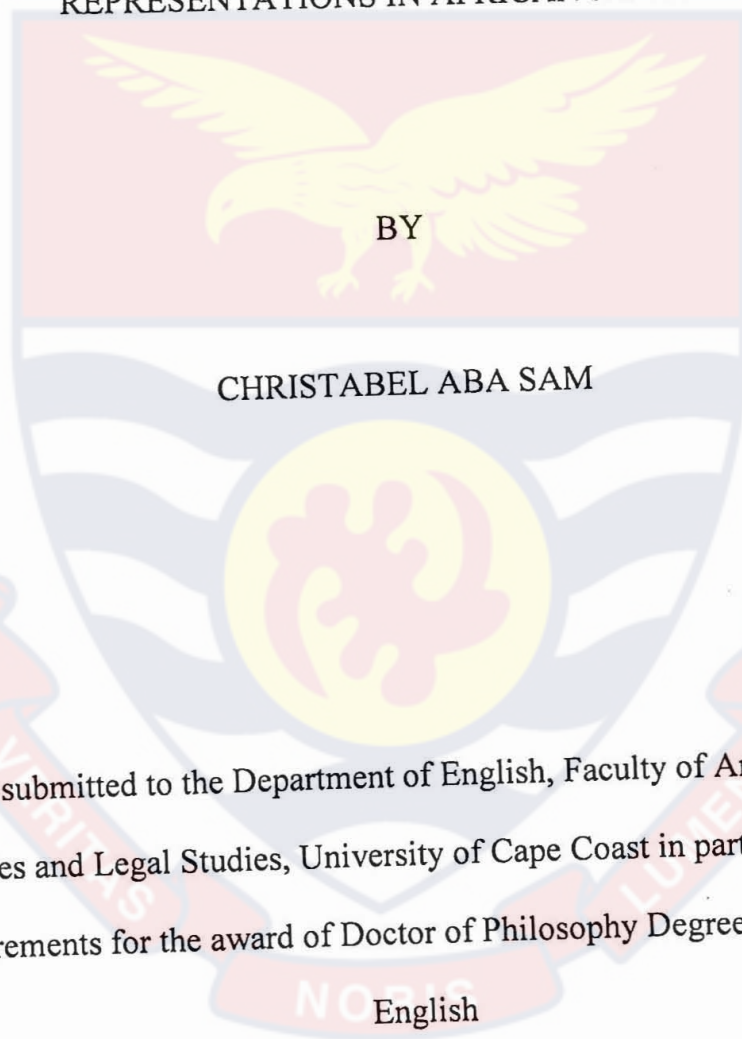©Christabel Aba Sam
University of Cape Coast

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INTIMATIONS OF FUTURITY: MASCULINITY AND SPATIAL

REPRESENTATIONS IN AFRICAN NOVELS

BY

CHRISTABEL ABA SAM

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Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Literature-in-

English

JULY 2018

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that

no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature .... Date .22nd August,2019

Name: Christabel Aba Sam

Supervisor's Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were

supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down

by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature......................... Date.22nd August, 209

Name: Dr. Theresah Patrine Addai-Mununkum

Co-Supervisor's Signature................. Date.22nd August,2019

Name: Dr. Rogers Asempasah

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ABSTRACT

Examining the correlation between masculine representations, spatial re-organization and futurity, this thesis analyzes selected works of four African writers: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* and Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile*. The study argues that these authors address fundamental questions about the nature of Africa's Utopia and the fact that African literature is forward-looking rather than the presupposed focus on the past. By investigating this claim of retrogressive focus in African literature, this thesis draws on the Postcolonial Literary theory, Bakhtin's theory of the Carnivalesque and Pitt and Fox's Performative Masculinity theory in order to unearth the anticipatory sensibilities deployed in the correlation between masculine representations, spatial re-organization and futurity as alternative ways in thinking about Africa's future. The findings reported in this thesis suggest that there is a relationship between forms of communities and forms of masculinities and that Africa's future is located within the evolution; that the fortunes of the new Africa are premised on polyphony, collectivity and balance.

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DEDICATION

To the special men in my life

Caleb

AB

Joe Sam

Buabeng-Odoom

Owusu-Ansah

Asempasah

Johannes

Peterkin

Mwinlaaru

Kobby

Jude

Kenneth

Albert

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

It is in the roots that the future is planted.
We should open the shutters of the mind
To those hidden spaces of Dusty Kingdoms
For memory is root: dreams are branches
(Dreams of Dusty Roads, Sallah (1993)

Background to the Study

Perspectives on the future of the African continent, according to West-Pavlov (2014), range from disorientation, Afro-pessimism, and often times, to cautious optimism. Many critics consider African futures very problematic and at other times, an almost impossible dream because of the trauma of colonialism, neo-colonialism and globalization. One possible function of postcolonial literature, as artistic piece, is its ability to imagine alternative worlds that have the potential of defeating the effects of the trauma and desolation associated with these three evils – colonialism, neo-colonialism and globalization. While European literature is credited with the ability to envisage this anticipatory longing for possibilities through the creation of science-fiction – where utopian experimentation becomes alternatives for newness, African literature on the other hand has been criticized to be radically pessimistic since it continually interrogates the relationship between the past and the present to the neglect of the future nation (Nnolim, 2010).

Despite the condition of disillusionment in African literature, I argue that it is simplistic to dismiss the anticipatory impulses that undergird African literature. It is important to mention that Africa's constant engagement with the past does not necessarily deprive it of a futuristic orientation. Rather, this constant dialogue with the past is a means to propose alternatives for the future based on the present circumstances. Sallah's poem is forceful on the relationship between the roots (the past) and the branches (the future). He admits that the past and its appendages serve as springboards upon which we launch into the future and therefore our visions of a better future are shaped by our understanding of the nature of the past. Ashcroft (2009) corroborates this idea most concisely when he asserts that:

> the vision of African futures begins in a reformulation of Africa's past to disentangle Africa from history, and there is no better way to re-affirm the ahistorical past, the mythic past, the diversity to cultural past than literature or more broadly various forms of creative cultural production (p.90).

This means that we cannot talk about Africa's future outside of the margins of history because it is the memory of the past that allows us to re-imagine the prospects of the future nation. Ashcroft (2009) believes that there is an identifiable hope that rests beneath the past since there is an attempt to project a new world that is radically different from what exists. Thus, quite clearly, the idea of utopia continues to be debatable in contemporary times as far as the issues of Africa's past, present and future are concerned.

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It is important to recognize that African literature manages a better vision of utopia than what Nnolim (2010) claims. Arguably, the concept of utopia can certainly not be reduced to the history of the word as it was coined by Sir Thomas Moore as the title of his book in the sixteenth century. Moore's 'utopia', which was coined from the two Greek words: *outopia* (no place) and *eutopia* (the good place), to mean 'the good place is no place', suggests an ideal world that appears to be in conflict with our world of reality. Moore used the word to refer to an imagined paradise, to name the unknown island which pre-supposes the desire for a better life. In the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, several scholars expanded the context in which the concept of Utopia was examined.

Unlike Moore's island of perfection, debates about the distinction between the 'good place' and, as it were, the 'bad place' emerged to question the very possibilities of imagining utopia (Varsamopoulou, 2010). For instance, Jacobson and Tester (2012) contend that utopia is not a destination. Rather, 'it is an ambition which puts question marks against everyday inevitability of this world and moreover, it motivates thought and actions –aimed at transforming what is through the lever of what could be' (1). In other words, utopia is a journey, a reaching at something in a somewhat improved form. It is something hoped for; radically different from present circumstances and not merely a physical space but a realizable space. Vieira (2010) confirms that utopia was intended to allude to an imaginary paradisiacal place.

She argues that Moore created this paradisiacal island (utopia) because he needed to designate something new other than the usual. Thus, Vieira suggests that utopia has at its core the desire for a better state of affairs and that it is purely a matter of attitude. Whereas Vieira considers utopia as a desire, Foucault conceives of the possibility of utopia in terms of functional spaces. In *Of Other Spaces*, Foucault argues that utopias are unreal spaces that are unachievable and that there are other spaces that can be found physically and yet are not actually there. He calls these other spaces 'heterotopias. He defines heterotopias as 'mythic and real contestations of spaces in which we live' (25). In other words, heterotopias are simply metaphorical spaces. They are not necessarily utopian, yet they reflect a utopian based function which is achievable.

Focusing on the images of the cemetery, the mirror, the theatre among others, Foucault suggests that when a person dies, for instance, and s/he is taken to the cemetery, the cemetery becomes that haven which shelves the dead person from experiencing the hardship of everyday life. In other words, the cemetery becomes that ideal physical space, realizable but fictional. Dahaene and De Cauter (2008) inject alterity in the same concept. They argue that heterotopias are strategies to reclaim places of otherness and in fact, 'localizable' utopias or actually realized utopias. Going back to Freud (1919)'s explanation of the *Heimlich*, the idea of utopia becomes the result of an uncanny effect which is often realized by drawing a distinction between imagination and reality. Therefore, heterotopias are realizable however concealed they may seem from

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reality. What this means is that we can achieve utopia through several indirect routes.

Currently, discourses on utopia are based on issues of progress and reformation (Bloch, 1995). Indeed, contemporary framework of Utopia is premised on the principle of hope as clearly distinct from the idea of perfection. It is considered as a reaction to aspire to overcome all difficulties through the imaginative possibility of alternatives. It is apparent from these perspectives that the term 'utopia' has become ambiguous in the sense that the possibility of promise and hope is subsumed and remains restricted to the idealized society. Although I do not want to dispense with the term 'utopia' altogether, in describing the transformative potential of African Literature, I propose to adopt the term *futurity* in order to expand the meaning of utopia. By Futurity then, I mean the desire for a new state of affairs, spatial re-organization, modes of being and freedom. Futurity therefore is the impulse for newness.

Similarly, the literature on African masculinities, like the literature on the nature of Africa's utopia, is linear in terms of the monolithic representations associated with the African male (Uchendu, 2008). The idea of masculinity is a global concept and it exists within the context of gendered relations or gendered order in terms of re-organizing and promoting gender relations in the light of socio-economic, cultural and religious indicators. It is an identity marker that derives from historical, cultural and social circumstances other than a biological construct (Beynon, 2002). A little over two decades ago, masculinity (or men's) studies were born out of a response to feminist criticism and earlier became the

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sole force for social change in the 1960's and 1970's (Beynon, 2002; Ouzgane & Morrel, 2005; Uchendu, 2008; Ennin, 2014). During the 1980's, masculinity studies became an alternative framework in sexual politics stressing the need to interrogate masculine identities amidst the several contradictions. There have always been questions on what constitutes masculinity. Whereas some critics believe that masculinity is an innate quality, others assume that masculinity is what men think and feel and how they behave (Seidler, 2006; Kimmell, 2004). Masculinity as a field of research is a consequence of the positioning of gender as a social category by the feminist movements (Connell, 2000; Kimmell, 1987 cited in Van der Walt (2007). Indeed, men as gendered beings had rarely been the focus in many gender debates. The study of masculinity has therefore broadened the considerations in gender studies, shifting the focus from how gender constructs taken-for–granted privileges for men and taken-for-granted-discrimination against women. The focus of men's studies, according to Connell (1998), has generally been to look at man's private life as a site for contestation, paying particular attention to how the nature of masculinity becomes fluid, unstable and socially restricted. In other words, the study of masculinity helps us to re-read and re-interpret gender performances across cultures. Pleck, Sonenstein and Ku (1993) also define masculinity as a cluster of norms, values and behavioural patterns expressing explicit and implicit expectations of how men should act and represent themselves. As an ideology, masculinity refers to men's acceptance or internalization of a culture's definition of masculinity and beliefs about adherence to culturally defined standards of male behaviour.

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African masculinity, as a sub-field, is an important emerging contribution to the growing field of gendered writings on men in Africa (Ouzagne and Morell, (2005)). The African masculine identity is not homogenous because of the plurality of the African experience. Gendered writings on men in Africa seem to suggest that the African man is defined by certain qualities including virility, machoism, power, economic independence, among others. Constructions of masculinities in contemporary times on the other hand, concentrate on the links between changes in defining masculinities focusing on colonial, post-colonial and neo-colonial times (Ouzagne and Morell, (2005)). These shifting meanings of the masculine gender have affected African men. The traditional African man, as Nerdlove (2014) affirms, is characterized by the ability to provide for a family, produce children, be a repository of knowledge, undoubtedly superior, very domineering of course, be a leader of men, the number of sexual partners one has access to, are all seen as part of the monolithic definitions of being a man.

The purpose of this research is to establish a correlation between masculine representations and intimations of Africa's future. It will pay attention to new configurations of the African male identity and how these configurations remain significant anticipatory discourses in African literature. Whereas recent trend on masculinity research interrogates and affirms the fluidity of the African male identity, (Mugambi & Allan (Eds) (2010); Ennin, 2014, Sam, 2016), this work focuses on the implications of fluidity of the African male identity.

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Statement of the Problem

Several studies have looked at utopian tendencies in African literature (Ashcroft, 2007; 2009; 2012; Asempasah, 2014; Varsamopoulou 2010; Hyatt, 2006). Specifically, these studies have focused on how certain concepts and tropes function as anticipatory discourses in the postcolonial novel. Similarly, studies on African masculinities (Allan and Mugambi, Eds; Uchendu, 2014; Shefer, Stevens and Clowes, 2010) have focused on the need to see African male identities from multiple perspectives, how masculinities are socially constructed and historically and contextually specific, foregrounding the subjective experiences of boys and men in the African context and challenging the default position that men are always privileged perpetrators of gendered power inequalities (Shefer, Stevens and Clowes, 2010). Although all these studies are important in the ways in which they help us to understand utopian impulses in African literature and the concept of masculinity, there is still a lot more to examine, in terms of how issues of masculinities and spatial re-organization in literary texts speak to or relate to Africa's future. It is in light of this paucity that this research is important, as it attempts to explore the relationship between masculinity, spatial re-organization and futurity. Specifically, I examine representations of masculinity as an index or a marker of futurity in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*, Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile* and J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*. The novelty of the study lies in the linkage it seeks to establish between masculine

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transformations, spatial configurations and intimations of futurity in African literature.

To this end, the overall question this study seeks to answer is this – What is the relationship between masculine representations, spatiality and futurity? Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. How does spatial re-organization propel new configurations of the African male identity?

2. In what ways do these new configurations of the African male identity remain significant anticipatory impulses in African literature?

The study provides an alternative perspective on the place of utopian thinking in African novels through a re-assessment of the relationship between masculine constructions and the positive negotiations that reflect futurity. It also makes a significant contribution to the on-going scholarship on the ideals of utopia and postcolonial utopianism.

Methodology

The qualitative approach is adopted in this study. This study is literary and it involves a re-reading of the selected texts and library searches. The analysis in this study is informed by the theories driving the study.

Justification for Author/Text Selection and Background to the texts

In order to establish the relationship between masculine representations, spatiality and Africa's future, this study has carefully selected four authors across four sub-regions on the African continent; West, East, North and South Africa. The reason for this selection is to show that African literature has the potential of

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hinting at a better tomorrow contrary to Nnolim's position that African literature is retrogressive. The study looks at Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*, Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile* and J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*. These authors have been purposively selected for two main reasons: these authors come from a postcolonial background and it is important to look at the ways in which they re-imagine the postcolonial nation by drawing linkages between masculine representations, spatiality and futury. It is important to state that these texts do not necessarily conform to the traditional utopian genre. Nevertheless, they contain an emancipator utopian imagination which breaks away from the established model. Again, these authors remain very important voices in African Literature and that the choice of two female and two male authors also helps provide a balanced perspective as far as gendered dynamics are concerned.

The choice of Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Saadawi's *God dies by the Nile* and Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* is informed by the agentic roles and the audacity of the female protagonists and how their roles remain significant in terms of the ways in which their agency proposes new ethics in re-thinking African masculinities and postcolonial futures. Coetzee's *Disgrace* is the first of his works set in post-apartheid South Africa and it is important because of the author's attempt to assess the significance of the racial change and the collective mood of the White populace in South Africa. I situate my examination of these texts in relation to utopian studies and African masculinities, using the concept of futury to suggest that new meanings of African masculinities serve as important

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parameters in reformulating ideas about Africa's future. I analyze each book in a separate chapter – isolating the key male characters as tools for analysis.

Ngugi wa Thiongo is an internationally acclaimed African writer, essayist, theorist and a human rights activist; a distinguished professor of comparative literature and performance studies. His works include novels, plays, short stories, essays, and literary criticism. Ngugi wa Thiongo champions the promotion of African women and other marginalized groups in the African society. He is particular on the place of the African language as a signifying referent of African literature. The transition from colonialism to postcolonialism has been a central issue in a great deal of his writings (Sadek, 2014). Much of the criticism on Ngugi wa Thiongo's novels has focused on the robbing effects of colonialism, language and identity, new civilizations, education as the primary tool of colonialism and, in particular, decolonization.

Wizard of the Crow has been described by Gikandi (2000) as a novel which sums up Ngugi wa Thiongo's previous works. Its intertextual quality allows us to appreciate the ways in which Ngugi wa Thiongo re-thinks the colonial and anti-colonial ideologies as well as how he expands the discourses of postcoloniality. The choice of *Wizard of the Crow* relies on the nature of it being potentially able to redefine and re-imagine the African continent in terms of the synthesis it provides. The novel is a fable set in the fictional African country of Aburiria. It satirizes the Ruler of Aburiria's attempts to dominate the nation while seeking financial support from western global institutions. The novel also shows

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how national and global interests are often inseparable and can be linked to such concerns as eco-criticism, Afrofuturism and Diaspora relationships.

J. M. Coetzee, a white South African novelist, now an Australian, is a novelist and critic whose works are noted for their forcefulness in reflecting the effects of colonization and the deforming impact of apartheid as well as the themes of power and otherness in South Africa. He has authored twelve novels to date and the majority of these novels chronicle the South African polarities of master/slave, black/white, male/female, private/public and oppression/resistance relationships as dominant characteristics.

Disgrace (1999) is a story about a 52- year old white professor of English at the University of Cape Town, David Lurie; a divorcee (having married twice) with a daughter, Lucy. Lurie has not had such a good relationship with women. After feeling dejected and disappointed by Soraya (a Muslim prostitute), he still goes about thinking that he 'owns' women's beauty and so made it a point to lure Melanie (one of his students) into his bed. Melanie succeeds in bringing out the young and the vulnerable side of Lurie. While he is lost in excitement, the affair with Melanie leads to David Lurie's expulsion from the university since he had blatantly refused to succumb to the demands of the investigating committee that was responsible for investigating the complaint brought against him by Melanie.

His expulsion from the university compels him to move to his daughter in the Eastern Cape. There, he is witness to a brutal scene in which he is severely burned, while his daughter is raped by three black men. David is shocked when he finds out his daughter was raped, but Lucy remains calm: she does not want to

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confess to the police. Throughout the story David and Lucy continue to argue about the violence in South Africa. Lucy however remains silent and does not want to talk to her father about this. As a sort of cure, David decides to work in an animal clinic. There, he meets Bev Shaw, with whom he discusses Lucy's situation and with whom he decides to have sex again. In the end, David reaches a feeling of absolution, because his care for the dogs takes his thoughts away from his daughter. *Disgrace* further parallels the racial oppression of blacks in South Africa with the treatment of themes of powerlessness through the rape of Lucy, racial hatred, sex and identity politics among others. A careful look at the critical reception on J. M. Coetzee's works shows that a lot of attention has been paid particularly to the resultant effects of apartheid and the dynamics of social relationships in South Africa. Issues of racial politics and the dynamics of space become controversial as far as the history of South Africa is concerned. However, there appears to be a lack of sustained discussion of the male characters in his works as gendered subjects and how their character roles speak to the progress of post-apartheid South Africa.

Nawal El Saadawi and Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie remain important feminist voices in the North and West Africa sub-regions respectively. Nawal El Saadawi is an Egyptian public health physician, psychiatrist, author and an advocate of women's rights. As a feminist, El Saadawi's works chiefly deal with the state of the Arab woman and how the oppression of women by men through religion becomes repulsive. Particularly, her novels deal with the subservient roles of women in the Middle East, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sexualities and

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the recognition of women's rights. A continual criticism on the portrayal of her male characters has remained subsumed into the feminist analysis of her women (Islam, 2007). The men in Sadaawi's novels are usually patriarchal units of oppression responsible for the constant humiliation and subjugation of women in the Middle East. A careful analysis of her men is crucial since it will constitute the basis upon which we can assess whether or not there is hope for gender harmony and equal rights in a fundamentalist religious society.

The novel *God Dies by the Nile* (1985) records the never-ending struggles of the peasants of the town Kafr El Teen, represented by Zakeya and her family against the greedy conduct of a village mayor and his sycophant cohorts --Sheikh Zahran, the Chief of the Guard, Haj Ismail, the village barber, and Sheikh Hamzawi, the Imam of the village. When the story opens, we meet Zakeya, an agricultural labourer who is working on the soil by the Nile River. We soon meet her family of poor peasants, as well as the privileged ruling class of the village. Four years earlier, her son Galal had gone off to fight at Suez, and had never been heard of again until he resurfaced at the latter part of the story. Her brother, Kafrawi, a widower, and his two daughters, Nefissa and Zeinab, live with her. The four of them work in the fields, as does everyone else in the village, until a summons comes from the mayor that Nefissa should work in his house as a maid so that he will pay the family an almost unimaginable sum per month. Kafrawi urges his daughter to accept the offer and Nefissa goes. She is molested and raped by the mayor. When the people of the town find that she is pregnant, the mayor

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murders an innocent man from the village, Elawu, and frames the girl's father up for the murder. Kafrawi is thus arrested, charged with murder and imprisoned.

Meanwhile Nefissa gives birth, abandons the baby and runs away. The mayor next turns his eyes on Zeinab, and the whole painful cycle begins again. Galal returns and finds that Zeinab is working for the mayor. Knowing Galal for his commitment to justice, the mayor and his group frame him up. He is arrested, charged with stealing and subsequently imprisoned. Hurt by these injustices, Zakeya goes to the mayor's house and butchers him with a hoe to death. She is arrested and imprisoned. There is also Fatheya, the strong-willed wife of the leader of the village mosque. This lady is forced to marry the sheik of the mosque, who is impotent. Fatheya, who has been longing for a child, chances on the baby Zakeya has abandoned and takes it home. For taking the innocent baby, she is stoned to death by the people in the village.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is a Nigerian writer of novels, short stories and non-fiction. Her works are assumed to give credit to Chinua Achebe's. This is to say that Adichie's novels, like Achebe's, contest the negative images associated with Africa as a continent. Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* symbolizes what has been considered a model of the new Nigerian Novel (Anyokwu, 2011). Critical commentaries on her works have focused on the changing experiences of nationhood in Nigeria, implications of gendered bodies within patriarchal settings, the strategic use of the female voice in decolonizing oppressive practices in contemporary Africa and issues of ideology. I argue that beyond these initial critiques, Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* explores a conjoint between issues of

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masculinities and Africa's future. The story in *Purple Hibiscus* centers on Eugene's family. Eugene is a wealthy man and a staunch Catholic. He appears to uphold moral standards, as he uses his newspaper, 'the standard' to challenge the injustices and the abuse of power in successive governments in the post – independent Nigeria. However, his private life is a mockery of what he proffers to dislike. He constantly batters his wife and children and uses violent means to correct them on any perceived wrongdoing. This awkward behaviour of his provokes Kambili's, Jaja's and Beatrice's re-awakening. Kambili and Jaja were to stay with their aunt, Ifeoma, for a holiday and the atmosphere they enjoy plays a significant role in their self discovery and journey to freedom.

Overview of the Thesis

The present study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter One has discussed the general introduction, including the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research question, scope and significance of the study, methodology, justification for authors selection and organization of the study. In chapter two, I engage with the critical literature on utopianism in the African context and the nature of African masculinities. I also pay attention to the critical commentary on the selected texts for this study. The second part of the same chapter also espouses the conceptual and theoretical considerations for the study.

Chapters three, four, five and six are dedicated to discussing each of the four selected texts. Chapter Three, which is themed, 'I Want to Remain a Man: Crisis, Identity and Reformation in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*' examines

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Adichie's construction of acceptable African maleness paying attention to how issues of space influence character behaviour.

In Chapter Four, I look at how Coetzee's *Disgrace* contributes to the discourses on emerging masculinities under the heading; 'The Making of the New Man in Contemporary African Fiction: A Reading of J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*'. 'Sketching the Future Nation: Women and Men at Post in Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*' is the heading for the fifth chapter. Here, I examine Ngugi wa Thiongo's radical revisions of postcolonial political leadership; emphasizing the importance of gender harmony as a prerequisite for Africa's progress and finally, I discuss, under the heading, 'Men, Women and God(s): Paradigms of Violation in Nawal El Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile*', how Saadawi re-imagines the future nation through a radical destabilization of the social organization of society. These headings are guided by the demands of the research focus. Chapter Seven is the final chapter, which summarizes the findings and implications of the study and as well suggests areas unaddressed in this work for further research.

Conclusion

The chapter has looked at the need to shift from focusing on ways in which the African male identity ceases to be homogenous to examining the anticipatory discourses that define the fluidity of masculine representations. It has also outlined the areas of concern to the study, provided justifications for the choice of authors and texts, the methodological approaches employed in the study, what the study seeks to achieve, the contributions it will make to the on-

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going scholarship on postcolonial utopianism and African masculinities and the proposed structure of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The previous chapter has situated the present study in the parent discourses of masculine representations in African novels, spatiality and futurity. It looked at the ways in which issues of spatiality and masculine representations become important in our thinking about African futures. The focus of this chapter is to review literature relating to the present study in terms of the conceptual underpinnings, theoretical base, and scholarly research. This chapter is divided into three broad sections: the first section discusses the conceptual framework; drawing attention to the similitude between the concept of utopia and the concept of futurity and finally, I contextualize how issues of space become significant in the overall interpretation of the texts under study. The second section discusses the theoretical frameworks underpinning the research. Using an eclectic approach, I begin by isolating associative theories of masculinities with the aim of justifying the choice of the Perfomative Masculinity perspective, Bakhtin's theory of the Carnival and Carnivalesque and the Postcolonial literary theory as the frameworks for discussion. The third section will be a critical literature review under three broad themes; namely, Utopian sensibilities in African literature, Studies on African masculinities and critical reception of the selected texts.

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Conceptual framework

The study relies on two key concepts; the concept of futurity and the concept of space.

The Concept of Futurity

Going back to my attempt at clarifying the several meanings associated with the term 'Utopia', I find that the varied interpretations make its use ambiguous for the purposes of this research. Although I do not disagree with its (Utopia's) ability in signaling issues of progress and hope, as contemporary critics (Levitas, 1990; Vieira, 2010) suggest it does, I prefer to use the term 'Futurity' which in itself expresses the idea of 'What it is to come' or ' the idea of the beyond'. As I have earlier stated in the introductory chapter, literature does not only offer insights into past circumstances but also has the capacity of affecting us through our participation in forming images of tomorrow. It is this imaginative competence that enables us to forge new ways to experience a better world.

This focus on futurity is supported by Eshel (2013) who argues that 'futurity is not the artistic celebration of modernity's technological forward thrust as put across by some theorists, neither is it a framework which resolves modern economic, social and political contingencies in a conclusive way. Rather, futurity marks the potential of literature *to imagine who we may become* (emphasis is mine). Thus, futurity remains literature's ability to raise, via our engagement with the past political and ethical dilemmas, a possibility of promise crucial for the future.

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The concept of futurity is thus a re-conceptualization of history that prompts us to act in the present in order to establish the condition for our future. In effect, what Eshel is saying is that the future is a way of mobilizing the past in order to redeem it for a potentially better option. She further admits that futurity as a mode of analysis operates on three (3) dimensions: first is its ability in prompting us to act (Futurity as pragmatic), its ability to resist static engagement with the past (Futurity as dynamic) and finally, its ability in keeping faith to effect a change (Futurity as Hopeful) (ibid. 3).

Also inherent in the concept of futurity, according to Grosz (1999), is the interplay between the idea of 'becoming' and 'the time of the political' and how these help us in thinking about the new. The idea of becoming is 'the process of unfolding a given essence of being (ibid). In other words, becoming must invoke certain possibilities that were hitherto unrealizable. This is to say that the idea of becoming must embody a certain kind of desire which comprises politics and subjectivity (Grosz 1999). In a sense, futurity springs a difference between who we are (present) and what we may become (future) indicating that the route to the future must be marked by agentic processes of discovery and re-discovery. In other words, there must be an attempt at moving away from the old (that is who we are in the present) to the new (what we may become). In this study, futurity refers to a state of affairs that is yet to come. It encapsulates a series of actions, attitudes, and representations that usher in the desire for a different or new state of affairs. I am interested in how masculine representations and spatial re-organization intimate a better future.

Postcolonial Spaces

The concept of space is multifaceted. It has usually been consubstantiated with notions of place, time, politics, aesthetics, among others (Upstone, 2009). In particular, the dimensions of 'place' as a location and an idea become crucial (in terms of how individuals become defined by geographies and how such persons understand the world) since it is often conflated with space as a duality. Key thinkers of spatiality, including Lebefvre (1991); Harvey (1996); Soja (1996) and Foucault (1986), have indicated that space is a fundamental and an essential quality of humanness and social being. In other words, spaces inform behaviour and determine how an individual relates with the world around him or her.

In postcolonial studies, the idea of space has been interpreted on the basis of dualities; East and West, colonizer/colonized; oppressor/oppressed; male/female; socialist/capitalist, as Said (1978) suggests. So that there is an attempt to interrogate how the problem of imperialism compels new forms of identities. In other words, the colonial discourse becomes central as far as postcolonial spatial politics is concerned. Ashcroft (2009) defines postcolonial space as:

> A place which signifies colonialism and offers a more fluid and
> open form that the imperial attempts to obscure (p. 97).

In other words, embedded in the idea of postcolonial spaces is an ambivalence of contestation and renegotiation. It means that there is an attempt to break with colonial definitions of being and a subsequent radical re-assertion of new modes of being. It is important to recognize that the emphasis of newness is

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not restricted to a radical destabilization of what the colonial offers but also a modest bridging of both forms. Soja (1996) emphasizes this point:

> These postcolonial worlds and their cultures of representation overlap but remain remarkably discrete and distinctive, especially in their paradigmatic core areas. Both worlds are represented here in Postcolonial Spaces although there is a concerted and creative effort to stimulate bridging and perhaps even hybridizing dialogues between them. (Upstone and Teverson, xi)

Thus, postcolonial spaces are inherently hybridized which presupposes that postcolonial identities become fluid in close connection with mobility. Upstone and Teverson (2011) point out that postcolonial spatial studies have been looked at on two levels; as spatial metaphors - how location, cartography and landscape become diffused into opening up a possibility of alternatives and overt spatial emphasis that stress the real politics of oppression. Thus, in our appreciation of postcolonial spaces, we are interested in how location reverberates the idea of newness through the paradox of 'otherness'. For the purpose of this study, I pay attention to how spatial configurations provoke futuristic impulses. In this thesis, I use space as a construct. It consists of place, the activities going on in the place and the roles and identities of the people in that given place. And so a spatial re-organization will mean changes in roles, changes in activities in that given place and a re-definition of relationships.

Theoretical Review

The overarching theory in this thesis is the Postcolonial Literary theory. Also, the theories of Performative Masculinities and Bakhtin's theory of the Carnival/Carnivalesque will be used in the appropriate texts to bring out the anticipatory sensibilities in the texts under study.

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory looks at the discourse of imperialism and the counter-discourse of post-imperialism. The focus of this lens is upon exposing the injustices suffered by oppressed groups and the contrast between the worldviews; the oppressor and the oppressed. Postcolonialism as a field of study emerged in the second half of the twentieth century after the Second World War (WWII), when the colonial enterprise started breaking down and European colonial powers such as France and England granted independence to many of their colonies (Lye, 1998). Both the term and the field of Postcolonialism have been subjected to extensive criticism from diverse perspectives: religious studies, literary studies and politics.

Rukundwa and Van Aarde (2007) identify two basic views of postcolonial theory. What they classify as optimistic and pessimistic views. They claim that the optimists see postcolonial theory as a means of defiance by which any exploitative and discriminatory practices, regardless of time and space can be challenged. In other words, for the optimists, postcolonial theory is 'the

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straightening up' approach, where there is an attempt to de-emphasize inferior views of the Orientals and emphasize perspectives of the colonized.

On the other hand, the pessimists view the theory as ambiguous, ironic and superstitious because of the lack of clarity in the arguments it seeks to raise. However, some leading proponents of the postcolonial theory including Bhahba, Spivak, Ashcroft, among others, contend that new forms of social collectivity require new ways of describing them and therefore acknowledge the danger in suggesting a single approach in dealing with all forms of histories (Slemon, 1995). This view corroborates Bhahba's (1994) observation that the continuing struggles of the postcolonial subject provoke certain specifics of the larger theory that 'the postcolonial theory bears witness to the unequal and universal forces of cultural representation that are involved in a constant competition for political and economic control in the contemporary world'. Thus, a critical examination of these views privileges the optimistic view as the more preferred. Bhahba (1994) sums up the optimistic position when he argues that:

> Postcolonial perspectives emerge from the colonial testimony of
> Third World Countries and the discourses of 'minorities' within
> the geopolitical divisions of East and West, North and South. They
> intervene in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt
> to give a hegemonic 'normality' to the uneven development and
> the differential, often disadvantaged, histories of nations, race,
> communities, peoples (p. 171).

Thus, postcolonial criticism focuses on social histories, cultural differences, discriminatory practices that are practiced as normal due to colonial issues. As a theoretical approach, postcolonial literary theory focuses on attempts made by formerly colonized societies to re-assert their identities, including national and cultural identities (Tyson, 2006). Characteristically, postcolonial literary theory corrects tainted images of Africa and creates versions of their own realities. It offers counter-narratives to the long tradition of European imperial narratives, paying attention to the effects of empire, assessing the position of the colonial or the postcolonial subject and reclaiming past histories. Proponents of the theory, including Bhahba, Said, Spivak, Ashcroft, Ngugi wa Thiongo, among others, dissect the ways in which writers from colonized countries attempt to express and even celebrate their cultural identities and reclaim them from the colonizers. They also pay attention to the ways in which literature of the colonial powers is used to justify colonialism through the perpetuation of images of the colonized as inferior.

Said (1978) and Spivak (1985), for instance, explore the structures of imperial domination and their material impacts on the lives of the colonized subject construed as the *other* or the *subaltern*. Whereas Said (1978) is credited with Orientalism - describing the binary between the Orient and the Occident, showing the impact of mystifying 'the other' and ultimately stressing issues of representation. Spivak (1985) in 'Can the Subaltern Speak' looks at how the epistemic violence of imperialism translates into varied subjectivities and suggests possible attempts to deconstruct meanings related to oppression. The

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choice of the postcolonial theory helps to assess the connectedness between the past and the present and how it has the potential of influencing our thinking about the future. It provides a basis for critically assessing the relation between the future and memory as well as the relationship between the individual and the collective. I choose the postcolonial theory because the authors selected for this study come from postcolonial countries or regions and also because in much of postcolonial studies, the idea of the future or the search for a new horizon is a contested one due to the defeated hope of independence and the fact that there is still a connect with the colonial apparatus (living in the past).

For instance, Bhahba (1994) suggests that in postcolonial literature, 'the idea of the beyond' is neither a new horizon nor a leaving behind of the past. What Bhahba suggests is that the idea of the beyond which signifies a new horizon or the authentic space is unreal because when we want to think about a way out of binarism, what becomes possible is a modified product of the coming together of the binaries. Therefore, what is possible is a hybridized space suggesting that postcolonial identity is an ambivalent one. It is exactly this issue that we need to interrogate because the crisis of hope in Africa does not eclipse the desire to rise above the present moments of nervousness and anxieties. Arguably, Bhahba's hybridized space is still imperial in the sense that, there still exist vestiges of the colonial legacy that are certainly injurious to the total liberation of postcolonial subjects. Therefore, the future of the postcolonial subject rests within a qualitatively improved space where the imprints of the colonial relic do not apply. The idea of the hybridized space therefore restricts the

possibility of imagining new worlds. The idea of the beyond which we aim at in the context of our discussions is targeted at the creation of the new man taking into cognizance the transformations that arise as a result of the correlation between masculine representations and spatial re-organization.

Bakhtin's theory of the Carnival/ Carnivalesque

Mikhail M. Bakhtin is a Russian philosopher, literary critic and scholar who wrote influential works of literary and rhetorical theory and criticism. Bakhtin outlines some critical ideas through his works, *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981), *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984a) and *Rabelais and His World* (1984b). In this quest, I will do a re-reading of the selected texts through the perspective of Bakhtinian polyphony, grotesque realism and the carnivalesque. These will provide valuable insights into the ways in which the texts I will be closely examining reconfigure the nation-state.

In *Rabelais and His World*, Bakhtin (1984b) examines how the carnival culture of the folk crept into high culture through the works of writers. He was interested in the great carnivals of Medieval Europe. He saw them as occasions in which the political, legal and ideological authority of both the church and state were upturned during the anarchic and liberating period of the carnival. Bakhtin (1984b) defines carnival as:

> A pageant without footlights and without division into performers and spectators. In carnival everyone is an active participant, everyone communes in the carnival act. Carnival is not contemplated and, strictly speaking, not even performed; its

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participants live in it, they live by its laws as long as those laws are in effect; that is, they live a carnivalistic life. Because carnivalistic life is a life drawn out of its usual rut, it is to some extent "life turned inside out." The reverse side of the world (p. 122).

Carnival characterizes a disordered world where law and order do not exist. It is therefore a celebration of disorder. During carnival time, life is self-styled because everything is permissible. In other words, the carnival is the law of freedom. For Bakhtin, carnival 'offers the chance to have a new outlook on the world, to realize the relative nature of all that exists, and to enter a completely new order of things.' (p.34) Thus in carnival, all the existing rules and norms are disobeyed - there are no limits to acceptability. That is, anything and everything is permitted in carnival, as long as the carnival lasts. Carnival is not restricted in place. It is a communal event in which everyone takes part. According to Bakhtin, the carnival life of the people is organized based on laughter. He describes the power of laughter:

> Laughter has the remarkable power of making an object come up close, of drawing it into a zone of crude contact where one can finger it familiarly on all sides, turn it upside down, inside out, peer it from above and below, break open its external shell, look into its center, doubt it, take it apart, dismember it, lay it bare and expose it, examine it freely and experiment with it (p. 23).

Thus, laughter has the capacity to destroy the ambitious, distance, fear and piety regarding an object. It replaces the official seriousness during carnival and

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demolishes authoritative structures. The carnival laughter makes a mockery of the 'king' by exposing the truth of his life and subsequently de-crowns him. The focus of the carnival is to challenge binary thinking and invert hierarchical categories in order that there will be room for collectivity and pluralism.

Another important Bakhtinian concept that will be used to extract the anticipatory discourses undergirding the selected novels is the idea of polyphony. The idea of polyphony is usually conflated with the term dialogism. Clark and Holquist (1984); Lodge (1990) and Pearce (1994) affirm the fact that the two terms (polyphony and dialogism) are synonymous through and through. Whereas I acknowledge the synonymity based on their interactional commitment, I do not use the two terms interchangeably. While dialogism focusses on how meaning is evolved out of a text based on the interaction between the author, the text and the reader – merging meaning into one single perspective, polyphony focusses on how narratological and character voices are set free to speak subversively without the writer of the text stepping in between character ad the reader. In other words, with polyphony, meaning is not merged into one single perspective. Each voice has its own perspective and its own strength. Polyphony literally means 'multi-voicedness'. According to Mikhail Bakhtin, it arises in fiction when there is an unrestricted interaction between characters. He asserts that:

> It is constructed not as the whole of a single consciousness,
> absorbing other consciousnesses as objects into itself, but as a
> whole formed by the interaction of several consciousnesses, none
> of which entirely becomes an object for the other; this interaction

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provides no support for the viewer who would objectify an entire event according to some ordinary monologic category (thematically, lyrically or cognitively) and this consequently makes the viewer also a participant (p. 18).

In other words, polyphony allows for an interaction between varieties of consciousness such that individual characters (with ideological positions) are not brought under the judgment of an authoritative ideology. Thus, polyphony breeds self-consciousness – characters are able to comprehend reality because there is no longer a superior reality. And so when there is a move from mono-voicedness to multi-voicedness, there is shift from passivity to active participation, which is indicative of progress.

The third and final Bakhtinian concept to be discussed is the grotesque realism. The concept of grotesque realism emphasizes the changes that take place in a human body through eating, drinking, defecation and sex. The grotesque is opposed to anything that is static or permanent. Bristol (1983) states:

The basic principle of grotesque or Carnival realism is to represent everything socially and spiritually exalted on the material, bodily level. It includes cursing, abusive and irreverent speech, symbolic and actual thrashing, and images of inversion and downward movement, both cosmological (the underworld, hell, devils) and anatomical (the buttocks, genitalia, visceral functions) (pp. 22-23).

It is a way of critiquing the world through human anatomy so that certain parts of the body are purposefully exaggerated, debased and degraded in order to

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expose the absurdities. Such degradation and debasement are usually meant to bring down to earth, to consume and give birth simultaneously (Case, 2015). In other words, the grotesque is an ambivalence of death and decay and birth and renewal. A key element of Grotesque realism, the grotesque character is one who has become bizarre, usually through an obsession. A grotesque character may be obsessed with an idea, a value or an assumption. Typically, grotesque characters are one-dimensional and possess one or more exaggerated personality traits. For the purpose of this thesis, I use Bakhtin's theory of the carnival/carnivalesque to show how the old order gives way to the birth of alternatives. Particularly, I employ the grotesque body as a metaphor for the state showing the how the writers mock key institutions and establishments that appear to be fighting in the interest of its citizenry. The carnival laughter and polyphony also allow us to see the vulnerability of officialese through the inversion of hierarchical categories. I apply Bakhtin's theory to three texts: Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Saadawi's *God dies by the Nile* and wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*.

Performative Masculinity

Pitt and Fox (2012) are the main proponents of the performative Masculinity theory. The theory focuses on the relevance of social structure and social interactions while operating on a continuum of orthodoxy, heterodox and cacodoxy. The continuum it proposes enables us to trace the development of male characters as they are engaged in different social interactions as well as the ways in which individual men construct their identities.

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Orthodox Masculinity

Orthodox masculinity has to do with traditional notions of what it is, and what it means to be a man or to be masculine. Orthodoxy is described in accordance with views, attitudes, beliefs, or practices prevalent or established in a particular society and how these doxic beliefs and assumptions define the ideal man. Traits of orthodox masculinity include bravery, stoicism, independence, dominance, confidence, among others (Pitt & Fox, 2012).

Heterodox Masculinity

Heterodox is the converse of orthodox, and it is articulated as 'not in accordance with established doctrines or opinions, or those generally recognized as right of orthodox' (Pitt & Fox, 2012). Heterodox masculinities are not constructed as the opposite to traditional orthodox masculinities. Rather, they are challenges to and the dismantling of fundamental beliefs. There is a conscious attempt at re-enacting or re-making masculinity. In this way, heterodox masculinity is still masculine; yet at the same time, less a process of tradition, and more a process of conscious, reflexive performance (Pitt & Fox, 2012).

Cacodoxy

Cacodox masculinities are presentations of masculinities that are neither heterodox nor orthodox. It is described as erroneous doctrines or opinions of masculinities and yet not feminine. The choice of the performative masculinity

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model helps us to trace the stages of development of the individual male characters in the selected texts and how the trajectory speaks to Africa's future. Apart from these, it is an upgrade of Connell (2005), Bourdieu (2001), West and Zimmerman (1987) and Butler (1999).

Connell's theory on masculinity has dominated the field since 1987. His work which focuses on the power/dominance relationship between men can no longer be used to analyze the ways in which men construct their individual identities in post-modern times. His theory helps us understand the hierarchies that exist amongst men themselves. Connell (2005) categorizes men into four basic groups based on the ways in which men are positioned in relation to power and dominance. These are (1) The Hegemonic Man, (2) The Subordinated Man, (3) The Marginalized Man and (4) The Complicit Marginalized Man. The hegemonic man, according to Connell (2005), legitimizes patriarchy by showing cultural dominance. Connell (2005) isolates men who dominate and control their female counterparts and their fellow men as successful since they are able to wield power and authority. The Subordinated Man, which is the second category, is defined in relation to internal masculine attitudes, so that when a man assumes a less challenging role rather than what he is expected to, he is considered a subordinated man.

In other words, subordinated masculinity is defined in relation to behaviours that are considered feminine. The Marginalized Man, according to Connell's categorization, is constructed through the intersection of external social structures such as ethnicity, class and race. In other words, the Marginalized Man

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is the one who suffers from racial and class-based subjugation. When a man is not able to meet the normative or idealized definitions of masculinity, he is classified as a Complicit Marginalized Man.

Bourdieu's (1986) theory of Masculine Dominance has several underlying concepts including the concept of Field, Symbolic Capital and Habitus (Bourdieu, 2001). The concept of field for instance sees society as a range of fields with their own regulations and that men (as the inhabitants of the field) are capable of internalizing varied values and attitudes. This is to say that society is not one-dimensional; it has several autonomous spaces which have their individual beliefs and practices and these beliefs shape and constrain men's behaviours. Similarly, the notion of the Habitus refers to skills, beliefs, dispositions, attitudes and expectations that permeate a person's actions (Bourdieu, 2001). Bourdieu argues that it is the Habitus that permits a deeper understanding of who a man is because although the Habitus may not be an accepted code, it succeeds in regulating the everyday life of the individual (Ashall, 2004).

West and Zimmerman's (1987) 'Doing *Gender*' and Judith Butler's theory of 'Performativity' highlight the idea that gender is a matter of stylized behaviour. West and Zimmerman (1987) explain 'Doing Gender' as:

> managing such occasions so that whatever the particulars, the outcome is seen and seeable in context as gender appropriate or as the case may be gender inappropriate that is accountable… to do gender is not always to live up to normative conceptions of

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femininity or masculinity. It is to engage in behaviour at the risk of gender assessment (pp. 135-137).

What they suggest is that gender is a process of achieving a status through social interactions and that the actors in any social interaction have an understanding of ideal masculinity and that appropriate presentation of masculinity is based on a shared understanding. Judith Butler's theory of Performativity draws on a very wide range of different theories (de Beauvoir, 1949; Foucault, 1978; Derrida, 1989). She looks at gender identity as performance and not a natural category. She suggests that gender is not something one is born with, rather, it is something we continually 'perform'. In other words, female does not mean feminine and male does not mean masculine. She argues:

Gender proves to be performative. That is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this case, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed (*Gender Trouble*, p. 25).

The crux of her argument rests on the fact that it is false to suggest that gender is a binary category. It is indeterminate, not fixed, and fluid. In all of these, we find that even though Connell's (2005) theory succeeds in showing that indeed there is not a monolithic conception of masculinity, we find also that his categorizations do not help us in assessing the transformations that individual male characters undergo. While Bourdieu's (1986) concept of Habitus conveys the ways in which individual men become more masculine which presupposes the possibility of tracing a certain degree of development, it is evident that the

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concept of the Habitus is tied to idealization. There is this rigid attempt to get the individual males to conform to certain acceptable modes of being since it is the Habitus that orients the individual behaviours of men. Rather than guiding us to be able to ascertain the trajectory of growth that male characters undergo by way of establishing a correlation between such character growth and Africa's future, West and Zimmerman's (1987) '*Doing Gender*' and Butler's (1988) performativity shift the focus from individual male characters and their development to interactional appropriateness. Hence, the choice of the performative masculinity theory allows me to trace the growth and development of individual male characters. I apply Pitt & Fox's (2012) Performative masculinity theory to three texts: Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Coetzee's *Disgrace* and wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*.

Empirical Review

In order to properly situate this study within existing related work, I review empirical literature under three (3) broad themes. I review literature on the concepts guiding the study in order to affirm its transformative potential to aid the understanding of the arguments that are raised in the course of the study. I also review literature on the nature of African masculinities and finally, I review critical commentary on the selected works in order to situate my study.

Utopian Sensibilities in African Literature

The subject of Utopia and Utopianism is not entirely new in the literature. Scholars including Pordzick (2001), Ashcroft (2007; 2009; 2012), Brown (1987),

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Simonse (1982) have made immense contributions to the bulk of scholarship in the area. However, a lot more still needs to be done in relation to the nature of Africa's Utopia. Clearly, the period of colonialism was indeed draining. The African continent sustained a severe degree of injury where people of Black Africa were robbed of their ancestral cultural heritage and again re-oriented Africa into disowning anything African since it was backward, archaic and savage. The oppressive nature of colonialism prejudiced the coming of independence such that it became difficult to envisage the disillusionment that has become characteristic of postcolonial Africa. In other words, the idea of independence became an utopian imagination which appears to have proved futile. Thus, tracing the themes in African literature, it is evident the extent to which writers expressed their disappointment in the post-independence era and the fact that Africa had been thrown into grave despair – calling for a return to and an endorsement of pre-colonial civilization. Ashcroft (2009) acknowledges that African writers were the first to recognize that the emancipator potential of independence was overestimated. Indeed, early African writings, including Achebe's *A Man of the People* (1966), Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Petals of Blood* (1977) and Ayi Kwei Armah's first three novels: *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968), *Fragments* (1970) and *Why Are We So Blessed* (1972) are replete of the pessimism of post independence African regimes and consequently an anchor for the Negritude agenda which became the start of Africa's renaissance. The Negritude tradition was not without its critics. Agitations for re-asserting the pride

of the African was framed in Afrocentric essentialism so that again, the concept of negritude became Africa's utopia par excellence (Nnolim, 1988).

Clearly, African literature manages a better vision of utopia than Nnolim (1988, 2000) suggests when he postulates that African literature is backward - looking and retrogressive since it is only capable of imaginatively projecting the problems of Africa without equally imagining solutions to such problems. In other words, what Nnolim (1988, 2000) suggests is that the future of African literature is bleak since it is routinely burdened with 'myths of return'. The basis of Nnolim's argument is carefully explained by Ashcroft (2009):

> It is often thought that utopianism died with post independence disillusion. But essential to the literature of revolution and critique is the anticipation of the future (p. 700).

Ashcroft (2009) argues that outside of the manifest function of African literature, which is to offer a critique of the coercive power of colonialism and the futility of the coming of independence (which is what Nnolim readily observes), therein is embedded an array of hope as far as the latency is concerned. And so notwithstanding the harsh realities of post independence, utopianism or utopian sensibilities are encapsulated in the core of resistance. In other words, the nature of Africa's utopia is procedural rather than finished. Ashcroft (2009) further argues that African literature has a double vision. He asserts that African literature

> is not merely a hope for African resurgence but a vision of Africa's transformative potential that will be realized as the teological

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expansionist and hegemonic tendencies of the West are gradually subverted (p. 716).

Here again, Ashcroft explains that the focus of African literature is not simply recovering the pre-colonial past as Nnolim assumes. Rather, its focus is an ambivalence of the re-affirmation of the African identity (pre-colonial civilization) and a de-affirmation of Western civilization so that the nature of Africa's utopia is not removed from Bhahba's concept of mimicry, where conceptions of the colonial experience is not restricted to a chaotic cultural climate but an appreciation of a new culture which makes inappropriate the colonizer's culture. In other words, the revolutionary nature of African literature (defined by resistance and myths of return) is a means of sketching the boundaries of the future nation.

In *Remembering the Future: Utopianism in African Literature*, Ashcroft (2009) again succinctly explains the connection between the past and the future. He suggests that the nature of Africa's utopia is 'cyclic and recuperative'. This means that there is an inter-related connection between past histories and visions of tomorrow so that in thinking about the future, hope is located in the re-negotiation of the two. And so, although African literature may appear to be pessimistic, it is optimistic in the ways in which the future is projected through memory – 'a recreation, not a looking backwards, but a reaching out to a horizon, somewhere 'out there' (p. 706).

Pordzick (2001) also corroborates the fact that Africa's utopia is not obvious but productive. In other words, it is not modelled on the features of the traditional

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genre (Moore's utopia). However, it succeeds beyond common expectations in re-telling 'what is to come'. Ashcroft (2013) further affirms this view when he acknowledges that:

> The utopian function of literature does not mean that literary works themselves are always utopian, nor even necessarily hopeful. But rather, that the imaginary of a different world in literature is the most consistent expression of the anticipatory consciousness that characterizes human thinking (p. 96).

This presupposes that African literature must not necessarily be seen to be projecting a better society or possibly utilizing science fiction by way of making obvious its anticipatory potential. What is key, as far as the utopian function of literature is concerned, is the ability of literature to envisage the possibility of a better society that is radically different from the present.

In *Before Utopia: the function of sacrifice in dystopian narratives*, Maria Varsamopoulou (2010) looks at how one can proceed to achieve utopia from the vantage point of dystopia or how one can proceed to the future from the present. She argues that rather than search for tropes or signposts that hint at utopia in narratives, writers ought to approach the search of utopia via different routes. Thus, she looks at the function of sacrifice in dystopian narratives. Interestingly, she claims that discourses on utopia and anti- utopia rather occur in a simple binary opposition and that it affects the much more complex relationship or continuum within which such discourses operate.

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In other words, Varsamopoulou is saying is that even the darkest totalitarian dystopian texts may exhibit an utopian impulse not merely external to the text (i.e. the author's intention) but primarily internal to the text by the narration or eventual textual outcomes. Her claims support one of the basic arguments in my work which is that it will be very simplistic to categorize all African texts as purely dystopian (Nnolim, 2010) because they do not explicitly solve Africa's problems in a conclusive manner; something science fiction makes possible in some European texts. From the point of view of hope, Africa's utopia is conjectured through a multitude of factors without fixed coordinates in arriving at the future. Whereas Varsamopoulou looks at the function of sacrifice, I will look at the correlation between masculine representations and spatial re-organization and how they intimate futurity.

Hyatt (2006) and Asempasah (2014) examine the appropriateness of Gilles Deleuze's concepts of 'machine investments' (in the former) and 'treason', 'traitor' and 'becoming traitor' (in the latter) within the context of utopia and utopianism. Whereas Hyatt makes a case for the significance of the utopian imaginary for understanding the antagonism between Hegel's labour of the concept and Deleuze and Guattari's machine investments for desire, Asempasah considers how the postcolonial novel invokes the idea of the people to come through Deleuze's notions of treason, traitor and becoming-traitor. Specifically, Asempasah shows the extent to which becoming traitor functions as an authentic act for thinking about postcolonial ethics and the people to come. He isolates the traitor figure as perhaps the prototypical figure of thinking the future in our

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contemporary era. While our works (Asempasah's and mine) contest the notion that Africa's utopia is backward looking (contrary to Nnolim, 2010), his approach is restricted, despite the valuable insights, in terms of the agential acts that discloses alternative modes of representing the new community. My work offers yet other relevant and varied ways by which writers intimate the future.

African Masculinities

This section of the literature review helps us to develop a gendered understanding of Africa and the ways in which men have been discussed. Our understandings of the African men, as far as the literature suggest, is shaped by notions of hegemony, dominance, violence, bravery just to mention a few.

For instance, van der Walt (2007) investigates constructions of masculinities among young men with a focus on the context of homosexuality in South Africa. He interviewed ten first year psychology students between the ages of eighteen (18) and twenty-five (25) of the University of Cape Town in South Africa to refute claims that masculinity, as is constructed in most societies, relate to total cultural dominance. Judging from the themes that emerge from his analysis, van der Walt suggests that men construct their identity through the ways in which individual men manage their emotions and physical appearance. He concludes that different levels of masculinities may be compromised if men were not seen as heterosexual beings.

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In a similar study, Ratele (2008) examines why and how African males have been analyzed in issues relating to gendered wars and deeds; violence against women and girls by males, neglecting the experiences of males as important social categories. Focusing on the five African sub-regions, he locates his examination in a pro-feminist context by analyzing men from two (2) social-psychological perspectives; how age, on the one hand, and occupational and income attainment, on the other hand, are tied in with becoming an African male. In relation to age and African manhood, Ratele (2008) argues that given the limits and opportunities granted by age, practices and experiences of Africa masculinities become tenuous. And also that masculine power and identity in the African context is better expressed taking into account the realities on unemployment and weak economy. He concludes that masculinities are better viewed as produced at both social and psychological levels rather than the daily gender wars. It is important to recognize the fact that what van der Walt(2007) and Ratele (2008) try to do is to reclaim stereotypical conceptions of being an African male and also the fact that the African man is not always privileged against his woman counterpart. Indeed Groes-Green's (2009) study further affirms this position.

Groes-Green (2009) explores the theoretical implications of sexual and violent practices among disenfranchised young men in Southern Africa. In a survey involving five hundred (500) young men and women, he identifies some major problems including material expectations and demand, lack of access to education, high levels of unemployment and the prospects of unemployment after

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completing secondary school as deep frustrations in romantic relationships and that young men in Southern Africa who fall out of the cultural prototype of the 'breadwinner' ideal become discontent since they are not able to put up with the strict economic demands. He argues that these struggles compel them to act violently towards their female counterparts since the sexual preoccupations of these young men are affected.

In '*Staging Masculinity in the East African Epic*', Waliaula (2010), in an edited collection, examines the elements of masculinity staged in the Fumo Liyongo epic of the Waswahili people in East Africa. He suggests that although the Swahili notion of masculinity is marked by virility, strength, intellect, dominance among others, the Liyongo epic enacts what he calls 'masculine femininity'. In other words, Waliaula (2010) argues that masculinity does not preclude the possibility of females exhibiting masculine attributes and the reverse is true. In as much as the epic is definable by fantastic deeds of men, Waliaula (2010) suggests that the female characters remain emblematic in the Liyongo epic. This he argues, are critical extrapolations of the meanings and manifestations of masculinity among the Waswahili that illuminate the idea that East African masculinity can be reclaimed from the patriarchal matrix.

Whereas van der Walt (2007), Ratele (2008) and Groes-Green (2009) focus on the different levels of masculinities in the African context and the fact that the idea of African masculinity is not homogeneous, Waliaula (2010) offers a different perspective – suggesting that African masculinities may include women, I tend to side with Halberstam (1998) that 'female masculinities are framed as the

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rejected scraps of dominant masculinity in order that male masculinity may appear to be the real thing'. In other words, even though Waliaula's (2010) work affirms traces of female masculinity, the discussion is foreclosed by anti-feminist apparatuses to keep the woman from any heroic deeds. We will find that the idea of female masculinity is very important when we talk of the future of Africa. This is because while we are interested in the heterogeneity of masculine representations as a mark of plurality; a necessity for Africa's progress, we will also find that the feminine experience is crucial since it contributes to the changing notions of dominant masculinities.

Ennin (2013) also examines the representations of men in Ghanaian fiction and film. Using five novels and two films, she examines the ways in which contemporary writers and film makers reject hegemonic masculinity by moving from the representation of an ideal masculinity and rather re-writing and re-creating versions of manhood in the African context. She pays particular attention to the ways in which these writers and film makers deploy and critique masculine images in their work and concludes that whereas the novels support futuristic representation of manhood – that is rejecting traditional notions of maleness, the films simply break the boredom of creating stereotypes. Although Ennin's work is very important to this project, her work is restricted to the Ghanaian context and therefore does not give us enough grounds to comment on Africa's future in relation to discourses on African masculinities. My project uses four texts spanning the four sub regions in the African continent, providing a broader scope for informed conclusions as far as the thesis of the research is concerned.

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Critical Reception on the Selected Texts

Coetzee's *Disgrace* has received a lot of critical attention. For instance, Petterson (2014) looks at gender perspectives on the possession of power in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*. She looks at sexual power abuse, paying attention to how David Lurie and Petrus deal with and use women to gain power. She argues that while both men 'tear' women apart until they become totally insecure and until they are able to control them completely, David Lurie's thoughts about women gradually change. Neimah (2013) also looks at the problematic of the body in Coetzee's *Disgrace* and postulates that the novel's protagonist, David Lurie, is initially driven by impulsive sexual behaviour beyond his control rather than self-centered eros which is why he is able to decide to care about the body of the 'other' (caring for the dogs).

It is important to acknowledge that Lurie's sexual behaviour may be impulsive, but it is more important to realize that his sexual behaviour was defined by a history of ownership and entitlements. And so his abuse of Melanie is not simply unethical as Neimah suggests. Rather, it was a means of purposefully usurping the body of someone he considered inferior and without rights due to his old notion of white superiority. While Petterson's (2014) and Neimah's (2013) works recognize the change in Lurie's behaviour as far as his transformation is concerned, both works appear to overlook the intricacies of Lurie's transformation, especially how Lurie's change in perception about his sexual behaviour is symbolic of the hope in post-apartheid South Africa.

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In *Post-apartheid South Africa and patterns of violence in J. M. Coetzee's Disgrace and Phaswane Mpe's Welcome to Our Hilbrow*, Tarka-Fai (2014) demonstrates that the two texts; Coetzee's *Disgrace* and Mpe's *Welcome to the Hillbrow* try to rectify the popular misconception of the post-apartheid South African nation as a sanctuary through the frustrations their characters experience. He also argues that the hope of the new South Africa is not immediate. Rather, it lies in the potential of reconciliation and entente through the transformative powers of the materiality of memory. Indeed, the new South Africa is not without problems. However, the hope of the new nation lies beyond the potential of reconciliation since political actors (blacks and whites) have not yet come to terms with the dynamics of the freedom after apartheid. Lurie's attitude towards the committee of injury is suggestive. Thus, it is important to examine alternative perspectives as far as the hope of the new South Africa is concerned.

Mardorossian (2011) also examines how representations of sexual violence expose the inextricable relationship between gender, class and race as social categories. She argues that Coetzee's *Disgrace* demonstrates that rape is not primarily a gendered crime but a discursive phenomenon whose consequences are constituted by profoundly racialized and class-based discourses. Citing the rape episodes (Melanie's and Lucy's) as instances, she argues that the inconsistencies in Lurie's responses to the two rape cases are symbolic of the naturalized violence in post-apartheid South Africa. She concludes that Coetzee's *Disgrace* casts a pessimistic glance at the new nation since it does not dissolve the tension between the blacks and whites.

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The discrepancies in Lurie's responses to the two rape cases as noted earlier indeed reveal the normalization of violence in South Africa. But whilst Coetzee leads us to appreciate that fact, he also leads us to appreciate the anticipatory impulses through Lurie's eventual transformation and the union of Petrus (a black man) and Lucy (a white woman). Thus, there still remain futuristic tendencies in what appears to be pessimistic as far as Coetzee's *Disgrace* is concerned. It is important to recognize that although these studies touch on masculine transformations without any attempt at drawing linkages with the dynamics of space and futurity, such linkages remain necessary as far as the future nation is concerned. Thus, my study seeks to examine the correlation between masculine representations and spatial re-organization and how it relates to Africa's future.

Scholarly attention on Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile* has focused on the feminist imagination in the Arab world. Issaka (2010) examines the situation of the woman in a patriarchal African society in Sadaawi's *God Dies by the Nile* and *Woman at point Zero* and he argues that even though women occupy an inferior position in traditional societies, the deep-rooted Islamic teachings further repress and confine them such that they remain eternally dependent beings. Drawing his conclusions, he suggests that patriarchy remains a cultural restraint and emerges as a system with political, economic, social, cultural and psychological manifestations bound together by underlying class dynamics.

Similarly, Kolhapur (2015) highlights the plight of poor peasant women exploited by males due to lack of power against men as well as how the different weapons of Arabic supremacy cooperate to restrict women in *God Dies by the Nile*. He contends that the roles played by exploitation, culture, religion, sex and psychology are to cushion male authority. Islam (2007) in 'The Patriarchal Class System in Nawal El Sadaawi's *God Dies by the Nile*' looks at how socialist feminists see the issue of class as central to women's lives and at the same time stress the impact of patriarchy. She argues that women in *God Dies by the Nile* are victims of patriarchal class system consolidated by politics, religion and social customs and that these class systems are ideologically manifested through double moral standards; rape, sexual violence among others. She confirms that Saadawi foregrounds these experiences by deconstructing the female identity. Whereas Issaka (2010), Islam(2007) and Kolhapur (2015) concentrate on the humiliation of women in Sadaawi's novels, paying attention to the ways in which women's subjugation become entrenched in religious and political ideologies, Ouzgane (2007) does a reading of the key scenes of male sexuality in Sadaawi's *God Dies by the Nile* and Ben Jelloun's *The Sand Child* and he argues that when masculinity is perceived in terms of virility; ignoring such feelings as vulnerability, intimacy and empathy between men, we pigeonhole the masculine experience and make it seem as though such feelings are totally feminine.

Contrary to western discourse on the place of the woman in a Muslim society, he concludes that the male characters in the two novels are defined by hierarchical relationships. What is lacking in all of this criticism is the ability to re-interpret and link such manifestations of masculinities to the hope of gender harmony in the Middle East and for that matter Africa. Waita (2013) in *Identity, Politics and Gender Dimensions in Ngugi wa Thiongo's Wizard of the Crow* interrogates the political dispensation in Aburiria, a prototype African country immersed in political dictatorship. Arguing from the backdrop of the experiences of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism, Waita (2013) claims that unless the African reclaims his/her identity from imperial legacies, African renaissance can never be achieved under a condition of alienation. He further isolates the character of Nyawira as the voice of emancipation and suggests that meaningful development may come to Africa if it is healed from current postcolonial indispositions.

Whereas Waita (2013) is concerned with the ways in which Africa can boldly think of a meaningful development, van der Smith (2007) investigates scholarly positions on the nature of the African theatre as well as the different styles of theatre practiced by Ngugi wa Thiongo in his novels. Particularly, he explores the influence Ngugi wa Thiongo has had on the Kenyan theatre. He argues that Ngugi wa Thiongo's theatre has certain definite features, including breaking away from imperialistic traditions, and that Ngugi wa Thiongo has a grass-root focus and highlights the peoples' history (i.e. elements of realism,

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history and orature). He concludes that Ngugi wa Thiongo's plays oral tradition motifs in creating a new structure for the Kenyan theatre.

While the Waita (2013) and van der Smit (2007) attempt to establish the novelty Ngugi wa Thiongo imputes into African literature paying attention to the ways in which he departs from established traditions, it is obvious they do so outside of gender considerations. Whereas my work supports their concerns of Africa's progress in terms of their call for healing (in the case of Waita, 2013) and his contribution in creating an African theatre (in the case of van der Smit, 2007), I assess the potential of Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* in relation to masculine representations and futurity.

Nweze (2012) does a stylistic analysis of Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* and Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* with the aim of registering their disgust at the incompetence and greedy leadership in their home countries. Drawing on literary and linguistic approaches, he describes the formal features of the texts and their functional significance and as well relates distinctive stylistic features to the authors' characteristic ways of perceiving their world. He concludes that though Ngugi wa Thiongo and Okri's texts draw much on their mimetic power from the African political experiences, they reveal a universal human condition through the unique style of their language.

Sadek (2004) examines the struggle of African women in the selected works of Ngugi wa Thiongo. He isolates the aspects of resistance mechanisms (including sisterhood/female bonding and female consciousness) used by Ngugi wa Thiongo in order to empower the African woman in a male-dominated society.

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He argues that while Ngugi wa Thiongo's earlier works venerate traditional African values of motherhood and is connected to African feminism, *Wizard of the Crow* breaks new grounds. It is obvious that a sustained discussion of the male subject in Ngugi wa Thiongo's novels is lacking and such a study is vital since it helps us to establish the degree of progress that comes to the African continent especially in terms of gender representations. Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* has been discussed from several angles, including the ways in which her novels speak to issues of feminism and womanism. Emery (2012) examines how the female voice in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* helps in decolonizing patriarchy. She argues that stigmas and sexuality have been used extensively in the subordination of women and that the juxtaposition of the male and female voice in the novels by these two authors helps to appreciate the need to deconstruct the imbalanced over structure between the sexes in order to bring about freedom to the woman.

Amartey (2013) also does a comparative study of Adichie's and Emecheta's *Purple Hibiscus* and *Joys of Motherhood* respectively, in order to ascertain the different and similar ways in which these female writers articulate womanist views in their novels. Based on his analysis, he claims that although both novels lean towards the ultimate goal of womanism, which is unity and survival for men, women and children, Adichie's approach tends to be challenging and usurping patriarchy while Emecheta's valorizes traditional patriarchal societies. He concludes that *Purple Hibiscus* resonates with womanist hope as opposed to *The Joys of Motherhood*.

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Ibeku (2015) also examines Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and the issue of feminism in Africa. She claims that Adichie's novel is a feminist piece that challenges dehumanizing practices against women. She argues that while exploring the African conception of an ideal woman, Adichie shifts from liberal feminists' approach to radical feminism. Although Amartey (2015) and Ibeku (2015) succeed in stressing Adichie's commitment for change – challenging the dehumanizing practices against women, they are however silent on the ways in which Adichie's commitment for change incorporates masculine representations. While *Purple Hibiscus* traces the development of young Kambili and the transformations she experiences, the roles played by Jaja and Father Amadi can never be undervalued. Thus, it is important to examine the extent to which the male factor becomes indispensable as far as change and progress is concerned.

Martin (2015) discusses the postcolonial identity through the deconstruction of Adichie's novels. He explores how the multiplicity of issues in Adichie's novels intersects with Jacques Derrida's deconstructionism. Arguing from Adichie's concerns about the dangers of having to write single stories, he deconstructs the binary oppositions in *Purple Hibiscus*, exploring issues of difference and concludes that Adichie's novels truly intersect with Derrida's project of deconstructionism in terms of the instability of textual interpretations.

Yohannes (2012) also weighs Adichie's novels from the standpoint of postcolonial theory in order to establish the fact that indeed the author devises innovative techniques in thinking about postcolonial writings. He looks at

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language, hybridity and the social function of her novels in relation to 'Africanness'. He concludes that Adichie's language is in trend with the language employed by global postcolonial writers and that her novels succeed in deconstructing issues of binarism and finally that her novels functions as a criticism of colonial and neo-colonial issues.

Although Yohannes (2012) and Martin (2015) look at how Adichie injects alterity into postcolonial writing – suggesting a shift from writing single stories to adopting innovative techniques in writing about postcolonial subjects, what they do not do is to assess the extent to which the point of departure from the usual is indicative of an optimistic future for Africa. Martin (2015) and Yohannes' (2012) works find affinity with mine in terms of how Adichie deconstructs postcolonial identity. But whereas they claim that Adichie appears to favour cultural hybridity as a characteristic of Africa's progress, I contend that Adichie rather endorses polyphony as a characteristic quality of Africa's future when we juxtapose Eugene Achike, the protagonist, and Father Amadi as symbols of political leadership. As we might have noted from our reading of the text, we realize that Amadi's inclusivist leadership carefully dissolved the strange silences that had long ruled the lives of Jaja and Kambili as opposed to Eugene's dictatorial leadership. Thus, the dynamics of the independence that these children gradually assume cannot be the result of attaining a mere balance between two competing cultures. My work therefore examines the correlation between masculine representations and spatial re-organization as alternatives for Africa's future.

Conclusion

While the literature review has demonstrated that masculinity and spatiality have become significant modalities of reading African literature, it is also evident that the intersection between masculinity and spatial transformation on the one hand, and futurity, on the other hand, has remained largely unexplored. This is a serious oversight especially because we should not just be interested in the forms of masculinities available; we should also be interested in how transformation in masculinities may be an index of a qualitatively different future. The chapter discussed the theoretical underpinnings of the study; it looked at Pitt and Fox's (2007) model of performative masculinity, considering the fact that it is an upgrade of existing theories on masculinities (Bourdieu, 1986; West & Zimmerman, 1987; Butler, 1988; Connell, 2005) and the fact that the continuum representation it proposes suits the purpose of the present study. I also justified the choice of the postcolonial theory and Bakhtin's theory of the Carnival/Carnivalesque as the alternative frameworks which help to deal with the issues of newness. The chapter also paid attention to the concepts of utopia and futurity and provided further justification for the preference of the concept of futurity over the concept of utopia. It has reviewed previous studies on three broad themes; on utopian sensibilities in African literature, studies on African masculinities and finally critical commentary on the selected texts. These studies help us to properly situate the concerns of the study within a larger debate on Postcolonial Utopianism and African Masculinities.

CHAPTER THREE

I WANT TO REMAIN A MAN: CRISIS, IDENTITY AND

REFORMATION IN ADICHIE'S *PURPLE HIBISCUS*

Introduction

In the previous chapters, I have contextualized my study within the broader discourses on masculinities, spatiality and futurity. I have discussed how Nnolim's argument (i.e. that African literature is, in the main, retrogressive since it is not able to imagine a better society) diminishes in the face of the ambivalence of the colonial discourse, and also that the reformations male characters go through by means of spatial dynamics are suggestive of the progressive ways in thinking about Africa's future. In this chapter, which begins my analysis, I will assess Adichie's construction of the African male through a re-examination of the male characters in her novel. Particularly, I will examine how Adichie constructs the idea of "acceptable" African maleness juxtaposing Eugene and Jaja (father and son). It is important to state that the use of the label "acceptable African maleness" in the present study does not presuppose a homogenous depiction considering the diverse cultural experiences in Africa. The label "African maleness" is used as a construct to refer to how Adichie creates alternative masculinities that emerge to compete with or displace orthodox masculinities. The chapter also considers how the male characters enact and re-enact their masculine identities influenced by issues of space.

I find that Adichie's attempt to suggest the extent to which colonialism (specifically white man's religion) has affected the identity of the African male, just like what Achebe does in *Things Fall Apart* is diffused into issues of regular gender politics, sexual violence, cultural crisis and postcolonial disillusionment (Mbaya Kivai, 2007; Rackley,2015 and Martin, 2015). It is crucial to acknowledge the fact that Eugene is torn between his desire to remain a respectable religious head and his dream of being a father- protector figure such that his inability to strike a balance between his desires succeeds in dispossessing him of any of his dreams.

Adichie's novel is set in post colonial Nigeria, forecasting the aftermath of British colonial rule through a micro setting in the Achike household. Adichie metaphorizes the domestic condition in the Achike household in order to reveal the larger damage colonialism did to Nigeria. *Purple Hibiscus* also explores issues of domestic abuse, sexual violence and cultural trauma. Although the story chronicles the experiences of young Kambili- from self esteem to self discovery, it is agreeable that her transition to selfhood is engineered by the misdeeds of her father, Eugene; the audacity in Jaja's character and the love of father Amadi.

The story in *Purple Hibiscus* centers on Eugene's family. Eugene is a wealthy man and a staunch Catholic. He appears to uphold moral standards, as he uses his newspaper, 'the standard' to challenge the injustices and the abuse of power in successive governments in the post – independent Nigeria. However, his private life is a mockery of what he proffers to dislike. He constantly batters his wife and children and uses violent means to correct them on any perceived

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wrongdoing. This ironic behaviour of his subsequently instigates a certain level of defiance in the attitudes of his children when they had the opportunity of experiencing an alternative society.

The chapter is sub-divided into four main parts. The first part examines the predominant male character in the novel. I examine how the character's worldview becomes a betrayal of the African identity. The second part looks at how Nsukka and Enugu as physical spaces influence character behaviour and subsequently, how the transformations in character behaviour intimate the possibility of an alternative world. While the third section discusses the qualities of postcolonial maleness and how these qualities remain necessities for the new nation, the fourth and final section summarizes the main arguments raised in the chapter. The analysis is done using Bakhtin's carnivalesque, the performative masculinity theory and the postcolonial literary theory.

'A man of integrity, the bravest man I know': Eugene and the Crisis of Identity.

The concept of identity, as far as literary stories are concerned, is premised on how characters define themselves and are defined by various combinations in their past, the choices they make and the social forces that act upon them (Culler, 1997) This is to say that a character becomes jointly defined by the norms of the social community s/he belongs to and the choices s/he makes. And so to be a man or to be a woman is informed by what the society requires, modes of perceiving

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the self and the historical antecedents that support performativity. In the world of Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Eugene is hailed as the embodiment of 'The man'.

Eugene Achike is the head of the Achike family and a father of two; Kambili and Jaja. He is a staunch catholic, a wealthy man and an ultimate figure of authority. He is the accepted model of maleness and a god-equivalent and so it is not surprising Ade Coker, the editor of Eugene's newspaper considers him the bravest of all men. Eugene is a colonial product and, in his quest, to emulate white/western civilization, Eugene rules his household in a strict regimental style. He has a daily schedule written out for each of his children and he makes sure that they live it as a matter of compulsion even in his absence. Beatrice, his wife was not better treated. Eugene had a strong allegiance to Catholic virtues which was definitely tied to colonial Christianity.

For him, indigenous religious worship is pure paganism to an extent that he rejects his African family members including his very own father, Papa Nnukwu, because they are idol worshippers (p.98). Eugene regulates the minutes his children spend with their grandfather because he is a heathen. His children are compulsorily made to go for confession for associating with a heathen and enjoying pagan rituals because it breaks the first commandment 'that pagan rituals are misinformed superstition and they are the gateway to hell' (p.106).

Eugene is a complex character because he is an embodiment of multiple attitudes. Part of his complexity lies in the fact that Eugene is both admirable and repulsive. He is a responsible father who wants the very best for his children. However, the best he wants for his children is informed by Eurocentric ideals,

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which he inherited as a boy from the mission school. His Eurocentric ideals are rigid and very inflexible. He detests the African way of doing things; it is backward, uncivilized and unprogressive. He has been brainwashed to think that for one to succeed in life, one needs to be western and Catholic. Eugene is a religious fanatic; when the story opens, we find that Eugene beats up his son because he did not go for communion – 'nothing but mortal sin would keep a person away from communion two Sundays in a row' (p.4) and so he punishes Jaja (his son) for putting physical things ahead of a religious demand.

Eugene is simply bent on bringing up his children in the "proper" way – the Western way, the Christian way. As a committed Catholic, Eugene is considered comparable to the Pope and Jesus, conferring on him some Messianic qualities. Indeed, Father Benedict uses him to illustrate the gospels (p.4) indicating that he is 'the standard' to follow, the yardstick for true religious worship and a replica of righteousness. Father Benedict admits:

When we let our light shine before men, we are reflecting Christ's Triumphant Entry. He said that on Palm Sunday. 'Look at Brother Eugene, he could have chosen to be like the other Big men in this country. He could have decided to sit at home and do nothing after the coup to make sure the government did not threaten his business. But no, he used the *Standard* to speak the truth even though it meant the paper lost advertising. Brother Eugene spoke out for freedom. How many of us here stood upon for the truth? How many of us have reflected the Triumphant Entry? (P.4-5)

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Eugene is indeed a well-celebrated 'Big man'. He does not use his wealth for political and material expediency like the usual 'Big men' do. Although his kinsmen had impressed upon him to take another wife who would bear him male children (p.20), his adherence to the Catholic faith would not allow him. The metaphor of *The Standard*; the name of his newspaper further helps us to appreciate the prestigious position Eugene enjoys amongst his contemporaries. He is indeed different. So much so that comparing him with any other man lowered and soiled him (p.20).

Eugene is considered a freedom fighter, using the medium of his newspaper to speak for minority groups, exposing corrupt practices in government and numerous military coups was advertising the value of freedom in his newspaper editorials. He believes that the solution to the charged political situation in post-independent Nigeria is 'Renewed Democracy' and he fervently prayed for the downfall of the 'godless' men – corrupt politicians and military autocrats who kept disturbing the peace of the common people.

Ironically, we find clearly that Eugene does not understand the fundamentals of freedom; he equates having a voice to rebellion and transgression against authority and ultimately against the authority of God. Evidently, Jaja, Kambili and Beatrice are afraid to voice their opinions and when they find the courage to do so, they make sure that it pleases the 'king'. His constant threats of physical abuse also prove the contrary. Jaja missed the missal for failing to go for communion on no other day than a Palm Sunday. Eugene abuses his entire family because they 'connive' with Kambili to break the Eucharist fast in an attempt to

relieve her menstrual cramps (p.102), and Beatrice is given a brutal beating resulting in the loss of her baby because she chooses to remain in the car when they were visiting Father Benedict after the morning mass as they usually do due to her morning sickness.

Eugene is a dictator and yet he is an advocate for democratic rule. This contradiction in his character remains significant for two reasons; Eugene represents the utopian idea of independence and the failed masculine status. When the Blackman came to a realization that he could rule himself, it was the case that anything western and imperial would be lowered in favour of democracy – stressing the value of Africanness and the African identity. What has become the political atmosphere in many African states is symbolic of the failed system of governance different from what we desired.

The emancipatory potential of independence is blocked by disillusionment and the selfishness of political actors in contemporary Africa. Again, what this contradiction means is that 'acceptable' maleness is not without imperfections. It is not analogous to orthodoxy. It is not hegemonic. Rather, it is characterized by the desire to interrogate the masculine heritage in order to create positive versions in time. In other words, the new man in Adichie's world view is not linear, not rigid but a bridging of several gendered behaviours needed for growth. Eugene thinks of himself no longer an African, considering his disgust for the African culture, and yet he is not fully western. His conflict of identity invites us to appreciate the need for the new man to dismantle the over stretched masculine ideals that do not accommodate the desire for change.

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Unlike Achebe's Okonkwo in *Things Fall Apart*, who is bent on becoming 'the man' in the Umuofia society by striving to meet his society's expectations of ideal masculinity, Adichie's Eugene is an already established orthodox male. Although Eugene's orthodoxy is not tied to sexual and physical prowess – despising anything that could make him feel feminine like the traditional orthodox male - he is Eurocentric and a religious fanatic. He is the standard for 'acceptable' masculinity exemplified in the comparison set between himself, Jesus and the Pope. This sense of 'deification' derives from a conscious effort to do away with anything native, African and unChristian. His Eurocentric religious beliefs (i.e. anything black is ungodly, punishing the body as a way of saving the soul from damnation) oblige him to inflict pain on his household if only it will help secure a place for them in Heaven. For him, self-denial and obedience to the Catholic doctrines is life.

Eugene becomes rather mechanical in dealing with his household. He does not pause to reflect on his style of ruling his home. He is never satisfied with anything, practically insensate and more of a domineering god-head. He is unrepentant. When Eugene beats his pregnant wife to the point that she loses her baby, one would have thought that he would be remorseful and subsequently re-enact his masculine identity. Rather, Eugene calls on his children to pray for the forgiveness of their mother as though she caused her own misfortune. He was simply impenitent.

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Despite the rebellion shown by Jaja after Nsukka, Eugene does not re-strategize. He fails to notice the impatience that grew inside of his children at his usual military orders. He considers himself as untouchable – someone young Jaja cannot outsmart. Clearly, he has no intentions of revising his strategies. He is bent on remaining 'the standard'.

Rackley (2015) argues that Adichie endorses the argument that cultural hybridity is the route to progress, considering the rigidity in Eugene's behaviour as a typical colonial product. She further argues that Adichie calls for an 'in-between' reality of the remnants of western colonial practices and traditional Igbo culture in order for positive change to occur. Granted the potential in Rackley's arguments in terms of how Christianity verses traditional Igbo religion become a microcosm of colonizer and the colonized binary, male-female dichotomy and dominant-subservient relationships; exposing oppression in the Achike household, I argue that Adichie rather appears to ridicule the contradiction in Eugene's character and stresses the fact that acceptable masculinity is shaped by issues of spatiality and balances.

We find that, unlike Jaja, who undergoes transformation due to the Nsukka experience, which is participatory, democratic and polyphonic, Eugene remains unbent because he is confined to the seriousness in Enugu, which is characterized by authoritarianism – his lone voice. Adichie appears to suggest that for a state or a country to become a nation, that nation must be multi-voiced, it must allow for diverse views; doing away with the dominant/subversive discourses. Therefore, it is not so much the case of calling for a hybrid culture as

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the route to progress but rather drawing our attention to move from a monologic space to a dialogic space where multiple opinions are tolerated in the bid for renewal. Whilst Rackley considers cultural hybridity as a characteristic quality of Africa's future, my work looks at the potential in polyphony as a necessity for Africa's future. It is important to recognize that, in Enugu there is only one voice, that of Eugene, the authoritarian voice which seems to be in control and therefore, there is no room for change. Nsukka is polyphonic; it is multi-voiced and it is participatory and therefore issues of class distinctions and authoritarianism diminish in the face of consolidated efforts. Thus, Eugene's death means that 'the standard' exemplified in his masculine identity is a failed heritage.

Enugu and Nsukka Juxtaposed: Of Spaces and Boundaries of Reformation

Hitherto, the concept of space was usually subsumed by its affiliate concept of time, indicating how the two connect and disconnect in talking about history and the anticipatory discourses. Sakamoto (2013) defines space as the internalization of how a place is the product of a relationship. In other words, space becomes the explanatory device through which we are able to understand and clarify the behaviours and attitudes of individuals. Moretti (2006) postulates that:

> Each space determines, or at least encourages its own kind of story' such that 'what happens depends a lot on where it happens (p. 70).

In other words, what Moretti claims is that the environment one finds oneself has an effect on what that individual does or can do and so we can pause to assess the ways in which Enugu and Nsukka become symbolic spatial categories with which we can understand the lived experiences of Eugene and Jaja. My interest in this section is to examine the symbolic function of Enugu and Nsukka as physical spaces. This is because Adichie uses these spaces to explore two forms of masculinities. Space is therefore ideologically charged in *Purple Hibiscus.*

In Enugu, life is regulated, attitudes and behaviours are prescribed to the extent that within the Achike household, Jaja and Kambili have everything spelt out for them in their daily schedules – time to bath, eat, read, play, time for conversations, TV and even time to sleep are all penciled down to ensure that they observe it religiously. The regimental lifestyle in the Achike household engineered a deep-rooted fear in Eugene's children. They have no voice; their anxieties and fears are all veiled in silence. They have to simply play by the rules, just so they do not incur the wrath of the 'Human-God'.

I argue that Enugu plays two symbolic functions: sacredness (Roman Catholic ideology/religious fanatism) and as a site for patriarchal repression (colonial civility). Part of Adichie's sophistication in the novel is that although she provides evidence of how patriarchy and Roman Catholicism operate as discrete forces of oppression, the emphasis on how both work together as imperial discourses is interesting. Life in Enugu is Catholic and Christian; Eugene ensures that his children observe all religious demands as the Catholic doctrines require.

In Enugu, anything traditional and African is pagan such that speaking in Igbo is a bad sign, singing Igbo songs is simply uncivilized and unChristian, relating with 'unChristian' family members call for purification. One would have thought that the emphasis on good Christian living – which Eugene is equated with, will be demonstrated in ways that truly reflect the core of Christianity. Quite interestingly, we find that despite the privileging of colonial Catholic Christianity, which supposedly believes in the sanctity of human life and freedom, the relationship between Eugene and his family is different. wa Thiongo and wa Muri's *'I Will Marry When I Want'* also exposes a similar neo-colonial ordeal – satirizing Christian Salvation through the ways in which the Kioi's dehumanize and exploit the downtrodden. Here again, we find that Christianity in Post-Independent Kenya and in our context, Nigeria, is portrayed as an exploitative agent that succeeds in disintegrating the African tradition. And so, Ahab Kioi like Eugene Achike becomes a violent patriarchal figure who seeks to further deplete the Gikuyu and Igbo cultures respectively.

Thus, Enugu is repressive, limiting, restraining and very intimidating. It is desolate and so, evidently, we recognize that Eugene's children are destabilized. They are not themselves in the least and more so that they are constantly threatened with physical abuse. Enugu is characterized by a pervasive air of oppression; there is no laughter and no happiness - the distress Jaja and Kambili suffered at the hands of their father became suffocating.

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It became so sickly that their silence assumed strangeness. It was no longer dopey and ordinary. As pointed out by Okuyade (2009), their silences had become furtive because it was characterized by hopes and dreams. In other words, their silences had become survival strategies within the 'Utilitarian calculus Eugene had created for their minds' (ibid). Enugu's symbolism as a site of precarious living transcends the Achike family. It is in fact a violent topography and this is marked by the abuses of the military.

> Soldiers were milling around. Market women were shouting and many had both hands placed on their heads, in the way that people do to show despair or shock. A woman lay in the dirt, wailing, rearing at her short afro. {…} As we hurried past, I saw a woman spit at a soldier, I saw the soldier raise a whip in the air before it landed on the woman's shoulders. {…} Another soldier was kicking down trays of fruits, squashing papayas with his boots and laughing (p. 52).

We find in Enugu a certain degree of intolerance and anarchy that had come to characterize the political landscape in post independent Nigeria. The violence between religious groups and the endemic corruption that had entrapped the state created an unstable atmosphere so that the common mass had to experience such brutality and pain. It is this political turbulence and the desire to have a new Nigeria that are revealed through the crisis in the Achike household.

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Enugu is a masculine space. It is dominated by rigid phallocentric principles of Papa Eugene. We find in Enugu a definite kind of gendered violence, exploitation and a mutilation of female agency. The attitudes of the military coupled with the rigid-arm leadership Eugene exercises over his household succeed in boosting female vulnerability so that in Enugu; the voices of the women are agonizingly muted. It is important to recognize that the nervousness that characterizes the daily lives of Beatrice and her daughter Kambili is as a result of the physical, emotional and mental torture they are subjected to on a daily basis.

Enugu is a place of duplicity. The rhetoric of democracy is what is affirmed in the real politics at home. Papa Eugene is admired as a hero because he fights for democracy. Yet, there is no democracy at home. Although Eugene's Christian doctrines emphasize the relevance of priesthood of the family as an essential democratic principle, he appears to have ignored the potential in the teachings. As it is recorded in Paul's epistle to Timothy, Paul teaches that:

It is a trustworthy statement: If any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. {...} He must be one who manages his household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity. But if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God? (1Tim.3:1-5 – NASB)

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Kivai (2010) makes a similar observation when he confirms the extent to which the family becomes a microcosm of the nation. He observes that:

Eugene represents the phallocentric state authority whereas his wife and children are symbolic of the dehumanized citizens. The state power represented by the soldiers who demolish vegetables stalls in the market is equivalent to Papa's authority in his household (p. 67).

Therefore, what Adichie may be suggesting is the fact that democracy begins at the level of the home. Without that, the quest for democracy at the national level will remain a mirage. She also appears to ridicule the decay and hypocrisy of Africa's political leadership, using the failed paternal role of Eugene Achike as framework.

Nsukka symbolizes a site of democratic rule. When Eugene reluctantly allows his children to observe the Easter festivities with Auntie Ifeoma, they encounter and experience new meanings of life. At the beginning, Jaja and Kambili lived in Nsukka as though they were still in Enugu because Eugene's intimidating presence followed them everywhere. Interestingly, the demography of Nsukka holds a promise for their ultimate freedom.

'We're entering the town of Nsukka', Kevin said few minutes later. 'We are at the university', he said finally. 'Good morning. Please how can we get to Marguerite Cartwright Avenue?' he asked. I turned to stare at the statue in the middle of the lawn, a black lion standing on its hind legs, tail curved upward, chest

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puffed out. I didn't realize Jaja was looking, too, until he read aloud the words inscribed on the pedestal: 'To restore the dignity of man'. It's the university's motto (pp. 119/20).

The symbol of the lion (as the king of the jungle) depicts strength, courage and pride. Indeed, the demography of Nsukka (particularly, the Marguerite Avenue) is one that restores human dignity. A place of repair, re-modelling and re-conditioning. We also find in the posture of the lion a guaranteed readiness of it entrants to bounce back to a life of meaning. Again, it is important to also recognize that the image of the university as a place of enlightenment predicts the fact that Eugene's children were going to be re-educated different from their father's. Life at Nsukka was pleasant, relieving and full of laughter but Jaja and Kambili looked ridiculous in a lot of ways. Nsukka came to them as vague, secular, no restrictions – 'the anything-goes' type of environment and so while Ifeoma's children saw Jaja and Kambili as weird and unsociable, they(Jaja and Kambili) also saw them (Amaka, Obiora and Chima) as abnormal. Jaja and Kambili observed how their Auntie Ifeoma took care of her children; without a schedule and no physical threats, Amaka, Obiora and Chima lived their lives normally. The atmosphere in their home is almost always peaceful with laughter all over; a moment unlikely to occur in the Achike household. Jaja and Kambili also observe that although Aunty Ifeoma and her children are also Catholic Christians, they do sing Igbo songs, they associate with Papa Nnukwu very freely and witness pagan festivities as it were and yet they are not condemned. It is

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democratic; a renewed democracy better practicised than those who profess to be freedom fighters.

Indeed, it was difficult for Eugene's children to assimilate these new ways of living, but they began to appreciate rather slowly the freedom that came with Nsukka. The symbolic significance of Nsukka (as a physical space) lies in the fact that it took off the shadows of fear and eventually broke the silence. Jaja's audacity is gradually consolidated through his association with Ifeoma and her children:

> Jaja's defiance seemed to me now like Aunty Ifeoma's experimental purple hibiscus: are, fragrant with the undertones of freedom, a different kind of freedom from the one the crowds waving green leaves chanted at Government Square after the coup
>
> A freedom to be, to do (p.16).

Jaja's defiance is indeed different. It has been shaped by an intense desire to resist the coldness in Enugu – he is therefore unable to bring himself to conform to the Enugu lifestyle. It had become really fusty and getting out of it required rare audacity. In Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born,* for instance, we find that part of the problem with the Man and the teacher is that they strive to resist their environment which is fraught with decadence and corruption and so they become anonymous individuals. It is also because they cease to be determined by the environment in which they find themselves. And so the possibility of the beautiful ones that are yet to be born are those who will be able to resist the decadence in the environment. And so Jaja, like the Man in

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Armah's *The Beautyful Ones Are Not Yet Born,* remains symbolic in terms of the desire for renewal and change.
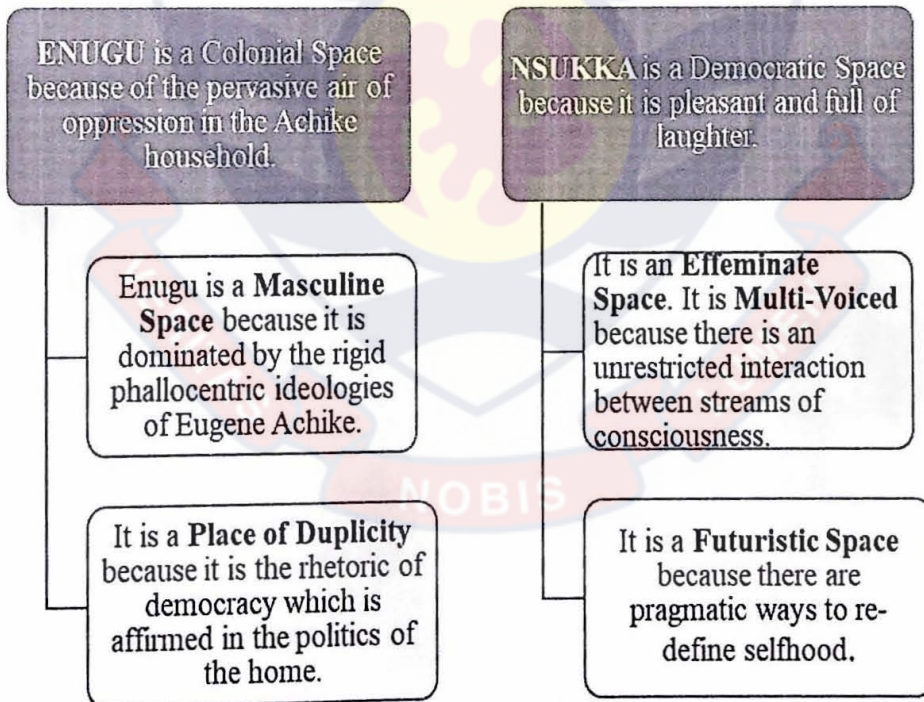
Nsukka provokes futuristic tendencies because of the carnivalesque tendencies that Jaja brings home. The carnivalesque as a literary discourse is espoused by Bakhtin (1984). It is concerned with the liberation of human beings and it breaks apart oppressive and moldy forms of thought and clears the path for the imagination and the never-ending project of emancipation. The popular tradition of carnival is believed by Bakhtin to carry a particular wisdom which can be traced back to the ancient world. For Bakhtin, carnival and carnivalesque create an alternative social space, characterized by freedom, equality and abundance (Robinson, 2009). Bakhtin's theory of the carnival provides the basis upon which we appreciate the fragrance in Jaja's defiance. Faulker (1999), as cited in Arko (2012), points out that:

> The carnival was the reaction of the underprivileged against the life of the elite which to the medieval people meant fear, humiliation and that the function of the Carnival is to uncover, undermine, even to destroy the hegemony of any ideology that seeks to have a final word about the world, and also to renew, to shed light upon life and the meanings it habours (p.248).

In other words, the notion of the carnival is simply an escape from a usual way of life and the fact that it is multi-voiced. Bahktin associates the notion of the carnival with laughter and posits that laughter has the potential of demolishing authoritarianism, while facilitating renewal and change. Thus, when we come to

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Enugu, which is dominated by a monologic voice – the voice of the father (Eugene), we require the carnival organized on the basis of laughter (p.7) to break that kind of hegemony. No wonder Nsukka had no class distinctions, no authoritarian rules, it was polyphonic – everybody in Nsukka was free to share an opinion, it was full of laughter. Jaja begins to better understand himself (as a man) and the world in Nsukka because it is a less serious environment with no room for religious dogmatism, and so coming back to Enugu meant resisting the environment. Thus, Nsukka as a carnivalesque space symbolizes becoming, renewal and change.

The diagram below provides a graphic summary of the spatial configurations in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*.

ENUGU is a Colonial Space because of the pervasive air of oppression in the Achike household.

NSUKKA is a Democratic Space because it is pleasant and full of laughter.

Enugu is a **Masculine Space** because it is dominated by the rigid phallocentric ideologies of Eugene Achike.

It is an **Effeminate Space**. It is **Multi-Voiced** because there is an unrestricted interaction between streams of consciousness.

It is a **Place of Duplicity** because it is the rhetoric of democracy which is affirmed in the politics of the home.

It is a **Futuristic Space** because there are pragmatic ways to re-define selfhood.

Two forms of masculinities emerge from the spatial configurations in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. Enugu is characteristic of orthodox hegemonic masculinity. The rigidity in Eugene's behaviour is because he is determined on defining himself along a certain bridging of Eurocentricism and Catholicism. So that the doxic beliefs of the two (Eurocentricism and Catholicism) largely constitute his definitions for acceptable maleness. No wonder he dissociates himself from his father (because he refuses to denounce his Igbo tradition and beliefs), refuses to support Aunty Ifeoma and the family because Ifediora (Aunty Ifeoma's husband) rejects his (Eugene) conditional assistance and expects a strict obedience from his son, Jaja. Jaja is therefore nothing less than a 'perfect' derivative of a gentleman. Eugene's violent approach in handling the affairs of his family - the physical and emotional torture he subjects them to are all informed by his masculine ideals.

Arguably, Papa Nnukwu is also part of the hegemonic apparatus in Enugu. But for Eugene's rejection and maltreatment, Papa Nnukwu does not believe in the ability of the woman. He has always thought that a woman does not matter and also that a woman is incapable of anything beyond regular traditional expectations. In a conversation with Aunty Ifeoma, trying to ascertain the real reason behind Eugene's apparent abandonment of him, he says:

> My son owns that house that can fit in everyman in Abba, and yet
>
> many times I have nothing to put on my plate. I should not have let
>
> him follow those missionaries.

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'Nna anyi', Aunty Ifeoma said. 'It was not the missionaries. Did I not go to the missionary school too?'

'But you are a woman. You do not count'

Eh! If I do not count then I will stop asking if you rose well in the morning

I joke with you nwa m. where would I be today, if my chi had not given me a daughter? (p. 91).

We find that Papa Nnukwu's fundamental beliefs about strict gender roles are gradually dismantled due to the significant role played by Aunty Ifeoma. Enugu breeds a certain patriarchal consciousness that seems to discredit the contributions of women in the society. Adichie appears to ridicule such patriarchal narratives by proposing a corrective through the 'fatherly' role played by Aunty Ifeoma – stressing the potential of the female factor as an essential in the discourses of progress.

Nsukka is characteristic of heterodox masculinity. In other words, in Nsukka, we find in the male characters a preferred balance of tradition and modernity (including Catholic Christian values). The flexible nature of masculine performances, which is exemplified in the character of Father Amadi, absorbs Jaja's tyrannical masculine behaviour so that he comes to appreciate the potential in this conscious flexible performance. It is important to recognize that although the form of masculinity that emerges from Nsukka is not rigid and domineering; it has a certain audacious quality that insists on stylized gender performances.

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While Eugene Achike is representative of stagnation in the disillusioned postcolonial state, Father Amadi is an embodiment of the hope of Africa. He is always full of laughter. He is no fan of dogmatism – there were no barriers of appropriateness as far as the worship life of the people is concerned. Father Amadi is a unifier. His presence in the life of Kambili and Jaja translated their strange silences into remarkable self-discoveries; they felt safer and more secure with him because his model of paternal authority was inclusive. He is part of the liberating apparatus in Nsukka– his tolerable nature rescues Kambili and Jaja from their programmed lifestyle and carefully restores them to the life they deserved.

Father Amadi is Adichie's revelation of the new man and the imagined future of Nigeria as a postcolonial state. He is a perfect derivative of Adichie's definition of postcolonial identity– the model of religious piety, democratic leadership and acceptable maleness. In *Fatherhood and Fatherlands in Chimamanda Adichie's Purple Hibiscus*, Peters (2010) contends that Father Amadi's legacy as representative of Africa's future is futile and destined to remain unfulfilled since he will remain fruitless (without an offspring) as a celibate. She further argues that Father Amadi fails just like Eugene because rather than staying in Nigeria to protect the fortunes of the future nation, he returns to the land of the colonizers about the same time as Eugene died. While it may have been beneficial to Father Amadi to have been fruitful (bearing children) by way of consolidating his gains – ensuring continuity as far as the future nation is concerned, it is crucial to recognize that Father Amadi does not represent

reproductive futurity. He is representative of unification and democratization which is why Jaja and Kambili no longer remain passive coming into contact with him. Indeed, Eugene fails because he is unsuccessful in his bid to forever colonize his children's reality until he dies; leaving him with no room for reformation – an indication that individuality and fanaticism can be monstrous and deadly. On the other hand, Father Amadi's return to Germany does not in any way suspend the progress he had made with Jaja and Kambili. He had succeeded in resuscitating the colonized lives of Jaja and Kambili and modeling them into perfect alternatives. In other words, Kambili and Jaja become his disciples in an event he never returns. Therefore, whether he returns to Nigeria or not, the foundation he lays for the future nation is secured.

Reading Postcolonial Maleness: Of Names, Discourses and Audacity

While feminist and postcolonial studies continue to show concern in terms of the production of new and more empowering forms of representations for the oppressed Third World woman, Kabesh (2013) contends that postcolonial masculinities also avoids 'the constant reinforcement of divisions and stereotypes created by the process of 'othering' and the problematic discourse of clash of civilizations'(p.7). In other words, postcolonial masculinities do not only examine how postcolonial maleness is shaped by the colonial history but also by the dissonances in the cultural meanings associated with maleness. And so, postcolonial maleness is simply not defined in opposition to that of the West.

We find in Adichie's novel a calculated attempt at revealing the dominant discourses that remain symptomatic of postcolonial maleness when we pause to assess the charactonym of 'Jaja'. Names play a very significant role in literary interpretations. As referents, names do not simply serve as identification for characters; they also serve as important semantic and allusive symbols in literary productions. Although Nicolaisen (2008) argues that the central focus of onomastics remains intra textual, Jaja's charactonym transcends the boundaries of Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* to include the ideological considerations that have become characteristic of the slave trade. We are made to appreciate the pragmatic quality of Jaja's name when Aunty Ifeoma explains the history behind his name. She reveals that:

> When he was a baby, all he could say was Jaja. So everybody called him Jaja'. Aunty Ifeoma said. She turned to Jaja and added, 'I told your mother that it was an appropriate nickname that you would take after Jaja of Opobo'
>
> 'Jaja of Opobo? The Stubborn King? Obiora asked. 'Defiant', Aunty Ifeoma said. 'He was a defiant king'. 'He was king of Opobo people', Aunty Ifeoma said, 'and when the British came, he refused to let them control all the trade. He did not sell his soul for a bit of gunpowder like the other kings did, so the British exiled him to the West Indies. He never returned to Opobo (p.144).

The story of Jaja Opobo, as Aunty Ifeoma tells us, helps us to appreciate Jaja's character. His defiance is no coincidence. It was expected because Aunty Ifeoma was hopeful he would be so knowing her colonial product of a brother and the African's belief in naming. And so she foreshadows the eventual outcome of the story which in many respects bothers on the choice of proper naming as an allusion. Jaja's name reveals two important discourses: the historical and modern discourse.

The historical allusion to the slave trade proffers issues of complicity and difference. Horne (2010) argues that the African male's collaboration with the White exploiters of the African people is a sign of political failure. Isolating Kofi Ako in Ama Ata Aidoo's *Anowa*, she suggests that the African male becomes defined by the benefits he derived from his alliance with the slavers since Kofi Ako eventually becomes an 'Obirempong' after his association with the White exploiters. While Adichie invites our attention to moments of complicity in what had become a colonial system, she however delineates the eagerness to preserve the future generation, as the story of Jaja Opobo illustrates. She appears to suggest that the African male can be self –dependent if he dissolves western exploitative tendencies that cloud his true identity.

Alpern (1995) as cited in Otu (2017), corroborates the idea that 'Eugene is in a way reminiscent of the Cross–Atlantic slave merchants who used mirrors, dry gin and other such petty materials to lure ignorant and greedy Africans into selling their fellow Africans into slavery'(2). Just like white slave traders who used petty material gifts to deceive Africans, especially kings and chiefs who

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were simply moved by the seeming benevolence of these Westerners, sold their people into slavery, Eugene equally uses material gifts as bait to draw his people into cultural, religious and intellectual slavery. As Aunty Ifeoma remarks:

> Have you forgotten that Eugene offered to buy me a car even before Ifediora died? But first he wanted us to join the Knights of St. John. He wanted us to send Amaka to a convent school (p. 95).

Contrasting Eugene, who becomes complicit in betraying the African identity, with Jaja Opobo, we find Jaja Opobo's refusal to sell his soul for a bit of gunpowder in something that had become usual of the slave trade; a cruel demand to betray his very own people as a mark of difference. Becoming 'other' than the usual and therefore, his decision to be different signals his desire to preserve the hope of the new generation.

Likewise, Jaja (Chukuma Achike) is no longer willing to succumb to his father's fundamentalist checks; he gradually becomes intolerable of the serious, regimental and abusive lifestyle in Enugu. Like Jaja Opobo, Chukwuma prefers to die than to suffocate in silence. His audacity is strange.

> Jaja, you did not go for communion. Papa said quietly, almost a question. Jaja stared at the missal on the table as though he were addressing it. 'The wafer gives me bad breath'. I stared at Jaja. Had something gone loose in his head? Papa insisted that we call it the host because 'host' came close to capturing the essence of the sacredness of Christ's body. 'Wafer' was too secular. 'And the priest keeps touching my mouth and it nauseates me', Jaja said. '…

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It is the body of our Lord', Papa's voice was low, very low…'you cannot stop receiving the body of our Lord. It is death. You know that'. 'Then I will die, fear had darkened Jaja's eyes to the colour of coal tar, but he looked Papa in the face now. 'Then I will die, Papa (p. 67).

The courage to talk back at his father, who was the symbolic patriarchal power and the audacity to choose death is worth our attention. Choosing to die meant choosing to break away from the fear of Papa's myth and consequently, deciding to be himself (Nwasu, 2014). He could no longer play along. His insistence on seeing what was considered as sacred to be ordinary and secular neutralizes Papa's authority which was premised on the idea of Puritanism. His attitude was absolute blasphemy. Adichie appears to suggest that postcolonial maleness is defined by the audacity to break gods; demolishing patriarchal colonial influxes and staging a defense against precarious ideologies that threaten freedom. It is characterized by the desire to speak with the Spirits; lifting the silence and the boldness to distort the 'official' discourse.

Conclusion

What this chapter has sought to do is to assess Adichie's construction of the African male through a re-examination of the male characters in her novel. I have paid attention to the ways in which the male characters enact and re-enact their masculine identities in relation to spatial dynamics.

I have demonstrated that Enugu and Nsukka as two worlds divulge issues of stagnation and progress respectively. In that, while Jaja is privileged to have a feel of both worlds, he is able to better enact his masculine identity despite any threats. His transformative potential is provoked by Bakhtin's notion of the Carnival which stresses the need for dialogism rather than monologism which was the case in Enugu. The notion of the Carnivalesque also helps to appreciate the ways in which progress may come to Africa in terms of its potential to demolish religious and cultural dogmatism. Adichie argues that a nation becomes a nation when it is multi-voiced –a peculiar way of re-imaging Africa. I have also demonstrated among other things Adichie's attempt at defining postcolonial maleness by paying attention to the historical allusion in the proper name, 'Jaja'. She appears to suggest that the core of postcolonial maleness is not simply an attempt to negate Western perception of the African male. Rather, she argues that postcolonial maleness is characterized by the audacity in breaking gods – putting up a strange defense against what has become constitutive of acceptable postcolonial masculinity. In other words, the new postcolonial nation as we envisage, must go beyond binary categories; specifically, there must be collectivity and belongingness such that gendered spaces (masculine and feminine) will be bridged by feelings of community expressed through the absence of dominant – subordinate relationships, racial segregation and a muting of neo-colonial infiltrations. What this means is that our visions of the new postcolonial nation is one that defies dualistic paradigms of masculine-feminine as parallel gendered spaces.

The chapter was sub-divided into four parts; the first part looked at Eugene and the crisis of identity, the second and third sections looked at issues of spatiality and how it influences behaviour; drawing attention to Bakhtin's theory of the Carnival and how the writer attempt a definition of postcolonial maleness through the dominant discourses the proper name, 'Jaja' proffers. The fourth and final section summarizes the major arguments in the chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE MAKING OF THE NEW MAN IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN

FICTION: A READING OF J.M. COETZEE'S *DISGRACE*

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have shown how Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* exemplifies the traits of the new man juxtaposing Eugene Achike and Jaja Achike (Father and Son). I have also foregrounded the significance of the carnival laughter as a means of demolishing authoritarianism (breaking gods), symbolizing the end of the old order. Adichie also emphasizes audacity as a quality of postcolonial maleness. In this chapter, I demonstrate how Coetzee's *Disgrace* contributes to the discourse on emerging masculinities taking into consideration the history of South Africa. Of crucial essence as far as the concerns of this chapter are concerned is the re-examination of the characters of David Lurie, the protagonist, and Petrus, the black peasant. While several scholars continue to make interesting observations regarding the life of the main character, David Lurie, how he has no relationship of depth with men (Kochin, 2002), how he represents the threatened Whites in South Africa (Du Pisani, 2001), and how he provokes issues of sexual minorities and male dominance (Graham, 2003), my examination of Lurie and Petrus' character roles will accentuate Coetzee's vision of the new man and how this vision corroborates his attempt at healing the binaristic tensions in post-apartheid South Africa.

Disgrace (1999) is a story about a 52- year old white professor of English at the University of Cape Town, David Lurie; a divorcee (having married twice) with a daughter, Lucy. Lurie has not had such a good relationship with women. After feeling dejected and disappointed by Soraya (a Muslim prostitute), he still goes about thinking that he owns women's beauty and so made it a point to lure Melanie (one of his students) into his bed. Melanie succeeds in bringing out the young and the vulnerable side of Lurie. While he is lost in excitement, the affair with Melanie leads to David Lurie's expulsion from the university since he had blatantly refused to succumb to the demands of the investigating committee that was responsible for investigating the complaint brought against him by Melanie. His expulsion from the university compels him to move to his daughter in the Eastern Cape. There, he is witness to a brutal scene in which he is severely burned, while his daughter is raped by three black men. David is shocked when he finds out his daughter was raped, but Lucy remains calm: she does not want to confess to the police. Throughout the story David and Lucy continue to argue about the violence in South Africa. Lucy however remains silent and does not want to talk to her father about this. In search of a cure, David decides to work in an animal clinic. There, he meets Bev Shaw with whom he discusses Lucy's situation and with whom he decides to have sex again. In the end, David reaches a feeling of absolution, because his care for the dogs takes his thoughts away from his daughter.

The chapter is structured into three main parts. The first part is under the sub-theme, 'Post Apartheid Writings and *Disgrace*'. Here, I examine the transformative potential of post-apartheid writings in general and *Disgrace* in particular. The second section, which is themed, 'White Men, Black Men; Coetzee's *Disgrace* and the making of the New Man, I examine Coetzee's propositions on the characteristics of the 'new African' using Frantz Fanon's concept of the new man. While the third section discusses how spatial dynamics become significant in the transformation project of Africa, under the title, 'This Place called South Africa: Spaces of Shame and Pride, the fourth and final section examines how hope is located in masculine reformations under the sub-theme; 'Refiguring Hope and Desire: Masculinities in Transition'.

Post-apartheid writings and *Disgrace*

South Africa in the late 1990's, after the abolition of the apartheid regime and after the first democratic elections was boiling with a supposed optimism, which sought to make stable the disorder, segregation and alienation and by so doing uncovering the content of the new South Africa. The new South Africa, celebrated as the 'rainbow nation' ordinarily suggests a cohesion between used-to-be racial categories, gendered subjects and cultural and religious units. Indeed, there was a move towards community. Nonetheless, writings within the post-apartheid era proffer bifocal perspectives. While Crous (2005) observes changes in the gendered ordering of society and how new ideals of human dignity are achieved, how the past plays a role in shaping the present as the concern of black

South African writers, Attwell and Harlow (2000) acknowledge exorcising the present of its enduring trauma as the concerns of white South African writers. While these positions stand, Pechey (1998) contends that post-apartheid writings ought to:

> Tell stories which open out to transform the victory over apartheid into a gain for postmodern knowledge, a new symbiosis of the sacred and the profane, the quotidian and the numinous (P.58).

J. M. Coetzee re-examines intimate historical issues and how they signal an impulse for newness. *Disgrace* is set in post-apartheid South Africa. The novel engages with a number of issues, including the effects of colonization and the deforming impacts of apartheid. The novel exposes the racial oppression of blacks in South Africa, the implications of place and land ownership as well as highlighting the themes of power and otherness in South Africa. Although some critics consider *Disgrace* unenthusiastic about the new South Africa, (Kok, 2008; Opheim, 2016), in terms of how the narrative appears to favour the plights of the Whites in South Africa, Coetzee's novel opens up possibilities rather than closing down the discussions. As we may find in the inversion of Lurie and Petrus, Coetzee does not present an oblique picture of the new South Africa. What he does is to stir up the options available for restoring human dignity.

Quite a lot of critics have looked at Coetzee's *Disgrace* from several intellectual perspectives. Karworska (2013), for instance, looks at the textual strategies Coetzee employs in signaling the essence of place. She argues that the allegorical orientations of place in Coetzee's fiction are representative of a large

idea or as a universal construct capable of carrying the echoes of colonial and post-colonial socio-political circumstances (p.4). Graham (2003) on the other hand interrogates the volatile nature of the subject of rape in Coetzee's *Disgrace*.

She argues that the novel performs a subversion of 'Black Peril' and suggests that such presentations potentially play on White paranoia and obscures the fact that most rape cases in South Africa are interracial. In *Age of Bronze, State of Grace: Music and Dogs in Coetzee's Novels*, Attridge (2000) claims that Coetzee presents a bleak image of the 'new' South Africa although he admits the fact that the novel deals with the relationship between racially defined groups. He however contends that the altered worlds Coetzee presents ushers in new ages – from a dangerous age to puritanical times to an age of painful awakening. Even though the bulk of these debates find connections with the current project, my focus in this chapter will be to explore the masculine representations in Coetzee's *Disgrace* paying particular attention to how the idea of the 'new' man is configured through the dynamics of space and how they compel a futuristic impulse. It also looks at how hope and desire are reconfigured through interpersonal relationships and how they usher in the anticipated social cohesion in post –apartheid South Africa.

White men, Black Men: Coetzee's *Disgrace* and the making of the New Man

The concept of the 'new man' is at the heart of Frantz Fanon's vision of the future of independent nations (Lazreg, 2007). Fanon (2002) argues that Africa's contact with the West during the colonial era brewed a certain kind of falsehood as far as issues of identity are concerned.

He further argues that the black man was forced to disown his heritage and violently coerced into accepting a different kind of reality so that there is a certain degree of pathological betrayal of blackness. In other words, Africa's contact with the West placed an ideological hold on the mindset of the black man and therefore the black man is reluctantly immersed in European consciousness – 'selfishness, recriminations born with conceit and the infantile silliness of always wanting to have the last word' (Fanon, 2002:48 as cited in Lazreg, 2007:19) as opposed to the communal and pluralism in pre-colonial civilization.

Consequently, Fanon suggests that in order to re-assert the dignity of the black identity, there ought to be born the 'new man' – a process that requires what he refers to as 'pacification', a kind of decolonization and mental cleansing. In other words, the 'new man' must break loose from the ideological hold of western influence and move toward feelings of community, taking responsibility for the shame associated with the African identity and radically de-affirming the superiority of whiteness. Thus, according to Fanon:

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The 'new man' can only emerge out of a consciousness that has been able to demystify the colonial ideology of obfuscation that hides before eternal essences (p. 49).

Simply, the 'new man' must be defined by a new consciousness – a consciousness that rejects and abandons the restricted meanings associated with black identity. A consciousness that is 'actionnel'-agentic, radical and productive. In other words, the 'new man' must show tough resistance to all forms of ideologies that are imperialistic and prejudiced. In the world of Coetzee's *Disgrace*, we recognize the potential of a new beginning through black resistance and the racial transformations when we juxtapose Petrus and David Lurie as important male figures.

David Lurie earns his living at the Cape Town University College as a Professor in Modern Languages and Communications. He is a two-time divorcee with a daughter. Fifty-two-year-old David Lurie appears to have solved the problem of sex rather well. In the opening scenes of the novel, we are introduced to David Lurie as:

For a man of his age, fifty-two, divorced, he has, to his mind solved the problem of sex rather well. On Thursday afternoons, he drives to Green Point punctually at two pm. He presses the buzzer at the entrance to Windsor Mansions, speaks his name, and enters. Waiting for him at the door of No. 113 is Soraya…. He strokes her honey brown body, unmarked by the sun; he stretches her out, kisses her breasts; they make love' (p. 1).

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David Lurie is a reckless man. For a two-time divorcee, Lurie is not in the least circumspect about his relationships. He has always found it easy to seduce women and as he ages, he loses this quality more and more and he refuses to realize this. He takes refuge in his poetic lines and assumes he is still on top of his game. Soraya, a Muslim prostitute, is just one of his conquests.

David Lurie is portrayed as self-absorbed in his dealings with others. Indeed, it is in his nature to reduce women to nothing especially the ones he considers super-inferior. To think that he considers ninety minutes a week of a woman's company better enough to make him happier than to need a wife, a home and/or a marriage is enough to tell how complacent and imprudent he is in emotions. He seems in control of his own life; having the liberty to have illicit affairs with whomever he chooses. He has become a womanizer and he exists 'in an axioms flurry of promiscuity' (p.7). He engages in sexual relationships with the wives of his colleagues. Dawn, the secretary at his Department, Soraya and his two unsuccessful marriages are examples. He cannot bring himself to retire from such games; he finds fulfillment in these. The thought of doing away with women comes to him 'like an animal on a local anesthetic' (p.11). It may make him feel as though he has ceased to exist if he entertains such ideas.

After the incident at St George's Street and the subsequent walk away of Soraya from their illicit affair, he begins to feel threatened. He has such a hard time accepting that Soraya does not want to see him anymore.

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For a man who believes that a woman's beauty does not belong to
her alone. It is part of the bounty she brings into the world. She has
a duty to share it (p. 16).

David Lurie's white traditional masculine orientation teaches him to
assume that women exist for man's pleasure. In the above extract, he is
immediately characterized as a man who believes that he has the right to possess
women's bodies without responsibility towards them or respect for their lives. He
asserts his individual sexuality over and above the mutual love that needs to exist
between a man and a woman. No wonder he is bent on usurping Melanie's body;
his sexual orientation is linked to a sense of authority and entitlements. This
prejudice is what later prevents him from reasoning with the Committee of
Inquiry because he sees his actions as defensible. Lurie becomes intoxicated with
Melanie, wanting to over-power her with all his fixated strength.

His affair with Melanie takes a different turn. It is important to
acknowledge that the notoriety in Lurie's behaviour divulges racial issues that are
worth our attention. Appearing before the Committee of Inquiry, David Lurie
seems to be contesting the new state's ideology. Lurie is accused of having a
sexual relationship with his student and he is called to appear before a committee
of inquiry to plead his case. At this point, he does not even want to read the
statement brought against him by Melanie and he refuses a compromise and a
public apology. As a white South African male, Lurie sees the demands of the
committee as preposterous possibly because they want him to confess to

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something he really does not consider as out of place. His obstinate attitude also finds meaning in the fact that he thinks he owns Melanie not just as a woman but as a person belonging to a minority group; a person whose abuse is 'legitimate' and therefore, showing remorse or demonstrating the sincerity of his statement means overturning the status quo. The history of exploitation that clouded the apartheid era, where white South African men in particular constructed their masculinities in relation to the ways that they perceived women and men of colour (Epstein, 1998), made men beneficiaries of sexism and therefore David Lurie's uncompromising attitude at the hearing as juxtaposed to the public hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) reveals the limited attitudinal change of many white South Africans who continue to think that the apartheid past was not unjust. And so the committee's insistence on a public apology comes to Lurie as inherently problematic. The ambivalence in Lurie's submissions suggests that although he agrees to have defied his ethical responsibility towards Ms. Isaacs, he sees the core of the hearing as some kind of a witch-hunt to discredit him since he claims to have been used as a scapegoat and also that he is a person disliked by the chair of his department. He simply sees the hearing as discriminatory.

Indeed, the coincidence between Lurie's hearing and the Rape Awareness Campaign, which is intended to flush out the Casanovas in the university, is significant. It is a move used by the writer to deliberately stress the desire to cure and heal South Africa of the endemic violence that has engulfed it. Again, the committee's demand for Lurie to make a public statement, even though he

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refuses, corroborates the extent to which the desire for a new South Africa becomes evident. The committee's demand for a public statement means an open declaration of remorse, a repentant gesture and a move for reformation.

This move of reformation as is embedded in the public declaration constitutes a promise to do things anew and a desire to work out a compromise. But, Lurie's refusal to accept the committee's demand is not simply because he is not regretful; it is because he sees the proceedings as witch-hunt. Be that as it may, we realize that at any rate, he is prepared for a reasonable compromise suggesting his desire to alter his existing world. In a conversation with Lucy, Lurie's daughter:

'Rose said the atmosphere was nasty',

I brought it upon myself. I was offered a compromise, which I wouldn't accept'.

'What kind of compromise',

'Re-education. Reformation of the character. The code word was *counseling*.'

'And are you so perfect that you can't do with a little counseling'

'It reminds me too much of Mao's China. Recantation, self-criticism, public apology. I'm old-fashioned, I would prefer simply to be put against a wall and shot. Have done with it'.

'So, you stood your grounds and they stood theirs. Is that how it was'

'More or Less' (p. 66).

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Lurie finds the position of the committee very ridiculous. This is because sexual violence against black women was a regular crime. It wasn't anything untold that should warrant any kind of punishment. It is important to recognize that the historical allusion to Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution in China in the 1960's shows his unwillingness to denounce his faith in the apartheid system which favoured him as a White South African male. He prefers to die than to revise his old ideological values and denouncing his privileges. It is evident that Lurie is a hangover from the past.

Lucy's question: 'And are you so perfect that you can't do with a little counseling' becomes crucial. Would Lurie have been less a man or less white if he accepted the compromise? It is important to recognize that the endemic nature of segregation (expressed through binaries; black/white, master/slave, male/female) has restricted any willingness for change. And therefore, accepting the compromise means disrupting his self-identity. But his mind has become 'a refuge for old thoughts, idle, indigent with nowhere else to go' (p.72). Lurie sees the bit of public apology as hypocritical and self-deception because he intimately believes in the foundations of his superior identity. For him his actions are justified and therefore there is no need to settle for a compromise. He still wants to hold on to the foundations of his authority. He is determined on being 'bad' and even 'dangerous'. He is not prepared to change. His masculinity finds superiority in the privileges the apartheid system offers the white men in South Africa and he will not redefine his masculine identity despite the move to democratic rule.

David Lurie is an orthodox male. His beliefs, attitudes and traits find meaning in the dynamics of the apartheid system which is why he considers himself better than anyone. Several attempts at persuading Lurie to re-think his masculine identity are frustrated by his own insistence on remaining 'superior'. Like Adichie, Coetzee also plays on the relationship between space and masculine transformations. Lurie's change in location, dethrones him from a superior position to a shameful one.

He reconsiders his masculine ideologies rather too late and so the opportunity of becoming a better person is scrapped by his stubborn arrogance as white South African male. On the other hand, Petrus is a black peasant, a gardener and the 'dog-man on Lucy's Small Holding in the Eastern Cape. He has two wives; one in Adelaide and the other stays with him on the farm. He obviously has a liking for women because of how he carefully schemes to have Lucy, Lurie's daughter as his third wife:

> Ask him. I'm sure he will. He got a Land Affairs grant earlier this year, enough to buy a hectare and a bit from me. I didn't tell you. The boundary line goes through the dam. We share the dam. Everything from there to the fence is his. He has a cow that will calve in the spring. He has two wives, or a wife and a girlfriend. If he plays his cards right he could get a second grant to put up a house; then he can move out of the stable. By Eastern Cape standards, he is a man of substance (p.77).

In Lucy's estimation, Petrus is an accomplished man. Working with him as her dog-man and farm manager, she has come to appreciate his commitment to succeed. This is Petrus. He is 'the man' in his own circles and yet he wants to be something more -more of a privileged man just like the white South African males. He has a dislike for white supremacy; Petrus finds it distasteful to consider Lucy his benefactor and so despite his achievements as a black man, he cannot help but feel frustrated about this pathological phenomenon of inferiority complexes:

> Petrus chuckles, 'No, it is a skill job, building, he says, 'bricklaying, plastering, all that, you need to be skill. No, I am going to dig the trenches. That I can do by myself. That is not such a skill job. That is just a job for a boy. For digging you just have to be a boy (p. 112).

Considering himself a 'boy' reveals his lack of self-confidence, inferiority complex and a feeling of frustration that continue to haunt him as a black South African male. The only means by which he can imagine himself becoming 'the real man' is to apply brute force and usurp the small holding of Lucy and subsequently become the farm manager. He masterminds the gang rape of Lucy and subsequently proposes to make her one of his wives. As Patton (2003) observes, the struggle against white supremacy by the blacks in South Africa is premised on the need for interracial linkages such as mixed marriages and so Petrus's real intentions are to dilute the phenomenon of idolizing white men and women and to assert for himself a new identity.

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Petrus is a chauvinist with a domineering personality. He considers women as second-class citizens who need to be directed lest they stray; a good reason 'for putting Lucy in her place' (p.129). His sense of masculinity is tied to the history of black resistance to white conquest and white dominance and so the success of the raid brings him some relief. He admits that 'No more dogs, I am not any more the dog- man' (p.129). He supposedly conquers his fears. He begins to entertain the possibility of being in charge. No more dogs, no more a boy but a farm manager, a 'real' man.

Petrus's masculine identity can be described as cacodox. He has stringent but erroneous opinions about what it means to be 'the man'. This is because, despite Lucy's praise of him as being an embodiment of respectable maleness as far as Eastern Cape standards are concerned, he feels a sense of limitation because of the racial dynamics in South Africa. He determines to consciously get into a more respectable domain of maleness; his association with the incursion on Lucy's small holding allows him to carve for himself some kind of a prestigious identity as a male. However, Petrus cannot be described as an orthodox male because of the dim segregation in South Africa. In the world of Coetzee's *Disgrace*, orthodoxy is tied to white supremacy and it appears an impossible achievement for Petrus. Nonetheless, Petrus achieves to an extent a degree of orthodoxy when he coerces Lucy into a mixed marriage. Their (Petrus and Lucy) union point to a new generation that stands the possibility of neutralizing the racial segregation in South Africa.

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'This place called South Africa': Spaces of Shame and Pride

The notions of place and space are often used interchangeably. They are often conflated and their agency can be referred to collectively as spatial processes. Spatial politics has become an important construct for critical consideration since it continues to be subsumed by its affiliate concept of time (Upstone, 2009). Key thinkers of spatiality (Foucault, 1986; Harvey, 1996; Soja, 1996; Lebefvre, 1991) have connected and disconnected the politics of space with temporality and historicity. For instance, Upstone (2009) claims that a re-assertion of spatiality requires temporality as a factor of equal significance. Spatial dynamics in contemporary times is not simply a re-inscription of history; it is also a means of exploring the anticipatory ideas that hitherto were opaque in matters relating to new times in the politics of Africa's future.

A new spatial dynamic in the context of this project means a redefinition of relationships in terms of how new forms of subjectivities and inter-subjectivities emerge in qualitatively improved spaces. This is because space in itself has inbuilt dynamics of oppression in terms of subordinate and super-ordinate relationships and so the production of space must be allowed to showcase itself (independent of time although essential) in terms of its varied properties. Our emphasis on space is limited to the physical spaces of Cape Town and the Eastern Cape as presented in the novel.

Cape Town plays two symbolic functions: Prejudice and as a site of patriarchal expression. The prejudiced politics of discrimination has become so pervasive that all forms of abuse including the abuse of women (especially black

women), forceful eviction of non-white citizens and ethnic and racial groups have become part of the embraced values of the people. Indeed, the core of the social values in Cape Town places men above women. Women are seen as the new 'other' with black women as a more hopeless category. Therefore, the abuse of women is no crime at all. That is why David Lurie sees the stance of the commission of inquiry as absurd and comical.

For Lurie, a woman's body does not belong to her alone (p.16) and so Melanie (his female student) has a responsibility of sharing this beauty. Thus, his affair with Melanie is 'justifiable' - he is merely taking what is rightfully his. He has the right of desire (p.89). This prejudiced racial history; the idea of ownership and superiority and the biased nature of the political climate in Cape Town deny Lurie the opportunity to recognize his imperfections as a white man. Again, part of Lurie's indifference towards the commission of inquiry is because issues of sex and rape are private matters. The usual nature of such gendered violence restricted any form of public retribution which is why the commission's demand for a public apology appears exaggerated to men like David Lurie. Lurie is unable to identify with this demand because it deviates from the 'accepted' practice. He shrugs:

These are puritanical times. Private life is public business.

Prurience is respectable, prurience and sentiments (p. 87).

Cape Town is symbolic of patriarchal repression. In Cape Town, we find that the abuse of women is almost a natural phenomenon – something permissible and so it is not surprising the cunning ways Lurie's male colleagues appear to

devalue the severity of the crime he commits. Their show of solidarity in his hearing simply suggests that there is nothing unusual about his (Lurie) behaviour (52). It is important to recognize that the concurrence of Lurie's hearing and the rape awareness campaign is significant in terms of calculated attempts at debasing such patriarchal definitions. When David Lurie moves to the Eastern Cape after his expulsion from the University, he appears to find the setting and the pre-occupation of the people who live there repressive. Starting with Petrus and the Shaws, Lurie has a difficult time accepting them as his daughter's friends. Because, like he has always wanted for Lucy, they are not capable of taking her to a higher life – a life worth living. He desires for her a life better than just farming and rearing dogs.

David's definition of a higher life is premised on his taste for sophistication; something out of the reach of the blacks because of the forced physical separation between the races in South Africa. When Lucy talks her father into accepting to work with Petrus and the Shaws', we find in his resistance a certain displeasure that is shaped by historical antecedents. For Lurie, offering to help with the dogs and the farm was absurd, a dubious reversal, it sounds like someone trying to make reparation for his or her past misdeeds (p.77).

In a conversion with Lucy, Lurie admits that:

> 'Alright I will do it'. 'But only as long as I don't have to become a better person'. 'I am not prepared to be reformed'. 'I want to go on being myself'. I'll do it on that basis … understood?

'So, you are determined to go on being bad. Mad, bad and dangerous to know? 'I promise, no one will ask you to change' (p.68).

Becoming a better person means being reformed, to change one's worldview. It means accepting to live according to the expectations of the new political dispensation in South Africa. He is not ready for a change. He still wants to live in the present as though he lived in the past. He is bent on being 'dangerous' and no one will compel him to reconsider. Before he could know it, his white orthodox masculine tendencies begin to give way for a more reformed masculine identity. It was a difficult, gradual, and a painful awakening. He begins working as Petrus's assistant – something he never envisaged. He becomes 'a boy' because he falls out of grace and while he is learning to re-adjust to his new life, Lucy is raped.

It is important to recognize why Lurie is particularly affected by Lucy's rape. He is not only affected because he is not able to go to her rescue when she obviously needed it, but his trauma finds meaning in Lucy's continued obstinate attitude not to bring her rapists to justice. Even though Lucy's position may seem weird in the context of the racial politics in South Africa, it is also important to recognize the negative results of publicizing rape as a framework of abuse. Notwithstanding these orientations, Lurie reads his daughter's position as unimaginable, unspeakable and for the most part torturing since it appears a way of abetting a historical crime as huge as violating a white woman's body. As

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Graham (2002) rightly observes, Lurie sees a history of wrong in Lucy's rapists but he is blind to the history of exploitation in his own behaviour. Coetzee's apparent reason for such depictions is not to rule out the operations of memory in looking forward, but what he seems to be doing is to ridicule the laws that permit black subjugation and advocating for equality of the races. Lurie is allowed to have a feel of what it means to be abused, a preparatory move to rethinking his perceptions of the blacks and a move to an inward reformation.

What Lurie wants to prevent is for Lucy to have a baby which will be regarded as inferior per the problems of mixed marriage in South Africa. In 1949, white South Africans could not marry blacks because it was banned under the Immorality Act. It became the first major piece of apartheid legislation. In 1950, there was a ban on mixed marriages and extra marital sexual relations between white and black South Africans. Sex between white and other ethnic groups was now a criminal offence and so the move by Petrus to marry Lucy further cripples Lurie psychologically. He cannot understand Petrus' audacity and the fact that Lucy is also not helping matters with her attitude. For him, it is criminal for Petrus to have planned the rape and at worse offering to marry her and also making her a second wife:

> Just an after-effect, he tells himself, an after-effect of the invasion.
> In a while, the organism will repair itself and the ghost within it
> will be my old self again. But the truth he knows is otherwise. His
> pleasure in living has been snuffed out like a leaf on a stream, like
> a puff balloon, a breeze; he has begun to float towards his end. He

sees it quite clearly and it fills him with (the word will not go away) despair (pp. 107-8).

The after-effect of the invasion overwhelms his reasoning. He tries very hard to deny his desire to make amends; he becomes a handlanger to Petrus (p.136), a mere assistant to a black peasant. He begins to feel an outsider – he no longer recognizes himself and subsequently begins to smell shame all around him. He becomes a dog-man, a dog-undertaker, a dog psycho pomp, a harijan (p.146). The comparison Coetzee sets between Lurie and the harijan reveals how insignificant Lurie has become. He has fallen from being a privileged white man to becoming a person of the lowest social and masculine status. He takes over as 'the boy'. The altered worlds that Coetzee presents through the characters of Petrus and Lucy are intimations of a better tomorrow in South Africa; an age where there is a reversal of historical and political facts through the very apparatuses that favoured them. A new spatial dynamic is also seen through the overturned spatial segregation and land dispossession expressed through the relationship between Petrus and Lucy.

The 1913 Land Act designated land on a racial basis and prohibited purchase or transitory of land rights by Africans outside of demarcated reserves (Hall, 2010). Twenty years after the end of apartheid, land ownership in South Africa is still skewed along racial lines; land policy formation continues to be shaped by racial patterns. De Moya (2004) observes, the black populace continues to remain marginalized in the distribution of lands and other natural resources.

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The question of ownership, taking into accounts the role played by this racial framework, has resulted in several land reforms including the three-pronged programme of land reform provided in South Africa's Constitution of 1996. As per this provision:

> A person or community disposed of property after 19 June, 1913 as a result of racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled to the extent provided by an Act of Parliament to restitution of that property or to equitable redress (RSA, 1996a, Section 25(7)).

Despite the controversies surrounding these reforms, Coetzee suggests a robust progress with land reforms and how it can contribute to stabilizing the political atmosphere in post-apartheid South Africa. In the world of Coetzee's *Disgrace*, we find that after the gang-rape of Lucy, she becomes mistrustful of the environment in which she lives even though she could count on her dog-man (Petrus). She realizes that Petrus's marriage proposal is just what she needs, taking into account her circumstances. It is not to say that she does not care about the discomfort it will cause her father, nor the extent to which her acceptance will compound the problems already associated with mixed marriages.

Rather, her need for protection in an environment which has become hostile compels her to ignore the painful humiliation in becoming a third wife to a black peasant. She readily acknowledges this hard truth. She says:

> Yes, I agree it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start at ground level. With nothing. Not with nothing but with

nothing. No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity… Yes, like the dog (p. 205).

Lucy's humiliating acceptance of Petrus's proposal finds meaning in her desire to unite and bond with the peasants to form a new community. Her willingness to give up her lands and the desire to become a 'by owner' and a tenant on her very own lands are indicative of the desire for a new beginning. Rather than continue to see each other as separate racial bodies, Lucy preaches inclusion, restoration, communism and equity, all at ground level. What Coetzee suggests is the fact that racism may truly end if political actors and policy makers make an effort at creating a level ground for both whites and blacks primarily in the exercise of their fundamental human rights. In other words, a genuinely new South Africa requires a re-organization of the spaces of shame and pride.

Cape Town is a space of pride and yet very dangerous. David Lurie sees everything in his reach as meant for his use, including Melanie, because of the White superiority that reigns in Cape Town. Which is why he is adamant in making any public apology; neither is he willing to reach a compromise nor opt for counseling upon the demand of the disciplinary committee. It is indeed ridiculous because he forms part of the dominant apparatus- the owners, the ruling class and the superiors. It is more of a private space. Everyone lives as it pleases them regardless of the new order - the abolition of the apartheid system. And so when David Lurie is eventually expelled from the university, he realizes that the privileges of Cape Town are gradually becoming weak. Private business becomes a matter for public concern and therefore he is unable to recognize his

environment. It is a new dispensation and it has become a threat to his identity as a white South African male.

The Eastern Cape is certainly a space of shame and yet it becomes a space of refuge and of hope. It was a no-life environment, very repressive for a man of Lurie's status. When he finds himself in the Eastern Cape, he thinks of extending to that space the dangers of Cape Town. He looks down on everyone there except Lucy his daughter. After Lucy's gang rape incident, he gradually and strangely begins to delight in the things he earlier on considered as humiliating. He no longer insists on remaining a dangerous person because he no longer has 'dignity', no more privileges; he becomes just a 'boy', the dog –man, a handlanger. He is gradually relieved from his old ways. The Eastern Cape saves Lurie from himself. His experiences with the Shaws' and Petrus pull him out of history and though he becomes less the man he used to be, he obviously becomes a better person.

For Coetzee, the new South Africa will only be stabilized in terms of racial tensions if only persons like David Lurie (who represents the voice of the Whites in South Africa) are able to learn to accept no privileges, no rights, no property and no cards in order to make way for equity; a very distasteful necessity for re-building South Africa. It is important to recognize that Lucy's desire to redefine dignity just like the dog is highly significant as far as the new South Africa is concerned. Petrus's treatment of Lucy and her father at his party reinforces this. He does not play the eager host, does not offer them a drink (p.129). It is just like saying that you are no strangers (foreigners) and so you may
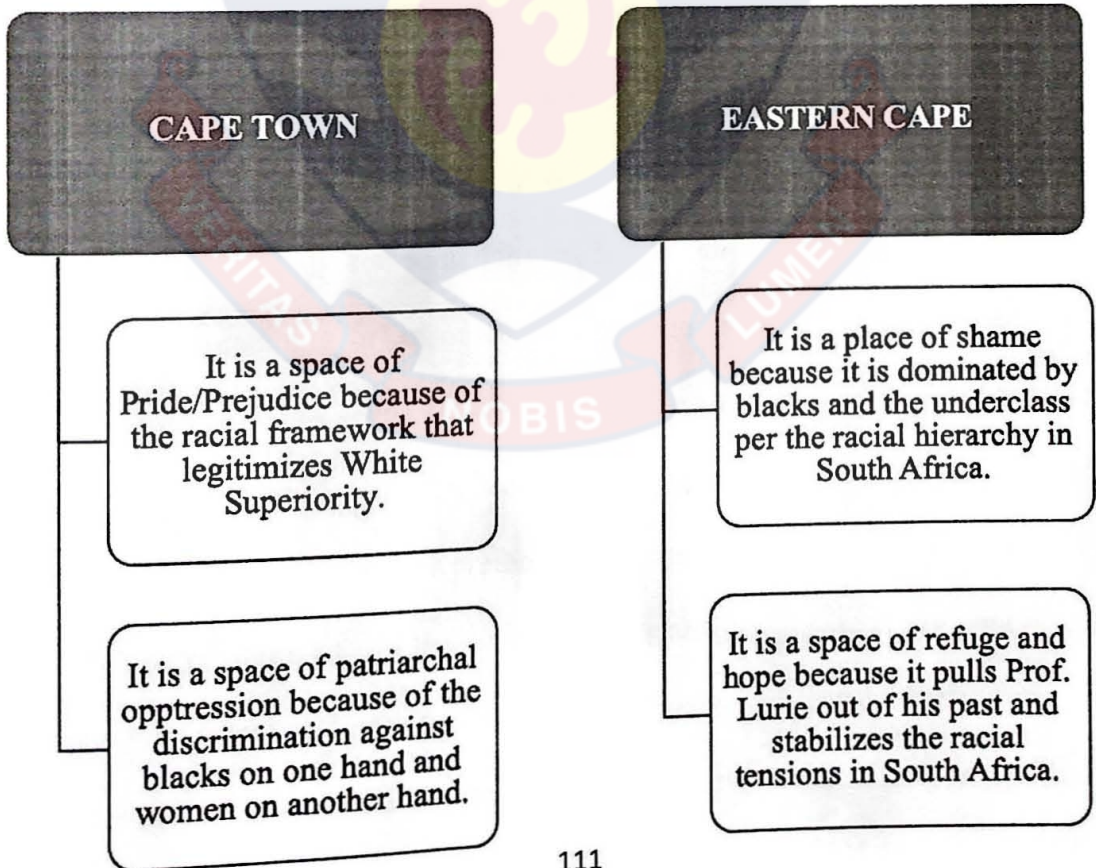
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help yourselves if you so wish. Surprisingly, Petrus says: 'No more dogs. I am not any more the dog-man' (p.129).

At this point, Petrus begins to see himself as the master. He is soon going to be the 'owner' of the owner of the dogs he has been caring for (a plan he will achieve should Lucy accepts his proposal) and therefore he sees himself as having equal or enough dignity as his benefactor. The disconnect in Lurie's acceptance to become a dog-man (owning no dignity) and Petrus's excitement at being not any more a dog-man reconciles in terms of re-instating the status quo. It is a move to reconstructing masculine behaviours as well as refiguring hope in a politically charged arena. The overturned desires (as demonstrated through Petrus' and Lurie in terms of the reversals in wielding power) help us in our appreciation of what a new South Africa holds for the contending racial groups. It is important to recognize that the new South Africa, as it is conceptualized in Coetzee's *Disgrace* will be distasteful for the white minority and a pleasant beginning for the black populace. However, the new South Africa can be a better community if only the White minority will redefine humiliation as a call for inclusion. The reversal also shows the nervousness with which the subordinated racial groups impatiently anticipate a better community where there is no segregation, stratification and subtle subordinations. Coetzee's complex interrogation of the relationships that exist among characters in his novel forms part of the anticipatory project which makes room for racial assimilatory practices. Rather than a direct interrogation, Coetzee creatively subverts racially defined notions in order to make way for a better appreciation of the deed done by apartheid to certain groups of people.

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The spatial climate in *Disgrace* becomes somewhat hazy in terms of the generated feelings of remorse, anxiety and uncertainties arising as a result of the upturn dynamics of space. While it is important to recognize the fundamental difference in the state of affairs in post-apartheid South Africa and the anticipated new South Africa, Lurie's eventual awakening suggests a potent route through which we arrive at our visions of the new South Africa which is also carefully represented through Lucy and Petrus. The transition is represented in the change in power dynamics of groups that are solely dominated or subordinated in the shift of material wealth.

The spatial configurations in J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* is shown in the diagram below.

CAPE TOWN	EASTERN CAPE
It is a space of Pride/Prejudice because of the racial framework that legitimizes White Superiority.	It is a place of shame because it is dominated by blacks and the underclass per the racial hierarchy in South Africa.
It is a space of patriarchal opptression because of the discrimination against blacks on one hand and women on another hand.	It is a space of refuge and hope because it pulls Prof. Lurie out of his past and stabilizes the racial tensions in South Africa.

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Two forms of masculinities emerge from the spatial configuration in Coetzee's *Disgrace*. Cape Town is characteristic of orthodox hegemonic masculinity which finds meaning in the racial framework in South Africa. Lurie's initial reluctance to reconsider his White hegemonic masculine ideologies is because of the collective commitment of the Whites in Cape Town to demarcate boundaries of belongingness ad superiority. Once he (Lurie) relocates to the Eastern Cape, where racial hierarchies are consciously disregarded, he decides to remodel himself along the demands of the political climate change. Petrus, on the other hand, outgrows his boyish masculine attitudes which was largely influenced by his racial orientation of being an inferior category. When he succeeds in making Lucy his third wife, he re-conditions himself as no longer as a ghettoized boy but an accepted male who belongs to the emerging community.

Refiguring Hope and Desire: Masculinities in Transition

Desire, generally speaking, is a strong feeling of wanting to have something or wishing for something to happen or the sense of longing for or hoping for something or an outcome. Eldrege (as cited in Ian-Cheng, 2013) claims that: 'there is a secret set within each of our heart. It is the desire for life as it was meant to be' (1). In other words, desire is produced as a result of an inner motivation; what is good and preferable in order to make up for what has been lost or not yet attained. In the context of this chapter, desire is not simply what human beings lack and seek for but also the valuable generated efforts at reaching this need. Therefore, the desire for reaching the new South Africa, as I argue, is

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contingent on the individual as well as the collective efforts of both racial groups – in terms of arriving at a common definition of the preferred civilization. In much the same vein, hope points to a feeling of optimism or the desire that something will happen.

As Bloch (1995) observes, all human beings dream of a better life and that these dreams are impulses of desire for perfection. He maintains that these impulses are provoked by one's lived experiences and for that reason, have a profound future orientation. *Disgrace*'s transformative potential consumes the uncertainties of a better community yet to come. Indeed, the aging process of transiting from grace to disgrace as exemplified through the experiences of Lurie signals the desire at attaining what seems to be impossible.

Lurie's conscious change from his past life communicates a progression from 'where we were not' to 'where we have come to be' and therefore deepens the pursuit for a new community and here in our case, a new South Africa. It is important to recognize the fact that Lurie's painful awakening becomes possible upon his arrival in Grahamstone (Eastern Cape) (as the repressive space) and the subsequent rape of Lucy. Rather than limiting him in terms of ambitions, Grahamstone becomes that special place for reflection – the renewed space, containable; where the operations within this landscape compel new meanings for personal and inter personal relationships and thus indicating the potential of a new civilization. The rigid civilization proposed by apartheid is reconfigured through the function of desire.

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We also find in Petrus's character an impatient desire to belong to the preferred community demonstrated through his ambition to 'own' Lucy and her property. Despite the racial hostility, the mutual fear shown by both Lurie and Petrus is indicative of their individual dilemmas of what this new community holds for them. Petrus's desire for status and to possess, however contentious, increases the level of tolerability between the two racially defined groups. This mutual need compels Lucy to sacrifice her body as a means of lowering the weight of the historical guilt. Their proposed union restores some sort of racial harmony. Their negotiations further serve as a rich means to stop gendered rifts that may arise in their new life and by extension, fortifying the foundations of this new civilization that awaits them and providing a conducive climate for the operations of gender. Although Petrus's intimate desire for status may be read as a patriarchal tendency to possess a woman's body and the usual move for dominance, the question of no more being the dog-man (just like Lurie's giving up on the dog) becomes significant.

Coetzee's vision of life in post-apartheid South Africa is clearly demonstrated through the ways in which space is re-organized in the text. For Coetzee, a new civilization, which is what is required, will mean a calculated effort to consciously upturn the centre of power operations in order to accommodate subordinated groups. This chapter has demonstrated how Coetzee's *Disgrace* contributes to the discourses on emerging masculinities taking into consideration the history of South Africa. The chapter has examined the characters of David Lurie and Petrus in order to define the characteristics of the

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new man in contemporary African fiction. This re-reading of Coetzee's *Disgrace* shows that there is a connection or relationship between masculine representations and the spatial dynamics in the text.

Although there is no explicit statement on futurity, the correlation between masculine representations and spatial re-organization proposes alternatives that are crucial in our attempts at envisaging a new South Africa. It has shown that the new South Africa may come to stay if only white superior ideology (represented in the character of David Lurie) give way to a more inclusivist mode of being. Like Jaja in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Coetzee's *Disgrace* represents the portrait of the new man in both Lurie and Petrus. With Lurie, Coetzee appears to suggest that the new man must be critical of his heritage so that he can assume a refined personality that in itself is indicative of progress. Although Petrus's approach in re-defining his masculine identity is somewhat brutish, his determination at undoing the inferiorities is significant. His resolve to be recognized as an accomplished man despite the history of segregation remains a quality of the new man. The characterization of violence parallels feelings in post-apartheid South Africa where evil does not belong to the 'other' alone. It is a means by which the marginalized reclaim their stake in the economy and register their disapproval in a society that has denied them of several privileges, which is why Lucy refuses to report her rape to the police because she felt that; 'They see me as owing something. They see themselves as debt collectors. Why should I be allowed to live here without paying?' (p.36). Thus, Petrus's brutish behaviour is symbolic of the political freedom that had come to South Africa.

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Conclusion

Contrary to the claim that Coetzee's *Disgrace* is unenthusiastic about the New South Africa (Kok, 2008; Opheim, 2016), the chapter assessed Coetzee's revisions of the New South Africa through a re-examination of his male characters. The chapter was structured into three main parts. The first section looked at how *Disgrace*, a novel set in the post-apartheid era, re-examines the intimate historical issues and the extent to which these facts become defining as far as our visions of the New South Africa is concerned. In the second section, I looked at Coetzee's construction of acceptable maleness in a racially charged society. I focused on the character of violence as symptomatic of postcolonial maleness. While both Lurie and Petrus use violence to signal their male power, it is evident that Petrus' use of violence is constitutive of his desire for change and newness. The third section of this chapter discussed how issues of space engineer redefinition of relationships in terms of how hierarchical structures are demolished for communal effect. We realize that Lurie's eventual transformation is shaped by the spatial climate in the Eastern Cape and the fact that his superior ideologies are gradually dispelled by his new circumstances. The final section, summarizes the overall argument of the chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SKETCHING THE FUTURE NATION: WOMEN AND MEN AT POST IN NGUGI WA THIONGO'S *WIZARD OF THE CROW*

Just as today is born of the womb of yesterday, today is pregnant with tomorrow
Ngugi wa Thiongo (*Wizard of the Crow)*

Introduction

What the previous chapters have demonstrated is that spatial dynamics affect masculine identities and that these transitions hint at the fortunes of a new Africa. While Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and Coetzee's *Disgrace* emphasize the strength of polyphony and audacity (in the former) and a conscious upturn of the centre of power operations in order to accommodate subordinate groups as alternatives for progress (in the case of the latter), Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* problematizes the political configurations inherited from colonialism and radically revises the possibility of a new Africa. He satirizes what appears to be an impossible future – ridiculing the contradictions in the quest for a new postcolonial state against the back-drop of neo-colonialism (emphasized in the dictatorial new multi-party dispensations) and globalization in Africa. To this end, Ngugi wa Thiongo provides an allegorical image of how Africa's potential is continually captured in an era of globalization.

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Wizard of the Crow is a story of a dictator who is simply referred to as the Ruler. He is the second ruler of the Free Republic of Aburiria; a prototype African country. He is the peoples' god – their beginning and end because no one dares to challenge him throughout his aging rule. His power is limitless. The character of the Ruler as all powerful and the source of all truths turned all his ministers into sycophantic subordinates who do nothing but fight amongst themselves just to be in favour with the Ruler. Ministers Sikiokuu and Machokali, and their own protégés continue their bickering until either group succeed in consolidating the power of their messianic head in the proposed Marching to Heaven project which is supposed to be a super world-class edifice of a rare quality. Marching to Heaven would allow the Ruler to have a direct communication with God. So that the Ruler's word is in effect the word of God. When all the strategies to get the Global Bank to sponsor this project fail, the Ruler becomes frustrated and subsequently develops a bizarre condition. As the story progresses, we encounter two beggars: Kamiti and Nyawira, who eventually become partners in divining the fortunes of the Free Republic of Aburiria. Kamiti and Nyawira carefully restore the voices of the people of Aburiria through series of counter-struggles with the Ruler's minions.

While several scholars have paid attention to the colonial legacy and the refracted African state; focusing on the tragic experiences of slavery and colonization even after the wake of independence (Oluwafisayo, 2014; Ogagaghene, 2010; Chakrabonty, 2012), others have also focused on the identity politics (Waita, 2013) and how Ngugi wa Thiongo devises resistance mechanisms

in order to empower the African woman in a male dominated society (Sadek, 2014). My examination will be to demonstrate the ways in which the successes and failures of Ngugi wa Thiongo's male characters become meaningful within the context of Africa's future. Again, I examine how Ngugi wa Thiongo re-imagines the postcolonial nation through the transgressive acts of Kamiti and Nyawira as collaborators in search for freedom. The heartless despot Ruler of Aburiria and his sycophants remain a distasteful reality Africa must confront in order to consolidate the defining freedom of the postcolonial state. Although the focus of the thesis is on the correlation between masculine representations, spatial re-organization and futurity, the heroic role of Nyawira (a female character) cannot be over-emphasized. The character of Nyawira does not simply indicate the author's feminist vision (Waita, 2013). Rather, Nyawira corroborates the author's desire for balance and collaboration in a new Africa renaissance. Ngugi wa Thiongo appears to favour feminine-masculine ideals as a necessary future factor. In other words, Ngugi wa Thiongo appears to suggest that our visions of a new Africa must be founded on unity and a conscious balance - a theme that is hinted and explored in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* especially in the coexistence of Father Amadi and Auntie Ifeoma as masculine and feminine fusion in Nsukka.

The chapter is structured into four main parts: the first part is titled, 'Men in Transition: Male Daemons, Power Daemons and Rebel Daemons', 'Dictatorial and /or Democratic Spaces: The Free Republic of Aburiria and the Birth of Baby 'D'' will form the second section. The third section is titled, 'Visions of tomorrow

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and Postcolonial therapeutics. The fourth and final section will constitute the concluding part of this chapter.

Men in Transition: Male Daemons, Power Daemons and Rebel Daemons

The Free Republic of Aburiria as a prototype African country is typically male dominated. Men are the owners of everything including women. In Aburiria, men are notorious for having multiple homes, some official, others on the side (p. 302), maleness is thus tied to having multiple women; wife-beating is a male prerogative and all other subservient female roles boost the ego of the men in Aburiria. Aburirian masculinity is defined by the quest for power, wealth and most importantly, the desire for white American maleness. In fact, it is the desirable ideal (p. 741). These desires are exemplified in the character of the second Ruler of Aburiria.

The second Ruler of the Free Republic of Aburiria is a veritable god. The entire Aburiria live in awe of him. They tremble at his presence for his word is the law. He is a man of power.

> The person who would ever dare to challenge his authority has not yet been born and if he has, he still has to change himself into a spirit and grow a beard and human hair on his feet. You did not know that did you? (p.11).

The second Ruler of Aburiria, His Holy Mightiness, Mtukufu Mtakatifu has an imposing personality. He is the dream of all the men in Aburiria; he has three wives, three sons and two daughters.

The Ruler was very protective of his bed-makers. He did not want
to know of any other person having touched them before or after
him. How many husbands had he exiled abroad, giving them jobs
far away that he might have unfettered access to the women?
(p.410).

The Ruler is a self-centered, greedy and a promiscuous man. He apparently
assumes the headship in every household. The Ruler of Aburiria is the might and
the light of Aburiria; the sole voice of the people. He and the country are one and
the same. Everything revolves around him. He is the standard for 'respectable'
maleness. It is a real honour to be noticed by the Ruler; no wonder Machokali,
Sikiouku, Big Ben Mambo and a host of others willingly decide to be maimed at
the pleasure of the Ruler. The long-standing rivalries between these sycophants
therefore, are pointers of their fantasy. Despite his unquestionable authority, the
Ruler with his loyal ministers displays a fantastic desire for a more superior
masculine identity – white American maleness. This desire which is by no means
provoked by colonial consciousness is diagnosed as 'White-ache' by the Wizard
of the Crow (a postcolonial diviner). 'White-ache' is characterized by a
symptomatic coughing of 'Ifs' and 'Ifness' indicating a certain level of restrain in
voicing the actual desire. This restrain, apparently, is as a result of a troubled
consciousness not to resign oneself to inferiorities.

Titus Tajirika is the first to be struck by this malady of words. After his rise to the position of the Chairman of 'Marching to Heaven' – an envious position although incomparable to that of the Ruler, Tajirika cannot bring himself to imagine the prospect of a better office; overwhelmed by the three sacks of money he gets from business introductions some few minutes after the announcement of his appointment, words get stuck in his throat and Vijinia his wife brings him to the diviner for a cure.

> The voice of the Wizard of the Crow now seemed to issue from inside the mirror: "vomit the words, the good and the bad" [...]
>
> If … my … skin… were… not… black! Oh, if only my skin were white!" [...] As he looked into the future, he suddenly realized that at the rate money was coming in he would end up being the richest man in Africa, and the only thing missing to distinguish him from all the other black rich was white skin. He saw his skin as standing between him and the heaven of his desire. When he scratched his face, daemons within were urging him to break ranks with blackness and enter into union with whiteness. In short, he suffered from a severe case of white-ache (pp. 179 - 180).

Tajirika's dream of a great future appears to him as bleak and impossible due to the colour of his skin. Indeed, his black skin is for him limiting, an impediment, and almost a ruin because he appreciates the difficulty in undoing 'blackness'. It created in him some kind of inferiority which has become a common disease in postcolonial Africa. The chronic nature of this disease,

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inferiority complex, is its ability to refract identity and retard growth – forcing one to become a willing slave to a presumed superior. The treachery in these thoughts pursues Tajirika until he finally turns himself into an ogre. After his rise to power as the imperial ruler of Aburiria, his secret desires remain a top priority. He succeeds in acquiring a white right arm and a white left leg in order to transform his body into a white man until tragedy strikes:

> Tajirika was making preparations to return to America for the other
> body parts to complete his transformation when he read in a
> newspaper that the clinic had been closed because it was not
> licensed. [...] So despite his incomplete state and loss of money to
> boot, Tajirika dared not complain, remaining a man in transition
> with a white left leg and white right arm (p. 742).

While Tajirika remains in transition, the second Ruler of Aburiria also entertains such treacherous thought despite his absolute power. Both men were complete African orthodox males – a huge status in itself and yet they desired something more. The second Ruler of Aburiria has a passionate desire to become white, for he too believes that to attain ultimate manliness with absolute respect, one has to be white. As a result, when the Ruler fails to secure the loan for 'Marching to Heaven' despite his personal involvement in the lobbying of the Global Bank in New York, he becomes disfigured by the harrowing thoughts of his deflated authority. He develops a strange pathological response. His body inflates; what is diagnosed as 'Self-Induced Expansion'.

Ngugi wa Thiongo's disenchantment with these deceitful desires is carefully encapsulated in the strangely degrading bodies of these men. The exaggerated body of the Ruler is a profound ambivalence that points to rot and renewal in the postcolonial African state. To this end, I deploy Bakhtin's notion of the grotesque in order to disclose the anticipatory discourses that undergird the exaggerated body of the Ruler. The notion of the grotesque indicates:

A body in the act of becoming. It is never finished, never completed; it is continually built, created, and builds and creates another body' (Rabelais 317). The grotesque body is a form of life-in-death, a perpetual rebirth: the body "swallows the world and is itself swallowed by the world" in an ongoing cycle of eating, drinking, defecating, copulation, pregnancy, and birth (Rabelais 317).

The Ruler, in his own state of expansion, is rumored to be pregnant; reflecting on this rumor, the Wizard of the Crow asks, "to be pregnant is to carry a seed of a becoming. Is it of life or death?" (p.680). Indeed, the Ruler was pregnant with an unfamiliar seed – the trauma of his failure with 'Marching to Heaven' and the desire to restore his waning authority had become boxed into unfamiliar desires. It is important to recognize that Ngugi wa Thiongo tries to ridicule the desire for White American masculinity as a desirable ideal – he considers it an erroneous image of acceptable maleness which is why these men are physically deformed – stressing it unsuitability.

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It is also very important to interrogate why the Ruler's sycophants disappear. Machokali and his rival Sikioukuu are made to disappear in order to terminate the reality of such desires. They had almost become incarnate of the Ruler and therefore their continued existence will mean a recycling of unacceptable maleness. Thus, their disappearance is an indication of Aburiria's readiness to discontinue the hegemony of the nation-state and also to make ineffective patriarchal structures that inhibit their freedom. These men (The Ruler and his minions) start off and remain orthodox males – despite the stiff challenge from Nyawira and the women of the peoples' court. They are unable to appreciate and accommodate the potential of the female sex and therefore the revisions of the new Aburiria. They are bent on remaining male daemons.

Kamiti (a young man who for the frustrations of job-seeking 'poses' as a diviner and is referred to as wizard of the crow) remains Ngugi wa Thiongo's revelation of the new man because he does not become co-opted in the increasing pathological betrayal of the African identity. His masculine ideologies are in contradiction with that of the Ruler and his sycophantic ministers. No wonder his masculine performance is considered a rebellion to the state. Kamiti appreciates his African identity as equally authentic amongst other authentic identities and therefore he believes in the self-worth of every individual. In fact, Kamiti exposes the monstrosity and treachery in accommodating such ideological essences of black inferiority and the fact that a continued affirmation of white superiority further cripples the potential of the new nation.

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Kamiti is symbolic of Africa's communal heritage and pluralism. Unlike the Ruler and his minions who were selfish, dubious and reckless – putting their individual interests ahead of the nation, Kamiti demonstrates a commitment to democratic principles when he purposefully encourages his clients to voice their desires. It is important to recognize that we find in Kamiti's nature a different kind of balance outside of male-female principle; his belief in the union of the sexes and his collaboration with Nyawira is the prelude to Aburiria's freedom. Kamiti also shows a cultural balance. When Kamiti is invited to America to help with the Ruler's ailment, Dr. Furyk and his colleagues are marveled at his (Kamiti) appearance and disposition when he admits to be a postcolonial witch doctor, he is not in the usual tatters with scary drawings on his face.

The deviation is implicitly profound as it apparently tells us of Ngugi wa Thiongo's subtle endorsement of mimicry rather than a radical destabilization of the colonial heritage. Thus, Kamiti's success in blending scientific and indigenous approaches in wizardry is indicative of the new times. And so for Ngugi wa Thiongo, the success of the new postcolonial state is not only premised on balance between the external (West and the East) or a hybridized culture but also a bridging of the sexes so that akin to Mbembe's (2001) concern which is that within the binary opposition itself lay certain internal imbalances in terms of creating and recreating stereotypes. In other words, what Mbembe (2001) suggests is that it is not helpful to understand postcolonial relations in terms of dissimilarities.

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Rather, it is important to understand the ways in which postcolonial subjects interrogate their identities which have more or less become their colonial legacies. Thus, what Ngugi wa Thiongo appears to suggest is the fact that the new postcolonial state, as we envisage, must form cohesive identities as far as the dynamics of gendered spaces are concerned. Again, the new postcolonial state must go beyond binary categories; specifically, there must be collectivity (exemplified in the collaboration between Kamiti and Nyawira) and belongingness such that gendered spaces will be bridged by feelings of community.

Chakraborty (2012) substantiates the fact that Kamiti and Nyawira resist the hegemony of the nation-state through their mock wizardry and dance performances so that the two characters become Ngugi wa Thiongo's model of good governance and progressive leadership. Kamiti believes in democracy – his attempt at purposefully guiding his clients to voice their intimate desires and the fact that he appreciates the contributions of the woman as a necessity for progress puts him ahead of his fellow men. Kamiti's masculine disposition rejects totally 'foreign' thinking and its content and thus reiterates Ngugi wa Thiongo's demand on overthrowing white superiority and re-asserting the African identity.

Dictatorial and/or Democratic Spaces: The Free Republic of Aburiria and the Birth of Baby 'D'

In discussing the spatial dynamics in the two previous chapters of analysis, we realize that our conceptions of change and progress in terms of masculine representations are contingent on the movement from one space to the other. That is why Enugu and Nsukka (in *Purple Hibiscus*) and Cape Town and Eastern Cape (in *Disgrace*) become important topographies. In Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*, the idea of transformation is not predicated on such shift in physical locations. Nonetheless, spatial influence on behaviour is achieved through a single qualitatively improved space.

The Free Republic of Aburiria is a prison of hopes and dreams. None of its citizenry dare to say anything except it is in praise of the Ruler and the country – The Ruler and the country share the same denominator. It became so unsafe a place that dreams and desires were carefully guided not to travel beyond the heart. Thus, we notice that even the so-called political actors (the Ruler's minions) are struck with the malady of words – the inability to voice one's desires. Aburiria is dominated by the sovereign voice of the Ruler. The Ruler's voice is the authentic voice and therefore the visibility of any other voice means a strange resistance of the established order. And so it is not strange Machokali announces that:

> The Aburirian masses are ready to forgo clothes, houses, education, medicine, and even food in order to meet any and every condition the Bank may impose on the funds it releases for Marching to Heaven. Upward ever, Downward never. That is our new slogan. We will not rest until we get to Heaven's gate. We

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swear by the children of the children of our children to the end of
the world – yes, we swear (p. 203).

The Free Republic of Aburiria will stop at nothing until she sees her
Christ-like Ruler communicate directly with God and that is why the Ruler and
his sycophants pause at nothing to frustrate the activities of the Movement of the
Voice of the People. It is a threat to state security not to be in favour of the
supposed unanimous decision of Aburiria. Thus, the activities of the Movement of
the Voice of the People, as anti-government machinery become crucial. While the
Ruler and his minions are completely detached from the masses – exploiting and
depriving them of their humanity, the Movement of the Voice of the People is
poised to restore hope into a fast collapsing nation under dictatorship.

The Movement stands for the welfare of the people and allows for
collective action – something the Ruler and the country perceive as unfamiliar
leading to the several confrontations between the two sides. What is more
unnatural about the Movement are the activities of the women and the Peoples'
court considering the political hegemony in Aburiria. At the celebration of the
Ruler's birthday, we find that the Movement of the Voice of the People
announces their displeasure about the impending waste and destruction that has
come to be characteristic of the Ruler's Aburiria. As a result, they purposefully
disrupt the celebration with the spread of plastic snakes all over; staging a revolt
at what will become a ruin to a crawling state.

The success of their performance threatens the sacred image of the Ruler as 'Marching to Heaven' will afford. In an attempt to issue a warning to his detractors, the Ruler assures that:

> He would out snake all their plastic snakes with real ones. In biblical times, it was the Mosaic snakes that swallowed the Pharaonic ones. Today, in Aburiria, it is the Pharaonic snakes that will swallow all of you who think that you are the new Moses (p. 25).

In the above extract, we are reminded of the biblical spectacle in Egypt where Moses, upon God orders, compels Pharaoh to free the Israelites from captivity. Thus, the Ruler's invocation of this biblical episode is not to stress the fact that he is intimidated by the scare of plastic snakes (which is a warning) nor is he ready and willing to forgo 'Marching to Heaven' even if it means leaving his people in perpetual crisis. But beyond these reactions, his insistence on remaining a 'Pharaonic snake', presupposes that he is going to be trapped in the middle of the Red Sea chasing his 'slaves'. Thus, the analogous connection he creates between himself and the image of the snake shows the extent to which his authority is soluble and that it will be contested and defeated in time. We recognize that the audacity of the women dance troupe further deflates the image of the Ruler. The supposed prelude to his birthday party turns out to be impunity to the state and to the image of the Ruler.

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And then just as planned', Nyawira told Kamiti, 'all of us in the arena suddenly faced the people, our backs turned to the platform. All together we lifted our skirts and exposed our butts to those on the platform, and squattered as if about to shit en masse arena. Those of us in the crowd started swearing: MARCHING TO HEAVEN IS A PILE OF SHIT! MARCHING TO HEAVEN IS A MOUNTAIN OF SHIT!'And the crowd took this up. There were two or three women who forgot that this was only a simulation of what our female ancestors used to do as a last resort when they had reached a point where they could no longer take shit from a despot; they urinated and farted loudly. May be need or fear overcome them or both (p. 250).

The message of the women dance troupe is loud and clear. They are simply tired of the despot of a Ruler who cares not a thing about his people except things that boost his ego. Their performance mirrors their absolute disgust for his dominance – they expose the stench that has engulfed them and the potential of the stench to chase out the very people that caused it. It is clear at this point that not everyone in Aburiria is in favour of his mountain of shit as the women called it. We realize that the audacity of the women strikes the Ruler to a point that there is absolutely nothing he can do to undo the stain in his weakening authority. The bit of the black humour remedy is unable to save him from the shame. The counter-spectacles of the Movement of the Voice of the People gradually succeed in flattening the bloated image of the Ruler.

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It is important to note that the performance of the women dancers does not merely challenge the authority of the Ruler and the state neither does it simply demolish the vertical structures between the powerful and the commons in Aburiria. 'It espouses a possibility for a better future—perhaps a future without the despotic Ruler—by exploring the regenerative aspects of the abusive, the bodily and the scatological' (Grzeda, 2013). This is because according to Bakhtin, reference to the lower parts of the body, such as "the genital organs, the belly, and the buttocks," is a characteristic feature of "grotesque realism". The idea of the grotesque which is:

> To degrade also means to concern oneself with the lower stratum of the body, the life of the belly and the reproductive organs; it therefore relates to acts of defecation and copulation, conception, pregnancy, and birth. Degradation digs a bodily grave for a new birth; it has not only a destructive, negative aspect, but also a regenerating one. To degrade an object does not imply merely hurling it into the void of nonexistence, into absolute destruction, but to hurl it down to the reproductive lower stratum, the zone in which conception and a new birth take place. Grotesque realism knows no other lower level; it is the fruitful earth and the womb. It is always conceiving (p. 21).

The idea of the grotesque shows how the imperfections of the body defeat the idea of absolutes and exactness. Thus, to degrade means to downplay the idea of superior self so that the self is defined by both limitations and possibilities. In

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other words, the grotesque humbles all that is elevated and, in the process, creates an opening for renewal. Hence, the performance put up by the women of Aburiria is a carnivalesque performance which serves as a subversive strategy to expose both patriarchy and the rot that had engulfed Aburiria – demolishing dictatorial rule and male chauvinism and preparing the cradle for the arrival of 'Baby D'. The images of 'fart', 'shit' and 'urine' explain these bodily excretions as residues so that the image of the Ruler is undermined and further devalued by the stench these bodily excretions produce. It is important to emphasize that underneath this devaluing of the Ruler's image is an opportunity for reformation. So that what is born out of the Ruler's old self becomes characteristic of the new man.

In other words, the notion of the grotesque beyond the subversive is also the regenerative feature. Thus, the women's performance has an ultimate objective beyond the mundane act of criticism. It looks forward to the regeneration or the renewal of the Republic of Aburiria. What they are intimating by their carnivalesque acts is a spatial regeneration or renewal and the fact that the politics of shit will be done away with. In other words, they intimate a qualitatively improved space where equality as the basis of democratic principles prevails.

In his bid to consolidate his statesmanship, the Ruler of Aburiria resigns himself to accommodate other voices however disgusting. Baby 'D' (Baby Democracy – the new system of governance in Aburiria) has been induced – it is so infantile and immature because it has become a necessity to ensure being in favour with the West. And so despite its potential towards community, it has

become the benchmark for global aid. The Ruler is pressured to embrace democracy just so he can access support from the Global Bank- an obvious burden of the postcolonial state.
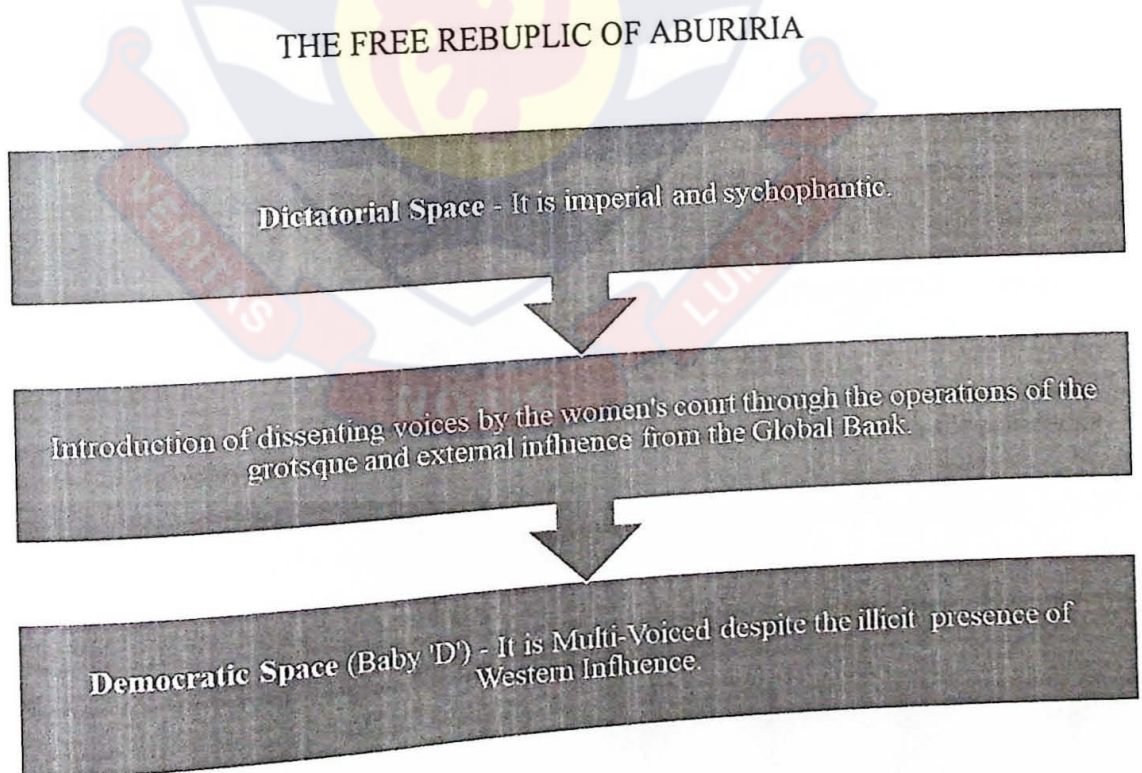
Certainly, Ngugi wa Thiongo does not deny the potential of democracy. Rather, he appears to ridicule the posture of the West as far as dictatorship is concerned and the fact that Africa's independence is simply a new form of imperialism. He indicates that while the West appears to frown on dictatorship, they remain the dictators to several democratic African governments. It has become usual how foreign aid is continually tied to one requirement or the other from the West; colonial masters controlling the economies of their former colonies all in the name of globalization. For Ngugi wa Thiongo, 'matured' independence is premised on participatory democracy, psychological freedom and the fact that Africa becomes self-reliant in all areas.

Aburiria is no longer monologic because of the Ruler's desire to be in favour with the West and also that the countless confrontations with the Movement of the Voice of the People has made it impossible for the Ruler's Aburiria to remain dictatorial. Authoritarianism has gradually faded and the voices of the people restored. While the role of the Movement of the Voice of the People is important in the liberation of the people of Aburiria, the Wizard of the Crow's contributions to Aburiria's emancipation is also important. Through his divination, the Wizard is able to guide his clients to voice their repressed desires – allowing them the opportunity to differentiate between reality and illusions. Notice how the Wizard (Kamiti) persuades his clients to voice their thoughts, both

the "good and the bad." He does not prescribe remedies to their problems; which is quite usual of medical consultations, robbing them of their voices.

Rather, the Wizard always creates an enabling atmosphere in which his clients are able to express themselves and make informed choices as well. This becomes extremely significant when we consider the fact that he empowers the people of Aburiria with the impetus to voice freely what had long been blocked for several reasons. The democratic spirit with which the Wizard does this can be considered as his commitment to democracy and pluralism. To quote Chakraborty (2012), 'The Wizard's performance becomes politically subversive, and thereby, symptomatic of an opponent to the dictator in the struggle' (p. 5).

The diagram below gives a graphic summary of the spatial configurations in Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*

THE FREE REBUPLIC OF ABURIRIA

Dictatorial Space - It is imperial and sychophantic.

Introduction of dissenting voices by the women's court through the operations of the grotsque and external influence from the Global Bank.

Democratic Space (Baby 'D') - It is Multi-Voiced despite the illicit presence of Western Influence.

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Two forms of masculinities emerge based on the spatial distribution in the novel. Aburiria under the dictatorial leadership of the Ruler and his men is defined by cacodoxy- erroneous opinions of masculinities. The Ruler and his men see their African orthodox-hegemonic masculine status as limiting despite the privileges it attracts and therefore make deliberate attempts at attaining a much superior masculine identity. Their failure, represented through the writer's use of grotesque bodies is to ridicule the origins of such desires and propose a redefinition of what constitutes acceptable maleness in a postcolonial context. Acceptable maleness in a postcolonial context, as I argue, is devoid of such influences as patriarchal hegemony and white superiority. Aburiria under baby-democratic rule is characterized by a preferred balance of gendered energies. The collaboration between Kamiti and Nyawira constitute a re-definition of acceptable Africa masculinities. While Kamiti's masculine performance remains ideal in terms of the ways in which his masculine identity deviates from the dominant hegemonic apparatus in Aburiria, Nyawira's character role as a schema for a resignification of masculine performances is crucial. To corroborate Stallybrass and White (1986), the character of Nyawira as a 'taboo-loaded' category, demystifies the extremist binary in Bakhtin's classification of the high and the low. Nyawira's agency, as politically and socially transgressive, appears to encapsulate the writer's ideological position that the male-female principle is the route to Africa's progress.

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Postcolonial Therapeutics and Visions of Tomorrow

While Kamiti (the Wizard of the Crow) shows commitment to democracy and pluralism, he also predicts the fortunes of the future nation in his quest to heal his patients. When he is summoned to explain the parable of the Ruler's pregnancy, Kamiti tells us how his search for a more superior black power to heal the Ruler, in time and space, has revealed Africa's disease from the genesis. He finds how Europe impregnate some in Africa with her evil;

> ...these pregnancies gave birth to the slave driver of the slave plantation, who mutated into the colonial driver of the colonial plantation, who years later mutated into the neocolonial pilots of the postcolonial plantation. Is he now mutating into a modern driver and pilot of a global plantation? But Africa impregnated its new breed, which made our people sing, even if you kill our heroes, we women are pregnant with hope of a new lot [...] so I said to myself: just as today is born of the womb of yesterday, today is pregnant with tomorrow (p.681).

And so, he conjunctures:

> What kind of tomorrow was Aburiria pregnant with? Of unity or murderous divisions? Of cries or laughter? Our tomorrow is determined by what we do today. Our fate is in our hands (p. 681).

Ngugi wa Thiongo assumes the move to globalization as a new order of marginalization of the African continent. What he refers to as 'a blind deity with a double-barreled name muting the independence of Africa into dependence'

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(p.681). He condemns Africa's typical willingness to let go of her heritage for money and market. How Africa relegates her moral and social responsibilities to the West. The baggage with developing countries having to condone same sex marriages for foreign aid, international groups and organizations influencing our economic policies are all ways of reducing the autonomy of our independence as a continent. We pause to wonder, just like the author, why African countries let their wealth meet the needs of those outside its borders and then follow behind with arms outstretched for a loan of the very wealth they let go. Ngugi wa Thiongo's prospects of the new Africa thus rely on the struggles to rescue our heritage – a healing of our impregnated souls. Aburiria's future is Africa's future and most importantly the Ruler's sanity since the Ruler and the country are the same. At the beginning of the novel, the Ruler is rumoured to be plagued with five illnesses:

> The first was born of anger that once melted up inside him and he was so conscious of the danger it posed to his wellbeing that he tried all he could to rid himself of it belching after every meal, sometimes counting from one to ten and other times chanting ka ke ki ko ku aloud.[…] The second was a curse from a wronged he-goat […] The third had something to do with the aging of his rule […] The fourth had its origins in all the tears unshed that Rachael, his legal wife had locked up inside her soul after her fall from his grace. […] The fifth illness was the sole mark of daemons that the Ruler had housed in a special chamber in the state house, who had

now turned their backs on him and redrew their protective services
(pp. 3-10).

Ngugi wa Thiongo's revision of the new postcolonial state is that which is devoid of a people who are unaware of who they are. Rather they must be a people who are conscious and proud of their origins in order that they might recognize the power they possess in the collective. He perceives 'White-ache' as a disloyalty to African identity and a considerable lack of confidence in the creative potential of the African continent. He suggests that if the African is unable to rid him/herself of this disease (the inability to move beyond the conditional 'if'), then the African stands the prospect of a better future. In other words, 'the possibility to capture the potential in Africa is an open move to community and a demand of our original image' (wa Thiongo, 2006). While we detach ourselves from this disillusioned project of the conditional (White-ache), it is important to recognize the danger in sit-tight African governments.

While a citizen, the Ruler believed in the fundamentals of freedom and fought for it as an advocate of the people. What happened when he assumed power? This situation has become very characteristic of several African leaders – Gambia's Yahya Jammeh, Cameroon's Paul Biya, Sudan's Omar Al Bashir, Chad's Idris Debby and Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe are sorry examples of the failed Masculinist state in Africa. Their aging rule, like that of the Ruler, has replaced vision with hopelessness and so Ngugi wa Thiongo assures that so far as Africa continues to excuse such monarchic leadership, Africa's democracy will remain a baby – i.e. almost dictatorship. In other words, a meaningful

independence will be the absence of the politics of hostility and enmity and thus, freeing attempts by the West to control the future.

It is also very important to recognize that Africa's future is incumbent on the ways in which we rethink the foundations of masculine authority. The pain in Rachael's (the Ruler's legitimate wife) soul is because she cannot foresee a brighter future with her husband's masculine disposition – defiling the younger generation as a matter of pleasure. The Ruler has no respect for the female gender and therefore using women to gratify himself is typical. This disposition is problematic because it does not afford him the opportunity to appreciate the strength in the union of the sexes and the fact that this unity has a potential for progress. And so sticking to his orthodox orientation means sticking to stagnation and for that matter staging a revolt against plurality as a mark of democracy. Thus, the failure of the Ruler's regime is predicated upon his obsolete masculine orientation.

Kamiti's balance is the springboard for Aburiria's progress. He believes in collaboration and the need to create voices for members of a community. This quality, as I have earlier noted, allows him to free Aburiria from the grips of unfamiliar desires and also offers them an opportunity to appreciate their identities as Africans. It is also important to recognize the author's disgust for a masculinity driven by white bourgeois values. Although Ngugi wa Thiongo proposes the need for alternative definitions of masculinity, he is emphatic on the threats of White American maleness. The frustrations of the Ruler and his sycophants are relevant lessons for Africa's growth.

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Conclusion

This chapter sought to assess Ngugi wa Thiongo's construction of the African male by examining the male characters in his novel. Attention has also been paid to the ways in which he dissects the problems confronting post independent Africa and how these nations can be re-invented; how Ngugi wa Thiongo champions the decolonization of Africa's future – calling for a transformative healing of the colonial wound (the loss of identity) and the need to reconcile the African with her origins. He presents Africa in the throes of a strange sickness (White-ache) that ceases her potential. To propose a solution, Bakhtin's notion of the grotesque is employed to demonstrate how Africa's deformities can be regenerated into possibilities. While the notion of the grotesque helps to expose the rot in postcolonial Africa, it also helps to appreciate the ways in which progress may come to Africa in terms of its inherent ambivalence of degradation and re-birth. We have also argued that Ngugi wa Thiongo's revisions of the new postcolonial Africa are incumbent on the unity of the sexes – a rethinking of masculine ideologies leading to the desired collaboration for emancipation of Africa. The chapter was sub-divided into four: the first part looked at men in Transition: male daemons, power daemons and rebel daemons, the second and third sections looked at issues of spatiality and how it influences behaviour; drawing attention to Bakhtin's theory of the Carnival (Grotesque realism) and how the writer proffers solutions to the condition of Africa. The fourth and final section summarizes the major arguments in the chapter.

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CHAPTER SIX

MEN, WOMEN AND GOD(S): PARADIGMS OF VIOLATION IN NAWAL EL SAADAWI'S *GOD DIES BY THE NILE*

In Times stay less stealthy swing
Uncompromising rude reality
We mangled the Monarch of our fashioning,
Who quavered, sank; and now has ceased to be
Thomas Hardy (**God's Funeral**)

Introduction

A critical review of Saadawi's novels indicates the centrality of the feminine experience – foregrounding the extent to which women's oppression and exploitation are legitimized by race, class, religion and the patriarchal system in Africa (Issaka, 2010; Shihada, 2007); how her novels attempt a socialist restructuring of the society and the extent to which she cancels patriarchal power in heterosexual practices. While these remain symptomatic of Saadawi's novels, it is important to reconsider the role of her male characters and the ways in which their representations speak to futurity. This is important because although various scholars expose the rot in the world of Saadawi's novels – stressing the male factor, there is also the need to unearth the anticipatory impulses that are realized through masculine representations and spatial dynamics. The objective of this chapter is to examine how Saadawi re-imagines the future nation through masculine representations, spatiality and futurity. In my earlier chapters, I have demonstrated that there is a relationship between forms of masculinity and forms

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of community. In *Purple Hibiscus* for example, we realize that Enugu and Nsukka (as physical spaces) become defining in terms of the representations of postcolonial maleness and the revisions of the new nation. Clearly, the potential in Nsukka (represented through Father Amadi), as opposed to the dogmatic lifestyle in Enugu (represented through Eugene Achike), rescues Jaja and Kambili from their strange silences into self-consciousness. In Coetzee's *Disgrace*, the vision of the new nation is envisaged through the ways in which Eastern Cape becomes a renewing space for a hangover David Lurie.

Noticeably, Lurie's eventual resolve to be a better man is provoked by the tensions between two competing worlds, his privileges as a white South African male as the apartheid endorsed and the demands of the post-apartheid society, which is why Cape Town and Eastern Cape become significant in examining new forms of identities as far as the politics of new times are concerned. Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* is deliberate on the fortunes of the future nation as far as the move to globalization is concerned. The character of the despotic Ruler of Aburiria and the collaborative efforts of Nyawira and Kamiti as change agents remain crucial. While the disposition and reputation of the Ruler dismiss the potential of progress, Kamiti's democratic strategies in divination restore the voice of the people.

In the foreword to her novel; *God dies by the Nile*, Nawal El Saadawi is explicit on the climate of censorship and oppression this particular novel suffered. The simple reason for this censorship was because of the novels' title, '*God dies by the Nile*'. What is the purpose to claim that God is dead? Indeed, God is eternal

and so appears to be the nature of the Mayor in the fictional world of Saadawi's novel. The African believes that God is a supreme deity who is eternal and has the characteristics of omnipotence, omnipresence and immortality (Adedeji, 2012) and that the African also sees God not only as the author of human life but also as the giver of cultural heritage and therefore 'God' as used by Saadawi to refer to the Mayor of Kafr El-Teen has literary significance. Haj Ishmail (one of the trusted friends of the Mayor) and several others share the conviction that the Mayor of Kafr El-Teen is indeed a god because nobody in Kafr El-Teen will dare suspect him of any evil (p.125). He is simply incapable of sin just like God. What is intriguing is the literary significance of the death of this 'god' who otherwise should be immortal.

God Dies by the Nile records the never-ending struggles of the peasants of the town Kafr El Teen, represented by Zakeya and her family against the greedy conduct of a village Mayor and his sycophant cohorts --Sheikh Zahran, the Chief of the Guard, Haj Ismail, the village barber, and Sheikh Hamzawi, the Imam of the village. When the story opens, we meet Zakeya, a poor peasant who is traumatized by the absence of her son, Galal who has gone off to fight at Suez, and has never been heard of again until he resurfaces at the latter part of the story. Her brother, Kafrawi, a widower, and his two daughters, Nefissa and Zeinab, live with her. The four of them work in the fields, as does everyone else in the village, until a summons comes from the Mayor that Nefissa should work in his house as a maid so that he will pay the family an almost incredible sum per month. Kafrawi urges his daughter to accept the offer and Nefissa goes. At the Mayor's house, she

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is molested and raped by the Mayor. When the people of the town find that she is pregnant, the Mayor murders an innocent man from the village, Elwau, and frames up the girl's father for the murder. Kafrawi is thus arrested, charged with murder and imprisoned. Meanwhile Nefissa gives birth, abandons the baby and runs away. The Mayor next turns his eyes on Zeinab, and the whole painful cycle begins again. Galal returns and finds that Zeinab is working for the Mayor. Knowing Galal for his uncompromising nature, the Mayor and his group frame him up. He is arrested, charged with stealing and subsequently imprisoned. Hurt by these instances of injustice, Zakeya takes hold of a hoe, goes to the Mayor's house and butchers him to death. She is arrested and imprisoned.

In this chapter, I will draw on Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque in order to reveal the anticipatory impulses that undergird Saadawi's novel. Particularly, it will pay attention to the metaphor of the death of God as a signification of possibility, progress and futurity. The chapter is subdivided into four main parts; 'The Death of the Only Man on Earth: The Mayor of Kafr El-Teen and the New Horizon' will constitute the first section. It will deal with the anticipatory discourses that are present in the metaphor of the death of God (the death of the Mayor). The second section; 'Breaking the limits of the Body: Zakeya and the Paradigms of Violation' will also look at how female agency becomes a necessary characteristic of the future nation. In the third section, I will look at how spatial re-organization leads to the creation of polyphonic identities under the heading, 'The Political Landscape of Kafr El-Teen: Of Sacred and

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Secular Spaces'. The fourth and final section will summarize the major arguments raised in the chapter by way of conclusion.

The Death of the Only Man on Earth: The Mayor of Kafr El-Teen and the New Horizon

The Mayor of Kafr El-Teen is the representative of the government. He is the spiritual head and the 'god' of the land. As a boy, his mother had said to him that his elder brother was better than him and so he felt this strange sense of inadequacy which made him assume a destructive and jealous personality.

Your brother is much better than you are. {…} your brother has passed his examinations brilliantly, whereas you… {…} the truth was so overwhelming that it shook to his bones. {…} It crept to his mouth and nose, reviving a taste of bitterness once more… (p. 15).

His brother's success has become his nightmare and in order not to show any form of sibling rivalry, he models himself as sovereign over all the people in Kafr El-Teen – an escapist strategy that becomes rather treacherous. No wonder he does not accommodate 'impossibility' – he is determined to outlive his inferiorities. He goes about as a god, supreme and controlling. No one challenges his authority. The Mayor is above all the villagers. In fact, he considers himself better than all the people in Kafr El-Teen:

Compared to me, you people are just nobodies. I am from a noble family. My mother is English and my brother is one of the people who rule this country (p. 15).

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The Mayor symbolizes the patriarchal class system in Egypt where social distinctions were very predominant. Leaders thought of themselves as gods in human form and recognized themselves as having greater rights than any other persons (Nyongen, 2017). People like the Mayor, who live on top of the world, assume themselves to be of a certain quality and usually have Eurocentric tendencies. Islam (2007) strengthens the fact that the Mayor does not simply foreground the problems of class and social stratification. Rather, the Mayor symbolically represents the ultimate god of patriarchy. The Mayor is perceived as a kind of demigod in the village with such authority 'this almost godly power of the Mayor leads Sheikh Zahran to say 'we are God's slave when it is time to say our prayers only but we are the Mayor's slaves all the time' (pp. 168-9). Despite these praises of himself, the Mayor has an unstable identity. He apparently becomes threatened by anything that he cannot easily get access to. He has a strange taste for women. Zeinab (Kafrawi's youngest daughter) becomes his object of interest.

> He burned with such a desire for Zeinab that only death could put an end to it. Sooner or later, he was going to lay his hands on her for like all Gods, he believed that the impossible did not exist (p. 74).

His obsession with Zeinab is obviously a consequence of Neffissa's (Kafrawi's eldest daughter and Zeinab's eldest sister) rejection. While he consoles himself with the idea that all the men in Kafr El-Teen are timid and have no guts (52), the Mayor is wounded to know that Elwau (the young man Nefissa chooses

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over the Mayor) has fuelled Neffissa's rejection of him and only death can stop him (the Mayor) from losing Zeinab to another 'infidel'. Zeinab ought to be his – she is part of his subjects and subjects are to serve the interests of their masters. Although he is assured of this fact, Elwau's bravery in snatching Neffissa makes him more determined. The Mayor kills Elwau in order to consolidate his absolute authority as the only man in Kafr El-Teen. He does not want to entertain the idea that someone (as insignificant as Elwau) was able where he failed – he has to wipe out anything that competed with him as the established order.

It is interesting to observe how his allies (Haj Ishmail and Sheikh Zahran) are determined to ensure that he succeeds in this regard; Zeinab and Zakeya (Zeinab's aunt) are brainwashed into believing that part of their family's problems and especially the ill-health of Zakeya is as a results of Zeinab's refusal to serve a man blessed by Allah and His Prophet. Therefore, in order to restore sanity to her mentally-troubled aunt, Zeinab has to oblige the demands of the Mayor because it is Allah's design. But Galal (Zakeya's son who returns to the village after several years) re-opens an old wound when he marries Zeinab and forbids her from serving the Mayor. The Mayor feels his authority diminishing when all efforts to get Galal to rescind his decision fail. He hates Galal's audacity and he (Galal) was not spared. The Mayor's treatment of Elwau and Galal is characteristic of his militant efforts to carve for himself a sort of personality, out of the ordinary, that is incontestable. As a Mayor, he considers himself a powerful monarch and therefore any acts of insubordination are treasonable.

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The Mayor is a shrewd politician – he has infiltrated the people's religion to suit his offensive demands and yet:

He was above suspicion, above the law, even above the moral values which governed ordinary people's behaviour. Nobody in Kafr El-Teen would dare suspect him of any evil. They could have doubts about Allah, but about him, it was impossible (p. 98).

The Mayor is a complex character. Part of this complexity is due to the fact that he has a double personality. Despite his self-righteousness, he is worshipped as though he is a step ahead of Allah; blameless and irreproachable and yet he is the source of the people's troubles. But Zakeya discovers the truth of his person rather late. She admits: 'I know who it is. I know it is Allah… I am the only one who knows' (171). Unfortunately, she is not the only one who knows about the double-personality of the Mayor. Haj Ishmail and Sheikh Zahran are the Mayor's accomplices. They cannot dare a reproach because the Mayor is their referent in all things especially in matters of moral piety which is why Zakeya's conviction is important. She probably might have realized their (the Mayor's minions) connivance in all of her family's sufferings and therefore knowing was not enough. It required agency. She kills the Mayor. She kills Allah because both the Mayor and Allah share the same denominator. Drawing on Bakhtin's theory of the carnival which posits that laws, prohibitions and restrictions that determine the structure and order of life is non carnival and that the carnival is:

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What is suspended first of all is hierarchical structure and all the forms of terror, reverence, piety and etiquette connected with it — that is, everything resulting from socio-hierarchical inequality or any other form of inequality among people. It is the suspension of social and behavioural codes that generates 'the atmosphere of joyful relativity characteristic of a carnival sense of the world' by allowing free and familiar contact among people who in the normal course of things are divided by 'impenetrable hierarchical barriers' (p. 123).

What this means is that carnival, as a celebration of freedom, enables a 'new mode of interrelationship between individuals, counterpoised to the all-powerful socio-hierarchical relationships of non carnival life' (Stevens, 2007). In simple terms, carnival offers the chance to have a new outlook of the world – realizing the comparative nature of all that exists and choosing to enter into a completely new world. In keeping with this theory, the death of the Mayor divulges futuristic discourses. When the Mayor dies, immortality, omnipotence and finalizability are broken – giving way to new forms of masculine identities and new meanings to religious and political leadership. When the Mayor dies, there is no longer the fear of 'being' – no dogma, no restrictions, no boundaries. Suffering is no longer inevitable and therefore there is the potential for progress. His death creates a free atmosphere where people are no longer bound by restrictions and prohibitions suggesting the potential of new modes of being. The

death of the Mayor is a metaphor of re-birth, restoration, new hope and new beginnings for Kafr El-Teen. While part of the restoration may obviously be seen in terms of reinstating women unto their dignified position in the society, there is re-birth in terms of accommodating emerging masculine identities. It is important to recognize that the Mayor had become the model of dominant and 'acceptable' masculine identity.

He had become the 'polished' image of all the men in Kafr El-Teen and therefore any man in Kafr El-Teen who did not approve of his kind of masculine disposition is silenced or dismissed – as seen in the fate of Elwau and Galal. Thus, Elwau and Galal's masculine disposition before the death of the Mayor is a corruption of the 'authentic' masculine identity embodied in the Mayor. When the Mayor dies, Elwau and Galal's masculine identities no longer remain a corruption; they cease to be 'discredited' by the final, polished and imposing masculine image of the Mayor and therefore their masculine identities become accommodated – they stand the potential of thriving in a free and familiar space which is what Kafr El-Teen becomes. The carnivalesque reiterates that anything that is assumed finished and authentic restrict the potential of alternatives and so when the Mayor dies, his extolled masculine image is pulled down giving way to other equally credible masculine identities.

Furthermore, when the Mayor dies, dictatorial leadership is dethroned. His voice no longer remains the voice of God and the voice of the people – he no longer has the final word. Thus, the death of the Mayor marks the beginning of democratic times and a pluralistic world. As an epitome of an imperial leader in

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Pharaonic Egypt, he is both the political and spiritual figure and therefore he is the supreme ruler. The Mayor exploits the people and enjoins them to believe that it is Allah's will for them and so they are unable to question his demands since he is more or less an intermediary between God and them. He becomes their truth. The people of Kafr El-Teen live in fear characterized by a strange silence and endurance. When the Mayor dies, the clot of pretense dissolves and fear disappears because they come to know alternative truths different from what has long defined their lives. Thus, his death implies the restoration of the voice of the people. The death of the Mayor represents a healthy celebration of freedom and emancipation from political oppression, sexism, ideological authority and imperial leadership. Thus, Saadawi's revisions of the future nation are that which is free from absolute authority – creating room for a kind of self-consciousness which is capable of nudging the finalized definitions of selfhood.

It is important to recognize that the Ruler in Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* and Eugene Achike in Adichie's *Purple hibiscus* are self-representationally gods. Being such deities, Eugene and the Ruler colonize 'truth' such that outside of them exist no other form of reality. They represent monopolized power structures that eclipse the possibility of alternatives. And so for Eugene, Jaja and Kambili are better off under the regimental life in Enugu. And to the Ruler, the voice of the people of Aburiria does not matter. When the Ruler is dethroned, Aburiria is freed from the coloniality of power; oppression is de-affirmed and the voices of the people are restored. The death of Eugene is symbolic of the collapse of absolute reality – Jaja and Kambili are able to come to

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a better understanding of themselves and their environment. Thus, death as a metaphor explains the extent to which hegemonic patriarchal leadership is discontinued in order that collectivism and participatory governance become the necessity for progress.

The Political Landscape of Kafr El-Teen: Of Sacred and Secular Spaces

Similar to the spatial configurations in Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow*, in Saadawi's *God dies by the Nile*, there is also no movement from one physical location to the other. However, unlike *Wizard of the Crow*, where we see a transformation in terms of how Aburiria moves from dictatorial rule to democratic rule, in *God dies by the Nile*, there is a profanation of the religious atmosphere so that inherent in Kafr El-Teen as once a sacred space which meant conformity and orthodoxy now becomes secular – a mark of pluralism and tolerance.

Life in Kafr El-Teen is dogmatic, rigid and regulated. Everyone had to live according to the Mayor's expectations – for his expectations become the foundations of moral piety in the town. In Kafr El-Teen, there is a solid knit between religion and politics, which is why the Mayor becomes the ultimate head. He is the symbol of religiosity (author of moral values) and political leadership (the ruler of the town and government representative):

> They don't have faith in God, nor do they worry their heads about what will happen either in this world or in the next. In their hearts, they don't fear God. What they really fear is the Mayor. He holds their daily bread in his hands and if he wants, he can deprive them

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of it. If he gets angry, their debts double and the government keeps sending them one summons after the other (p. 134).

Kafr El-Teen is simply the Mayor's. He is their source of life – they have so much faith in him even better than Allah – a venerated leader. And so life in Kafr El-Teen is what the Mayor designs. He is their spiritual truth - even the Sheikh of the mosque makes sure that his Friday sermons are in praise of the Mayor to an extent that when Sheikh Hamzawi begins to fall out of respect with the people because he shelters an 'accursed' child, he is not so much affected by the people's attitude towards him. Rather, he is very much afraid of the Mayor's wrath because life is meaningless when one is in disfavour with the Mayor. He is the 'sacred' head – the people's voice. No wonder he eventually orders that Sheikh Hamzawi be removed. The Mayor, The Ruler in Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow,* Eugene Achike in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* and David Lurie in Coetzee's *Disgrace* are all despotic leaders who do nothing but repress their subjects. They represent the pre-democratic era where the voice of the leader was the voice of the people and the voice of God. They are intolerant of variety, pluralism and balance and therefore they justify their destructive ideologies on the blind side of the new politics and new times in postcolonial Africa.

The spiritual praxis in Kafr El-Teen suddenly becomes weak with the advent of Galal. He becomes irritated by the hegemonized demands of the Mayor and is certainly not prepared to play along. His presence in Kafr El-Teen engineers a plurality of consciousness when his obstinacy in granting the Mayor's

desires leads him to prison. Bakhtin's perception of the carnival space as cited in Christodoulou (2012) is:

> Where the subject is celebrated in reality's binary expressions: life and death, degradation and regeneration, high and low, ambivalence and oneness. Through these binaries, human identity is stripped off every pretense society imposes on the individual. Thus, one can witness in so far as this is possible, the process of human identity formation; as well as the integration of that identity in the life cycle which concludes with death and re-birth (p. 91).

The carnivalesque stipulates that when we juxtapose two 'opposing' entities in similar contextual situations, we are likely to appreciate their individual realities and limitations so that no individual's identity is shrouded in assumptions. And so when Zakeya comes to better understand the workings of her society and for that matter the schemes of the Mayor and his minions, she is no longer checked by societal expectations – she unmasks the Mayor of the pretentious sacred image, exposes the flaws in his masculine identity and consequently redefines the spiritual praxis of her society when she dares to kill the Mayor. His death is an ambivalence of death and re-birth.

When the Mayor dies, authoritarianism, religious fundamentalism, female oppression and orthodox maleness are dethroned. The deception in the sacred identity he creates for himself is uncovered and therefore there is the possibility for new and acceptable forms of being. Kafr El-Teen is no longer sacred because Zakeya's role is a profanity of the established order. She breaks the cycle of
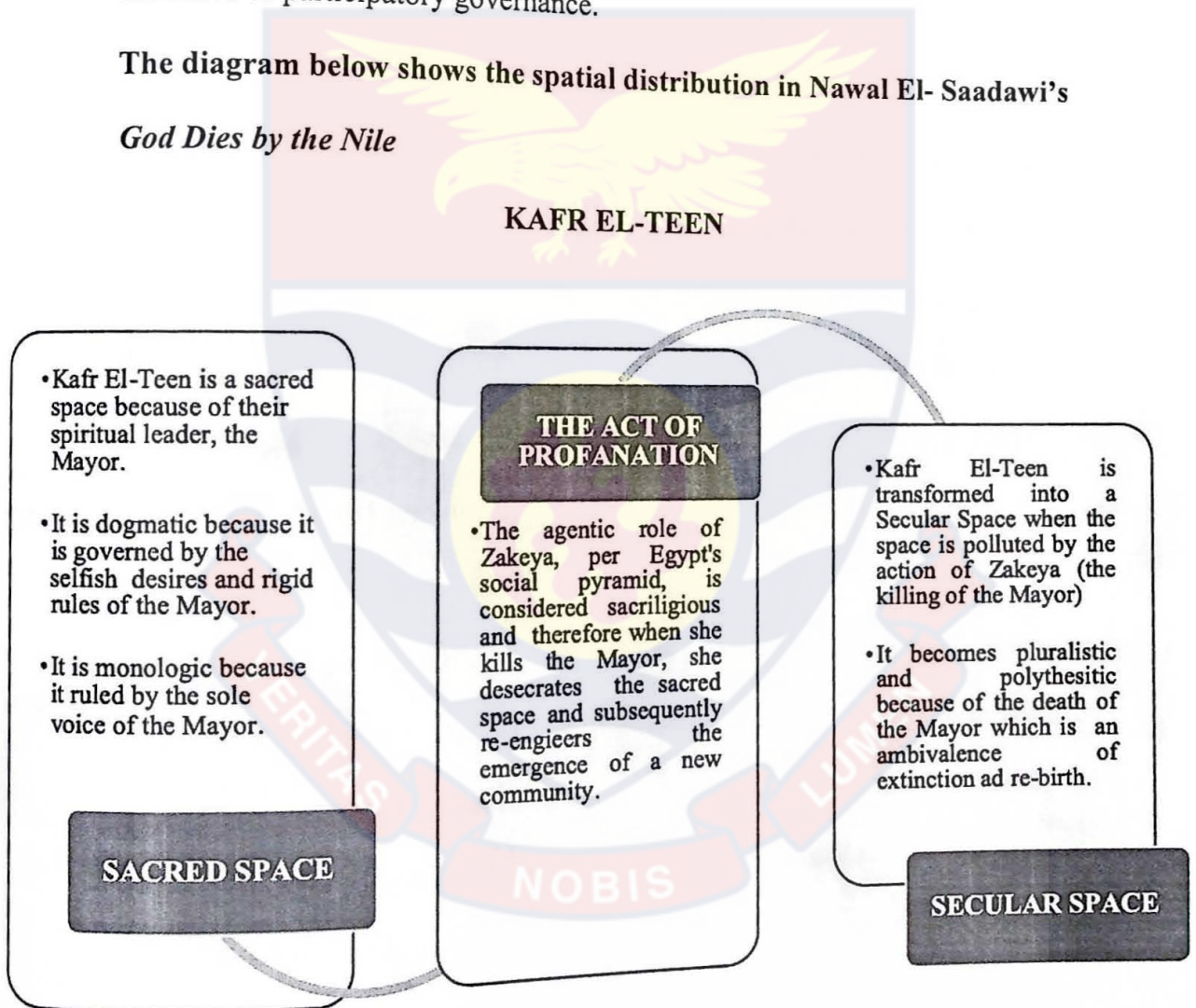
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dogmatic beliefs and initiates the move to an unbiased and a flexible world. Kafr El-Teen becomes secular because of the unspeakable act of Zakeya. She disrupts the social ordering of Kafr El-Teen - dissolving conservatism in the society, gender stereotypes are subverted and masculine oriented history is terminated.

The death of the Mayor is an ambivalence of pollution and purification. When Zakeya kills the Mayor, she pollutes the spiritual atmosphere in Kafr El-Teen when she decidedly dislocates and excludes the sacred head from amongst the people. She leaves Kafr El-Teen without a god and without spiritual truth. By so doing, Zakeya instigates the upsurge of secularism since the fetishist image of the Mayor is defiled. That notwithstanding, Zakeya purifies and rescues Kafr El-Teen from the Mayor's dread obsession to restrict Kafr El-Teen to his egoistic religious beliefs. In other words, the death of the Mayor is a desired liberation against fundamentalist religious practices. It is important to recognize that Kafr El-Teen was monotheistic because the Mayor was the monarchic head – outside him existed no other form of religious viewpoint. Kafr El-Teen only knew one God. Thus, the death of the Mayor marks the beginning of diverse religious perspectives which is what is required for the new nation.

Saadawi appears to draw our attention to the problems of religious fundamentalism. She stresses the extent to which people continue to be mentally and psychologically colonized by the compliant nature of fundamentalist ideals. She emphasizes the need to disengage the crippling consequences of rigid religious demands through the impudent role Zakeya plays in the novel. In the poem; *God's Funeral*, Hardy compares the irreparable nature of death to the 'rude

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realities' of monarchic systems where distortions gradually assume mythical qualities so that reality remains a corruption of truth in time. In other words, until monarchic systems are extinct (until someone – usually a 'god' dies) reality will continue to be obscured. Therefore, the death of the Mayor is futuristic because his death beaks the cycle of dependency and inflexible governance – engineering the move to participatory governance.

The diagram below shows the spatial distribution in Nawal El- Saadawi's *God Dies by the Nile*

KAFR EL-TEEN

- Kafr El-Teen is a sacred space because of their spiritual leader, the Mayor.

- It is dogmatic because it is governed by the selfish desires and rigid rules of the Mayor.

- It is monologic because it ruled by the sole voice of the Mayor.

SACRED SPACE

THE ACT OF PROFANATION

- The agentic role of Zakeya, per Egypt's social pyramid, is considered sacriligious and therefore when she kills the Mayor, she desecrates the sacred space and subsequently re-engieers the emergence of a new community.

- Kafr El-Teen is transformed into a Secular Space when the space is polluted by the action of Zakeya (the killing of the Mayor)

- It becomes pluralistic and polythesitic because of the death of the Mayor which is an ambivalence of extinction ad re-birth.

SECULAR SPACE

Breaking the Limits of the Body: Zakeya and Paradigms of Violation

In this section, I explore the extent to which female agency becomes a necessity in our revisions of the future nation. It is important to appreciate that the hierarchical ordering of the Kafr El-Teen society denied women privileges of any kind and therefore Zakeya's role in the liberation of Kafr El-Teen remains significant. Women in ancient civilization (Egypt, Iraq etc) enjoyed respect and high status in all domains of life until the beginning of the patriarchal class system (Saadawi, 1990). Now women's oppression in the Arab world has become usual. Women, children and slaves remain at the bottom of the social structure – without rights, without privileges. This is because their experiences are largely shaped and defined within the context of religion and other socio-cultural paradigms that are hugely patriarchal. Nawal El Saadawi's narratives are particularly blatant about the abuses inflicted on women – exposing the larger socio-economic and cultural apparatuses that entrap women. Giglio (2017) also explains that Saadawi's narratives are presented with difficulties that come from simply being in a predominantly Islamic society – how women fight the established systems in order to assert their freedom. For example, in *Woman at Point Zero*, Saadawi is very direct about the bodily integrity of women. Firdaus (the protagonist in the novel) is violated from the home to the streets to an extent that her attempts at liberation and self-realization become severed when she is incarcerated.

When Firdaus is 'sold' into marriage, her body is commercialized for the gains of her uncle. She becomes passive because she has no say in matters that affect her until she decides to be complicit in her life's circumstances. Firdaus character exemplifies the extent to which the woman's body becomes both a site for marginalization and intimate justice. In *God dies by the Nile*, we are confronted with a similar situation. Kafr El-Teen is a conservative society where female sexuality is degraded. Men are the rulers and women are the ruled. In fact, in Kafr El-Teen, a woman's dignity was not worth more than twenty piasters (27).

And so when Sheikh Zahran (the chief of the village guard) is expected to bring Zeinab to the Mayor's house, Kafrawi's (Zeinab's father) reaction comes to him as a surprise:

> I am all for accepting Sheikh Zahran, but as you can see, it's the
>
> girl who refuses, but what can I do if she can't see sense?
>
> … What can you do? Is that a question for a man to ask?... Beat
>
> her. Don't you know that girls and women never do what they're
>
> told unless you beat them up? (p. 27).

In Kafr El-Teen, women are considered incapable of reasoning. They are assumed to be not self-directed. They are seen as a people who do not have initiative. They are considered as a people who love being controlled. In Kafr El-Teen also, religion plays a huge role in the daily lives of the people – regulating what constitutes acceptable behaviour and more importantly, it is ruled by the Mayor who believes in the social ordering of the society of which consequence, women's oppression are legitimized. Zakeya is treated like any other peasant

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woman in Kafr El-Teen. The Mayor's insensitive demands on her nieces are tolerable especially when he is a man blessed of Allah and His Prophet.

Although she is greatly affected by the absence of Neffissa and subsequently by the incarceration of Kafrawi, leading to her psychic trauma, Zakeya is still willing to remain obedient to the established order. She is no longer opposed to Zeinab's going to serve the Mayor until Galal re-surfaces and marries her (Zeinab). When Sheikh Zahran purposefully accuses Galal of theft in order that he may get him out of the way to enable the Mayor once again have access to Zeinab, Zakeya begins to boil with a righteous fury which can no longer be subdued. She becomes defiant – 'I was blind but now my eyes have been opened'. (p. 171). Her eyes could now pierce through the Iron Gate which was symbolic of the Mayor's authority and its hidden dangers she no longer remains neutral.

The choice of female agency as a strategy in Saadawi's novel is significant. Saba Mahmood (2005) does a persuasive exposition on the subject of female agency. She recognizes the danger in oversimplifying the obvious meanings imbued in the idea of female agency. She argues that the history of female oppression and the desire for autonomy and self-expression makes it quite simplistic to assume that female agency may be equated to any acts of resistance which is focused on de-emphasizing masculine authority and consequently valorizing female potential. While she acknowledges resistance as an act of disrupting existing powers and therefore emancipator in nature, she argues that such feminists' conceptions only succeed in restricting female agency as merely a

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corrective in terms of the ways in which hegemonic patriarchal structures are demolished.

Mahmood (2005) thus argues that beyond the emancipator rhetoric is the foreclosure of resignification and subversion. In other words, what Mahmood (2005) suggests is that female agency must not simply be understood in terms of disrupting hegemonic structures, but that, it must also succeed in undermining such hegemonic structures with an intention of ascribing new meanings to existing structures. Therefore, the author does not only appear to draw our attention to the paradigms of violation - upturning the status quo as far as the social ordering of the society is concerned. She also seems to draw our attention to the fact that the deified image of the Mayor is undermined and devalued so that there is an attempt to redefine behaviour and new meaning associated with the sexes. Therefore, Zakeya's awakening is important because it marks the beginning of the new order. Zakeya's killing of the Mayor is an audacious act that is usually not ascribed to women. Her defiance and rage for what had become the foundations of their (women's and her family's) struggles are symptomatic of her desires for progress and change. She had become the author of new life and new hope – creating room for the new Kafr El-Teen.

Here again, the carnivalesque which is opposed 'to all that is finished and polished, to all pomposity, to every ready-made solution in the sphere of thoughts and world-outlook' (3) helps us to further explain the futuristic impulses in Zakeya's audacity. What this means is that anything that appears to be absolute, exact, ended or anything that does not allow for alternatives or substitutes as far

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as our perception of the world is concerned impedes progress and so when Zakeya kills the Mayor, she creates room for alternatives so that Kafr El-Teen becomes multi-voiced. When Zakeya kills the Mayor, she abolishes the hierarchies in Kafr El-Teen, dethrones patriarchy, demolishes authoritarianism and establishes in its place a new order (i.e. balanced, inclusive and pluralistic) which is symbolic of the future of Kafr El-Teen.

Saadawi's revisions of the future of the Arab world and for that matter the new African nation is that which is devoid of rigidity (religious fanatism), authoritarianism (orthodox maleness) and monologism (political dictatorship). Rather, the future nation must be inclusivist (striking an appropriate balance between binaries) and polyphonic (allowing for plurality of consciousness).

Conclusion

Saadawi's strategic deployment of gender reforms as far as Zakeya's role is concerned shows that patriarchy and for that matter, masculine identities and female subjecthood are neither stable nor homogenous. She argues that the fortunes of the new nation are incumbent on the disruption of the old order – represented through the Mayor in terms of passivity, repression and authoritarianism. The new nation, as she argues, must be polyphonic – represented through the agentic role of a poor female peasant; ushering in the birth of plurality of consciousness after she dismantles authoritarianism (killing the Mayor). The chapter has looked at the signification of the death of the Mayor (the death of God) as symbolic as far as the future nation is concerned. Drawing

on Bakhtin's theory of the carnival, the chapter has also demonstrated that masculine identities are heterogeneous in connection with spatial dynamics. The hegemonized religious atmosphere in Kafr El-Teen had virtually shelved the potential of emerging masculine identities but once we understand the motif of the death of God (the death of the Mayor), there is the re-birth of alternative masculine identities that are a corrective of the mono-image of the Mayor.

The chapter was subdivided into four parts; the first part dealt with the anticipatory discourses that are present in the motif of the death of God (the death of the Mayor). The second and the third sections looked at how female agency becomes a necessary characteristic of the future nation as well as how spatial re-organization leads to the creation of polyphonic identities. The fourth and final section summarizes the main arguments raised in the chapter.
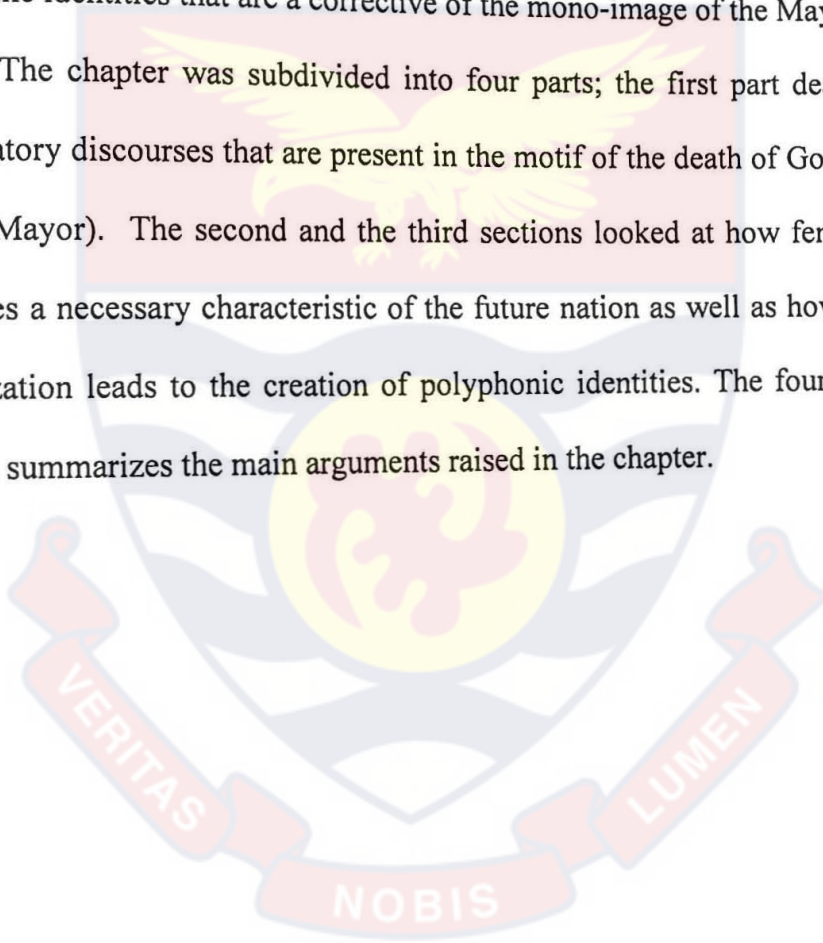
CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have attempted an examination of the correlation between masculine representations, spatial re-organization and futurity. This examination was as a result of the contention in the literature that African literature was incapable of hinting at a better future since its themes are routinely focused on the after-effects of colonialism and the need to return to the original culture (Nnolim, 2010). Indeed, African literature has been criticized for its inability to re-imagine the future of the African continent as compared to the success of European literature since it (European literature) utilizes science-fiction as an alternative in proposing lasting solutions to the world's problems. While this may be justifiable, I argue that we cannot talk about Africa's future outside of the margins of history because it is the memory of the past that allows us to re-imagine the prospects of the future nation. Ashcroft (2009) succinctly corroborates this idea when he asserts that:

> the vision of African futures begins in a reformulation of Africa's past to disentangle Africa from history, and there is no better to re-affirm the ahistorical past, the mythic past, the diversity to cultural pasts than literature or more broadly various forms of creative cultural production (p. 90).

Hence, it is important to recognize that African authors have also succeeded in re-creating and re-imagining the future of the African continent through varied routes; examining tropes and motifs and other linguistic and textual resources that are significant in relation to the future discourse. One other important route is to explore the correlation between masculine representations, spatial re-organization and futurity because Africa's history is tied to patriarchy, religion and colonialism as dominant defining structures, which is what this study has explored. To do this, I drew on the performative masculinity theory, Bakhtin's theory of the carnival and postcolonial theory as important lenses.

Masculinity as a concept gained relevance in academic interrogations when feminist politics became rather linear as far as the discourses on gender inequalities are concerned. Thus, the focus on masculinity studies, according to Connell (1998), is generally to look at man's private life as a site for contestation, paying particular attention to how the nature of masculinity becomes fluid, unstable and socially restricted. In other words, the study of masculinity helps us to re-read and re-interpret gender performances across cultures. In line with this, my research examined the anticipatory impulses that undergird the changing meaning associated with masculine representations in connection with spatiality and futurity.

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To this end, the present study selected four novels; Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (West Africa), Coetzee's *Disgrace* (South Africa), Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* (East Africa) and El Sadaawi's *God Dies by the Nile* (North Africa), representing the four sub-regions of the African continent in order to demonstrate that indeed the future pattern is present in African literature. It is important to mention that this whole debate finds relevance in the broader discourses on African literature, utopia and postcolonial utopianism. It is important to mention that whereas my work finds relevance in the area of utopian studies, I preferred the term 'futurity' in order to dissociate it from the idea of a perfect world as Moore's utopia suggest. By futurity, I meant a process of 'becoming', a new state of affairs which is different from present circumstances and modes of being. The thesis has been structured into seven chapters; chapter one constituted the general introduction and chapter two was literature review. Chapters three, four, five and six constituted the analysis and discussions while chapter seven summarized the major findings of the study.

In the first chapter, I set the tone for the discussions by problematizing the key concerns of the study. I looked at why it is important to re-think the potential of African literature rather than merely dismissing its anticipatory potential because of its return-to-the-source themes. I also looked at the need to examine the correlation between masculine representations; spatial re-organization and futurity since the plethora of literature on African masculinities have simply focused on the changing images of African men to the neglect of their potential in hinting at the future of the African continent.

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In chapter two, I engaged with the literature for two reasons; the first and obvious reason was to assess the extent to which my research was in dialogue with empirical research, and also to show how my research is significant in terms of what is lacking in existing literature. Particularly, I reviewed literature on the works of the four selected authors in order to examine points of convergences and divergences as far as the arguments of this thesis are concerned. Secondly, I justify my choice of the Performative masculinity theory, the postcolonial theory and Bakhtin's theory of the carnival as important theoretical lenses for this research.

While the Performative masculinity theory helps us to trace the pattern of progress as far as achieving acceptable maleness is concerned, the postcolonial theory and Bakhtin's theory of the carnival help us to assess the connectedness between the past and the present and how it has the potential of influencing our thinking about the future. It provides a basis to critically assess the relationship between the future and memory as well as the relationship between the individual and the collective, and also to unearth the ideologies that shape our worldviews.

In chapters three and four, I explored *Purple Hibiscus* and *Disgrace* respectively to consider how the writers intimate the future in the texts. *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie does this by the juxtaposition of two worlds that are radically different in terms of beliefs systems and ideologies. Enugu and Nsukka divulge issues of stagnation and progress in relation to the transformations that Jaja and Kambili undergo. In *Purple Hibiscus*, Adichie demolishes religious and cultural dogmatism as dominant structures that seize the

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prospects of the new postcolonial nation. She appears to argue that the new postcolonial nation can only thrive on the foundations of a strange audacity to 'break gods', the absence of strict binaries and a feeling of community. Subsequently, Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* demonstrates that there is a correlation between forms of masculinity and forms of community so that Jaja's transition from timidity (due to the climate of fear in Enugu) to heroism (facilitated by the climate of freedom in Nsukka) becomes significant.

In *Disgrace*, J. M. Coetzee indicates that in addition to polyphony as a necessary characteristic of the future nation, robust progress is possible in post-apartheid South Africa when there is a conscious attempt to mute racial tensions and create new definitions for subjectivities. In his portrayal of David Lurie and Petrus, Coetzee undermines the endemic stratification in post apartheid South Africa and calls for a new civilization through the union of Lucy and Petrus. Coetzee's vision of life in post-apartheid South Africa is clearly demonstrated through the ways in which space is re-organized in the text. We realized that Lurie's painful awakening is predicated upon the unfamiliar nature of Grahamstone. It was a 'no life zone' – a bad place for a white South African male. Thus, Lurie's attempt at becoming an insider in an unfamiliar space remains fundamental in relation to the desire for newness. Petrus' desire for status and to possess, however contentious, increases our assurance in the hope of the new South Africa.

His proposed marriage to Lucy restores some sort of racial harmony, creating a conducive climate for change and progress. Thus, in both novels, the writers reiterate the necessity of collectivity and de-legitimizing binaries as essentials for the future nation. They contend that acceptable maleness is defined by the audacity to be critical of one's heritage and the willpower to be recognized despite any history of segregation.

Continuing in chapters five and six, Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow* and Nawal El Sadaawi's *God dies by the Nile* highlight the need to rethink the foundations of masculine authority, despotic leadership, neo-colonialism and globalization. What becomes clear in my analysis is that Africa can know little or no progress when we continue to define ourselves in relation to the West; sticking to destructive colonial mindset and stressing fundamentalist ideals. Ngugi wa Thiongo like Saadawi condemns dictatorial and monarchic African governments through the characters of the Ruler and the Mayor. While Ngugi wa Thiongo's revisions of the future of Africa through the failure of the despotic Ruler as opposed to the collaborative efforts of Nyawira and Kamiti as change agents, Saadawi's deployment of the metaphor of the death of God is symbolic of the life in the future nation. Saadawi's men are predisposed to embrace alternative masculine identities when the ultimate image of the Mayor falls. Thus, the death of the Mayor and the overthrow of the Ruler are intimations of new times in the postcolonial nation.

All four novels chosen for this research have demonstrated that there is a correlation between masculine representations, spatiality and futurity which is one of the key finding of this research; that there is a relationship between forms of communities and forms of masculinities and also that the transition from one masculine identity to the other is indicative of progress and newness. Another key finding of this research is that the fortunes of the new nation are premised on polyphony, collectivity, and balance.

We have realized that the rigidity in Eugene's, Lurie, the Ruler of Aburiria and the Mayor of Kafr El-Teen's characters hinder progress in their respective spaces. Once the stiffness in their dispositions is dethroned, there is born the beginning of newness and growth. The research has also shown that postcolonial maleness is shaped by the audacity to violate the status quo in order that new identities may emerge. It is important to mention that the research has also shown that masculinity is not 'male' experience. It encompasses all forms of experiences that are heroic and liberating regardless of sex. The characters of Nyawira in Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Wizard of the Crow,* Kambili in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus,* Lucy in Coetzee's *Disgrace* and Zakeya in El-Sadaawi's *God Dies by the Nile* become crucial as far the politics of new times is concerned and therefore it will be limiting to deny them their masculine identity based on their sex.

Another important finding of this study is that apart from the opportunity the theory of Performative Masculinity offers in terms of how it allows us to trace the pattern of progression in relation to masculine performances, the categorization it offers as far as the tripartite scale is concerned is limited.

For example, the theory posits that orthodox masculinity is characterized by braveness, stoicism, dominance, among other traditional hegemonic notions. The study has however shown that orthodoxy has a colonial inclination. In other words, while we acknowledge the traits of the new man as essentials for building the new nation, then orthodoxy which is symbolic of the rigidity of the colonial heritage must include all forms of imperial behaviours including Eurocentricism, religious fanaticism and racist dispositions as the analysis offered in this thesis establishes.

One of the greatest challenges I found while undertaking this research was the dearth of critical work on African literature and utopia. Although several scholars have looked at representations of masculinities in African literature, they have simply focused on its fluidity to the neglect of the anticipatory discourses that are therein embedded. Nevertheless, this challenge makes my research significant since it makes an important contribution to the growing scholarship on the place of utopia in African literature and postcolonial utopianism. My study is again significant because it opens up discussions on the correlation between masculine representations and spatial dynamics – in terms of how new forms of subjectivities and inter-subjectivities emerge due to the dominant-subjective structures present in any given space.

In future, I hope to examine the correlation between feminine representations, spatiality and futurity. I would also love to look at names and naming practices and how they intimate the future of Africa.

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