomfortably aware” of the lack of a home, which “frightens” him (“Home” 29).

The catalogue of tenderness and terror Ndebele presents in the novel, and in his critical writing, attests to the extent to which post-apartheid South Africa remains a space of extremes, a space of the “spectacle,” in his theoretical lexicon. Ndebele locates in the “rebuilding of homes” the potential of “sustain[ing] our nationhood” and preventing “our democracy from being an event in which extremes of behaviour can dangerously ossify into spectacles of superficiality” (“Home” 29). The narrative nostalgia for homes lost and un-recovered dovetails with the project of ‘rediscovering the ordinary.’

Ndebele’s Winnie personifies the culture of the “spectacle,” “the culture of political posture [...] characterised by formulaic superficiality” (*Cry* 62). The novel sets itself the task of uncovering the private, intimate self from beneath the “mask of posture” (91). Given the mutual imbrications of its various textual projects, the novel’s recovery of Winnie’s private self is equivalent to “a rediscovery of the ordinary” and “a home for intimacy.” However, what it finds instead in the “inner recesses” (100) of the beloved black mother is a terrifying return, or “doubling” (Freud 234), of the brutalities associated with apartheid.

The novel aims to “stop the train of Winnie’s life and ponder it” (40). The image is significant. The train has long been associated with the experience of migratory men, and is also drawn on in Ndebele’s critical writing to describe the prevalence of the “spectacle” in South African literature. He employs a metaphor of a “train whose driver has lost control” to describe a “socially entrenched manner of thinking about the South African reality; a manner of thinking which, over the years, has gathered its own momentum and now reproduces itself uncritically” (“Beyond” 205). Winnie’s mobility, then, is congruent with the “spectacle” while, concomitantly, Ndebele’s aesthetics of the “ordinary” is invested in waiting women. Framed by the mythic legacy of Penelope, Winnie is rendered as a homemaker sadly “re-routed” from her ‘natural’ destiny (113). The Winnie the text longs to recuperate is one whose greatest aspiration was to be a homemaker: “I wanted to make a home for Nelson. Winnie, a housewife! Strange to say, I sought to be that at the time. What woman wouldn’t?” (88). The “rediscovery of the ordinary” becomes a project of re-making home, and depends on women to fulfil the role of homemaker.

In "A Home for Intimacy," Ndebele touches on the story that stands at the heart of the novel: "When Madiba came out of prison on February 11 1990 to return home, what did he find? His struggle to rebuild a home was never to succeed" (29). The novel speaks of Winnie's failure to "live up to the dream of [Mandela's] return," which "fired our imaginations, making everything in life seem possible" (66). This dream married politics (the public) and romance (the private). It promised to re-establish the gendered division of spheres uncannily destabilised by the "political widow" who refused to be contained within that title. The reunion of Winnie and Nelson, and Winnie's retreat into the private, declares the novel, would represent "the end of dislocation" and the culture of the "spectacle" fostered under apartheid's destruction of homes, which has left South Africa susceptible to "extremes of behaviour" (68).

Regretfully noting that this dream "didn't last," (69), the novel holds Winnie responsible for the demise of a newly regained intimacy and bemoans that "we continued to feel homeless and rootless" (69). "[W]hy did you fail to live up to the dream of his return?" (66), it demands of her. Winnie thus bears the burden of the national failure to recreate homes. A critique is issued at returning men in the case of Penelope's and Delisiwe's husbands, who prioritised the public, civic realm over the private and intimate, returning to "a country as home" rather than "the home that was your home" (67). But the critical voice is muffled with regard to Nelson Mandela, whose poignant statement at the divorce trial is quoted: "Ever since I came back from jail, not once has the defendant ever entered the bedroom whilst I was awake. [...] I was the loneliest man during the period I stayed with her" (76).⁷ Ndebele invests narrative sympathy in the returning husband, rather than in the recalcitrant wife, who is alone held responsible for the mammoth task of re-making the home and restoring intimacy. Not only should she

⁷ This loneliness is figured at the close of the film *Mandela and de Klerk* in a manner redolent of the division between "home and the world" of which Partha Chatterjee speaks. Mandela (Sidney Poitier) walks through the empty Presidential mansion while his Rivonia speech, in which he committed himself fully to the civil struggle, echoes through the halls. Paging through a file, he draws out a postcard-perfect picture of Winnie as a nubile young woman in traditional amaXhosa dress. The emptiness of the home expresses the loss and lack that lurk at the heart of the dream. The film's nostalgia is geared towards women as protectors of what Chatterjee calls the "inner sanctum" (tradition) and Winnie's failure to do so ("Nationalist" 239). Ndebele's novel articulates and forgoes this form of nostalgia, even as it attends to the loneliness consequent upon the loss of homes.

have returned to the private, the novel suggests at one point, but she should have constituted the private, the home waiting for Nelson's return.

The "ultimate death of home" preceded even Nelson's release as, in Winnie's Orlando residence, children were "Loved to perdition" (74). Here the narrative pauses to quote from Nelson Mandela's Long Walk to Freedom (see 431-32). Mandela relates a recurring nightmare he had in the wake of the 1976 Soweto uprising, when children defied parental authority to take the lead in the struggle, egged on by his wife, the champion of the youth. Dreaming of his unexpected release from prison, he finds that "There was no one to meet him"; proceeding to the family house, he observes that it is "empty, a ghost house" (74). The haunted house conveys the unhomely affect produced by the unhomely woman. The overtones of Ndebele's own return home are mirrored in and mediated through Mandela's return, hence the narrative reticence in directing critique at Mandela and the textual longing for Winnie to render the home homely.

Ndebele's critical agenda and private longing, with its nostalgic desire for homes, confronts him with the impossible task of reinserting Winnie into the private domain that she has long forsaken. He splits Winnie into two – reconstituting the division between public and private – so that she might observe herself from a reflective critical distance. The wifely self is sent on a journey in which she tries to reclaim the homely self the novel insists she was before Mandela's imprisonment ushered her into the public sphere.

This Winnie obeys the critical injunction to re-create homes: "Thinking about it now, I shouldn't have walked out with him. I should have waited outside the prison gates for him to walk back into my waiting arms" (87). She still flaunts the "revolutionary appeal" of bringing her waiting to an end by "walk[ing] into prison to fetch her man," showing the world that "Winnie does not wait. She goes and gets what she wants" (87). But, in her "quiet moments," the reflective mode Ndebele prioritises, she contemplates an alternative scenario: "I, Winnie Mandela, waiting at the prison gates for my man to come out to me" (88). Had she had played the role of waiting woman, suggests the novel, she and Nelson would have "insert[ed their] interrupted intimacy into the public drama and so reaffirm[ed their] private lives" (88). Any attempt to restore the "ordinary," private lives subsumed by the public drama requires, then, that Winnie retreat into the private, that she become the home into whose arms Nelson could have walked.

But this regressive desire is mitigated by the novel's willingness to face the terrifying abyss of unhomeliness. Boym suggests that the distinction between "restorative" and "reflective" nostalgics is evident in their different responses to the uncanny: "Restorative nostalgics don't acknowledge the uncanny and terrifying aspects of what was once homey. Reflective nostalgics see everywhere the imperfect mirror images of home, and try to cohabit with doubles and ghosts" (251). Confronting instead of shying away from uncanny affects, the novel self-consciously dramatises, rather than conceals, its own contradictory desires.

The outer frame of Sara Baartman speaks to these desires and the novel's recognition of their impossibility. The return to South African soil of Baartman's remains is one of many attempts to re-make the unhomely country as home. As the uncanny fear of dismemberment is dispelled through burial, the re-membered Mother of the Nation reflects back to the nation its imaginary unity. Ndebele, however, selected for his cover a representation of Baartman that hints at disintegration and offers, at best, a provisional unity.⁸ Willie Bester's construction from scrap metal draws attention to the bolts and hinges that hold this 'body' together and to the extent to which it has been produced from the colonial encounter (one of the pieces comprising the work is stamped "Made in England").

While the novel's project of rediscovering homes for intimacy proceeds, it allows itself to remain haunted by uncanny traces of dismemberment that undercut the ideal image of the nation as 'home,' as it gestures towards the unhomely infiltration of colonial power into the "recesses of the domestic space" (Bhabha 9). Thus, it resists the temptation to write the home as a space outside power, a realm apart from the "momentous social transformations" of modernity that drove men from the home (*Cry* 5). Instead, the home is conceptualised as the site of "history's most intricate invasions" (Bhabha 9).

Delisiwe, one of the *ibandla* women (the novel's gathering of widows), is the daughter of mission-school graduates who "brought modernity into their home" (36). She pointedly refers to her father's assertion of power within the home, which is dependent

on a production of women as homemakers: “You were there to serve him, and he was there to be served” (38). Correspondingly, Winnie draws attention to the home as the site of racialised power: “There’s something about the home and orderliness. [...] The four corners of a room, with everything put in its place [...] I think this kind of order is one of the central features of whiteness. We were all ‘civilised’ into it” (89). The home itself, what Partha Chatterjee calls the “inner sanctum” protected against colonial encroachment, is always already penetrated by colonial modernity (“Nationalist” 239). Like Felski, then, the novel questions the notion “that the habitual, home-centred aspects of daily life are outside, and in some sense antithetical to, the experience of an authentic modernity” (Felski 18). Not necessarily “linked to tradition,” the home “has been central to many women’s experience of modernity” (Felski 26). Far from being located outside of power, the home is equally the site in which women encounter the operations and intersections of gendered and racialised power.

The separation of “the home and the world” in which Chatterjee locates a gendered split in Indian nationalism, and which was employed in Mda’s The Heart of Redness, is forsaken in The Cry of Winnie Mandela. Ndebele recognises that the coloniser has encroached into the “inner sanctum” that women are called on to represent as inviolable. His Winnie is accordingly figured in radically different ways from Mda’s Qukezwa. If the latter represents the core of traditional, ‘native’ and thus homely, integrity, Winnie is an *unheimlich* figure.

In Ndebele’s Winnie, we recognise, within the ‘familiar,’ beloved black mother and icon of the anti-apartheid struggle, the ‘unfamiliar’ violence of the apartheid state. Winnie’s black breast, the novel proposes, houses a ‘heart of whiteness.’ We are informed that Major Swanepoel, Winnie’s torturer, found “for himself a permanent home in the inner recesses” of his victim (100). Winnie’s “intimate secrets” reveal a horror that cannot be contained within the idealised notion of home. The pervasive reach of colonial violence – into the “inner recesses” – that “restorative nostalgia” represses, returns, terrifyingly, in the figure of the national Mother. The novel’s nostalgia for homes – for loyal wives and nurturing mothers – thus gives way to one that acknowledges the

⁸ In the author’s acknowledgments, he expresses his thankfulness to the University of Cape Town and Willie Bester “for their kind permission to use, on the cover of this book, a photograph of Willie Bester’s

uncanny quality of the nation as 'home,' and which recognises that the traumatic affects of the past will not easily be exorcised

Like Mda, Ndebele alludes to Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness but does so to different purpose. Mda's novel endeavours to celebrate and restore that which was denigrated in Heart of Darkness. Ndebele grapples with the intertext at a more profound level. Rather than inverting its binary categories – as Mda attempts to do – he reveals the points at which they interpenetrate. Winnie is compared to neither the waiting woman – “the Intended” – nor the “savage and superb” African woman (Conrad 87). Instead, she is likened to the white male explorer who penetrates into the “heart of darkness” only to find it within himself. Winnie twice applies Conrad's statement about Kurtz to herself: “‘Mees Winnie – she dead’” (103-4, 112; see Conrad 100). The novel thus comments on how she has internalised the abuses of apartheid during her journey into the ‘heart of whiteness’ of apartheid South Africa.⁹

Ndebele's recognition of the uncanny follows Heart of Darkness in destabilising the separation of “home and the world.” Conrad's Marlow insists on a separation of spheres when the waiting Intended intrudes into his narrative: “They – the women I mean – are out of it – should be out of it. We must help them to stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse” (69). According to George, Marlow distinguishes between the “domestic world from which the brutalities of empire are painstakingly erased and the rough public world where those with virtues and delicate constitutions cannot survive” (George 86). For Marlow, the male realm (the world) is the site of unbearable ‘truth’ and the feminine (the home) that of “delusion” (Straus 50). This opposition is deconstructed in the novella's closing scene, when Marlow's lie renders an uncanny truth in the heart of the domestic home, one in which the African woman begins to merge with the Intended.

Gabrielle McIntire suggests that women's “essential immobility” in Heart of Darkness reinforces the separation between colony and metropole; “as such they are crucial for guarding and preserving difference between Africa and Europe” (259).

remarkable sculpture of Sara Baartman” (122).

⁹ Speaking elsewhere of Steve Biko's killers, Ndebele evokes this coinage: “Suddenly, ‘the heart of darkness’ is no longer the exclusive preserve of ‘blackness’; it seems to have become the very condition of ‘whiteness’ at the Southern corner of the African continent” (“Iph’ Indlela” 5).

However, the concluding uncanny iteration of the figure of the African woman in the sequestered interiors of Conrad's Brussels suggests a collapsing of the boundaries that separate the "home and the world." Set in the heart of empire, this scene marks also the uncanny returns of a repressed sexuality that has been projected onto African women (such as Sara Baartman) in order to retain an ideal image of white women (such as Penelope) as domestic subjects who faithfully await the return of their men. Ndebele's Winnie exemplifies such crumbling boundaries and uncanny returns.

Like Kurtz, Ndebele's Winnie speaks the 'truth,' which is the "horror" (Conrad 100), while, like Marlow, she issues this truth through a lie. Dirk Klopper argues that Madikizela-Mandela's "lie" during her TRC hearing, which is described in the novel as "the victory of image and posture" (63), "paradoxically reveals some order of truth" (Klopper 464). The novel, then, concedes, contra Ndebele's theoretical claims, that the "spectacle" does indeed reveal a form of truth. As an icon of a revolution that "employed terror to combat terror," Madikizela-Mandela is an "uncanny," "ghostly" "double of the inhumanity the revolution sought to oppose" (Klopper 467, 464). Her unrepentant appearance before the TRC "compels the ANC to confront not an enemy but itself, its other self" (Klopper 464). Similarly, in the novel, the truth Winnie's "lie," or her "mask of posture," renders is a profoundly unsettling one that disrupts the national desire for home.

The horror Ndebele's novel speaks through Winnie is that the home is *unheimlich*, rather than "domestic" or "native" (Freud 222, 220); the "inner sanctum" has been violated, the "world-in-the home." With reference to Winnie, Ndebele also traces the haunting presence of the past in the present. Noting that apartheid security police relied on "the disruptiveness of disorder on a mind structured into order" to "make you desire more order," Winnie embraces disruption (89). Internalising the disruptions foisted on her by the apartheid state, she embodies the uncanny reiteration of violence in the post-apartheid present. Among other traumatic recursions the novel points to is the "jackroller" – or gang-rape – phenomenon of post-apartheid South Africa, which, it suggests, sprang fully formed from Winnie's household, with its perverted ethos of

hospitality (98).¹⁰ The monstrous mother is the uncanny shape taken by the return of the repressed.

The understanding of “intimacy” developed in the text is thus a nuanced one, similar in many respects to Wicomb’s. As Ndebele writes in the novel and “A Home for Intimacy”:

Intimacy? A dangerous word. It has the South African capacity to imply the extremes of banality and profundity. Yet, when we gave up the AK-47 for negotiation, we opted for intimacy. [...] We opted for complexity, ambiguity, nuance, and emergent order. We opted for the uncertainties of experiencing one another. In this new universe, we may come to terms with the disturbing truth that both friends and enemies of yesterday may no longer be taken for granted. The heroes of the revolution may suddenly reveal distressing flaws, while the devils of repression may become disturbingly lovable. It is in this new universe that new political meanings and values will emerge. It is there that we may find our new homes. (*Cry* 71; “Home” 29)

Ndebele thus turns away from a project of recovering the cosy comforts of home towards one of finding new homes in a state of unhomeliness. The revised project does not need to recuperate Winnie as ‘Mother,’ nor abject her as ‘witch,’ but rather represents her in all her complexity and contradiction. This creates the space in which to grapple with the contradictions and complexities of the post-apartheid present. Additionally, it introduces ramifications into Ndebele’s aesthetic theory. Accommodating the “spectacle” in its uncanny manifestations, the novel revises the notion of the “ordinary” from one based on settled interior

¹⁰ Quayson presents a similar argument: noting that the apartheid state relied on disorder as a political instrument, he suggests that “the anti-apartheid movement itself had of necessity to buy into the reigning culture of impunity and violence in order to pursue its legitimate struggle against the state. What we see post apartheid is the residue of the culture of impunity and disorder displaced on to the streets” (211). Like Ndebele, Quayson points to the “spate of rapes” in post-apartheid South Africa as exemplary of this “culture of impunity,” concluding that women have become its new victims (212).

intimacies to one that opens itself to the dangerous intimacies of the negotiated settlement.

Rather than exorcise the uncanny through reviving a discourse of “hospitality,” which depends on a restoration of home, the novel engages with what Jacques Derrida, in an uncanny neologism, terms “hostipitality.” “Hospitality,” notes Derrida, is a word of “troubled and troubling origin, a word which carries its own contradictions incorporated into it, a Latin word which allows itself to be parasitized by its opposite, ‘hostility,’ the undesirable guest [...] which it harbors as the self-contradiction of its own body”: “hostipitality” (3). Ndebele’s aesthetic emphasis on “intimacy” evokes the ethos of hospitality, but his nuanced understanding of “intimacy” as a “dangerous word” offering “disturbing truth[s]” inflects the hospitality being forged. It suggests not only an effort to welcome the stranger in, but also one that recognises the stranger within, which in turn disrupts the writing of nation as homely.

Conclusion: Hos(ti)pitality and the Stranger Within

Is it possible that South Africa is one big game lodge where all its black citizens are struggling to make sense of their lives, like people who awake in an enormous vacation house which is now supposed to be theirs but which they do not quite recognize? Do they strive to be just like their fellow citizens who have mastered the economics of the game lodge, and who may seek to consolidate a cultural condition in keeping with their strategies of survival by marketing an image of South Africa as a haven of safety and success in a dark, violent and threatening continent? [...]

Are we evolving a split personality which may yet generate its own forms of creativity? What does it mean to use the vacation house as a vantage point from which to look down on others, when we have yet to prove that the house belongs to us and we are its rightful owners? --- Njabulo Ndebele, “Game Lodges and Leisure Colonialists” C10.

'Being home' refers to the place where one lives within familiar, safe, protected boundaries; 'not being home' is a matter of realizing that home was an illusion of coherence and safety based on the exclusion of specific histories of oppression and resistance, the repression of differences even within oneself.

--- Bidy Martin and Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Feminist Politics: What's Home Got to Do With It?" 196.

In "Game Lodges and Leisure Colonialists," Ndebele meditates on his uncomfortable experience of visiting a luxury game lodge, previously the preserve of white South Africans. He considers how the exclusions of the apartheid state threaten to return in an apparently inclusive 'rainbow' nation that does not welcome 'visitors' from the north. And he suggests that an uncanny doubling – or "split personality" – may be the site from which new forms of creativity, appropriate to our new context, will arise.

The aesthetic that The Cry of Winnie Mandela begins to forge is one that recognises the stranger within. As Ndebele writes in an article published in the same year as his novel, "Suddenly, I experience the erstwhile target out there as something intimately inside of me" ("Approach" 14). According to Kristeva, such a recognition counters nationalism's troubling xenophobia towards the stranger without, which Ndebele addresses when he expresses concern about post-apartheid South Africa's attempts "to keep the north at bay" ("Game" C10).

The final chapter of The Cry of Winnie Mandela sees the *ibandla* women, along with Winnie, taking up the leisure prospects of the 'new' South Africa. They hire a Caravelle, Venter trailer and a driver, eschewing the home – and thus their roles as waiting widows – in favour of a newfound mobility. At the start of their journey, the women break into song, singing "*Iphi'ndlela*" ('Where is the way?'), a phrase used by Ndebele in the title of his Biko Memorial lecture, which was subtitled "Finding Our Way Into the Future." The novel's conclusion, then, can be read as an attempt to map out future social and cultural directions. It does so by remapping physical space, and reclaiming the country as home, but a home that neither demands the domestication of women, nor one whose interior intimacies are premised on exclusions, beginning with disavowals of aspects of the self (see "Home" 28; Cry 68-69).

In his Biko memorial lecture, Ndebele listed among the unhomely effects of the 'new' South Africa, which include also the Mandela divorce, that of a "new black elite" taking up "membership of the wealth making class" ("Iph' iNdela" 2). The essay quoted in my epigraph, similarly, sees him reflecting on the danger that the black elite will be co-opted. This, he declares, "is perhaps the most frightening aspect of culture in post-apartheid South Africa" ("Game" C10). The material accretions of the novel's concluding journey – the Caravelle, Venter trailer, hired driver, credit card and Winnie's trade-mark designer dark-glasses – are thus marked by a structure of anxiety similar to that exhibited in Ramphele's autobiography. Enduring the horror of the uncanny spectre rather than turning from it, The Cry of Winnie Mandela grapples with the threat voiced by Derrida that the "one inviting becomes almost the hostage of the one invited" and the alternative scenario, in which the guest is taken hostage by the host. The final chapter of Ndebele's novel encourages us to re-read the conclusion to Ramphele's autobiography in this light ("Hostipitality" 9).

Embracing the witch archetype and allowing the recesses of the domestic to invade the world, Ramphele learns to live with contradictions as she crafts an uncanny, hybrid identity for herself. At home in the global village, the autobiographer retains in her text haunting affects that the witch does not dis-spell. The autobiographical closure, with its reference to "American decadence," sends anxious reverberations across the text: has hospitality mutated into "hostipitality"? Has the guest been taken hostage by the host?

A similar anxiety haunts Ndebele's narrative. Like Ramphele, he aims to reconstruct the intimate and private, without subsuming women in the home and barring them from the civic sphere of citizenship. Ndebele's Winnie, reluctant, as Ramphele suggests, to cede the public sphere to the returned husband, finds strange "allies" in the oppressors who imprison her, shockingly claiming that "his return to lead the people to freedom would be the end of my freedom" (109). Troubling the notion that the 'new' South Africa has brought freedom for all, Winnie points to a post-conflict re-domestication of women that paradoxically threatens the freedom she enjoyed during the struggle for freedom. Avoiding this re-domestication, the novel sends its women on a trip that depends on a degree of affluence unavailable to "ordinary" South African women (a trip made possible only by the credit card that allows them to pass through the tollgate).

Ndebele reflects critically on this solution, which suggests an uncanny reiteration of the apartheid past on the part of a new elite, of which Winnie is a representative figure.

Foregoing the comforting “illusion of complete belonging” that the home encapsulates (Boym 254), Ndebele leaves the door open to the other and recognises the stranger within. The women stop for a hitchhiker, taking into their midst a foreigner. The chapter is entitled “The stranger,” and the stranger turns out to be none other than Penelope, travelling “around the world to places where women have heard of me, attempting to free them from the burden of unconditional fidelity I placed on their shoulders” (120). Inviting otherness – the stranger – within, the women recognise themselves in the foreigner.

The novel thus concludes by theorising alliances between women beyond the borders of the national ‘home,’ thus taking up a similar project to Bloodlines and Mother to Mother. Even more keenly than these previously discussed novels, it keeps in its sights the question of on whose terms and under what conditions this meeting will take place, thus avoiding the sentimental trap into which some of the renditions of Krotoa-Eva stumbled. This is a question of interpretative power, a question, to quote Sisi Maqagi, of “Who Theorizes?” (27). The Cry of Winnie Mandela remains keenly aware of the dangers of women in Africa being co-opted by a global (or white) feminist movement. Stopping to pick up a hitchhiker entails the risk of being hijacked. As Derrida says, “If I am sure that the newcomer that I welcome is perfectly harmless, innocent, that (s)he will be beneficial to me ... it is not hospitality. When I open my door, I must be ready to take the greatest of risks” (qtd. in Rosello 12). Ndebele’s women take such risks and, in risking all, open themselves up to new encounters that speak to their experiences of womanhood and widowhood.

By suggesting a strategic meeting rather than an essential unity of women, the novel proposes what Caren Kaplan and Inderpal Grewel refer to as “transnational feminist practises,” which belong not to a global feminism but to one that “involve[s] forms of alliance, subversion, and complicity within which asymmetries and inequalities can be critiqued” (2). A “meeting,” according to Kristeva, “welcomes the foreigner without tying him [sic] down, opening the host to his [sic] visitor without committing. A mutual recognition, the meeting owes its success to its temporary nature.” (11.) The

meeting between the *ibandla* women, Winnie and Penelope is, in other words, an instance of what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak describes as 'strategic essentialism' (see Post-Colonial 11), or what Elaine Salo, in the South African context, refers to as coalition politics (see 129). Reflecting on her own critical practice, Spivak says: "You pick up the universal [anti-sexism] that will give you the power to fight against the other side, and what you are throwing away by doing that is your theoretical purity." The ensuing "contaminations" rub the situational against the universal and vice versa (Post-Colonial 12).

I have read The Cry of Winnie Mandela and its inscription of "political widowhood" and of 'home' through psychoanalytic theory and its re-articulation in a theory of migration and movement by Bhabha. Like Bhabha's migrant subjects and Ndebele's women, theory travels. I have taken it on a route through a local and experiential study of "political widowhood" by Ramphele, in order to read Ndebele's novel and its figuration of Winnie Mandela as (un)homely woman. Ndebele's conclusions, in turn, illuminate the closure reached in Ramphele's autobiography. The ending of the novel suggests to me both the potential rewards and dangers entailed in such transnational reading practises. To a white woman reader, it suggests also ways of engaging with texts of and / or by African women.

Penelope's relation to the waiting women is not one of 'enlightened saviour' or disembodied interpreter of their experiences (see Lewis, "Politics" 94, 100), but is one in which specific shared subjugations are identified and addressed through coalitions or "meetings." Penelope has left behind both home and nation. Yet her response to the shape taken by classical Greek patriarchy is not posed as necessarily applicable to Winnie and the waiting women in transitional South Africa. As Desirée Lewis has argued,

White and middle-class feminists attach key importance to their liberation from the family and domesticity, while for many black and working-class women, 'freedom' to enter the male domain is frequently oppressive, and can entrench rather than challenge patriarchy. ("Politics" 98; see also hooks 41-49).

Even as they whiz across the countryside, one of the women, Delisiwe, chooses the role of homemaker within the Caravelle, feeding her fellow travellers and “meet[ing] their needs” (116). It is Delisiwe, as homemaker, who creates the possibility for the “meeting” between the women and Penelope, for it is she who demands they practise hospitality and stop for the hitchhiker.

‘Home,’ then, is not only a site of women’s domestication but is also an activity that permits “hos(ti)pitality.” In terms of theory and interpretation, ‘home’ as locality and specificity is, moreover, the site from which theory begins, and to which it returns. The ‘home’ from which we theorise, however, need not be understood as static and sealed, but, as the novel suggests, can productively be conceptualised as mobile and open to differences within and without. It is in this spirit that I have read A Life and The Cry of Winnie Mandela and their negotiation of “home and the world,” and it is in this spirit that I mark my reading – of Winnie and Ramphele, of women as victims and mothers, and of three women drawn from the historical past – as one that is as provisional and as risky as the brief meeting between six women on a South African freeway.

CONCLUSION – STORIES OF THE TRANSITION: THE WARP AND WOOF

In conclusion, I spin the loom from warp to woof, from a vertical thematic study to thinking across the thesis, by tracing some of the horizontal threads that weave their path through the chapters. The shape taken by my tapestry owes much to Zoë Wicomb's David's Story. I first encountered David's Story when I was beginning to formulate the path I would follow in this thesis. It was immediately evident to me that the novel would stand at the heart of my thesis. It articulated, in poetic, playful and prophetic ways, many of the issues that were emerging and would emerge during the following four years, as I worked my way through the narratives of the transition that comprise the subject matter of this study. David's Story speaks to the opening three chapters, as it alludes to both Krotoa-Eva and Sarah Bartmann, and responds to the textual strategies employed by Zakes Mda to manage the prophetic voice of Nongqawuse. At the same time, through its interest in "recursions" (184), it allows us to trace an uncomfortable thread between past and present.

I selected for analysis three of the most complex and contradictory women of South African history and noted how their stories have largely been flattened out and domesticated in the present, and how the loose threads and snares in their legacy have been snipped off and sutured. Out of the raw material of their legacy, the nation is produced as a multihued cloth, complete and entire unto itself. Re-presented as maternal figures, these women reflect back to the nation its wholeness and unity. Forgotten in such accounts are women's experiences of motherhood, and their relationship to their reproductive bodies. Motherhood is, instead, presented as patriarchal institution and national emblem.

By all accounts, Krotoa-Eva had a vexed relationship to her children and her maternal identity. Nongqawuse was not a mother, at least not at the time of her prophecies. Moreover, she offered one of the most striking challenges to patriarchal control of the female reproductive body, by calling for the destruction of the currency through which women's reproductive potential was appropriated by the patriarchal clan. Little is known of Bartmann's experiences as a mother; she reported that her child had

died of smallpox before she left the Cape and other accounts suggest she may have borne a further two children in Manchester. Rather than being used as the occasion to consider maternal loss, however, her story has been shaped to express her national 'children's' need for a maternal figure to render the national family a home. The recuperation of such complex figures as national Mothers irons out the messy seams of the national past and the transitional present, while denying the contradictory experiences of women as mothers and as reproductive bodies.

In contrast to the sentimental fictions we find, for instance, in André Brink's Imaginations of Sand and Trudie Bloem's Krotoa-Eva, Wicomb records the psychic violence of the colonial encounter and refuses to romanticise Krotoa-Eva:

(There is the indisputable example of the first native woman of no parentage, Eva/Krotoa, who in spite of being taken into the cleanliness of the Dutch castle, in spite of marriage to a white man and fluency in his language, reverted to type and sold her own brown children's clothes for liquor.) (David's 38)

The richly ironic voice of Wicomb's narrator is crafted to unpick the neat edges of both colonial discourse and its nationalist rebuttals. "David's story started at the Cape with Eva/Krotoa, the first Khoi woman in the Dutch castle, the only section I have left out," the narrator informs us on the opening page (David's 1). This teasing mention both inscribes and erases Krotoa-Eva from the foundational position into which historians and writers are increasingly placing her, along with Sarah Bartmann.

What we often witness at work on the remembered and disremembered, re-remembered and dismembered, bodies of Krotoa-Eva and Sarah Bartmann is what Svetlana Boym terms "restorative" nostalgia, which "patch[es] up memory gaps" (41). The iconography of woman as Mother provides the thread with which "restorative" nostalgia sutures the cloth of national memory. Ironically, then, the body 'fragmented' through the fetishisation of the womb offers a suggestive symbol of the restorative process of remembering the nation.

My reading aimed to restore to these women some of their complexities and the challenges I believe they present to the national narrative spun around their bodies. I identified Nongqawuse's prophecy and its female authorship as a "subaltern past"; Dipesh Chakrabarty describes such pasts as being "like stubborn knots that stand out and break up the otherwise evenly woven surface of the fabric" of a national historiography (22). Such knotty fabrics stand in contrast to the tightly woven cloth of nationalist imaginings and ideologies. I revisited Krotoa-Eva's legacy as translator, rather than that of 'rainbow' mother. The vocations of the historical Krotoa-Eva and Nongqawuse – translator and prophet – challenge prevailing conceptions of authorship, as they return to us images of women who wove their words through the voices of others. I considered instances in which these women were written into fantastical, magical realist-type narratives, and suggested that, in the texts analysed, the fantastic provided a means by which an androcentric conception of male authorial power was reinforced.

One thread weaving across the thesis, then, is that which engages with the formal aesthetic properties of texts and their relation to gender and nationalism. In my reading of David's Story, I proposed that the seam between feminist and postcolonial theory, on the one hand, and postmodernist theory and aesthetics, on the other, may offer more appropriate textual homes for women such as these. Nongqawuse, I suggested, had engaged in decentred speech-acts that granted authority to the female self through a cunning act of displacement. This conception of authorship then provided the angle from which I read the 'testimonies' of the mother-witness. The female characters performing the authorising subject position of the mother-witness were granted entry into the public sphere in order to speak of their sons, but wove their own gendered stories into their testimonies.

Njabulo S. Ndebele avoided many of the pitfalls Brink and Mda stumbled into by offering a self-conscious interrogation of his position as a male author inscribing female characters, and of his desire for a restoration of home. While texts such as The Heart of Redness control their female characters with a hidden, god-like, hand, Ndebele explicitly points to the control his narrator exerts over the textual inscription of Winnie and the widows:

In these random journeys they take, they are subject to one requirement: to resist the urge to break out of the confines of thought into full desire. They strain at the writer's leash, wanting to assume individuality of character. But the writer must hold on to the leash, and hope it won't choke them; that they will learn to enjoy the movement between the end of the lease and the hand that holds it. (35)

This self-conscious commentary reflects both on the act of narrative control, and, by alerting us to the insistence with which his characters "strain at the writer's leash," reminds us of the as-yet-unknown spaces into which these women might stray, should the leash be slackened. Thus do the meta-fictional devices of self-reflexivity associated with postmodernism complicate and open up what I have identified as the closed discursive structures of gender and nationalism.

Wicomb's and Elleke Boehmer's novels also present formal challenges to nationalism; *David's Story*'s fragmented form frustrates teleological national redemptive narratives, while the multivocality of *Bloodlines*'s structure works against the unitary forms favoured by national discourse. It invites, instead, textile metaphors of textuality. Models of narrative drawn from "women's 'unofficial', domestic world" of "functional [...] use-value production," argues Josephine Donovan, express "a preference for unofficial, non-subordinate, everyday modes and a resistance to the imposition of authoritarian official dicta" (97). Thus, I here enlarge on metaphors associated with the domestic domain to draw out a central thread in this thesis: the ways in which women have addressed the public sphere by subversively inhabiting the private sphere.

Boehmer's *Anthea* aspires towards a perpetual writing without closure, her constructed history of the Makken family is constituted out of the "Threads and patches, stitched little by little across the surface of her grief" (90). A central metafictional motif in the novel is the "charmed pelsjas" or "native patchwork skin-jacket" Dollie sews for her Irish lover during the war (214). A veritable "pelsjas" itself, *Bloodlines* is a patchwork of fictional and historical narrative, letters, songs, journal entries and poems, as it ties together the threads of the Irish Brigade, the Anglo-Boer war, anti-apartheid bombings and the transition into the 'new' South Africa. By working these historical

“patches” into the fabric of a narrative set in the early 1990s, the novel suggests that past conflict did not end with the release of Nelson Mandela. Nor, by implication, will it be over after the first democratic elections in 1994. Embracing such narrative forms, and linking them to ‘women’s work,’ Boehmer engages directly with gendered stereotypes, such as those surrounding women and weaving, or, as pertinently in the post-traumatic context of the transition, women and the project of social mending.

A prevailing theme in this study has been the textual and discursive strategies of domestication, which inscribe women as Mother and homemaker. My methodology has been to return to the stereotypes in which women and nation have been produced, and to read them against the weave. Here I again adopt textile metaphors drawn from the domestic domain, as I knit together the stories that have emerged across the thesis. I have followed Judith Butler’s notion of “opposition working *from within* the very terms by which power is reelaborated [...] exploit[ing] and restag[ing] them, subject[ing] them to abuse so that they can no longer do their usual work” (“How” 279). In the process, I have traced the ways in which women weave their path in, and out of, the nationalist script, as they take up, and then subvert, the positions into which they have been subjected.

Equated with the body, and with use-value production, women are excluded from cultural production. Bloodlines and Our Generation respond to this by reclaiming the reproductive body from its nationalist tropes, and marking it, instead, as the source and site of creativity. Weaving back into the script of domesticity, maternity can, however, present a minefield for women writers in the nation, as I found in the case of Boehmer’s narrative, which occasionally stumbles into a poetics of ‘blood.’

I suggested that a persistent preoccupation with the politics and poetics of ‘blood’ – a form of ‘living on’ from the apartheid past – dismembers women, reducing them to the womb through which ‘blood’ passes, and silences their tongues. The opening chapters found that women’s words are managed, repressed and transposed into the fruits of their wombs. Disgrace then returns to dramatise this process in the figure of Lucy, who cannot speak her rape in a transitional present obsessed with women’s wombs as the space in which ‘blood’ mingles, and who opts instead to retreat into the private realm, rather than publicly declare her rape.

The private and public division, between 'home and the world,' provided another persistent theme across the texts. Impaled on the division between private and public, women such as Jaffer and Ramphele express their sense of being dismembered by the competing demands of the personal and the political; each autobiographical subject inhabits an unravelling self. Both are re-membered through complex negotiations of gendered spheres and relational subjectivities that belie the ease with which the mythic figures of Krotoa-Eva and Nongqawuse are recuperated for our times. Ramphele and Jaffer re-member themselves not in order to reflect an imaginary wholeness back to the nation-under-construction, but in order to return the figure of the female activist into a post-war transitional present that persistently re-domesticates women, as Dulcie's story reveals.

These autobiographies, like the novels by J. M. Coetzee, Ndebele and Wicomb, encourage us to rethink ideologies of the home as they point to the dangerous intimacies of the domestic domicile. Ndebele's women risk the perils of home in order to reconstitute a discourse of hospitality, which carries within it dangers of its own. The Cry of Winnie Mandela thus enabled me to consider the interwoven lives of women within and beyond the nation, which emerged as a key topic in earlier chapters: Magona's witnessing mother addresses her testimony not to the nation, but to another mother located beyond the national boundary; Bloodlines stitches together a narrative of national and international exchange and interaction between women; and Ndebele brings together South Africa's most spectacular woman and four unknown, ordinary women. His Winnie responds to her four interlocutors, thanking them for drawing her into their tapestry: "How can I forget to thank you, *zimtombi*, for inviting me into this communion of waiting women. It's a great honour. You have assured my consent by weaving my life into yours so richly" (90). Woven also into the narrative is the archetypal weaver of western myth: Homer's Penelope. Penelope's weaving was presented in myth as a loyal and homely act of waiting for her wandering husband; in Ndebele's novel, it is reconceived as a transnational feminist practice.

✿ The texts considered in this thesis theorise relations between women, as well as those between women and nation. Another of the threads running across the thesis raises the question of how to write women in South Africa, and of how to theorise feminist

practices, whether presented as “maternal politics,” as mainstream feminism, or as a nascent, located South African feminism. The understanding of hos(ti)pitality developed in the final chapter attempts to present a model whereby alliances between women, across and within national boundaries, can be rethought. Such forms of hospitality remain perilous for African women, as Dan Sleight’s narrative of Krotoa-Eva reveals, in which we find a domesticated Krotoa-Eva “imitat[ing]” the speech of Maria van Riebeeck, who is named as “hostess” (62). Yet, as Ndebele’s concluding chapter suggests, the gains of transnational feminist reading practices may compensate for the risks involved.

If the national history fashioned during the transition has had its edges sewn in too neatly, thereby rendering both women and the “everyday” invisible and privileging a script of sacrificial sons and mourning mothers, what is the effect when this narrative is cut from a different cloth? If we conceive of the South African social fabric as one – or many – rent by apartheid, and colonialism before it, then images of sewing and quilting, patchwork and tapestry offer pertinent, alternative textual models to that produced in the official script. These are models that foreground the need for a social mending, while deferring the desire for a seamless closure in the name of reconciliation, and urging us to rethink the domestic roles women are thought to fulfil in the nation. Simultaneously, they alert us to the world of the “ordinary” often elided in the TRC, and encourage us to think about the voices of women and how they have been, and could be, produced.

Metaphors of quilting, tapestry and weaving are all ones of becoming rather than of being; they favour process and creative reworking over completion and complacency. Understanding the process of coming to terms with the past that has been central in the transitional moment as an endless act of reworking the torn social fabric inherited from the past privileges also a discourse of reparation – from the root of “repair” – over that of reconciliation. Simultaneously, it reminds us of the provisionality and fragility of social reconstruction: stitches and patches can mend and thereby make the fabric reusable and life liveable, without promising the attainment of originary wholeness that the national Mother is called upon the represent.¹

¹ Another apposite metaphor here is that of the “cracked heirloom,” which Ingrid de Kok usefully adapts from Derek Walcott’s Nobel acceptance speech (see 61-62); in “Cracked Vases and Untidy Seams” I draw on both the metaphor of the “cracked heirloom” and the textile metaphors employed here in a study of narrative closure in the TRC and fiction influenced by it (see 67-68).

Forsaking the stable, unified forms favoured by nationalism, and imaginatively produced by the figure of the national Mother, novels such as David's Story and The Cry of Winnie Mandela, and historical figures such as Krotoa-Eva and Bartmann, allow us to trace, also, forms of 'living on' denied in the closure sought in the nationalist teleological script. The textual resistance to Bartmann's burial exhibited in David's Story is a resistance to narratives of re(-)covery – of closure and healing – that fail to account for Dulcie's shameful experiences in the transitional present. Dulcie's leaky body – or the loose threads dangling from the narrative cloth into which she is woven – suggests such forms of 'living on,' which are denied in Mda's attempts to seal the female form into an immaculate container for authorial meaning. In contrast, Wicomb refrains from pinning Dulcie down as an interpretable subject and permits us to witness the discordance her unstable presence introduces into the text. Among other things, the leaky body of Dulcie allows us to trace the mutation of colonial and apartheid projects into post-apartheid ones. It is precisely uses of the female form such as those exhibited in The Heart of Redness that Wicomb refuses; when she alludes to such authorial impregnations in her story of Antjie and A. A. S. le Fleur, and then opts instead for protean textual forms that slip "hither and thither" across the page.

Far from being simply a nation-building technology, literature, as these diverse texts reveal, complicates and restores complexity to the notion of national collectivity. Its ability to do so stems often from its self-conscious reflexivity, its potential to dramatise, rather than conceal, contradictions, and, as a rhetorical medium, its ability to rework and dis-figure the representations of women from which nationalist identity, belonging and unity is produced. David's Story stands as exemplary of such creative reworkings of the historical past and transitional present. Yet all the narratives considered here permit us to glimpse, at one point or another, the contradictory desires out of which they are comprised. In the process, the national cloth into which women have been woven begins to unravel, and we find ourselves able to imagine new ways of being gendered in the nation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Abrahams, Yvette. "'Ambiguity' is my Middle Name: A Research Diary about Bartman, Myself, and some other Brown Women." Unpublished. African Gender Institute Colloquium, U Cape Town, 1996.

----- "Miscast." Rev. of Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture, curated by Pippa Skotnes. Southern African Review of Books 44 (July/August 1996): 15-16.

----- "Was Eva Raped? An Exercise in Speculative History." Kronos 23 (1996): 3-21.

----- "The Great Long National Insult: 'Science,' Sexuality and the Khoisan in the 18th and early 19th Century." Agenda 32(1997): 34-48.

----- "Images of Sara Bartman: Sexuality, Race, and Gender in Early-Nineteenth-Century Britain." Nation, Empire, Colony: Historicizing Gender and Race. Ed. Ruth Roach Pierson and Nupur Chaudhuri. Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1998. 220-36.

----- "Colonialism, Dysfunction and Disjuncture: Sarah Bartmann's Resistance (Remix)." Agenda 58 (2003): 12-26.

Adhikari, Mohamed. "The Sons of Ham: Slavery and the Making of Coloured Identity." South African Historical Journal 27 (1992): 95-112.

Ahluwalia, Pal, and Charmaine McEachern. "Founding Father Presidencies: The Case of Kenya and South Africa." The Post-Colonial Condition: Contemporary Politics in Africa. Ed. D. Pal Ahluwalia and Paul Nursey-Bray. Commack: Nova Science, 1997. 81-97.

Ahluwalia, Pal. "Towards (Re)Conciliation: The Post-Colonial Economy of Giving." Social Identities 6.1 (2000): 29-48.

Ahmed, Sara. Differences that Matter: Feminist Theory and Postmodernism. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.

Alarcón, Norma. "Traddutora, Traditora: A Paradigmatic Figure of Chicana Feminism." Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices. Ed. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan. Minneapolis: U Minnesota P, 1994. 110-133.

Alcoff, Linda Martín, and Lucy Gray-Rosendale. "Survivor Discourse: Transgression or Recuperation?" Getting a Life: Everyday Uses of Autobiography. Ed. Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson. Minneapolis: U Minnesota P, 1996. 198-225.

Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)." 1969. Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays. Trans. Ben Brewster. New York: Monthly, 1971. 127-88.

Amupadhi, Tangeni. "TRC ducks Quatro." Mail & Guardian 26 June 1998. 1pp. 10 Jan. 2005. <<http://archive.mg.co.za>>

Anderson, Benedict. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. London: Verso, 1983.

Andrews, Molly. "Grand National Narratives and the Project of Truth Commissions: A Comparative Analysis." Media, Culture & Society 25.1 (2003): 45-65.

Anthias, Floya, and Nira Yuval-Davis. Introduction. Woman-Nation-State. Ed Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias. London: Macmillan, 1989. 1-15.

----- . Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-Racist Struggle. London: Routledge, 1992.

Ardener, Shirley. "Sexual Insult and Female Militancy." Perceiving Women. Ed. Shirley Ardener. London: Dent, 1975. 29-53.

Attwell, David. "Reprisals of Modernity in Black South African 'Mission' Writing." Journal of Southern African Studies 25.2 (1999): 267-85.

Bailey, Brett. The Prophet. Perf. Third World Bunfight. Standard Bank National Arts Festival, Grahamstown, 1999. Published in The Plays of Miracle and Wonder: Bewitching Visions and Primal High-Jinx from the South African Stage. Brett Bailey. Cape Town: Double Storey, 2003. 167-93.

Bakhtin, Mikhail. Rabelais and His World. Trans. Helen Iswolsky. Cambridge: MIT P, 1968. Trans. of Tvorchestvo Fransua Rable i Noradnaia Kultura Srednevekovia i Renessansa.

Barnard, Rita. "Coetzee's Country Ways." Interventions 4.3 (2002): 385-94.

Barthes, Roland. "To Write: An Intransitive Verb?" 1966. The Rustle of Language. Trans. Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1986. 11-21.

----- . S/Z. Trans. Richard Miller. Oxford: Blackwell, 1990. Trans. of S/Z. 1973.

----- . "The Death of the Author." Trans. Stephen Heath. Image-Music-Text. Ed. Stephen Heath. Glasgow: Collins, 1977. 142-48. Trans of "La mort de l'auteur." 1968.

Battersby, Christine. Gender and Genius: Towards a Feminist Aesthetics. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1989.

Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator: An Introduction to the Translation of Baudelaire's Tableaux Parisiens." 1923. Illuminations: Essays and Reflections. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books, 1968. 69-82.

----- "Theses on the Philosophy of History." 1950. Illuminations: Essays and Reflections. Ed. Hannah Arendt. Trans. Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books, 1968. 253-64.

----- "Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian." One-Way Street and Other Essays. Trans. E. Jephcott and K. Shorter. London: New Left, 1979.

Bester, Willie. Sara Baartman. 2000. Chancellor Oppenheimer Library, U Cape Town.

Bhabha, Homi K. The Location of Culture. London: Routledge, 1994.

Bird, John, ed. The Annals of Natal, 1495-1845. Vol. 1. 1888. Cape Town: Struik, 1965.

Bloem, Trudie. Krotoa-Eva: The Woman from Robben Island. Cape Town: Kwela, 1999.

Boehmer, Elleke. "Stories of Women and Mothers: Gender and Nationalism in the Early Fiction of Flora Nwapa." Motherlands: Black Women's Writing from Africa, the Caribbean and South Asia. Ed. Susheila Nasta. 1991. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1992. 3-23.

----- Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995.

----- "Motherlands, Mothers and Nationalist Sons: Representations of Nationalism and Women in African Literature." From Commonwealth to Post-Colonial. Ed. Anna Rutherford. Sydney: Dangaroo, 1992. 229-47.

----- "Without the West: 1990s Southern African and Indian Women – A Conversation?" African Studies 58.2 (1999): 157-70.

----- Bloodlines. Cape Town: David Philip, 2000.

----- "Not Saying Sorry, Not Speaking Pain: Gender Implications in Disgrace." Interventions 4.3 (2002): 342-51.

----- Empire, the National and the Postcolonial, 1890-1920: Resistance in Interaction. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002.

Bonnin, Debby, Roger Deacon, Robert Morrell and Jenny Robinson. "Identity and the Changing Politics of Gender in South Africa." South Africa in Transition: New

Theoretical Perspectives. Ed. David R. Howarth and Aletta J. Norval. London: Macmillan, 1998. 111-31.

Boym, Svetlana. The Future of Nostalgia. New York: Basic, 2001.

Bradford, Helen. "Women, Gender and Colonialism: Rethinking the History of the British Cape Colony and its Frontier Zones, c. 1806-70." Journal of African History 37 (1996): 351-370.

Bredenkamp, Henry. "The Le Fleur Family: The Dead Bones of Adam Kok." Group Portrait South Africa: Nine Family Histories. Comp. Paul Faber. Cape Town: Kwela; Amsterdam: KIT, 2003. 132-55.

Brink, André. Imaginations of Sand. London: Secker & Warburg, 1996. London: Minerva, 1997.

----- "Reinventing a Continent (Revisiting History in the Literature of the New South Africa: A Personal Testimony)." World Literature Today 70.1 (1996): 17-23.

----- "Stories of History: Reimagining the Past in Post-Apartheid Narrative." Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa. Ed. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee. Cape Town: Oxford UP, 1998. 29-42, 275-76

----- "Interrogating Silence: New Possibilities Faced by South African Literature." Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995. Ed. Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. 14-28.

----- The Rights of Desire: A Novel. London: Secker & Warburg, 2000.

----- "A Tribute to Sestiger Publisher Daantjie Saayman." Summer, Sun and Sapphire 16.1: 1-2.

----- "Advent of The Great Novel Trumpets South Africa's Postcolonial Coming of Age." Sunday Independent 27 Oct. 2002: 18.

----- "Brink's Love Ebbs and Flows in Islands' Tides." Sunday Independent 23 May 2004: 18.

Brink, Elsabe. "Man-Made Women: Gender, Class and the Ideology of the *Volksmoeder*." Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945. Ed. Cherryl Walker. Cape Town: David Philip; London: James Currey, 1990. 273-92, 372-75.

Bruzelius, Margaret. "Mother's Pain, Mother's Voice: Gabriela Mistral, Julia Kristeva, and the Mater Dolorosa." Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature 18.2 (1999): 215-33.

Bundy, Colin, "The Beast of the Past: History and the TRC." After the TRC: Reflections on Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa. Ed. Wilmot James and Linda van de Vijver. Athens: Ohio UP; Cape Town: David Philip, 2000. 9-20, 202-03.

Butler, Judith. "Variations on Sex and Gender: Beauvoir, Wittig and Foucault." Feminism as Critique: Essays on the Politics of Gender in Late-Capitalist Societies. Ed. Seyla Benhabib and Ducilla Cornell. Cambridge: Polity, 1987. 128-42.

----- Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. New York: Routledge, 1990.

----- Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex.' New York: Routledge, 1993.

----- The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1997.

----- "How Bodies Come to Matter: An Interview with Judith Butler." Interviewed with Irene Costera Meijer and Baukje Prins. Sings 23.2 (1998): 275-86.

Carby, Hazel V. "'On the Threshold of Woman's Era': Lynching, Empire, and Sexuality in Black Feminist Theory." Critical Inquiry 12 (1985): 262-77.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. "Minority Histories, Subaltern Pasts." Postcolonial Studies 1.1 (1998): 15-29.

Chamberlain, Lori. "Gender and the Metaphorics of Translation." Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. London: Routledge, 1992. 57-74.

Chatterjee, Partha. Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse? London: Zed, 1986.

----- "Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question." Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History. Ed. Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid. 1989. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1990. 233-53.

----- "Anderson's Utopia." Diacritics 29.4 (1999): 128-34.

Chidester, David. "Stories, Fragments and Monuments." Facing the Truth: South African Faith Communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Ed. James Cochrane, John de Gruchy and Stephen Martin. Cape Town: David Philip; Athens: Ohio UP, 1999. 132-41.

Claris. "Robert McBride: 'A Soldier Fighting for His People.'" Sechaba July 1987: 29-30.

Cock, Jacklyn. "Domestic Service and Education for Domesticity: The Incorporation of Xhosa Women into Colonial Society." Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945. Ed. Cheryl Walker. Cape Town: David Philip; London: James Currey, 1990. 76-96, 352-54.

----- "Women and the Military: Implications for Demilitarization in the 1990s in South Africa." Gender and Society 8.2 (1994): 152-69.

Coetzee, Carli. "Krotoä Remembered: A Mother of Unity, a Mother of Sorrow." Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa. Ed. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee. Cape Town: Oxford UP, 1998. 112-19, 264-65, 279-80.

Coetzee, J. M. Waiting for the Barbarians. Johannesburg: Ravan, 1980.

----- Foe. 1986. London: Penguin, 1987.

----- White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa. New Haven: Yale UP, 1988.

----- Giving Offence: Essays on Censorship. Chicago: Chicago UP, 1996.

----- Disgrace. London: Secker & Warburg, 1999.

----- Stranger Shores, Essays 1986-1999. London: Secker & Warburg, 2001.

Comaroff, J. L. "Governmentality, Materiality, Legality, Modernity: On the Colonial State in Africa." Perspectives on African Modernities. Ed. J-G. Deutsch, P. Porbst and H. Schmidt. London: James Currey, 2002. 107-34.

Conrad, Joseph. Heart of Darkness. 1899. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.

Conradie, Pieter. "The Story of Eva (Krotoa): Translation Transgressed." Journal of Literary Studies 14.1-2 (1998): 55-66.

Cooper, Brenda. Magical Realism in West African Fiction: Seeing with a Third Eye. London: Routledge, 1998.

Couto, Mia. The Last Flight of the Flamingo. Trans. David Brookshaw. London: Serpent's Tail, 2004. Trans. of O último voo do flamingo. 2000.

Crais, Clifton C. The Making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand UP, 1992.

Cronin, Jeremy. "The Time of Prophets." Even the Dead: Poems, Parables and a Jeremiad. Cape Town: David Philip, 1997. 36-38.

Crook, Glynis. "Some Dignity at Last for Saartje Baartman." The Star 29 April 2002. 2pp. 17 May 2002. <http://iol.co.za...art_id+ct20020429201453226S62222>

Cry Freedom. Dir. Richard Attenborough. 1987.

Curnow, Robyn. "Thandi Modise: A Woman in War." Agenda 43 (2000): 36-40.

Cypress, Sandra Messinger. La Malinche in Mexican Literature: From History to Myth. Austin: U Texas P, 1991.

Dangor, Achmat. Bitter Fruit. Cape Town: Kwela, 2001.

Davis, Angela. "Rape, Racism and the Myth of the Black Rapist." Women, Race & Class. New York: Vintage, 1983. 172-201, 265-68.

Davis, Gaye. "Chief Little Takes on a Big Job." Mail and Guardian 25 July 1997. M&G Archive. 4pp. 17 May 2002. <<http://archive.mg.co.za>>

The Day of the Two Suns: The Trial of Nongqawuse. Screenplay by Zakes Mda. Dir. John Matshikiza. Prod. Mark Newman. Saints, Sinners and Settlers Series. SABC2, 1999.

Daymond, M. J. "Inventing Gendered Traditions: The Short Stories of Bessie Head and Miriam Tlali." South African Feminisms: Writing, Theory, and Criticism, 1990-1994. Ed. M. J. Daymond. New York and London: Garland, 1996. 223-39.

----- "Bodies of Writing: Recovering the Past in Zoë Wicomb's David's Story and Elleke Boehmer's Bloodlines." Kunapipi 24.1-2 (2002): 25-38.

Dè Kok, Ingrid. "Cracked Heirlooms: Memory on Exhibition." Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa. Ed. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee. Cape Town: Oxford UP, 1998. 57-71.

Denman, Mariatte C. "Visualizing the Nation: Madonnas and Mourning Mothers in Postwar Germany." Gender and Germanness: Cultural Productions of Nation. Ed. Patricia Herminhouse and Magda Mueller. Providence: Berghahn, 1997. 189-99.

De Reuck, Jenny. "Social Suffering and the Politics of Pain: Observations on the Concentration Camps in the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902." 1999. Re-Imagining Africa: New Critical Perspectives. Ed. Sue Kossew and Dianne Schwerdt. Hurtington: Nova Science, 2001. 81-100.

Derrida, Jacques. Speech and Phenomena and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs. Trans. David B. Allison. Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1973.

----- "Des Tours de Babel." Trans. Joseph F. Graham. Difference in Translation. Ed. Joseph F. Graham. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1985. 165-207.

----- "Hostipitality." Trans. Barry Stocker. Angelaki 5.3 (2000): 3-18.

De Villiers, Andries William. "Monday, February 2, 1998." Register of Reconciliation. 2 Feb. 1998. 1pp. 13 May 2002. <<http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/ror/page11.htm>>

Dhlomo, H. I. E. The Girl Who Killed to Save (Nongqause the Liberator): A Play. Alice: Lovedale, 1936.

"Dignity at Last for Saartjie." SABC. 29 April 2002. 1pp. 17 May 2002. <http://www.sabcnews.co.za/south_africa/general/0,1009,33296,00.html>

Donovan, Josephin. "Style and Power." Feminism, Bakhtin and the Dialogic. Ed. Dale Bauer and Jaret McKinstry. New York: State U New York P, 1991. 85-94.

Driver, Dorothy. "M'a-Ngoana O Tsoare Thipa ka Bohaleng – The Child's Mother Grabs the Sharp End of the Knife: Women as Mothers, Women as Writers." Rendering Things Visible: Essays on South African Literary Culture. Ed. Martin Trump. Johannesburg: Ravan, 1990. 225-55.

----- "Women and Nature, Women as Objects of Exchange: Towards a Feminist Analysis of South African Literature." Perspectives on South African English Literature. Ed. Michael Chapman, Colin Gardner and Es'kia Mphahlele. Johannesburg: AD Donker, 1992. 454-74.

----- Afterword. David's Story. By Zoë Wicomb. New York: Feminist, 2000. 215-71.

Driver, Dorothy, and Meg Samuelson. "History's Intimate Invasions: Yvonne Vera's The Stone Virgins." The End of Unheard Narratives: Contemporary Perspectives on Southern African Literature. Ed. Bettina Weiss. Neckargemünd: Kalliope, 2004. 175-208.

Duiker, K. Sello. Thirteen Cents. Cape Town: David Philip, 2000.

----- The Quiet Violence of Dreams. Cape Town: Kwela, 2001.

Du Preez, Max. Pale Native: Memories of a Renegade Reporter. Cape Town: Zebra, 2003.

Eagleton, Mary. "Ethical Reading: The Problem of Alice Walker's 'Advancing Luna – and Ida B. Wells' and J. M. Coetzee's Disgrace." Feminist Theory 2.2 (2001): 189-203.

Elbourne, Elizabeth. "Early Khoisan Uses of Mission Christianity." Missions and Christianity in South African History. Ed. Henry Bredekamp and Robert Ross. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand UP, 1995. 65-95.

----- "Domesticity and Dispossession: British Ideologies of 'Home' and the Primitive at Work in the Early Nineteenth-Century Cape." Deep hiStories: Gender and Colonialism in Southern Africa. Ed. Wendy Woodward, Patricia Hayes and Gary Minkley. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002. 27-54.

Ellis, Stephen, and Tsepo Sechaba. Comrades Against Apartheid: The ANC and the South African Communist Party in Exile. London: James Currey; Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1992.

Ellman, Maud. "The Power to Tell: Rape, Race and Writing in Afro-American Women's Fiction." An Introduction to Contemporary Fiction: International Writing in English since 1970. Ed. Rod Mengham. Cambridge: Polity, 1999. 32-52.

Eng, David L., and David Kazanjian. "Introduction: Mourning Remains." Loss: The Politics of Mourning. Ed. David L. Eng and David Kazanjian. Berkeley: U California P, 2003. 1-15.

Enloe, Cynthia. The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War. Berkeley: U California P, 1993.

Erasmus, Zimitri. "Some Kind of White, Some Kind of Black: Living the Moments of Entanglement in South Africa and its Academy." Un/Settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, 'Transruptions'. Ed. Barnor Hesse. London: Zed, 2000. 185-255.

----- "Introduction: Re-imagining Coloured Identities in Post-Apartheid South Africa." Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town. Ed. Zimitri Erasmus. Cape Town: Kwela and SA History Online, 2001. 13-28.

Etherington, Norman. "Natal's Black Rape Scare of the 1870s." Journal of Southern African Studies 15.1 (1988): 36-53.

Fabian, Johannes. Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object. New York: Columbia UP, 1983.

Fanon, Frantz. "Algeria Unveiled." A Dying Colonialism. Trans. Haakon Chevalier. New York: Grove Weidenfeld. Trans. of L'An Cinq, de la Révolution Algérienne. 1959. 35-59.

Fausto-Sterling, Anne. "Gender, Race, and Nation: The Comparative Anatomy of 'Hottentot' Women in Europe, 1815-1817." Deviant Bodies: Critical Perspectives on Difference in Science and Popular Culture. Ed. Jennifer Terry and Jacqueline Urla. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1995. 19-48.

Felski, Rita. "The Invention of Everyday Life." New Formations 39 (1999-2000): 13-31.

Ferris, Diana. "I've Come to Take You Home." Herald 10 August 2002: 5.

Foucault, Michel. "The Subject and Power." Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984: Power. vol. 3. Trans. Robert Hurley. Ed. James D. Faubion. New York: New, 2000. 326-48. Trans. 1982.

Freud, Sigmund. "The 'Uncanny.'" 1919. Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works. Vol 17. Trans. and ed. James Strachey. London: Hogarth, 1955. 217-56.

Friedman, Roger. "Tutu Visits War Memorial." Cape Times 3 July 1996: 6.

Friedman, Susan Stanford. "Creativity and the Childbirth Metaphor: Gender Difference in Literary Discourse." Speaking of Gender. Ed. Elaine Showalter. New York: Routledge, 1989. 73-100.

Fuss, Diana. Identification Papers. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Gaidzanwa, Rudo. "Bourgeois Theories of Gender and Feminism and their Shortcomings with Reference to Southern African Countries." Gender in Southern Africa: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues. Ed. Ruth Meena. Harare: SAPES Books, 1992. 92-125.

Gaitskell, Deborah, and Elaine Unterhalter. "Mothers of the Nation: A Comparative Analysis of Nation, Race and Motherhood in Afrikaner Nationalism and the African National Congress." Woman-Nation-State. Ed. Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias. London: Macmillan, 1989. 58-77.

Gane, Gillian. "Unspeakable Injuries in Disgrace and David's Story." Kunapipi 24.1-2 (2002): 101-13.

Gaylard, Rob. "Zoë Wicomb." South African Writers. Ed. Paul A. Scanlon. Dictionary of Literary Biography. Vol. 225. Ed. Paul A. Scanlon. Detroit: Gale, 2000. 450-54.

Gellner, Ernest. Nations and Nationalism. Oxford: Blackwell, 1983.

George, Rosemary Marangoly. The Politics of Home: Postcolonial Relocations in Twentieth-Century Fiction. Berkeley: U California P, 1996.

Gevisser, Mark. "Mamphela Ramphela: If Not a Mother, Then a Witch." Portraits of Power: Profiles in a Changing South Africa. Cape Town: David Philip, 11-15.

Gilbert, Sandra M., and Susan Gubar. The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination. 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale UP, 2000.

Gilman, Sander L. "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature." Critical Inquiry 12 (1985): 204-42.

Gilroy, Paul. The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness. London: Verso, 1993.

Goldblatt, Beth, and Sheila Meintjes. "Gender and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: A Submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission." Johannesburg: Centre for Applied Legal Studies, Witwatersrand U, 1996.

-----, "South African Women Demand the Truth." What Women Do in Wartime: Gender and Conflict in Africa. Ed. Meredith Turshen and Clotilde Twagiramariya. London: Zed Books, 1998. 27-61.

-----, "Dealing with the Aftermath: Sexual Violence and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission." Agenda 36 (1999): 7-18.

Gould, S. J. "The Hottentot Venus." Natural History 91.10 (1982): 20-27.

Government Communication and Information System, Republic of South Africa. "Saartje Baartman's burial place, date to be announced." By Mantshele wa ga Tau. 24 July 2002. 1pp. 15 Nov. 2002. <<http://www.gov.za/buanew02/02072412461001.txt>>

Graham, Lucy. "Reading the Unspeakable." Journal of Southern African Studies 29.2 (2003): 433-44.

-----, "'Yes, I'm Giving Him Up:' Sacrificial Responsibility and Likeness with Dogs in J. M. Coetzee's Recent Fiction." Scrunity 2 7.1 (2002): 4-15

Gray, Stephen. "The Frontier Myth and the Hottentot Eve." Southern African Literature: An Introduction. Cape Town: David Philip, 1979. 38-71.

Greenblatt, Stephen. Marvellous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World. Chicago: U Chicago P, 1992.

Grewal, Inderpal, and Caren Kaplan. "Postcolonial Studies and Transnational Feminist Practices." Jouvert 5.1 (2000): 1-3. <<http://152.1.96.5/jouvert/v5i1/grewal.html>>

Grunebaum-Ralph, Heidi. "Saying the Unspeakable: Language and Identity After Auschwitz as a Narrative Model for Articulating Memory in South Africa." Current Writing 8.2 (1996): 13-23.

Gubar, Susan. "'The Blank Page' and the Issues of Female Creativity." The New Feminist Criticism. Ed. Elaine Showalter. London: Virago, 1986. 292-313.

Guy, Jeff. "Gender Oppression in Southern Africa's Precapitalist Societies." Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945. Ed. Cheryl Walker. Cape Town: David Philip; London: James Currey, 1990. 33-47, 348-49.

----- "A Landmark, Not a Breakthrough." Rev. of The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7, by J. B. Peires. South African Historical Journal 25 (1991): 227-31.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd. "'The Mind that Burns in Each Body': Women, Rape, and Racial Violence." 1983. Southern Exposure 12 (1984): 61-71.

Hall, Stuart. "The Question of Cultural Identity." Modernity and Its Futures. Ed. Stuart Hall, David Held and Tony McGrew. Oxford: Polity; Blackwell; Open UP, 1992. 273-316.

----- "Conclusion: The Multi-cultural Question." Un/Settled Multiculturalisms: Diasporas, Entanglements, 'Transruptions.' Ed. Barnor Hesse. London: Zed, 2000. 209-41.

Hamber, Brandon, and Richard Wilson. "Symbolic Closure through Memory, Reparation and Revenge in Post-conflict Societies." Unpublished. "Traumatic Stress in South Africa," Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 1999. 19pp. 12 Jan. 2000. <<http://www.wits.ac.za/esvr/papbh&rw.htm>>

Hansen, Karen Tranberg. "Introduction: Domesticity in Africa." African Encounters with Domesticity. Ed. Karen Tranberg Hansen. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1992. 1-33.

Hatem, Mervat. "Toward the Development of Post-Islamist and Post-Nationalist Feminist Discourses in the Middle East." Arab Women: Old Boundaries, New Frontiers. Ed. Judith E. Tucker. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1993. 29-48.

Hendrickse, John. "Eva." Khoi. London: New Beacon, 1990. 10-11.

Hernández, Tanya Katerí. "Sexual Harassment and Racial Disparity: The Mutual Construction of Gender and Race." Journal of Gender, Race and Justice 4 (2001): 183-224.

Hesse, Barnor. "It's Your World: Discrepant M/Multiculturalisms." Social Identities 3.3 (1997): 375-94.

Higgins, Lynn A., and Brenda R. Silver. "Introduction: Reading Rape." Rape and Representation. Ed. Lynn A. Higgins and Brenda R. Silver. New York: Columbia UP, 1991. 1-11.

Hoffman, Eva. Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language. 1989. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990.

hooks, bell. "Homeplace: A Site of Resistance." Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics. Toronto: Between the Lines, 1990. 41-49.

Horler, Adelle. "The Sad Life of Saartjie the 'Beast.'" Drum June 1995: 12-13.

"'Hottentot Venus' May Finally Come Home." SABC. 28 January 2002. 1pp. 17 May 2002. <<http://www.sabcnews.co.za/entertainment/culture/0,1009,27402,00.html>>

Innes, C. L. Woman and Nation in Irish Literature and Society, 1880-1935. Athens: U Georgia P, 1992.

Irigaray, Luce. "When the Goods Get Together." Trans. Claudia Reeder. New French Feminisms: An Anthology. Ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron. Brighton: Harvester, 1980. 107-10. Trans. of "Des marchandises entre elles." 1977.

Isaacson, Maureen. "Free Sate Madonnas Prevail in Mda's New Novel." Rev. of The Heart of Redness and The Madonna of Excelsior, by Zakes Mda. The Connection 2003. 4pp. 3 Oct 2003. <<http://www.theconnection.org/features/zakesarticle.asp>>

Jaffer, Zubeida. Our Generation. Cape Town: Kwela, 2003.

Wilmot James and Linda van de Vijver. Ed. After the TRC: Reflections on Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa. Cape Town: David Philip; Athens: Ohio UP, 2000.

JanMohamed, Abdul R. "Sexuality on / of the Racial Border: Foucault, Wright and the Articulation of 'Racialized Sexuality.'" Discourses of Sexuality: From Aristotle to Aids. Ed. Donna Stanton. Ann Arbor: U Michigan P, 1992. 94-116.

Jeffreys, M. K. "How White are the Whites?" Drum Aug. 1959: 44-48; Sept. 1959: 36-39; Oct. 1959: 47-48; Dec. 1959: 26-39; Feb. 1960: 26-27.

Jeter, Jon. "Burial Finally Restores Dignity of Exiled Sarah." Sunday Independent 11 August 2002: 3.

Jordan, A. C. Towards an African Literature: The Emergence of Literary Form in Xhosa. Berkeley: U California P, 1973.

Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Bargaining with Patriarchy." Gender and Society 2.3 (1988): 274-90.

Karodia, Farida. Other Secrets. Johannesburg: Penguin, 2000.

Kessler, S. V. "The Black Concentration Camps of the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902." Historia 44.1 (1999): 110-47.

Kirby, Percival R. "The Hottentot Venus." Africana Notes and News 6.3 (1949): 49-62.

Klopper, Dirk. "Narrative Time and the Space of the Image: The Truth of the Lie in Winnie Madikizela-Mandela's Testimony Before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission." Poetics Today 22.2 (2001): 453-74.

Krebs, Paula M. Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire: Public Discourse and the Boer War. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999.

Kristeva, Julia. Strangers to Ourselves. Trans. Leon S. Roudiez. New York: Harvester, 1991. Trans. of Étrangers à nous memes. 1988.

Krog, Antjie. Country of My Skull. Johannesburg: Random, 1998.

Kwenda, Chirevo V. "Beyond Patronage: Giving and Receiving in the Construction of Civil Society." Journal of Theology for Southern Africa 101 (1998): 1-10.

Lacan, Jacques. "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I." Écrits: A Selection. Trans. Alan Sheridan. 1977. London: Routledge, 2001. 1-8. Trans. of "Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je." 1949.

Lacapa, Dominick. Writing History, Writing Trauma. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2001.

Lalu, Premesh, and Brent Harris. "Journeys From the Horizons of History: Text, Trial and Tales in the Construction of Narratives of Pain." Current Writing 8.2 (1996): 24-38.f

Lan, David. Guns and Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe. London: James Currey, 1985.

Landman, Christina. "The Religious Krotoa (c1642-1674)." Kronos 23 (1996): 22-35.

Langer, Lawrence L. "Memory's Time: Chronology and Duration in Holocaust Testimonies." Yale Journal of Criticism 6.2 (1993): 263-73.

----- "The Alarmed Vision: Social Suffering and Holocaust Atrocity." Dædalus 125.1 (1996): 47-65.

Lewis, Desirée. "The Politics of Feminism in South Africa." 1993. South African Feminisms: Writing, Theory, and Criticism, 1990-1994. Ed. M. J. Daymond. New York: Garland, 1996. 91-104.

----- "Women and Gender in South Africa." South Africa: The Challenge of Change. Ed. Vincent Mapai. Harare: SAPES, 1994. 158-172.

----- "Gender Myths and Citizenship in Two Autobiographies by South African Women." Agenda 40 (1999): 38-44.

----- "Internalized Bondage: The 'New' Gender Stereotypes." Indaba99: Women's Voices: Gender, Books, and Development. Harare: Zimbabwe Book Fair, 1999. 162-74.

Lindfors, Bernth. "Courting the Hottentot Venus." The Blind Men and the Elephant and Other Essays in Biographical Criticism. Trenton: African World Press, 1999. 169-90.

The Life and Times of Sara Baartman – 'The Hottentot Venus.' Dir. Zola Maseko. M&G Television, France 3 and SABC 2, 1998.

Lloyd, David. Anomalous States: Irish Writing and the Post-Colonial Moment. Durham: Duke UP, 1993.

----- "Colonial Trauma / Postcolonial Recovery." Interventions 2.2 (2000): 212-28.

Long Night's Journey into Day. Dir. Francis Reidt and Deborah Hoffman. Iris Films, 2000; "Long Night's Journey into Day Transcript." California Newsreel 19pp. 10 Jan. 2005. <<http://www.newsreel.org/transcripts/longnight.htm>>

Magona, Sindiwe. To My Children's Children: An Autobiography. Cape Town: David Philip, 1990.

----- Mother to Mother. Cape Town: David Philip, 1998.

----- "Interview with Sindiwe Magona." Interview with David Attwell and Barbara Harlow, with Joan Attwell. Modern Fiction Studies 46.1 (2000): 282-95.

----- "The Stories She Writes." Interview with Renée Schatteman. Sindiwe Magona: The First Decade. Ed. Siphokazi Koyana. Scottsville: U KwaZulu-Natal P, 2004. 175-92.

Magubane, Zine. "Which Bodies Matter? Feminism, Poststructuralism, Race, and the Curious Theoretical Odyssey of the 'Hottentot Venus.'" Gender and Society 15.6 (2001): 816-34.

Maimane, Arthur. Hate No More. Cape Town: Kwela, 2000.

Malherbe, V. C. Krotoa, Called 'Eva': A Woman Between. Cape Town: Centre for African Studies, U Cape Town, 1990.

Mamdani, Mahmood. Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1996.

----- "A Diminished Truth." After the TRC: Reflections on Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa. Ed. Wilmot James and Linda van de Vijver. Cape Town: David Philip; Athens: Ohio UP, 2000. 58-61.

Mandela, Nelson. Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela. Boston: Little, 1994.

Mandela and De Klerk. Dir. Joseph Sargent. Perf. Sidney Poitier and Michael Caine. 1997.

Maqagi, Sisi. "Who Theorizes?" 1990. South African Feminisms: Writing, Theory, and Criticism, 1990-1994. Ed. M. J. Daymond. New York and London: Garland, 1996. 27-30.

Marais, Michael. "Very Morbid Phenomena: 'Liberal Funk,' the 'Lucy-Syndrome' and J. M. Coetzee's Disgrace." Scrutiny 2 6.1 (2001): 32-38.

Martin, Biddu, and Chandra Talpade Mohanty. "Feminist Politics: What's Home Got to Do With It?" Feminist Studies / Critical Studies. Ed. Theresa de Lauretis. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986. 191-212.

Matshikiza, John. "The War that Dispossessed Me." 1999. With the Lid Off: South African Insights from Home and Abroad, 1959-2000. Todd Matshikiza and John Matshikiza. Milpark: M&G, 2000. 174-76.

Matshoba, Mtutuzeli. "Three Days in the Land of a Dying Illusion." Call Me Not a Man. Johannesburg: Ravan, 1979. 143-87.

Matthee, Dalene. Pieterella van die Kaap. Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2000.

Mbeki, Thabo. "I am an African." [Statement of Deputy President T. M. Mbeki, on the Occasion of the Adoption by the Constitutional Assembly of The Republic of South Africa Constitution Bill.] 8 May 1996. 3 pp. 15 Nov. 2002.

<<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/mbeki/1996/sp960508.html>>

----- Inaugural address. 16 June 1999. "Nelson Mandela's and Thabo Mbeki's Inaugural Speeches." Safundi June 1999. 6pp. 22 May 2002.

<<http://www.safundi.com/papers.asp?lop=mandela>>

----- "Internment of Sarah Bartmann." [Address of the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, at the Reburial of Sarah Bartmann, Hankey, Eastern Cape] 9 August 2002. 15 Nov. 2002. <<http://www.gov.za/speech02/02081209461001.txt>>

Mbembe, Achille. On the Postcolony. Trans. A. M. Berrett, Janet Roitman, Murray Last and Steven Rendall. Berkeley: U California P, 2001.

----- "African Modes of Self-Writing." Trans. Steven Rendall. Public Culture 14.1 (2002): 239-73.

----- "On the Power of the False." Trans. Judith Inggs. Public Culture 14.3 (2002): 629-41.

- McClintock, Anne. Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- McCracken, Donal. The Irish Pro-Boers, 1877-1902. Johannesburg: Perskor, 1989.
- "Part II: The Irish Transvaal Brigades." Southern African Irish Studies 2 (1992): 54-65.
- McIntire, Gabrielle. "The Women Do Not Travel: Gender, Difference and Incommensurability in Conrad's Heart of Darkness." Modern Fiction Studies 48.2 (2002): 257-84.
- Mda, Zakes. Ways of Dying. Cape Town: Oxford UP, 1995.
- "Interview with Venu Naidoo." Alternation 4.1 (1997): 247-61.
- The Heart of Redness. Cape Town: Oxford UP, 2000.
- "Valley of the Believers." Sunday Times 14 May 2000. 7pp. 2 Oct. 2003. <<http://www.suntimes.co.za/2000/05/14/lifestyle/travel/travel03.htm>>
- Meer, Fatima. The Trial of Andrew Zondo: A Sociological Insight. Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1987.
- Robert McBride and Greta Apelgren, The Magoos Bombing: A Sociological Report for the Defence. Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1988.
- Miller, J. Hillis. "Border Crossings, Translating Theory: Ruth." The Translatability of Cultures: Figurations of the Space Between. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1996. 207-23.
- Mngqibisa, Olefile Samuel. "Sexual Abuse of Young Women in the ANC Camps." Searchlight South Africa 3.3 (1993): 11-16.
- Mohamed, Elaine. "Sexual Terrorism." Lives of Courage: Women for a New South Africa. Ed. Diana E. H. Russell. New York: Basic, 1989. 31-44.
- Mokae, Gomolemo. Robert McBride: A Coloured Life. Pretoria: SA History Online and Vista UP, 2004.
- Mongalo, B. E., and K. du Pisani. "Victims of a White Man's War: Blacks in Concentration Camps during the South African War (1899-1902)." Historia 44.1 (1999): 148-82.
- Mooney, Katie. "Conference Report: The TRC: Commissioning the Past (June 1999)." African Studies 58.2 (1999): 207-18.

Moorti, Sujata. Color of Rape: Gender and Race in Television's Public Spheres. Albany: State U of New York P, 2002.

Nasson, Bill. Abraham Esau's War: A Black South African's War in the Cape, 1899-1902. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991.

----- Uyadela Wen'osulapho: Black Participation in the Anglo-Boer War. Johannesburg: Ravan, 1999.

Ndebele, Njabulo S. "Beyond 'Protest: New Directions in South African Literature.'" Criticism and Ideology: Second African Writers' Conference, Stockholm 1986. Ed. Kirsten Holst Petersen. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1988. 205-218.

----- Rediscovery of the Ordinary: Essays on Southern African Literature and Culture. Johannesburg: COSAW, 1991.

----- "A Home for Intimacy." Mail and Guardian 26 April-2May 1996: 28-29.

----- "Memory, Metaphor, and the Triumph of Narrative." Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa. Ed. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee. Cape Town: Oxford UP, 1998. 19-28, 275.

----- "Game Lodges and Leisure Colonialists." Blank: Architecture, Apartheid and After. Ed. Hilton Judin and Ivan Vladislavic. Cape Town: David Philip, 1998. C10.

----- "Iph'Indlela? Finding Our Way Into the Future." Unpublished. Steve Biko Memorial Lecture, U Cape Town, 2000.

----- "An Approach to Viable Futures." Voices of the Transition: The Politics, Poetics and Practices of Social Change in South Africa. Ed. Edgar Pieterse and Frank Meintjies. Sandown: Heinemann, 2003. 14-17.

----- The Cry of Winnie Mandela: A Novel. Cape Town: David Philip, 2003.

Ngubane, Ben. "Discussions to Retrieve Saartjie Baartman from France." [Press Release by the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology] 31 Jan. 1996. 1pp. 17 May 2002 <<http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/pr/1996/pr0131b.html>>

----- "Efforts to Have Remains of Saartjie Baartman Returned." [Statement by the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology] 10 Oct. 2000. 2pp. 17 May 2002. <<http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2000/001010110p1003.htm>>

Nicol, Mike. This Day and Age: A Novel. New York: Vintage, 1992.

Niranjana, Tejaswini. Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context. Berkeley: U California P, 1992.

Nkosi, Lewis. "Postmodernism and Black Writing in South Africa." Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995. Ed. Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. 75-90.

Nongqawuse: The Truth Commission. Community Arts Project. Cape Town: Cape Town Festival, 2003.

Ntabazalila, Eric, and Judy Damon. "Enrobement Ritual Restores Sarah Bartmann's Dignity." Cape Times 5 August 2002: 5.

Ogundipe-Leslie, Molar. "The Female Writer and Her Commitment." Women in African Literature Today. Ed. Eldred Durosomi Jones, Eustace Palmer and Marjorie Jones. London: James Currey; Trenton: Africa World Press, 1987. 5-13.

Olckers, Ilze. "Gender-neutral Truth: A Reality Shamefully Distorted." Agenda 31 (1996): 61-67.

Oliver, Lenore. "Saartjie's Remains Back on Home Soil." Cape Argus 3 May 2002. 3pp. 17 May 2002. <http://www.iol.co.za...art_id=ct20020503194537201S632468>

Oppelt, Phylcia. "She Was Us." Sunday Times 3 March 2002. 3pp. 17 May 2002. <<http://www.sundaytimes.co.za/2002/03/03/insight/in11.asp>>

Papastergiadis, Nikos. "Tracing Hybridity in Theory." Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism. Ed. Pnina Werbner and Tariq Modood. London: Zed, 1997. 257-81.

Parry, Benita. "Speech and Silence in the Fictions of J. M. Coetzee." Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995. Ed. Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. 149-65.

Paster, Gail Kern. The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993.

Pateman, Carole. The Sexual Contract. Cambridge: Polity, 1988.

Paxton, Nancy L. Writing Under the Raj: Gender, Race, and Rape in the British Colonial Imagination, 1830-1947. New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1990.

Peires, J. B. The Dead Will Arise: Nongqawuse and the Great Xhosa Cattle-Killing Movement of 1856-7. Johannesburg: Ravan, 1989.

Peteet, Julie. "Icons and Militants: Mothering in the Danger Zone." Signs 23.1 (1997): 103-129.

Plaatje, Sol T. "The Mote and the Beam: An Epic on Sex-Relationship 'twixt Black and White in British South Africa." 1921. Sol Plaatje: Selected Writings. Ed. Brian Willan. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand UP, 1996. 274-283.

Posel, Deborah, and Graeme Simpson. "The Power of Truth: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Context." Commissioning the Past: Understanding South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Ed. Deborah Posel and Graeme Simpson. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand UP, 2002. 1-13.

Prakash, Gyan. "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World: Perspectives from Indian Historiography." Contemporary Studies in History and Society 32.2 (1990): 383-408.

Pratt, Mary Louise. Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation. New York and London: Routledge, 1992.

Press, Karen. "Krotoa's Story." Bird Heart Stoning the Sea. Cape Town: Buchu, 1990. 45-67. Rpt. in Women Writing Africa: The Southern Volume. Ed. M. J. Daymond *et al.* New York: Feminist; Johannesburg: Witwatersrand UP, 2003. 433-48.

----- Krotoa. Pietermaritzburg: Centaur, 1990.

----- Nongqawuse's Prophecy. Pietermaritzburg: Centaur, 1990.

Quayson, Ato. "Symbolisation Compulsions: Freud, African Literature and South Africa's Process of Truth and Reconciliation." Cambridge Quarterly 30.3 (2001): 191-214.

Ramphela, Mamphela. A Life. Cape Town: David Philip, 1995.

----- Across Boundaries: The Journey of a South African Woman Leader: A Memoir. New York: Feminist, 1996. [US ed. of A Life]

----- "Political Widowhood in South Africa: The Embodiment of Ambiguity." Dædalus 125.1 (1996): 99-118.

----- "This Little Bit of Madness: Mamphela Ramphela on Being Black and Transgressive." Interview with Kimberley Yates and Pumla Gqola. Agenda 37 (1998): 90-95.

----- "The Dynamics of Gender Politics in the Hostels of Cape Town: Another Legacy of the South African Migrant Labour System." Journal of Southern African Studies 15.3 (1989): 393-414.

Rassool, Ciraj, Leslie Witz and Gary Minkley. "Burying and Memorialising the Body of Truth: The TRC and National Heritage." After the TRC: Reflections on Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa. Ed. Wilmot James and Linda van de Vijver. Athens: Ohio UP; Cape Town: David Philip, 2000. 115-127, 208-11.

Rautenbach, Elmari. "Dalene in 2000." Sarie 22 Mar. 2000: 32-33.

Renan, Ernest. "What is a Nation?" Trans. Martin Thom. Nation and Narration. Ed. Homi K. Bhabha. London: Routledge, 1990. 8-22. Trans. of "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?" 1882.

Rich, Adrienne. "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence." Signs 5.4 (1980): 631-60.

----- Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution. New York: Norton, 1986.

Richards, Jo-Anne. The Innocence of Roast Chicken. London: Headline, 1996.

Roach, Joseph. Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance. New York: Columbia UP, 1996.

Robertson, Heather. "You Can Take Your Hat Off." Sunday Times 25 March 2001. 9pp. 2 Oct. 2003. <<http://www.suntimes.co.za/2001/03/25/lifestyle/life02.htm>>

Robins, Steven. "Silence in My Father's House: Memory, Nationalism, and Narratives of the Body." Negotiating the Past: The Making of Memory in South Africa. Ed. Sarah Nuttall and Carli Coetzee. Cape Town: Oxford UP, 1998. 120-40, 265-67, 280-81.

Rosello, Mireille. Postcolonial Hospitality: The Immigrant as Guest. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2001.

Ross, Fiona C. Bearing Witness: Women and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. London: Pluto, 2003.

Rubin, Gayle. "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex." Toward an Anthropology of Women. Ed. Rayna R. Reiter. New York: Monthly, 1975. 157-210.

Rustin, Carmine. "Perceptions of Power, Race and Gender in Interracial Rape." Diss, U Western Cape, 1998.

Said, Edward W. Beginnings: Intention and Method. New York: Basic, 1975.

Salo, Elaine. "From Woman to Women: Feminist Theory and the Diverse Identities of South African Feminists." Knowledge in Black and White: The Impact of Apartheid on

the Production and Reproduction of Knowledge. Ed. Kwesi Kwaa Prah. Cape Town: Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society, 1999. 117-31.

Samuelson, Meg. "The Braided Voice: Mamphela Ramphele's A Life." Interaction 6 (1997): 50-55.

----- "Reading the Maternal Voice in Sindiwe Magona's To My Children's Children and Mother to Mother." Modern Fiction Studies 46.1 (2000): 227-45.

----- "The Rainbow Womb: Rape and Race in South African Fiction of the Transition." Kunapipi 24.1-2 (2002): 88-100.

----- "Cracked Vases and Untidy Seams: Narrative Structure and Closure in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and South African Fiction." Current Writing 15.2 (2003): 63-76.

----- "Hamsi (Marie Kathleen Jeffreys), 'Though I am Black, I am Comely.'" Women Writing Africa: The Southern Region. Ed. M. J. Daymond *et al.* New York: Feminist; Johannesburg: Witwatersrand UP, 2003. 229.

----- "The Mother as Witness: Reading Mother to Mother alongside South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission." Sindiwe Magona: The First Decade. Ed. Siphokazi Koyana. Scottsville: U KwaZulu-Natal P, 2004. 127-44.

----- "Fictional Representations of Rape in South African Fiction of the Transition." Cultural Perspectives of Colonialism, Racism and Migration: Versions and Subversions in African Literature. Ed. Susan Arndt and Marek von Spitzczok Brisinski. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005. n. pag.

Sanday, Peggy Reeves. "The Socio-Cultural Context of Rape: A Cross-Cultural Study." Journal of Social Issues 37.4 (1981): 5-27.

----- "The Social Context of Rape." New Society 61.1037 (30 September 1982): 540-42.

Sanders, Mark. "Ambiguities of Mourning: Law, Custom, Literature and Women Before South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission." Law, Text, Culture 4.2 (1998): 105-51.

----- Complicities: The Intellectual and Apartheid. Durham: Duke UP, 2002.

----- "Disgrace." Interventions 4.3 (2002): 363-73.

Sangari, Kumkum. "The Politics of the Possible." The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse. Ed. Abdul R. JanMohamed and David Lloyd. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990. 216-45.

Scholtz, A. H. M. A Place Called Vatmaar: A Living Story of a Time that is No More. Trans. Chris van Wyk. Cape Town: Kwela, 2000. Trans. of Vatmaar – 'n Lewendagge Verhaal Van 'n Tyd Wat Nie Meer is Nie. 1995.

Schrire, Carmel. "Native Views of Western Eyes." Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen. Cape Town: U Cape Town P, 1996. 343-53.

-----, "Miscast." Rev. of Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture, curated by Pippa Skotnes. Southern African Review of Books 44 (July/August 1996): 13-14.

Scott, David. Refashioning Futures: Criticism After Postcoloniality. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1999.

Scott, Joan Wallach. Gender and the Politics of History. New York: Columbia UP, 1999.

Scully, Pamela. "Rape, Race, and Colonial Culture: The Sexual Politics of Identity in the Nineteenth-Century Cape Colony, South Africa." American Historical Review 100.2 (1995): 335-59.

-----, Liberating the Family? Gender and British Slave Emancipation in the Rural Western Cape, South Africa, 1823-1853. Portsmouth: Heinemann; Oxford: James Currey; Cape Town: David Philip, 1997.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire. New York: Columbia UP, 1985.

Sepamla, Siphosiso. "To Makana and Nongqawuse." The Blues is You in Me. Johannesburg: AD Donker, 1976. 23.

Setshwaelo, Marang. "The Return of the 'Hottentot Venus.'" 14 Feb. 2002. 5 pp. 17 May 2002. <http://www.africana.com/DailyArticles/index_20020214.htm>

Shakespeare, William. The Tempest. Ed. A. N. Parr. Cape Town: Maskew Miller, 1976.

-----, Titus Andronicus. Ed. Jonathan Bate. Walton-on-Thames. Nelson, 1998.

Shell, Robert. Children of Bondage: A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1838. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand UP; Hanover and London: Wesleyan UP, 1994.

Sielke, Sabine. Reading Rape: The Rhetoric of Sexual Violence in American Literature and Culture, 1790-1990. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002.

Skotnes, Pippa, curator. Miscast: Negotiating Khoisan History and Material Culture. Cape Town: South African National Gallery, 1996.

Skotnes, Pippa, ed. Miscast: Negotiating the Presence of the Bushmen. Cape Town: U Cape Town P, 1996.

Sleigh, Dan. Islands. Trans. André Brink. London: Secker & Warburg, 2004. Trans. of Eilande. 2002.

Smallberg, Mavis. "Recognition." Weave's Ink @ Boiling Point: A Selection of 21st Century Black Women's Writing from the Tip of Africa. Cape Town: WEAVE, 2000. 239-40.

Sole, Kelwyn. "Reading the Nation." Rev. of South African Literature and Culture: Rediscovery of the Ordinary, by Njabulo Ndebele. Southern African Review of Books Sept.-Dec. 1995: 20-21.

----- "Miss Nongqawuse 1997." Love That Is Night. Durban: Gecko, 1998. 99.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. Translator's Preface. Of Grammatology. By Jacques Derrida. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976. ix-xc.

----- "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture. Ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. London: Macmillan, 1988. 271-313.

----- The Post-Colonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues. Ed Sarah Harasym. New York: Routledge, 1990.

----- Outside in the Teaching Machine. New York: Routledge, 1993.

----- A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999.

Steenekamp, Anna Elizabeth. "Record or Journal of Our Migration from Our Mother Country to Port Natal." 1876. The Annals of Natal, 1495-1845. Vol. 1. Ed. John Bird. 1888. Cape Town: Struik, 1965. 457-68.

Stoler, Ann Laura. Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule. Berkeley: U California P, 2002.

Stratton, Florence. Contemporary African Literature and the Politics of Gender. London: Routledge, 1994.

Straus, Nina Pelikan. "The Exclusion of the Intended from Secret Sharing." Joseph Conrad: Contemporary Critical Essays. Ed. Elaine Jordan. London: Macmillan, 1996. 48-66.

- Strother, Z. S. "Display of the Body Hottentot." Africans on Stage: Studies in Ethnological Show Business. Ed. Bernth Lindfors. Bloomington: Indiana UP; Cape Town: David Philip, 1999. 1-61.
- Tisani, Nomathamsanqa. "A Tribute to Sarah Baartman." Sowetan, 8 Aug. 2002: 17.
- Trapido, Barbara. "A New Man Out of Africa." Rev. of Imaginations of Sand, by André Brink. The Spectator 17 Feb. 1996: 31.
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report. 1998. 5 vols. 10 June 2000.
<<http://www.polity.org.za/govdocs/commissions/1998/trc/index.htm>>
- Turner, Victor, and Edith Turner. "Postindustrial Marian Pilgrimage." Mother Worship: Theme and Variations. Ed. James J. Preston. Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1982. 145-73.
- Tymoczko, Maria. "Post-colonial Writing and Literary Translation." Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice. Ed. Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Upham, Mansell. "Mooij Ansela & The Black Sheep of the Family." Part 3. Capensis June 1998: 26-39.
- , "In a *Kind* of Custody: For Eva's Sake ... Who Speaks for Krotwa?" Capensis Nov. 1998: 6-13.
- , "Who were the Children of Eva Meerhoff?" Capensis Nov. 1998: 13-31.
- , "Creolisation and Indigenisation: Burlamacchi and Diodati Family Ties in the Dutch VOC Empire." Capensis Dec. 1999: 16-34.
- , "Florida: Mythologising the *Hottentot* 'Practice' of Infanticide – Dutch Colonial Intervention and the *Rooting Out* of Cape Aboriginal Custom." Capensis June 2001: 5-22.
- Van der Spuy, Patricia. "Gender and Slavery: Towards a Feminist Revision." South African Historical Journal 25 (1991): 184-95.
- Van Heyningen, Elizabeth. "The Voices of Women in the South African War." South African Historical Journal 41 (1999): 22-43.
- Van Riebeeck, Jan. Journal of Jan van Riebeeck. 3 vols. 1651-1662. Ed. H.B. Thom. Trans. W. P. L. van Zyl, J. Smuts, C.K. Johnman and A. Ravenscroft. Cape Town: Balkema, 1952-1958.

Van Rensburg, A. M. "My Genetic Enrichment: Eva the Hottentot." 7pp. 20 Sept. 2003.
<<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Rhodes/1266/genetic-eva.htm>>

Venuti, Lawrence. Introduction. Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology. Ed. Lawrence Venuti. London: Routledge, 1992. 1-17.

----- "Translation and the Formation of Cultural Identities." Cultural Functions of Translation. Ed. Christina Schäffner and Helen Kelly-Holmes. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1995. 9-25.

----- The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference. London: Routledge, 1998.

Walker, Alice. "Advancing Luna ... and Ida B. Wells." You Can't Keep a Good Woman Down. San Diego: Harcourt, 1971. 85-104.

Walker, Cheryl. "Conceptualising Motherhood in Twentieth Century South Africa." Journal of Southern African Studies 21.3 (1995): 417-37.

Warner, Marina. Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary. 1976. London: Picador, 1985.

----- Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form. London: Weidenfeld, 1985.

Watson, Stephen. "Song of the Broken String." Return of the Moon: Versions from the Xam. Cape Town: Carrefour, 1991. 59-60.

"Welcome Home Saartjie Baartman." 31 Jan. 2002. 2pp. 17 May 2002.
<http://businessportal.iafrica.com/news/sa_news/889983.htm>

Wells, Julia C. "Eva's Men: Gender and Power in the Establishment of the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-74." Journal of African History 39 (1998): 417-37.

----- "Maternal Politics in Organizing Black South African Women: The Historical Lessons." Sisterhood, Feminism and Power: From Africa to the Diaspora. Ed. Obioma Nnaemeka. Trenton and Asmara: Africa World Press, 1998. 479-94.

Werbner, Pnina, and Nira Yuval-Davis. "Introduction: Women and the New Discourse of Citizenship." Women, Citizenship and Difference. Ed. Nira Yuval-Davis and Pnina Werbner. London: Zed, 1999. 1-38.

Wicomb, Zoë. "Zoë Wicomb, Interviewed by Eva Hunter, Cape Town, 5 June 1990." Between the Lines II: Interviews with Nadine Gordimer, Menan du Plessis, Zoë Wicomb, Lauretta Ngcobo. Ed. Eva Hunter and Craig MacKenzie. Grahamstown: NELM, 1993. 79-96.

----- "To Hear the Variety of Discourses." Current Writing 2 (1990): 35-44. Rpt. in South African Feminisms. Ed. M. J. Daymond. New York: Garland, 1996.

----- "An Author's Agenda." Critical Fictions: The Politics of Imaginative Writing. Ed. Philomena Mariani. Seattle: Bay, 1991. 13-16.

----- "Comment on Return to South Africa." Kunapipi 16.1 (1994): 575-76.

----- "Shame and Identity: The Case of the Coloured in South Africa." Writing South Africa: Literature, Apartheid, and Democracy, 1970-1995. Ed. Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. 91-107.

----- David's Story. Cape Town: Kwela; New York: Feminist, 2000.

----- "Zoë Wicomb in Conversation with Hein Willemsse." Research in African Literatures 33.1 (2002): 144-52.

----- "Translations in the Yard of Africa." Journal of Literary Studies 18.1-2 (2002): 209-23.

----- "Zoë Wicomb Interviewed on Writing and Nation." Interview with Stephen Meyer and Thomas Olver. Journal of Literary Studies 18.1-2 (2002): 182-98.

Wilson, Richard A. The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001.

Wiss, Rosemary. "Lipreading: Remembering Saartjie Baartman." The Australian Journal of Anthropology 5.1-2 (1994): 11-40.

Woodward, Wendy, Patricia Hayes and Gary Minkley. Introduction. Deep hiStories: Gender and Colonialism in Southern Africa. Ed. Wendy Woodward, Patricia Hayes and Gary Minkley. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002. xxi-xlvi.

Yali-Manisi, D. L. P. "The Cattle-Killing." 1970. Trans. Jeff Opland. Words that Circle Words: A Choice of South African Oral Poetry. Ed. Jeff Opland. Parklands: AD Donker, 1992. 285-88.

Young, Robert J. C. Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Ziarek, Ewa. "The Uncanny Style of Kristeva's Critique of Nationalism." Postmodern Culture 5.2 (1995): 1-18.

<http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/postmodern_culture/v005/5.2ziarek.html>

Zuma, Jacob. "Address to NCOP" [Address by Deputy President Jacob Zuma in the National Council of Provinces, Cape Town]. 8 Aug. 2002. 4pp. 15 Nov. 2002.

<<http://www.gov.za/speech02/02080815461002.txt>>