

**THE AESTHETICS OF DISCONTENT AND DISSIDENCE IN LESEGO  
RAMPOLOKENG'S *BLACKHEART: EPILOGUE TO INSANITY* (2004) AND  
*WHITEHEART: PROLOGUE TO HYSTERIA* (2005)**

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### **Declaration**

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted for award of a degree in any other university or any other award:

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## **Dedication**

To all Mothers:

May they find true rebirth

In their daughters,

May they be revered –

Not with ripping

But with true veneration.

### **Acknowledgement**

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### **Operational Definition of Terms**

**Aesthetics:** the literariness and philosophical appeal in the two novels under examination which enable Rampolokeng to communicate the grotesque body resultant from the subjection to systemic racism of apartheid in his society in a way that disrupts habitual perception while giving new perspective(s) and insight(s) on apartheid as a lived experience.

**Discontent:** dissatisfaction (lack or desire) due to social injustices still embedded in the language of the state apparatuses that prop[ped] systemic racism of apartheid.

**Dissidence:** theorized in this study as phantasmagoria or confused dreamlike state in which the subject tries to negotiate with desire/ lack caused by dissatisfaction emanating from systemic racism of apartheid.

**Textual resistance:** deployment of discourse to counter oppressive forces embedded in the language and psychology of the state apparatuses used to perpetuate social injustices.

**State Apparatuses:** as per Althusian Marxism these are institutions used by the state to control her subjects either through ideological programming or coercion; they include familial, pedagogical, religious, judicial and military structures.

**Jouissance:** the desire that can never be fully satisfied even when our demands are met which makes us feel there is something more that we should have experienced.

**(Post) apartheid:** the lived experience of Apartheid which reverberates in the psyche of the subject in Rampolokeng's novelistic universe of *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart* due to systemic racism being perpetuated through State Apparatuses despite the official closure of this discriminative governmentalism in South Africa in the 1990s.

**Abbreviations**

*B/H – Blackheart*

*W/H – Whiteheart*

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the motifs of discontent and dissidence in the two novels by the South African poet, playwright and novelist Lesego Rampolokeng. The study is based on the premise that black South African writers use literature as a vehicle for self-expression to communicate the traumatic pain of systemic racism of apartheid as a lived experience that still influences the way black South Africans relate with themselves and with others whose existence is shaped by the psychological affect of apartheid. The primary goal is to demonstrate fictionalized discontent and dissidence as social metaphors deployed by Rampolokeng to communicate the aberrations of apartheid and to show their connectivity to the existential realities of black subject especially at the linguistic and psychological levels. The study employs the psychoanalytic theory to analyze the two novels in order to unearth their fictionalized resistance and its significance at the level of themes. The theoretical framework will lean on the connection between language and psychoanalysis as posited by Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva and Melanie Klein. This study employs textual analysis as the methodology for collecting, organizing, interpreting and analyzing data on the social metaphors of discontent and dissidence from the two novels. Many studies have been carried out on Rampolokeng's poetry but little on his two novels which are the concern of this study. Consequently, the study widens the critical horizons by which Rampolokeng's literary works can be read and interpreted. By approaching the two novels under the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence to communicate the common themes, the study underscores the insistence, relevance and commitment to social justice of this South African writer making him an important voice in both literature and reality emanating out of South Africa.

**Key words:** Rampolokeng, Protest literature, Psychoanalysis, Textual resistance, Apartheid.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION: CONTEXTUALIZING LESEGO RAMPOLOKENG

celebration of humanity is my quest  
 blessed is the god who grants this request  
 let them who bar this incur the wrath of humankind  
 let the tide of time leave them behind  
 (Rampolokeng 1990: 81)

#### 1.1 Background to the study

Lesego Rampolokeng's literary expression, as suggested by the epigram above, appears to be a deliberate deployment of aesthetics meant to critically communicate lived human experiences as well as to philosophise being and the complexities of celebration of humanity. Following the critical commitment of literariness and philosophical appeal communicated in the epigram, this study sets out to examine the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence in Lesego Rampolokeng's *Blackheart: Epilogue to Insanity* (2004) and *Whiteheart: Prologue to Hysteria* (2005). Aesthetics is a problematic term since it does not have a fixed meaning that can be used across disciplines such as historical, philosophical and literary contexts. In effect, critics such as J. M. Coetzee and Lewis Nkosi have pointed out the absence of the aesthetic dimension in Black South African literature written during the apartheid era. In *Literary Prospects in "Post-Apartheid" South Africa*, Jabulani Mkhize observes that Coetzee lamented in his "Jerusalem Prize Acceptance Speech" of 1987 that South African literature was in bondage due to its preoccupation with elementary relations of contestation, domination and subjugation giving it the character of the literature one would expect people to write from a prison (171). Mkhize's observation implies that Black South African literature written during the apartheid era was more of

political resistance rather than creative writing meant to give pleasure and appeal to the sensibilities of its readers. Mkhize's "Literary prospects in 'Post-Apartheid' South Africa" tries to theorize on the literary direction for South African writers after the ban on apartheid in the 1990s culminating in the 1994 General Elections.

Theorizing on aesthetics, this study itemizes two important latitudes of critical engagement: literariness and philosophical appeal. Reviewing David Davies *Aesthetics and Literature*, Jukka Mikkonen observes that "as literary works of art are both linguistic and aesthetic objects, they are generally examined primarily as subjects of the philosophy of language or artistic works that belong to the realm of aesthetics (116). It follows then that for this study, aesthetics is conceived as literariness and philosophical appeal that enables Rampolokeng to pleurably communicate the grotesque body of systemic racism of apartheid in his two novels under study in a way that disrupts habitual perception while giving new perspective(s) and insight(s) on discontent and dissidence against social injustices operating through the state apparatuses that prop(ped) apartheid. In *An Aesthetics of Dissidence: Reinaldo Arenas and The Politics of Rewriting*, Maureen Spillane Murov observes that for Arenas the most important element in a literary text "[is] the prominent element of resistance that expresses itself through the aesthetics of writing in general and rewriting in particular" (133-148). Subsequently, the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence in this study should be understood within the potential of literary texts to use linguistic and philosophical appeal to rewrite earlier texts, appropriate contexts and challenge perspectives in dominant tropes in order to resist subjugation and social injustices.

Dissidence is theorized in this study as phantasmagoria. In *Illusions Past and Future: The Phantasmagoria and its Specters*, Tom Gunning observes that the term

‘phantasmagoria’ has “a vivid and dramatic historical origin” (1). It started in Paris in the 1790s as a form of popular entertainment which used a concealed magic lantern to project phantoms in a darkened room in order to astonish the audience as they saw reality dissolve into a ghostly form(s) right under their eyes. By using slides with varying themes and format, phantasmagoria evolved into intellectual and aesthetics domains. Fragmentations in Rampolokeng’s literary works are perceived in this study as ‘literary slides’ which Rampolokeng deploys to project abject images meant to challenge the official sanitized perceptions of state apparatuses that prop[ped] apartheid.

This study locates itself within the South African post-apartheid fiction – the literature in prose written after 1990, when apartheid was abolished in South Africa. The focus is on Lesego Rampolokeng; a South African poet, playwright and novelist who came to prominence in the 1990s due to his blunt and unflinching examination of social degradation and oppression in his society through his works. He has written several poetry collections: *Horns for Hondo* (1990), *Talking Rain* (1993) and *The Bavino Sermons* (1999), which have won him an African Kwanzaa Award. He has also written: *End-beginnings* (1998), *Blue V's* (1998), *The Second Chapter* (2003) and most recently *Head on Fire* (2012). His play *Fanon’s Children* was performed at Cape Town’s Baxter Theater in 2002 (Poetry Foundation, ‘Lesego Rampolokeng’). He has also written two novels: *Blackheart: Epilogue to Insanity* (2004), and *Whiteheart: Prologue to Hysteria* (2005). Focussing on these two prosaic works, the concern of this study is to explore how Rampolokeng communicates discontent and dissidence against social oppression of the blacks perpetuated through the language

and psychology of the state apparatuses in a post-apartheid society. The context of the fictive society in his two novels provides the interpretive socius.

The topic of this study partly stems from some of the audacious statements made by Rampolokeng concerning his role as an artist. Frank Eisenhuth notes that Rampolokeng sums up his artistic goal as follows: “Whether [it] pleases the kings and princes of this earth is absolutely of no importance to me” (“Artist Biography”). This statement makes this study curious to know the aesthetics that would emanate from this kind of rather blunt, unexpected attitudinal or nihilistic abandonment. Commenting on his interview with Rampolokeng, Douglas Valentine observes that Rampolokeng, “expresses the outrage black South Africans still feel over the horrors of apartheid forced on them by white supremacists” (“Weekend Edition”). Valentine’s observation implies that apartheid is a lived experience and that it continues to be a critical concern for writers despite its apparent official closure in the 1990s as portrayed in Rampolokeng’s literary expression.

Moreover, Beate-Ursula Endriss notes that for Rampolokeng:

Catholicism wants to make people sterile and clean. Bodily functions, whole sexuality, are associated with shame. The Virgin Mary is this totally untouched figure. Not to mention the halo above the head of the tiny, oh sweet, child: complete purity. When we look at the role religion plays in oppression throughout the world ... even apartheid was vindicated using the Bible. The colour of my skin – which I consider beautiful – is associated with excrement. I have to ask myself where that comes from. The answer is the Catholic Church. (“Rap-Master in the Extreme”)

This statement expresses dissatisfaction at the way religion has been used to subjugate the blacks. The term “the blacks” is used in this study as Frantz Fanon does in *Black Skin, White Masks* to mean “every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality” (9). Religion is one of the state apparatuses used to construct ‘blackness’ as a means of social oppression through the psychology in liturgical textual subjection of Africans, Asians and other minority groups in South Africa – in fact, the world over. As Rampolokeng’s texts under study reveal, religion – as a state apparatus – is used to create an excremental vision which subjugates the blacks at the symbolic as well as psychological levels.

Mark Waller observes that Rampolokeng uses negativity in a way that wakes people to the oppressive circumstances humanity is made to go through and that author insists that he does not celebrate negativity in the society but is bent to eliminate evil which imprisons the human soul:

I’ve never celebrated nor embraced negativity in my life. Every single thing I have tried to do or written has come out of a need to actually eradicate or wipe out whatever it is that could seek to stand out there and destroy the soul of other people (“Rampolokeng: Ranting at Fat Arses”)

Here, Rampolokeng clearly states his commitment to social justice. He expresses dissatisfaction at the oppressive tendencies of the state apparatuses in his apartheid society. It is clear that his chief goal of writing is to dissent against the social forces that subjugate the blacks.

Rampolokeng uses language in a peculiar way in order to express aesthetic beauty in his society despite its subjection and humiliation through the juridical,

religious, pedagogical and other structures of domination. Endriss notes that Rampolokeng writes about the grotesque nature of beauty in his society:

People like things that are beautiful. I don't write about beautiful things. When you see how teenagers attack a man who sells milk and hack off his arms to slurp yoghurt from his open wounds, that's nothing beautiful. How can people like it when I write about things like that? The Nobel Prize winner for literature, Nadine Gordimer, wanted to drag me off to her personal analyst; she reckoned I was sick. Is it me who's sick, or the things I write about? ("Rap-Master in the Extreme")

This text shows that the language Rampolokeng uses in his literary works is meant to aesthetically communicate the "insanity" and "hysteria" in his society which are occasioned by social injustices. As one of Francis Imbuga's characters observes in a different context, "when the madness of an entire nation disturbs a solitary mind, it is not enough to say the man is mad" (31). Rampolokeng is not a mad writer but his writing reveals that he is extremely disturbed by the execrable social injustices portrayed in the fictive society of his novelistic world.

In reality, madness is a social construct of the state by which the subject is interpellated in order to perpetuate social injustice. Interpellation, as a concept, is associated in particular with the philosopher Louis Althusser. In *Ideology State Apparatuses, Consumerism, and U.S. Capitalism: Lessons for the Left*, Richard D. Wol notes that Althusser distinguished two sets of apparatuses that the state uses to gain control over the subject. The first, he called Repressive State Apparatuses (RSAs) which uses coercion such as the police to control the subject, and the second, Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) such as the church which construct identities and "call" the subject to fill them (1-6). ISAs operate in a veiled way which makes the subject to think that they are the ones independently constructing their own identities.

While RSAs use physical confinement and punishment as tools of power to control the subject, ISAs imprison the subject psychologically through programming dogmas and indoctrination without necessarily using any physically-oriented coercion. Actually, ISAs make the subject to submit themselves to the psychological cell in a celebratory mood since the subject is not aware that they are being psychologically manipulated. Both ISAs and RSAs ultimately maneuver the subject at the level of psyche. This study examines both forms of hegemonic control of the subject as signifiers creating discontent and dissidence in the subject described in Rampolokeng's two novels.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the literariness and philosophical appeal of the social metaphors of discontent and dissidence as expressed by Rampolokeng in his two novels under examination is worth pursuing in this study.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Although institutionalized Apartheid came to a closure in South Africa in the 1990s, its aberration continues to restructure the way the Blacks relate with themselves and with others who are a product of this governance framework. The problem of this study is to examine how Rampolokeng uses the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence to communicate the dissatisfaction and dissent of the Blacks resultant from subjugation which is still embedded in the language of the state apparatuses that prop[ped] apartheid as portrayed in his two novels under examination. The ultimate goal of this study is to establish how stylistic strategies deployed in the two novels aesthetically communicate discontent and dissidence against the social injustices perpetuated by systemic racism of apartheid.

### 1.3 Objectives of the study

This study hopes to fulfill the following three objectives:

- 1) To examine how the oppressive social forces operating through the State Apparatuses in the society portrayed in *Blackheart (B/ H)* and *Whiteheart (W/ H)* instigate discontent and dissidence.
- 2) To investigate how Rampolokeng uses the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence in *B/ H* and *W/ H* to project abject images from the lived experience of Apartheid into the psyche of the subject in order to challenge social oppression being perpetuated through State Apparatuses.
- 3) To establish how the deployment of stylistic strategies in the two novels under study aesthetically communicates discontent and dissidence against the subjection of the Blacks to systemic racism of Apartheid.

### 1.4 Research questions

The following questions help to examine the objectives of this study in order to ensure that what it sets out to do is achieved:

- 1) How do the oppressive social forces operating through the State Apparatuses of the society portrayed in *B/ H* and *W/ H* instigate discontent and dissidence?
- 2) How does Rampolokeng use the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence in *B/ H* and *W/ H* to project abject images from the lived experience of Apartheid into the psyche of the subject to challenge social oppression being perpetuated through State Apparatuses?
- 3) How does the deployment of stylistic strategies in the two novels under study aesthetically communicate discontent and dissidence against the subjection of the Blacks to systemic racism of Apartheid?

### 1.5 Research assumptions

This study makes the following assumptions:

- 1) That the oppressive social forces operating through the State Apparatuses of the society depicted in *B/ H* and *W/ H* instigate discontent and dissidence.
- 2) That Rampolokeng uses the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence in *B/ H* and *W/ H* to project abject images from the lived experience of Apartheid into the psyche of the subject in order to challenge social oppression.
- 3) That the deployment of stylistic strategies in *B/ H* and *W/ H* aesthetically communicates discontent and dissidence against the subjection of the Blacks to systemic racism of Apartheid.

### 1.6 Justification of the study

Many critics and scholars have studied the literary works of Rampolokeng as a performance poet and have pointed out that the violence and Catholicism of his childhood inform his blunt, unflinching examination of degradation and oppression in his society at the level of style (Eisenhuth, “Artist Biography”). Rampolokeng has been studied extensively as a poet within the discourse of resistance and liberation from colonial racism and apartheid. Furthermore, Eisenhuth notes that Rampolokeng “increasingly rejects this limited categorization of his work” (“Artist Biography”). Consequently, this study is interested in exploring the author not as a poet but as a novelist committed to social justice not just in South Africa, before and after Apartheid, but globally through the textual expression in his two novels also. In “Dub Poetry: Lesego Rampolokeng,” Flora Veit-Wild notes that Rampolokeng calls himself, a “doctor of rap, rap-surgeon come to operate” in raps 31 and 41 (33). As Veit-Wild observes, Rampolokeng uses combative poetry as a surgical procedure to

cut into the ‘ailing flesh of society’ in order to expose, analyze and expunge the ‘cancerous cells’ maligning humanity (33). Engaging with the afore-mentioned criticism, notifies us of a lacuna. It is one this study attempts to fill, by establishing how Rampolokeng carries out ‘surgery’ on his society using his prosaic mode of communication to expose, analyze and lampoon the social evil emanating from systemic racism of Apartheid which is perpetuated through the Althusserian State Apparatuses. Approaching his novels, *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart*, generically, the discourse of his protest tradition will be examined stylo-thematically under the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence. Such an examination contributes in widening the critical horizons that offer interpretation of this unique South African writer.

### **1.7 Scope and delimitation**

Rampolokeng is an accomplished poet, who has written several collections of poetry: *Horns for Hondo* (1990), *Talking Rain* (1993), *End-beginnings* (1998), *Blue V's* (1998), *The Bavino Sermons* (1999), *The Second Chapter* (2003) and *Head on Fire* (2012). He has also written a play entitled *Fanon's Children* (2002) and the two novels under study: *Blackheart* (2004) and *Whiteheart* (2005). This study is delimited to Rampolokeng's two novels to date (2016). One is a sequel to the other, and their aesthetics is closely connected. The scope of this study is guided and girded by an examination of how the author uses the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence in his two novels to challenge the systemic racism of Apartheid. We note his exceptional use of the two works as a literary means of expressing his commitment to social justice in the then society under Apartheid. The study engages the psychoanalytic theory to unearth the social message coded in the two novels. The psychoanalytic approach on language as posited by Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva and Melanie Klein

is invoked as an interpretive grid for the analysis of the works under study. This refreshing post-structuralist perspective is itself an effort worth mention, away from the other Rampolokeng's studies mentioned above.

### **1.8.1 Literature review**

Review of texts written on systemic racism of apartheid contextualizes this study in terms of themes, aesthetics, characterization and theoretical framework. The ground for the choice of literature is guided by the pertinent aesthetic and theoretical concerns raised in the research topic. These are the motifs of restlessness and protest as structured within Rampolokeng's textual expression of the social forces in the context of systemic racism of Apartheid.

Many studies have been done on Rampolokeng's literary works. In *Verses, Subverses and Subversions in Contemporary Postcolonial Poetry: The arts of Resistance in the Works of Linton Kwesi Johnson and Lesego Rampolokeng* (2009), J. L. França Junior notes that "the main targets of Rampolokeng's writings are South Africa's social, political and racialist problems, as well as corruption, injustices and despotic governments across the world" (125). He also observes that Rampolokeng's pugnacious attitude in his writing is justified by the historical facts of colonialism and Apartheid as well as the protest tradition noticeable in many a postcolonial Of the Twentieth Century. He draws a very important conclusion that the linguistic means which Rampolokeng uses to counterattack colonialism and apartheid also buttresses his "distort[ion] [of] dominant speeches by means of mimicking and reversing the hegemonic discourse [through] rewriting, punning and creolizing the English language, as well as depicting social debasement through obscene, violent and iconoclastic imagery" (126). França Junior's observation indicates that Rampolokeng

deploys discourse to counter the colonial discourse, and hence textual resistance is one of the literary vehicles to be investigated when analyzing Rampolokeng's literary works. França Junior's critical examination of Rampolokeng's literary works appears to be delimited to the author's poetic expression and, therefore, there is a lacuna in the writer's novelistic expression of *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart*. It is this gap that the current study sets out to fill.

From Thomas William Penfold's "The Poetics of Dirty Aesthetics: Lesego Rampolokeng" in *Black Consciousness and the Politics of Writing the Nation in South Africa* (2013), a number of important inferences can be drawn. One, Penfold notes that Rampolokeng often uses violent sexual imagery, and that "sex can be interpreted as one of the most ordinary examples of love whilst conversely being an image of the human condition at its most brutal and atavistic" (218 - 219). This observation legitimates sexuality as one of the signifiers to be examined while interpreting Rampolokeng's literary works. Two, he concludes that "Rampolokeng continues to draw on the Freudian metaphor through the dual images of the eunuch and phallic stump" (220). His point is that Rampolokeng considers colonial experience and its present tendencies, neo-colonialism, as castration (loss of power) affecting the psychic well-being of South Africa and other post-colonial states. Penfold's observation enunciates that, at the level of theory, psychoanalytic theory could be used to interpret Rampolokeng's works. Three, he concludes that for Rampolokeng, religion, when misappropriated and abrogated, can be a source of violence.

Penfold avers that Rampolokeng "believes the presence of an omnipresent God is nothing more than a thinly veiled threat for people to follow the righteous path" as approved by the state and its oppressive apparatuses (221). The validity of this observation becomes evident when we consider the role of ISAs in controlling the

subject. It is, thus, perceivable why Rampolokeng rebels against the normalized puritan expectations of the Catholic Church in his literary writing. Four, like França junior, Penfold concludes that this author uses hyperbolic, colourful, and crass language in his Lyrics to “decentre, destabilize, and carnivalise the linguistic domination of English” (221). This observation points to Rampolokeng’s deployment of the discourse of dissent against the monolithic linguistic structure of power used by the State Apparatuses to propagate social injustices. It also foregrounds Rampolokeng’s commitment through his literary works to fight social domination in a racialized system that subjugates the Blacks.

In “Writing Resistance on the Margins of Power: Rampolokeng’s poetry and the Restoration of Community in South African,” James Ogude marks Rampolokeng as a serious writer committed to social justice in his postcolonial and post-apartheid society. Ogude locates Rampolokeng’s poetry within the tradition of what Edward Said calls resistance which aims to “reconstitute a shattered community, to save or restore the sense of community against all pressures of the colonial system” (252). Ogude’s observation infers that Rampolokeng uses literary means to try and salvage his society from the shambles of apartheid. He observes that “for Rampolokeng, the history of apartheid South Africa has been a history of struggle over the cultural protocols of imagination, of intellectual and figurative means of seeing and rethinking relations of domination” (253). This observation is relevant to this study in that Rampolokeng seems to have “gone out of his mind” to recreate the narrative of apartheid in a peculiar way that has been described as “dirty aesthetics” or “crass language” and “obscene, violent imagery” in some of the literature so far reviewed. Ogude contends that Rampolokeng “subverts the simple binary polarities we tend to associate with oppositional narratives because his poems seek to transform and

humanize those relations of power that have kept his people in servitude” (254). Thus, Rampolokeng’s literary work is bent on freeing his people from the normative imaginaries deployed by systemic racism of Apartheid which perpetuates social injustices in his society. As Ogude notes, Rampolokeng has something new and worthwhile to add to the corpus of resistance literature:

It seems to me that Rampolokeng’s poetry of the last few years, while continuing the tradition of resistance poetry that has tended to characterize black poetry in South Africa, redefines resistance and seeks to reach out for new aesthetics and political horizons. (254)

This assertion affirms Rampolokeng’s relevance as a literary writer since he seems to be committed to reaching out to his society with new literary strategies where the old ones have failed or seem to have failed to bear communicative fruit. About Rampolokeng’s *Talking Rain* (1993) Ogude notes that the poems “show a melancholic poet displaying something akin to angst, but he still seeks redemption in poetry” (261). This observation suggests the suitability of Melanie Klein’s psychoanalytic arguments on melancholy for the interpretation of Rampolokeng’s literary works.

Flora Veit-Wild’s “Time’s Gone Mad: Rhyming & Ranting of Lesego Rampolokeng” in *Writing Madness: Borderlines of the Body in African Literature* (2006), draws important conclusions on Rampolokeng’s use of language to protest against social injustices in his society. Veit-Wild notes that in a typically post-colonial way Rampolokeng rhymes “to shoot the British with the bullets that are english” which implies that he uses the English language in his own unconventional way in order to express discontent and protest against oppressive hegemony. She observes

that “he writes back, subverting the English language. Hence, as in all post-colonial literatures, we find two levels of language: english is parodying English, and the parody is intrinsically hybrid (33). Veit-Wild’s observation communicates the idea of textual resistance through the deployment of discourse to protest against the language of the state apparatuses which are used to prop colonial hegemony. Furthermore, Veit-Wild observes that Rampolokeng mixes languages and organizes voices from a variety of languages, ethnicities and social background which he blends into a truly hybrid consciousness. Of this “hybridity”, she writes that it “emanates from the liminality of transgressing into areas which have been prohibited for a long time both by the South African state and by official apartheid politics” (29). Veit-Wild’s observation indicates that Rampolokeng reaches out to new aesthetics in order to express discontent and dissidence against the systemic racism of Apartheid. Since her critical engagement with the author’s literary works is inclined to poetry there seems to be a gap on the writer’s prosaic works of *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart*.

In a review of “Bantu Ghost: a Stream of (black) Unconsciousness,” Mphutlane wa Bofelo notes that Rampolokeng is “recreating language, overturning idioms/ concepts/ terms, giving birth to new words and developing new proverbs to deal with ‘new’ realities” in post-apartheid South Africa. Bofelo’s observation implies that the aesthetics of writing in general, and rewriting in particular, is a form of discontent and dissidence meant to address emerging social realities. Bofelo further observes that Rampolokeng “adds a spice and puts a spin and twist to words not as an exercise in word-play but as a ‘subversive’ act of questioning slogans and rhetoric of the new dispensation” in post-apartheid South Africa. What this study infers from Bofelo is that aesthetics finds definition in both literariness and the philosophical

dimension of language. Rampolokeng uses language creatively in his works of art not just to appeal to the sensibilities of his readers, as an object of art would do, but also to engage philosophically with his readers through the texts. Bofelo observes that Rampolokeng “uses ‘uncouth’/ ‘vulgar’ language and imagery of filth/ dirt and gore [...] to highlight ravages of the new world order on the social psyche as well as the rampant corruption and moral decadence from the top echelon to the bottom-rung of society” (“Bantu Ghost”). Bofelo’s observation gives credence to the consideration of faecal matters as probable constituent of aesthetics of discontent and dissidence in this study.

In *Interpretations in Transitions: Literature and Political Transition in Malawi and South Africa in the 1990s*, Fiona Michaela Johnson Chalamanda observes that Rampolokeng brings together some of his earlier established and new poetry and pieces of prose in *Bavino Sermons* to “invariably express the ironies of a fractured post-apartheid South Africa from the position of the underprivileged” (83). Her observation legitimizes the proposition in this study that Rampolokeng deploys ‘literary slides’ in his literary works to stage phantasmagoric discontent and dissidence against the ravages of the dominant tropes of (post)apartheid on the social psyche. She notes that Bavino is “a township term for ‘everyman’ and that Rampolokeng employs it to refer to the underprivileged” (83). She argues that by qualifying “Sermons” with “Bavino” Rampolokeng is challenging the monologic speech associated with religious authority.

Further, Chalamanda observes that Lacanian theory of the unconscious ‘other’ reveals that “Rampolokeng is, in his use of word play, seeking out the subversive ‘other’ in language, finding alternative repressed meanings” (87).

Subsequently, Lacanian psychoanalytic theory could be suitable for interpreting Rampolokeng's literary works being examined in this study. In addition, she points out that Julia Kristeva's theoretical concept of the abject would be useful in understanding why Rampolokeng's transgressions against dominant tropes in his literary works "are seen as repulsive and obscene by official discourse or what [Kristeva] terms as the Symbolic Order" (88). She argues that "Rampolokeng's poems with their many figures of the abject could therefore be read as deliberate lapses or transgressions of the new official order" (88). In effect, Rampolokeng's transgressions fall under aesthetics. Finally, she observes that "references in Rampolokeng's poems to rape, diarrhea, gunshot wounds and filthy waste and sewage that flow down open drains of deprived townships, can be read as socially referential instances of the abject" (88). The observation gives credence to the use of the term 'grotesque body' to describe the aberrations of Apartheid. The gap that appears to emerge from review of Chalamanda's critical examination of Rampolokeng's works is the writer's deployment of abject images in his novelistic world and the aesthetic mode he uses to challenge social oppression in *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart*.

In "Neither History nor Freedom will Absolve us: on the Ethical Dimensions of the Poetry of Lesego Rampolokeng," Khwezi Mkhize observes that Rampolokeng's literary writing "has been one of a relentless questioning of the meaning of freedom and the impact of violence on human agency" (179). Mkhize's observation legitimizes the terms "discontent" and "dissidence" for this study since "a relentless questioning" implies dissatisfaction and dissent against particular social realities. Mkhize describes Rampolokeng's poetic strategies as a literary means of coming to terms with the emergent social realities and questioning their sensibilities.

What is evident from this literature thus reviewed is that most of the studies done on Rampolokeng's literary works are mainly on his poetry but little is said about his published novels. It is also evident that Rampolokeng is a writer worth studying as he appears to be committed to social justice in his society through his literary expression.

### **1.8.2 Theoretical framework**

This study engages the psychoanalytic theory, in its Post-structuralist mode, to establish how Rampolokeng uses language to express dissatisfaction (lack) with and to dissent (fantasize) against systemic racism of apartheid in his society. Since literary aesthetics forms the heart of this study, the theoretical focus will be on the connection between language and psychoanalysis. There are many psychoanalytic approaches but this study will lean on the Lacanian approach because it is a revision of the classical psychoanalytic theory. Moreover, of greater significance for this study, Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic insights are invoked to reiterate his attempt to show how psychology is embedded in the language of the State Apparatuses which perpetuate social oppression.

To begin with, the connection between language and psychoanalysis is well illustrated by Lacan's idea of "lost object of desire" or "objet petit a". His argument is that the Symbolic Order involves the experience of separation of the infant from its mother since language brings in the concepts of others. The child therefore experiences traumatic loss of its union with its mother. In *Critical Theory Today*, Lois Tyson lucidly explains the point being made: "the use of language in general, in fact, implies a loss, a lack, because I wouldn't need words as stand-ins for things if I still felt that I was an inseparable part of those things" (29). In fact, metaphoric language

involves substituting one thing for another in order to communicate that which lacks signification without the other. Therefore, Lacan's "lost object of desire" will help this study to gain insight on Rampolokeng's social metaphors of discontent and dissidence.

In *Jacques Lacan*, Sean Homer notes that Lacan conceptualizes the relationship between language and psychoanalysis by combining Freud's theory with the Linguistics theorization of Claude Levi-Strauss and Roman Jakobson (38). Lacan maintains that the unconscious is structured like language. For Lacan the unconscious becomes the signifier and the conscious the signified. In other words, the infantile experience that is incomprehensible or traumatic is nonetheless retained by memory unconsciously and is active in signification even in contexts that do not seem to be remotely connected to it. Hence, the connection between language and psychoanalysis can be expressed as the 'metonymic desire' which is construed from metonymy in language and displacement in psychoanalysis. As Homer posits:

Jakobson pointed out that metaphor is an act of *substitution* of one term for another and thus corresponded to the paradigmatic axis, or the axis of selection. Metonymy is a relation of contiguity, in that one term refers to another because it is associated or adjacent to it, and therefore it corresponds to the syntagmatic axis, or the axis of combination. Lacan saw in Jakobson's structural model of metaphor and metonymy a direct correspondence with Freud's processes of dream work: condensation and displacement. (42 - 43)

This theoretical argument in which Lacan combines Jacobson's linguistics with Freud's dream work will help the study to gain insight on social censorship and separation which substitute or displace desire creating a confused dream-like state in

the subject – phantasmagoria – as the subject tries to negotiate with deficits and deficiencies of existential purview.

Lacan combines Freud's Oedipal triangulation with Claude Levi-Strauss and Roman Jakobson's linguistics to explain the relationship between sexuality and language. Lacan's conceptualization is hoped to help this study to unearth how Rampolokeng deploys sexuality in his two novels to communicate discontent and dissidence against the grotesque body of systemic racism of apartheid. It has already been noted in the statement of the problem that the family, judiciary, school and the church are some of the state apparatuses used to perpetuate social oppression. Lacan's combination of Freud's sexuality and Linguistics will help this study to clearly understand how these State Apparatuses are used to subjugate the Blacks through language and consciousness. The Black subject becomes fixed by association with unifying social structures – the law of One or the Father; that is, the closed ideological systems and structures of social domination (Homer, 55 - 56). The law of the Father aids this study to gain insight on how patriarchal frameworks embedded in State Apparatuses are used to perpetuate social oppression as portrayed in Rampolokeng's novelistic world.

Kristeva further develops Lacan's conceptualization of Freud's Oedipal Triangulation and Linguistics through her argument that language is a signifying process involving a speaking subject which brings to the fore its heterogeneous nature. Toril Moi notes that according to Kristeva the heterogeneous force of language is what makes it a productive structure (1). While Freud argues that sexual identification with and affection for the mother and the father is what influences choice of object, Moi observes that for Kristeva, "the subject exists only inasmuch as

it identifies with an ideal Other who is the speaking other, the other in so far as he speaks” (252). This theoretical argument will help this study to investigate how the black subject interacts with their existential realities within the social context of systemic racism of apartheid as expressed in *B/ H* and *W/ H*. In addition, Melanie Klein’s theoretical argument on projective identification will enable this study to examine the emotive or affective engagements in the two novels. Her argument is that identification is sustained by the ‘hostile’ as well as the guilt-ridden desire to take the place of a persecuting mother out of envy.

Julia Kristeva and Melanie Klein’s theoretical arguments will be used to try and overcome the limitations of Lacanian signification model. Kristeva adds to the Lacanian model of signification by implying that the Mirror Stage is not fixed. On the contrary, it can be revisited even after the infant reaches the Symbolic Stage. In *Desire in Language*, Kristeva observes that “the semiotic with maternal ties seems to be the furthest we can reach when we try to imagine and understand the frontiers between nature, or ‘physis’, and meaning” (qtd. in Fletcher, 43). Her argument will help this study to gain insight on the “mother” as the incarnation of the semiotic.

In “Julia Kristeva’s Psychoanalytic Work” Rachel Widawsky notes that Kristeva refers to the semiotic as *Khora*, a Greek concept from Plato signifying the preexistent status of things (62). In this study, the preexistent nature of things translates to that stage when the Imaginary or the Symbolic are not necessary for signification. This interpretation will help this study to understand where the subject is coming from and is hoped to put in focus the metaphorical discontent and dissidence in Rampolokeng’s textual expression in his two novels under examination.

More specifically, the psychoanalytic theoretical arguments on language posited by Lacan, Kristeva and Klein will enable this study to examine how

Rampolokeng uses the social metaphors of discontent (desire) and dissidence (phantasmagoria) to communicate the broad themes of insanity in *B/H* and hysteria in *W/H*. In *The Powers of Horror*, Kristeva observes that “the abject is radically excluded and draws me towards the place where meaning collapses” (2). She explains that the abject is the non-symbolized pre-linguistic experience of loss which is close to fear. She compares it to the “phobic object that shows up at the place of a non-object state and assumes all the mishaps of drives” (35). She argues that when the abject recurs in our life as repulsion and or fascination, it represents the threat that meaning is breaking down, that identity and order are disturbed. She uses this concept to explain borderline or psychotic states. This theoretical argument will help this study to gain insight on the borderline issues in the social context of systemic racism of apartheid as depicted in *B/H*.

Secondly, the theoretical arguments on hysteria posited by the three psychoanalysts will help this study to understand how ‘whiteness’ as a signifier creates hysteria in the signification of the black subject within the social context of systemic racism of apartheid described in *W/H*. At the heart of the argument is that an infantile experience that is either incomprehensible or traumatic is retained by memory unconsciously and reactivated at a later time in a different unpredictable context producing new signification and new meanings where politics of race and racism; as well as the politics of inclusion and exclusion are at the head of power contestation and its subversion.

Further, the idea of Death drive originally founded by Freud and later revised by Lacan will enable this study to gain insight on the negotiation between the Symbolic (law) and Desire (the Imaginary) which are quite important in creating existential realities of the subject. Homer observes that:

Clinical experiences revealed to Freud that subjects compulsively repeated painful or traumatic experiences in direct contradiction to the primacy of the pleasure principle. Freud called this beyond of pleasure ‘Death Drive’ and suggested that the primary purpose of life is to find the correct path to death. Lacan followed Freud in associating the death with repetition, but he argued that we are not driven towards death by death. It is the loss that drives life through desire. (89)

From this argument, it is clear that lack creates fantasy; and this study hopes to use the argument to gain insight on how lack (discontent) leads to dissidence against lost freedoms in *B/H* and *W/H*.

Homer is of the view that racism emanates from jouissance, a psychoanalytic concept used by Lacan to show that desire can never be truly attained:

As subjects we are driven by insatiable desires. As we seek to realize our desires we will inevitably be disappointed – the satisfaction we achieve is never quite enough; we always have the sense that there is something more, something more we could have had. This something more that would satisfy and fulfill us beyond the meagre pleasure we experience is jouissance. We do not know what it is but assume that it must be there because we are constantly dissatisfied. (90)

This theoretical argument indicates that racism is structured by the discourse of the Other. The subject lacks jouissance and therefore attributes it with the Other. The subject attempts to exclude the Other in order to recover the jouissance which the Other is believed to have stolen. Homer further explains that “what we assume the Other – be they Jewish, black, gypsies or gay – has stolen from us is our jouissance” (90). The significant point for this study is the implication that racism has nothing to do with colour but everything to do with desire – colour is just a signifier for communicating lack and exclusion of the Other.

In conclusion, psychoanalytic theoretical perspectives and adumbration are invoked to help this study to investigate the psyche of the Black subject in the social context of systemic racism of Apartheid, especially as revealed through the Black subject's discontent and dissidence against the State Apparatuses for perpetuating social injustices as portrayed in the textual expression of *B/H* and *W/H*.

### **1.9 Research methodology**

This study involves close reading of *B/H* and *W/H* in order to identify data on the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence as used by Rampolokeng in his two novels to express dissatisfaction with and protest against social oppression in (post)apartheid South Africa. The purpose of the study is not to quantify data but to establish its nature and organization within the two novels and how well it communicates dissatisfaction and protest against the grotesque body of systemic racism of Apartheid. In all the stages, therefore, the study engages the qualitative research methodology as opposed to a quantitative one. While reviewing literature both within-study and between-study analysis is used to investigate conclusions and inferences made in order to establish their relevance, and to note any gaps in the literature.

The study is library oriented which means that textual analysis is the main methodology for collecting, organizing and interpreting the information. This methodology is appropriate for this study because, as Allan Mckee notes in *Textual Analysis: A Beginner's Guide*, "textual analysis is a data-gathering process that enables researchers to understand how human beings make sense of who they are, and of how they fit into the world they live" (1). The method is scholarly, engaging right from the selection of texts for the study, to the collection, analysis and interpretation of data. According to Norman Fairclough in *Analyzing Discourse*, "a key function of

texts is to represent other entities – such as ideas, beliefs or actions” (27). This function informs the selection of *B/H* and *W/H* as the texts under examination in this study. The two novels represent the peculiarities of systemic racism of apartheid in the fictive society depicted by Rampolokeng.

According to Greg Philo, there is a distinctive discursive moment between encoding and decoding of texts (194). It is during such a moment that the metonymic desire and metaphorical engagements in the two novels under examination offer the study rich grounds for interpretative textual analysis. The aim of the methodology is to get beneath the surface (denotative) meanings of the two novels and examine the more implicit (connotative) social meanings. In effect, textual analysis enables this study to describe the content, structure, and functions of the social messages contained in *B/H* and *W/H*. Through the descriptive and interpretive tools of textual analysis the study hopes to establish the characteristics of the written messages in the two novels such as the stylistic strategies used by Rampolokeng to communicate the oddities of systemic racism of apartheid in his fictive society. The forcefulness and effectiveness of Rampolokeng’s textual expression in his two novels will be determined through rhetorical criticism while the thematic concerns will be brought to the fore through content analysis.

Greg Philo disapproves of “texts-only analysis” as this method does not integrate the context of production or audience reactions (194). To overcome this limitation, relevant secondary information that builds the social context of Rampolokeng’s production of his two novels will be sought from both scholarly Websites and print sources.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 EXCREMENTAL VISION AND THE AESTHETICS OF DISCONTENT IN

#### *B/ H AND W/ H*

‘Call me NOT a MAN,  
for neither am I a  
man in the eyes of the law,  
Nor am I a man in the eyes of my  
Fellow man...’  
(Mthuthuzeli Matshoba)

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the epigram above, the subject appears to experience psychological deficiencies due to the way fellow humans use the symbolic to exclude them from humanity. “Call me NOT a MAN,” could be interpreted as an expression of deep-seated discontent at being excreted from the human body politic. Excremental vision is built on the disgust people feel over bodily secretions and excretions. Humans distance themselves from scatological categories such as faeces, vomit, spittle, semen and blood despite being instrumental in defining their own bodies and running those bodies as systems. When a group of people desires to subjugate another, there is a tendency for that group to liken the other to the scatological; and, hence, metaphorically displace their humanity with undesirable secretal matter. Excremental vision and discontent are inherently linked since human beings experience dissatisfaction when they are reduced to excrement either explicitly or through association. This chapter examines how the human subject in both *B/ Hand W/ H* is driven to discontent by the social injustices embedded in the psycho-linguistic structures of the State Apparatuses in the (post)apartheid South African society portrayed in the two novels which, apparently, is driven by the disarticulating grammar of apartheid itself.

As discussed in chapter one, the study employs Lacan's conceptualization of the relationship between language and the psyche to interpret the two novels. The study theorizes that discontent is one of the signifiers forming the body of signification involving the Mirror stage, the Symbolic stage, Secretion or Hormonal stage, Orgasmic stage, Excretion and then Discontent. For Lacan, the Mirror stage is a human developmental stage occurring between the age of six and eighteen months and it corresponds to Freud's primary narcissism in which the infant "is in love with the image of themselves and their own bodies and which precedes the love of others" (Homer, 24). Oedipus complex marks the transition from the Mirror stage to the Symbolic stage. Here, the infant experiences a traumatic loss after the infant-mother dyad is broken by the intervention of what Lacan terms the-Name-of-the-Father which is "a symbolic position that the child perceives to be the location of the mother's desire" (Homer, 53). The infant tries to recapture the lost object of desire in everything that it does; what this study terms as Secretion or Hormonal stage. Secretion leads to Orgasmic stage which involves illusory fulfilment or what is called *Jouissance* in psychoanalytic diction according to Julia Kristeva. The subject experiences lack and perceives the "other" with repulsion for apparently denying him or her opportunity to have full enjoyment in their experience. The transcendence of the ego marks the "other" as excrement in order to try and recover the apparently missing enjoyment which becomes the onset of the movement of discontent experienced by the subject in the signifying chain.

In *B/H*, the author tells the story of the blacks' discontent and dissidence against the state instigated oppression which operates through the oppressive State Apparatuses such as religion, the family, institutionalized education, juridical structures and the military. One of the characters, Bavino, is the narrator. He narrates

the blacks' ordeal in a way that appears to castigate the state and its minions with reverberations from the (post)apartheid South African Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 which appears to echo some of the sexual offenses stipulated during the Apartheid era. Oppression from all quotas of the government is imbued with a metaphoric charge of sexual perversion, perhaps, in order to communicate the gravity of oppression on humanity. In *W/H*, the story of the blacks' oppression is revealed through the child-narrator called Bavino. Generally, the metaphor of the family is used in the novelistic space to communicate the effects of psycho-sexual violence and the oppressive tendencies characteristic of the phallic mentality which tends to be used in the governing of the family. The government of souls (religion) and all other kinds of government such as the problematic of pedagogy (education) and the government of economy seem to converge in the family.

## **2.2 SALUTING GOD'S PHALLUS AND ITS ATTENDANT DISCONTENT**

Religion is, arguably, one of the State Apparatuses which permeates all sectors of life in society. Religion is a pursuit for psychological fulfilment which makes it to be a constant source of discontent. In both *B/H* and *W/H*, the narrator succinctly communicates the way religion is used as a channel of secreting and excreting the blacks in [post]apartheid South Africa from the body politics. Secretion involves the glands and it is motivated by hormonal, libidinal and salivary body zones. It is catalytic in nature and it excites the body into rigorous compulsive repetitive action(s). *B/H* starts with a metaphoric religious secretion: "a-man! a-man! a man!" the narrator observes that "some were saluting god's sex. some differed with these" (3). The narrator's observation suggests that state-operatized religion is a kind of

interpellation which sets off the subject to try and fill the ideological postings promised by this State Apparatus.

Bavino puts forth the idea of “god’s sex” (3) which is in tandem with what Achille Mbembe calls “God’s Phallus.” It is the idea that “the religious act [...] consists in activating, in a continuous manner, the god’s libido” (213). “God’s sex” or “God’s phallus” points to the primacy of the phallus in the signification system and how it relates to religion through the paternal metaphor of the “Name-of-the-Father.” The Christological affirmative “amen” used by Christians during religious exchange to mean ‘let it be’, especially during sermons, is given a twist by the narrator, “a-man!,” (3) so that it simultaneously communicates both the galvanization of God’s libido and its approval by the Christians which turns them into willing subjects of religion. The refrains squirted by the Christian subject could be perceived as the compulsive movement of desire as the subject seeks for the definitive victory over oppression – apparently covenanted in religion.

The Christian subject in *B/H* appears to experience lack of the phallus: “still others showed how long they’d been willingly subjected to porn in unlikely places” (3). Subsequently, for the narrator, they lay themselves open to the “god a father, the son and a spirit all at once triple faceted” (3) as they seem to associate the phallus with the supreme-being. The phallus, according to the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, is “a signifier of lack and sexual difference” and “it is the single indivisible signifier that anchors the chain of signification” (Homer, 54). It does not come as a surprise then that masculinity of God should indivisibly move from the Father to the Son and the Holy Spirit. For the narrator, the subject’s religious refrain, “ah-men! ah-men!,” (3) as they seek their god is comparable to the “first syllable of an acute stammerer’s speech” (3). If we graphically represent the speech of a person who stammers, there

would be many hiatuses which indicate the blockage of the movement of the signifier into the signified. The dashes in the stammerer's written speech are comparable to the hyphen in the refrain 'a-man!'

The singularity of desire appears to be communicated in the phrase 'a-man!' but the plurality of desire is expressed in the phrase "ah-men!" which means that desire can wear many faces simultaneously or in temporal difference. The Gothic God is triple-faceted which appears to refer to the Holy Trinity of God – the Name-of-the-Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It then follows that the religious act can be transposed on Lacan's 'loss and lack' experienced by an infant on entering the Symbolic Order. For Lacan, the subject experiences "Oedipal prohibition" marking the "replacement of the Desire for the Mother with the Name-of-the-Father" (Tyson, 31). The Lacanian "Name-of-the-Father" means that the symbolic law which includes religion is phallic in nature and hence a source of discontent. The symbolic law means the politics of inclusion or exclusion inaugurated when the infant learns to speak and discovers that – contrary to his belief in the mirror stage that the mother belongs to him – the mother belongs to the father. The infant is thus pitched into a traumatic feeling of separation from the mother.

In Rampolokeng's novelistic universe, characters seek religion in pursuit of something that would fill the emptiness they experience within the symbolic order. The fulfilment or enjoyment sought from religion is governed by the symbolic order and its movement is congruent with what Fink describes in "Knowledge and Jouissance" thus: "phallic Jouissance is the Jouissance that fails us, that disappoints us. It is susceptible to failure, and fundamentally misses our partner" (37). What Fink's observation means is that as subjects seek for a fulfilment partner in religion they are bound to miss him because, like the phallus, he is borne out of fantasy and

therefore he does not exist in the first place, and hence the subjects will eventually experience disgruntlement. For the narrator, religion is a kind of exposure to pornography which causes excitations in the body but is unable to satisfy the subject's desire. In *B/H*, the authorial narrator notes that while some Christians 'saluted god's sex,' there were "others [who] showed how long they'd been willingly subjected to porn in unlikely places" (3) such as the church. Showing or talking about sexual activities in an explicit way that is meant to make people sexually excited may seem to be a far-fetched idea when describing a church sermon. However, the narrator seems more interested in communicating the libidinal drive behind religion which appears to inaugurate the movement of discontent.

Consequently, the narrator puts the religious sermon taking place in "the Lord's tent" (3) side by side with a sexual activity right behind the "tent" to show that both spaces are imbued with libido as their driving force. In the above incident, the all permeating authorial narrator, Bavino, goes behind "the tent" to relieve himself having been seemingly put off by the religious orgasmic moanings in "the Lord's tent" expressed by the Christian subject in "a lay loo yeah! a lay loo yeah!", and he discovers that "religion was in refrains there too" (3). This view is reinforced when Bavino goes out and behind the tent only to find a woman on the ground moaning herself to death, "jesus! jesus!" with sexual pleasure as a man has sex with her. Disoriented and in a crisis of faith, Bavino swears, "fucking hell!" and "stepped hard on the man's pumping to heaven buttocks" (3). Bavino's discontentment with the religious is explicable when we consider what Sean Homer notes about Lacan's notion of the drive. Homer notes that "for Lacan, every drive is sexual in nature and at the same time every drive is a death drive" (76). The narrator describes the moaning woman as having "her legs spread wide as the fallen walls of Jericho for the second

coming” (3) which communicates the repetitive compulsive destructive force experienced at the level of psyche by the subject(s) of libido.

Indeed, the subject of religion is driven to discontent as portrayed by Bavino in his two novels when the somatic processes such as hunger and thirst are substituted for libido. In *B/ H*, the narrator portrays the source of the religious drive as security for somatic needs which finds representation in the psyche as faith. Bavino describes the phallic nature of religion in the expression “lord enter with us this house of the lord” (3) which is uttered by the preacher whenever he visits the house of any of the faithful irrespective of their denomination. In one of these instances, the priest is conducting a requiem for a boy who had apparently died of hunger. He works himself into the spirit of the Lord exciting some of the mourning into “writhings and wringlings and body pumpings as they embraced the holy presence. eye rolling. rump thumping. they were climaxing. ah ha! praise be to the power of the lord” (4). What is evident here is that the physical death of the boy has been replaced by a contradictory lawless abandon in the form of sexual saturnalia which creates discontent in the subject of religion narrating the happenings. The priest claims that “that boy so cold and unmoving in the grip of death in his box was holding the lord by the hand and marching with him trumpeting the holy chorus” despite the fact that he “could not sing a note to save his life while still alive” (4). The narrator seems to suggest that such a melodious life beyond death could only make sense if the boy had had, at least, some fulfilment while he was still alive. But he leads a miserable life.

Bavino observes that “alienated from cosmos’ black-heart-fire pulse swamp-senses...metal-morass spiritual abscess concrete value structures oppress mass-cause more praxis than mind packed in flesh hind flash brilliance? (79). Bavino appears to be of the opinion that the efficacy of religion lacks any practical substance potent

enough to alleviate the suffering of the oppressed black subject. The South African Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 describes “exposure or display of or causing exposure or display of genital organs, anus or female breasts to persons 18 years or older [as 'flashing']” (3). Therefore, by “flash” the narrator suggests that the way religion is used in Rampolokeng’s novelistic universe constitutes a contravention of the Blacks’ fundamental rights.

Angst, which is an extreme emotional disgruntlement, is what the reader hears from the voice of the narrator as he reports what the preacher says about the enjoyment that the unmoving boy was experiencing at the right side of Jesus. The narrator observes that “jesus offered him his blood in a chalice and that boy so cold and unmoving in his box drank deep. and his thirst was slaked and lord enter said so” (4-5). What drives the subject to a feeling of dissatisfaction is the fact that when the boy was alive nobody offered to quench his somatic thirst nonetheless now that he is dead he is offered not just any kind of drink but a chalice of Jesus’ blood. The narrator appears to be of the opinion that religion and its minions promise the Christian subject phantasmal relief which has no capacity to alleviate the desolation experienced by the subject under the harsh realities of social oppression. Bavino observes, “covenant blasphemes they are washing castrate souls in menses feeling for ruptured spleen the steam rises & drops in liberation illusion shower” (131). The narrator’s observation suggests that religion is not able to restore the potency of the oppression-vasectomised black subject since the freedoms it professes seems to be sham rather than tangible.

The emotional excess of the mourners pushes the subject (narrator) over the precipice. He is disgusted at their bacchanalia in which “they a manned and ah manned and ah lay loo yeahed until a post behind lord enter’s head sagged and

enveloped him in tarpaulin and it was the hand of god demonstrating his power and lord enter surfaced saying so” (5). The post resembles the phallus which is in compulsive repetitive crusade that represents the movement of the priest’s libido and by extension of god’s until it bursts and this releases ejaculatory waste which drives the subject into gloominess. At the same time the priest is not spared when the gates of discontent are flung wide open by the fall of libido from its orgasmic heights. Bavino observes, “but shock waves drowned the good lord’s voice and the boat of ungodliness was afloat. ‘ke dibatabata hayi tsa tambo hayi hayi!!!’ (dibatabata do not deal with the strings not not!!!) that became a ‘silindele wena yoo baba tambo sinigez’ibazooka!!!’(We expect you yoo thread sinigez’ibazooka!!!) (“Google Translate”) all the fire of hell!” (5). Bavino’s observation implies that the minions of religion spell out special religious conditions that are supposed to limit the moral conduct of the Christian subject. However, the underlings themselves contravene this covenanted state of affairs.

The preacher witnesses part of his congregation engaging in sexual immorality right inside the “lord’s tent.” He spots a woman erotically dancing with a man and he equates her to mamoloi “the daughter of darkness, the mistress of evil, the wife of pharaoh” but he cannot extricate himself from the secretion inaugurated by the pornographic movement of libido as the woman is “grinding her groin, i mean shaking her buttocks!” (5). He notices that she is gyrating with someone he considers respectable, an act that drives him to further displeasure: “and, no, not radebe too, oh lord, that good men should be dragged down the path of evil! look, that broom of a beard sweeping the dust” (5) and before he can comprehend the debauch, he discovers Ntate Moramang shamelessly engaging in carnal gymnastics. Enter Lord finds the whole debauchery too tempting for words and in spite of himself he joins the sexual

carrousel wishing the most ungodly: “yeah fuck all the holy virgins! Fuck them all. Fuck mamoloi. yeah. not bad that prospect” (5). At the end he is no better than the sinners he dismisses as filth and unclean before the Lord. In fact, he is full of faecal matter and the disappointment he experiences is described as deflation “in a whoosh of a giant fart” (5). He is trapped by what he sets out to oppose: the movement of libido simply because the means he employs – religion – is also phallic.

In *W/ H*, Bavino employs the story of Father Mason, a Catholic priest, to communicate the way the subject is driven to discontent by the supplanting of somatic processes with libido. A child narrator observes and describes the pornographic flow of libido as the priest engages with a social sex worker through a hole in the perimeter fence of the church. Father Mason is inside the church compound while the sex worker is outside. The fence is like the bar separating the signifier from the signified in Lacan’s reformulation of Saussurean linguistics as noted by Homer in *Jacques Lacan*:

Signifier  


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 signified      (41).

The hole in the fence becomes a point of slippage allowing the signifier to slip under the bar which grants the child observer a glimpse of the drive governing religion. Bavino observes that “the fence sang as he bobbed it up & the woman on the other side pulled it up. it was a symphony (25). The singing of the fence could be perceived as renting of meaning to the signified after the blockage of the bar is shaken. For the child narrator, the music produced by the flow of libido is a piece of classical music played by a symphony orchestra which means that Father Mason and the sex worker seemed to be dancing to an unconscious serenade that had slipped into the innermost core of their consciousness. When the “sound of the piano playing within the church’s

bowel made its heavenly sounds” (26) the child narrator observes that Father Mason and the sex worker “started going at it faster. the fence moved to & fro, father mason on the inside the woman on the outside, with the fence between them fucking through a hole” (26). The upsurge of the movement of libido is inducted by the religious music from the piano being played in the church which implies that the religious is phallic in nature and consequently an entrance to discontent and disillusionment.

It has been noted in chapter one that *B/H* and *W/H* are written as a sequel. Consequently, Father Mason in *W/H* seems to find his anchor from Lord Enter in *B/H*. The prospect of fucking all the holy virgins and even Mamoloi expressed by Lord Enter is followed through in the person of Father Mason. The tide of libido seems to be accentuated by Father Mason’s intoning as he recites Biblical verses while making compulsive repetitive entries into the erotic castle of the Mamoloi. The narrator observes, “he switched to psalm 92, that song of sabbath. it would soon be time for a rest. ‘but thou has exalted my horn like of the wild ox...’ yes indeed, i thought, catching glimpses of it as it slid in & out of her tent” (26). Father Mason is Lord Enter making his grand entrée into the house of the Lord. He seems to use the verses to prop up the gratification of the stream of libido because his recitation begins when the Mamoloi threatens to exclude the phallus from her heated up tent. Bavino observes that when the sex worker stopped moving Father Mason’s face contorted and he was frustrated by her demand for money: “give me the money Now”, to which he intoned, “oh blood of jesus...” (25). When he realises that the Mamoloi is not ready to swallow the bait as she rebuffs him, “oh stop it up you little bleeding jesus”, he fished from the folds of his robe some banknotes and pushed the lot through the fence without caring to count it. Father Mason trades the offertory with the gratification of

libido which is bound to throw him into discontent that comes with the phallic jouissance.

Undeniably, the tide of libido causes ejaculatory waste whose pounding power is described as God's crushing voice that sounds like a rolling storm. The narrator notes that when Father Mason approaches the orgasmic stage he intones the Biblical verse on the potency of God's voice thus: "the floods have lifted up oh lord the floods have lifted up their voice... the floods lift up their roaring... mightier than the thunders of many waters... mighty mighty my my ha ha oh lord all mighty mightier than the waves of the seaaaa..." (25-26). The crashing storm described here would definitely toss things up and cause dissatisfaction in the subject as their ego is smashed. However, there is even greater possibility of discontent if the flow of libido is stemmed as it reaches its zenith. Father Mason suffers this fate: "at what seemed like the height of that storm the woman suddenly jerked forward, sliding him out & sprinted into the elephant grass on her side of the fence & and seconds later disappeared out of sight" (27). The phallic exclusion makes Father Mason snap into hysterics corresponding to "the gathering gloom as his red phallus got into a wild dance crashing against the fence this way & that as fluid gushed out of it baptising the grass on the other side" (27). The narrator appears to be of the opinion that phallic exclusion is a source of disappointment in religion.

Indeed, Father Mason experiences a sharp sense of loss as his "penis gave a few last/ lust kicks against the dying sun making discordant music" (27). Here, the narrator seems to suggest that for the minion of religion the phallus is the centre of attraction and when it is threatened chaos erupts. The narrator observes, "[Father Mason] screamed. 'from the lord of hosts you will be punished hm hm with thunder & earthquake & loud noise [...] at this point he shook his fist at the woman fast

disappearing into the thick grass shouting ‘AMEN’ over her shoulders [...]’ (27). It is worthwhile to note that Father Mason uses religion to issue threats to the prostitute for denying him the chance to pour his phallic waste into her tent. The priest swears and curses and brings heavens down as he experiences disappointment at the disappearance of the receptacle. The narrator observes that the priest is exasperated at the deflation of his penis: “now it swayed. its head drooping in shame. he looked down at it in frustration & i heard him turn earthbound swear & curse & bring the heavens down FUCKING SHIT BITCH I’LL GET YOUUUU your mother’s arseho...” (27). The narrator appears to be of the view that Father Mason’s abuse of religion becomes a source of disgruntlement for the social sex worker who is able to see through Father Mason’s pretensions.

What comes next is even more intriguing as it explicably communicates what lies behind religious violence as portrayed by Bavino in the two novels. The open eye that observes and describes the movement of the phallus in religion is condemned with utmost terms by the agency of religion. The boy-narrator who observes and describes to us Father Mason’s sexual exploits through the hole in the church fence after the sex worker suddenly disappears – which is what he was anyway doing even when the woman was present since she let him in only to get access to the offertory money – meets the wrath of the disgruntled priest: “woe to the shepherds who destroy & scatter the sheep of my pasture...” (27). The narrator says that he felt so small cringing to his transgression and could not find the strength to escape from the amorous priest breathing the self-righteous fire from all heavens and even hell. Father Mason whips the child narrator with a strap which “came down pulling flesh off where it ate into my skin” and he justified his action by claiming that “he was exorcising the demons out my foul system” (28). Father Mason batters the boy

mercilessly until he loses his consciousness; all along intoning Biblical verses about the wrath of the Lord. The following Sunday, the child narrator refuses to be dressed up in jacket and tie to get carted away to church. He reports “i rolled around screaming & kicking on the floor & my mother couldn’t understand. my soul indeed needed saving. the grace of our lord...” (28). What is evident from the child narrator’s account is that the subject in both *B/H* and *W/H* is further driven to discontent due to the psycho-violence inherent in religion and which is meted out on an innocent congregation as a façade to quieten any keen eyes or descriptive voices that might expose the phallogocentric structure of religion.

Moreover, the subject is driven into discontent by eruption of the real into the symbolic order. The narrator introduces the section describing Father Mason’s abuse of religion with non-English words “IN NOMINE PATRI” (25). It seems tenable to argue that as used in the novel, “IN NOMINE PATRI” (Latin, meaning “in the Name of the Father”, which is used in the Sunday Missal in the Catholic Church) is a veil that is meant to make the subject believe that there is something behind it which apparently translates into faith. Slips may appear in the veil occasionally allowing the subject to have a glimpse of what lurks behind it and the glimpse inaugurates the movement of discontent. For Bavino, religion is a mask to hide human failures or excesses. In *B/H*, the narrator notes that “religion is a superstition. in every region. for every reason. we hold on to myths to justify failures, find reasons for excesses” (30). Here, the narrator expresses discontent at the way religion is used to exclude the “other” – those who do not subscribe to the god or gods being paraded to the world as the only worthy of worship. Bavino gives the example of the banner: “DEATH TO THE ARAB” (9). The Arab is the “other” and Christianity as a religion is used as an excuse to exterminate the ‘other race’.

Bavino points repetitively to the Word as the major source of discontent experienced by the subject in his two novels. In *The Kristeva Reader*, Toril Moi gives the myth of the relationship between Eve and the Serpent as the best summary of the exclusion of the other through the Sublimation of the word. Moi observes that “[t]he serpent stands for the opposite of God, since he tempts Eve to transgress His prohibition. But he is also Adam’s repressed desire to transgress, that which he dares not carry out, and which is his shame” (143). Eve is reduced to the “other” who must succumb to pain and torture – the melancholic “other.” In *B/H*, the narrator seems to follow the same argument when he makes the observation, “worms explode inside the unclean WORD made flesh” (12). The Blacks are perceived as unclean human beings because of their pigment and hence they are discriminated against by the whites. The Word refers to the symbolic – both religious and political – and exclusion from it means being denied access to power and knowledge. It is this exclusion which is occasioned by the abuse of religion that drives the subject in both *B/H* and *W/H* into discontent. Bavino writes in *B/H* that “the genesis WORD fed phantom voice effects this current phantasm epoch prostrate at sound-sense-strangler-alter choke-squeezed from plastic-liquid-refuse” (79). Through this seemingly semantically impenetrable phrase, the narrator indicates that the subject is driven into discontent by the apparently oppressive character of religion which is used by the state to reduce the blacks into excrement. The blacks are made subjects of religion through being threatened with abject images such as hell fire. Bavino also seems to be referring to the words in Genesis which gives man and woman equal status before the story of Adam and Eve is introduced: “male and female He created them” (2). The ‘other’ is thus a creation of man which makes religion to be the birthplace for discontent.

Following Lacan's theoretical conception of fantasy and the **objet petit a**, it can be concluded that religion is a hole at the core of our being which can never fulfil our search for wholeness, and therefore it forms a platform for the inauguration of discontent. Homer writes that for Lacan, "fantasy is one of the ways through which we reconcile ourselves to our dissatisfaction with our jouissance and the impossibility of the real" (90). In effect, religion exists between the poles of reality and imagination and is a negotiation with desire. In *B/H*, Bavino observes that religion is equivalent to having a dream: "to dream is a scream in a vacuum," and adds that the dreamer is governed by traumatic fear, "chugging and charging to some precipice of salvation in smashed pieces" (43). When the real which according to Lacan is "the traumatic kernel at the core of subjectivity and the symbolic order" slips through the hole of representation – fantasy is representation of desire – the subject is driven into discontent as in the case of Father Mason and the child narrator explained above.

The narrator perceives religion as a book of treachery which drives the subject to discontent once they discover that they have been betrayed by the very institution they have entrusted their existence with. Bavino observes, "treachery is engraved in god's book. the serpent, iscariot, peter the back tracker. thrice shall the cock crow. but that one was a reasonable fellow. what's the use of dying for one man if he is dying for the whole world, you included?" (53). Duplicity is thus associated with the "other" regardless of the prevailing circumstances and it inaugurates excremental vision that is slapped on the being of the 'other'. The dissatisfaction experienced by the other is labelled dirty and satanic. The narrator notes about negritude which is the discontent felt and expressed by blacks due to their exclusion from the symbolic order on account of their pigment: "the wearing of blackness like a shroud of darkness, the waving of colour like a placard at a picket, the zooming skywards on a blackman

ticket. race in reverse against the barrenness of racially perverse” (53). The skewed relationship of the blacks to the Word forces them to search for their own heaven (jouissance) which, like all desire, is unfortunately an abyss because it is based on the very symbolic object used to lock them from the symbolic order – Blackness.

Bavino looks at state-operatized religion as a psychological means through which Whiteness try to control the Blacks and lock them into servitude. In *B/ H*, Bavino observes, “in church they make sure that the sermons make sin live to you, and the resultant burning. you can feel the heat of hell sitting there, looking at the preacher. the fire runs out of his mouth and chars your heart” (60). The movement of the signifier of sin into that of burning-hell fire marks the subject of religion. According to Lacan the subject is “the breach in the signifying chain – the gap that opens up between the symbolic and the real, through which the drive manifests itself” (Homer, 79). Following Homer’s observation, it could be argued that the blacks are turned into subjects by the minion of religion who ascribes sin to them and therefore creates a rapture which excludes them from the power and knowledge of religion. The Blacks are threatened with the phobic object represented by the convection of hell-fire from the preacher into the being of the subject. The narrator appears to be of the opinion that the Blacks experience discontent because of being reduced into objects of sin whose judgement is hell-fire.

The twin of religion as an ideological state apparatus and as a constant source of discontent is institutionalized education as conceptualized for the Blacks by the Apartheid structure. For this reason, education is the next point of interest which this study discusses.

### 2.3 PEDAGOGICAL SLIME AND DISCONTENT

Education is another source of discontent for the subject in both *B/ H* and *W/ H* because it is structured to exclude the 'other'. The aim of education seems to serve, to use the narrator's words, "the INVERTED genetic EQUATION" (10) so that when you flip the coin of education it corresponds to the narrator's assertion in *B/ H*: "flip the race coin & blackness is a commodity" (10). It follows then that Education is a commodity deceptively meant to serve the whites while making the blacks to remain for ever in servitude for the whites. Bavino notes that even in Francophone countries in which colonial education was supposedly meant to turn Africans into French-like subjects, it was still meant to serve the interests of the whites: " 'educate to assimilate' is an altogether other song. Long & in monotone. Ask the black-rubberised francophone" (10). Assimilation was one-sided as it aimed to dislodge the African from his culture and transform him into an object desirable for the White man. The narrator is of the view that institutionalized education is one of the forms of psychological control used by the state: "salute the new slime [...] the psychological aspects of control [...]" (72). For the narrator, institutionalized education in (post)apartheid South Africa is a source of social filth.

Acceptance into the symbolic world of education is not pegged on schooling but on someone's pigment which leads the Blacks to discontent as portrayed in Bavino's novels under examination. In *B/ H*, Bavino describes what he calls "airport fart" in which the narrator who is black is subjected to dehumanizing search before he could be allowed to board the plane. The narrator laments "how much am i humanimal?" since "the search [is] physical but the quest goes beyond psychological" and he laments, "they rifle through my sub-conscious" (12). The narrator is asked demeaning questions: "who gave you what & what to do with it?" and as though to

spite him for apparently being illiterate owing to his pigment, “going out a woman brought magazines. coming in another gave me a book. both women white” (12). The narrator acidly expresses his discontent at this exclusion from the symbolic realm of education by retorting, “but i don’t carry the pigment of the literate. that was not under the hammer at the auction-block & chain-rattle hour” (12). The discriminatory racial treatment accorded to the narrator makes him to experience psychological dissatisfaction. He expresses this feeling of discontent thus, “i find myself consciously blaaaakkkk” (12). The Blacks are made subjects of their colour which has already been excluded from the symbolic order by Whiteness. It follows then that despite the level of education attained by the Blacks they have to go through the filth of human degradation before being allowed sanctioned interaction with Whiteness.

The narrator in *B/ H* encounters another instance of being judged as illiterate due to his pigmentation while he is sitting in a bar relaxing. A red faced boy approaches him and asks if he could sit next to him to which he accents. The narrator is in the company of a man called Ollie Pant and a pale blonde lady by the name Sue. The boy looks at Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* which the narrator is reading and asks him, “is she teaching you to read English?” and when he does not get an immediate answer he asks the question again indicating his sharp interest in the literacy of the narrator (74). Sue comes to the aid of the narrator by whispering loudly, “what a shock. doesn’t he know you’re a published writer?” (75). For the boy, and by extension for the penetrative aspect of Apartheid as an ideology, the measure of literacy is first weighed on one’s pigment: Whiteness for literacy but Blackness for illiteracy. This hierarchical racial view of literacy explains why a published writer like the narrator in *B/ H* is thought to be illiterate even when he clearly displays the evidence of being literate – his reading a novel.

The phallic essence of education is well illustrated by “a young man as a portrait of the artist” who goes to the narrator in *B/H* to inquire of what literature is all about. He describes literature with pride thus, “well, literature is when they say you must write letters, you know, and the teacher corrects them...” and, “sometimes they ask you to write grammar right...” to which the narrator retorts, “really? literature must be boring” and he further adds “they do? they must be old yawns” (73). The young man turns away satisfied and full of pride but he fails to catch on the narrator’s sarcasm. Bavino describes the oppressive symbolic nature of education as “epic grammar-ticks & HI-Qs” which “suck out the hypothalamus tuck in yr prostrate...” (141). What Bavino implies by ‘epic grammar-ticks’ is the colonial education which is hailed as heroic or classic and shoved down the throats of the Blacks in order to apparently civilize them. The ‘HI-Qs’ seems to refer to the grand intelligent Quotient ostensibly required in order to understand the classic grammar of the White man’s education. For Bavino the White man’s education is like a marshy wasteland which has little patches of fertility. The narrator notes that “uniqueness has generic curse that claw killer slays in series [...] law once drowned one in faeces is snout integrity spout dignity same difference” (141). Studying law does not grant the narrator access to the symbolic juridical order since the Whites continue to consider him as the ‘other’. The Blacks are lead to discontent due to the way the White man’s education erodes their jouissance: “pleasure bone thought drained their head’s drone on hell-block crawl-flying arse-up white tar-feathered” (141). The kernel of discontent with institutionalized education is that this State Apparatus seems to be designed to make the Blacks better slaves for the Whites.

In *W/H*, Bavino describes how education drives the Blacks to discontent through the story narrated by a child who experiences a lot of misery in school due to

his black pigment. The narrator laments, “this teacher hated me. She said so to me every day. & showed it in the straps & sticks & hosepipe coming down on my back. She hit me with her fists threw her shoes at me kicked me. It was an everyday thing” (9). The teacher punishes the child as a way of excluding him from the symbolic literacy circles since, according to her, the boy belongs to the “other” that is apparently either uneducable or does not merit education. The narrator hints at the reason the teacher hates him when he explains his miserable circumstances: “it ate into my brains & i couldn’t get anything right. my existence was wrong. & everything else stemmed from that” (9). The Black child narrator is not naughtier than the other pupils in his class but he is picked on because of his colour. His transgression is being different from the other pupils in terms of his pigment which is condemned as cultural excrement by the White superiority order.

The teacher dehumanizes the black child by battering him as well as stereotyping him. The child grieves, “when she wanted the plural for child i said in a real proud voice, because it was so easy, ‘childs’. she said my head was so big because it was filled with water & the other children laughed until it bounced from the wall to wall off to my head...” (9). The boy is so traumatized that he lashes out at the nearest pupil and knocks out two of his front teeth. The teacher then gives the narrator more merciless thrashing, and when the narrator tries to escape his fellow pupils rush after him and lift him up high in the air. The teacher asks them to drop him and when they do he crashes his head. From that point the child narrator hates school and runs into the streets where he gets, “reality street corner knowledge” (9). It then follows that formal education designed to serve the symbolic function creates discontent in the subject in both *B/H* and *W/H* because of its exclusion of the other and even more due

to its potential of psycho-violence as witnessed from the traumatic pedagogical experience the child narrator in *W/H* undergoes in the hands of the racist teacher.

*In B/H*, Bavino indicates that there is inequality in the pedagogical realm with the blacks getting the brunt end. While reminiscing school memories, the narrator observes that they would walk to a school with cracked windows and a leaking roof and that their teacher laughed off the devastation by telling them that the holes-in-the-roof and the broken windows were meant “to nourish your minds children, to keep it cool, understand?” (24). The poor education facility is a pointer to the malnourished education the blacks received from the (post)apartheid South African government. The whites attended their upgraded school which the Blacks were denied access. The teacher in the school for the Blacks tries to explain to the Black children why they cannot attend the white schools by light-heartedly passing on to them the fantasy used by the Whites in order to exclude the Blacks from symbolic order of education:

you cannot go to white schools because the mathematics there would shatter your brains. do you want to see your brains splashed on the pavements in town with people walking on them, leaving brainprints leading home and getting home and telling your mothers to wash your brains off their shoes. in the busy streets making cars to skid, causing a traffic jam, causing collisions, your mother squashed under cars gone out of control. do you want that? (25)

The children respond with “no teacher” because they have been made to experience the phobic element they would encounter were they to join the White schools. They seem content to grapple with the devastation in the Black schools rather than face the monster they are made to believe exists in white schools. The repulsion felt as guilt of being inferior is passed on to the children through the education system. It deceptively supports the phallic waste which marginalizes the Blacks by denying them a proper

education. The brains of the Blacks are described as filth that would cause all kind of shameful and fatal inconveniences.

Education in Black schools drives the subject to discontent due to its dehumanizing element. The Blacks are labelled the other with defective brain but the Whites are given an applauding access to education. The Black teacher continues to explain to the Black children the apparent difference between the blacks and the Whites that necessitates the existence of Black and White schools: “you see, your brains are smaller than theirs, and also, em, watery...” (25). Bavino seems to be of the opinion that the Blacks are made to shrink in size and are slapped with the label of a soggy brain. The feeling of inferiority becomes lodged deeper into the psyche which explains the traumatic “pain of a memory with no possibility of recapturing. a brother amused by a sister proud of x’s in her book declaring a sun-beamingly: siphon come see how many scissors i have...” (25). Bavino’s observation suggests that the pride the girl feels on account of her failure is an example of the self-fulfilling prophesy in which the subject accepts the condition slapped on them as a defence mechanism. The girl discovers that the charge put on her of being inferior due to her pigment is insurmountable and unconsciously decides to go along with it.

In the novel, this charge of an inferior brain is carried over to the job market where the Blacks are excluded from white-collar jobs and shoved to manual work. The discrimination of the Blacks at the work place intensifies the feeling of discontent among the Black subject. The rejection of the Blacks in the work place despite having acquired reasonable education under the devastating circumstances proves that the (post)apartheid system in South Africa used education as a tool of inclusion and exclusion based on pigment rather than qualification. In *B/H*, an educated Black is said to have gone searching for a job only to be asked not about his academic

certificates but, “what do you know about a jacket and a tie?” (25). It is stated to him that white collar job is not suitable for him as it would choke him to death. He is further directed that his place is with manual work as overalls would be good for his blood circulation. For the narrator, education in Black schools is a source of traumatic pain for the Blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa. It is an education of resentment that drives the Black subject into discontent. Bavino writes about this pedagogical trauma, “pain of a brother whom school gave soulscars lifelong carried. the education of resentment, boots, buttocks, tongues licking deep” (25). The phallic waste of the education system in (post)apartheid South Africa makes the Blacks subjects of their colour which creates a sharp sense of inferiority in their psyche that can be described as blackheart if the heart is taken to mean the kernel of being.

For Bavino, formal education has been reduced to a commercial commodity which serves phallic interests instead of serving humanity. In *B/ H*, Bavino observes that literature is not published and read on the strength of its value to concertize and therefore empower humanity but on monetary value. The narrator’s literature is denied access to publication in spite of raising contemporary societal concerns about corruption and oppression in Zimbabwe. His unpublished literary text is locked out on the reason: “you’re unreadable, therefore literarily inedible!” (18) and that his work is like “words walking like a crab, spun in a literary spider web” which defy the phallic aim of literature: “literature turns no treasure for a mind’s toilet but shilled pleasure in a bloodlined pocket” (18). The implication from the narrator’s observation is that Literature, which applauds bloody exploits governed by the death drive, is more marketable than that which tries to expose and clean up the slime of the money-driven education. The sad turn of events is that the black subjects of education end up being pushed from the system like excrement. Bavino writes of

the plight of Zimbabweans, “when a backtalk to an art attack got Zimbabweans by the flock rushing their lot on his pen turned pillar of salt?” (18). Bavino’s observation implies that the Zimbabweans are pounded into worms by the phallic aim of education. They are made to suffer castration which causes discontent culminating into revolutionary violence.

The point Bavino seems to be making is that pedagogical slime is not ejaculated only by the (post)apartheid South African Education System but everywhere in the world especially in countries where “the pedagogy of the oppressed,” to use Paulo Freire’s conceptualization, is stifled by the zeitgeist of the oppressor-oppressed contradiction. For Freire, “liberation is [...] a childbirth, and a painful one. The man or woman who emerges is a new person, viable only as the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is superseded by the humanization of all people” (49). In Rampolokeng’s novelistic space, an exclusionist rather than inclusive pedagogy seems to be in place engendering dehumanization which pitches the blacks into discontent.

Bavino observes that education leads the subject into disgruntlement as revealed in both *B/H* and *W/H* due to its phallic nature which reduces the blacks into faecal matter both by denying them social value equivalent to that of the whites and discarding them after sucking their pedagogical systems dry through brain drain. The family is one of the most important components in the acquisition of education. It is itself a kind of informal institution of learning, and like the formal educational institution, it follows the law of the Father which makes it to be another source of discontent in the society.

## 2.4 THE MAN IN THE FAMILY AND DISCONTENT

The family is the cradle of humanity. It offers the infant birth and shapes their entire life in ways that touch the very kernel of their being. The family is considered to be the basic social organization and is consequently associated with polity. Any political entity is truly a constant source of discontent because it is organized in such a way as to serve the symbolic function which is governed by the death drive and as already observed from Lacan death drive is sexual in nature. The phallus is the anchoring signifier whose representation in the infant creates subjectivity in the family.

In *W/H*, the narrator observes that the child narrator is closed off in a kind of haze masking him from the traumatic symbolic reality of what seems to echo Lacan's rupture of the mother-infant dyad by the intervention of the Name-of-the-Father. Bavino notes that "it was then and now a transitional phase. it is personal, it was national. i woke out of it like a dream, euphoria swirling around and in. only it had taken disillusionment to get me back to reality or what I had been made to see as it" (7). The polity of the experience the narrator undergoes and the swing between personal and national and between the past and the present marks the movement within the signifying chain which is what turns the narrator into a subject of desire. However, when the narrator fails to get the **objet petit a**, which according to Lacan is "at once the void, the gap, the lack around which the symbolic order is structured and that which comes to mask or cover over that lack", the narrator is utterly disappointed and he is tossed back to the abyss of lack (Homer, 88). Bavino accordingly inscribes about the void the narrator falls into: "the doors closed behind my time and now opened on that which was made unmine" (7). What is taken away from the narrator is the self he had formulated for himself during the Lacanian Mirror stage in which the

infant perceives the mother as belonging to him but on entering the symbolic stage he learns that the mother belongs to the father making him to experience a traumatic separation from the mother.

The rupture of the mother-infant dyad throws the infant into a void which the infant tries to negotiate through fantasy but in the circumstance of the destruction of the mother by the phallic after the rupture the subject is pitched into discontent. In *W/H*, the child narrator expresses discontent at the battering his father rains on his mother. He mourns the devastation of his mother, “i heard a sickening crack of bone and saw the blow split my mother’s lip and throw her against the wall. he had a grin on his face as he advanced” (7). The splitting of the mother by the man causes vibrations in the psyche of the narrator which revives the trauma the infant experiences on entering the symbolic stage. The word ‘sickening’ communicates the nauseating movement whose excremental waste creates repulsion in the narrator. The ‘crack’ represents the rupture of the mother-infant dyad which the word ‘split’ that follows insists on indicating the compulsive repetitive movement of the phallus and how it transposes itself on the somatic before being permanently lodged into the psyche as a void or abyss.

Between hearing the sickening crack of bone and seeing the effect of the splitting blow the narrator already experiences a psychical separation that borders on what Julia Kristeva calls ‘abject’ which means as discussed in chapter one the non-symbolic pre-linguistic experience of loss bordering the phobic object (35). The narrator observes that his sister in the next room “screamed the walls down” and he communicates the effect of the scream on him in the following words, “it came down hard inside my head. trying to break out” (7). The narrator’s observation appears to echo Kristeva’s conception of the abject in which the subject experiences repulsion

set in motion by the psychic fear that meaning is breaking down and that identity and order are traumatized. It is plausible to argue that the shattering magnitude of the scream is gained through the tide of fear riding with the movement of the phallic violence. The somatic screaming the walls down marks the hysteria which results when the abject recurs as repulsion in the subject.

In “Re-reading Camera Lucida,” Victor Burgin observes that the word trauma, “derives from the Greek word for ‘wound’ (86). Subsequently, the physical splitting of the mother causes wound in the psyche of the child narrator, his sister and their mother. The mourning of the loss of the mother breaks out from the psyche and expresses itself in crying which is a form of hysteria. Everybody including the walls is crying apart from the man who is the instigator of the discontent being experienced by the narrator’s family. Melaine Klein’s conception of “projective identification” could be used to explain the apparent movement of hysteria from the subject of the phallus to the walls. In *Projective Identification: The Fate of a Concept*, Elizabeth Spillius and E. O’Shaughnessy note that for Klein projective identification involves, first, “something of oneself that is unpleasant or something that one feels one does not deserve to have is attributed to somebody else,” and second, “this something, good or bad, is split off from the self and put into the object” (16). The narrator explains, “my mother was not crying anymore. the walls were. red as the sun crashed down through the torn curtains. he kicked her in the stomach & i saw her body heave itself off the weeping walls and crash out through her mouth” (7). Here, Bavino seems to imply that the narrator erects a defence mechanism which momentarily cushions him from experiencing a total breakdown of meaning that would otherwise crash his psyche resulting to insanity.

The mother's tears and her blood staining the walls are projected by the narrator so that now they ostensibly belong to the thing (the wall) since the mother has been reduced to no-thing. A moment later, the narrator hears his mother professing that she loves the man who has caused her untold suffering which makes his defence mechanism to crumble down like the cracking of a wall. The narrator observes, "i thought i heard the rain come down hard beyond the walls. but it wasn't. he was a big man, & us? we were so small. all of us. i heard the walls crack. those blows slashing into my mother's flesh opened holes in my soul I'm still trying to close" (7). The demolitions of the mother by the phallic movement repetitively open a void in the being of the narrator which throws him into a state of castration. The narrator experiences a sharp sense of powerlessness not just for himself but for all his family being subjected to the violence of the symbolic order.

The sense of castration experienced in the symbolic order is heightened when the narrator tries to run to his mother but his effort is violently curtailed. Bavino writes, "i started to run towards mama & a huge boot rushed at me. my neck was liquid heat when i spun around. i felt the wall knock against the back of my head as i grabbed empty air. i always do. " (7). The phallic becomes an underlying signifier which insists on the narrator's castration giving meaning to his claim that he still grabs at empty air whenever he finds himself in circumstances that torture him. It means that the narrator could not cope with his traumatic and incomprehensible infantile experiences which were repressed into the unconscious or the psyche. When the trauma is reactivating in dreams the narrator experiences the repulsion which pitches him into hysteria: "when he rips into me in the nights of torture I open my mouth to scream but it hits against my chest & goes down where he's heaving & swearing through his clenched teeth. & his breath creeps against the nape of my neck"

(7). It could subsequently be argued that hysteria is a form of discontent rooted deep in the psyche. It is a psychic dissatisfaction at the knocking down of the mother by the phallus.

Discontent is not static but it moves in both time and space. In *W/H*, the child narrator observes, “later we walked for a long time. my sister moaned on my mother’s back. the many times we had walked like that followed behind us. no. they lead the way. we have been walking for most of my life” (7). The ambulatory done by the narrator together with his sister and mother is inaugurated by the movement of the phallus and its attendant violence. The family keep running away from the tide of the phallic muscles but as the narrator admits the ambulatory (movement of discontent) has run way ahead of them so that when they look behind they see dissatisfaction and when they look ahead they see more dissatisfaction. In other words, the family is besieged in the void initiated by the phallic death drive. Now the child has only the mother to cling to – but the mother has been reduced to a no-thing which means the child is clutching at a void. The narrator observes, “my mother’s hand clutched mine. tight. i looked up in the dark” (7-8). The mother seems to be looking for fortification from the traumatized child. However, the child does not look at the mother but up in the dark because the mother is now a void.

The movement of discontent within time and space constantly robs the subject off a sense of home. The child narrator observes how the slopping from the phallic waste alters the appearance of the mother in temporal space: “mother your face cracks with my every minute” (8). The abyss of lack experienced by the subject continues to widen and deepen with time. The narrator feels the weight of misery placed on his mother as she is supposed to fend for him and his sister despite having been reduced to no-thing. His attempt to help her search for something to eat finds him crawling in

the abattoir “to scavenge for the skins they tear off the chickens & throw out” which he brings to his mother and “she goes to the market & comes back with onion that is not too bad to cook and [they] have a great meal” (8). The narrator is driven to discontent due to the thrashing of the mother and her children by the man and eventually being locked out of the production system which produces capital in the Name-of-the-Father. Even when the narrator is collecting stray chicken skins (the waste of the production system) one of the workers in the abattoir kicks him and this makes the narrator to express his dissatisfaction through the death drive: “someone held me back when i wanted to slice him like he did the chickens” (8). The narrator appears to be quick to anger due to his being pitched into discontent by the bitter reality of destitution.

However, it should not escape us that the narrator experiences repulsion at the sight of any kind of death. He closes his eyes tight when the chickens are being slaughtered to shut out their cries. Later he has to hunt for their skins in spite of himself. His discontentment is heightened by being forced to indulge in the abject by necessity. The narrator cannot stand the sight of raw meat and he subsequently observes, “i can’t pass the butchery without the phlegm hitting against my throat, hard trying to get out & i have to get on my knees & ask it please don’t” (8). The abject created by traumatic violence seems to govern the narrator in all facets of his life. The rise of phlegm in the narrator at the sight of raw meat indicates the excremental waste he has been shoved into by the unyielding familial governmentality. The narrator’s father governs the family with a phallogentric temperament and it makes the narrator to experience discontent at the insanity of the familial phallus and its affinity to psycho-violence with its attendant politics of inclusion and exclusion, secretion and

excretion. Cooked meat is less threatening to the narrator but it often makes him to wonder about hell.

For Bavino the family is also a major source of discontent when ‘the man’ reincarnates in the siblings as in the authorial creation in *W/ H* of the “two sons” whose contradiction in the politics of inclusion and exclusion is engendered by “filial interests [which] clash to mortal levels at times” (63). The narrator explains that his two uncles did not have any love lost between them. One of them had “died ages ago fever-ridden frozen out in the cold on the stoep after they had a falling out” (63). The narrator’s observation implies that one of his uncles is perceived as the ‘other’ and excluded from the family so that he dies in the cold with no one to care for him. The narrator is of the opinion that when the ‘be-your-brother’s-keeper’ is overridden by “clashing filial interests,” a fatal tide of the phallus is inaugurated and as it swirls in time and space the politics of the ‘other’ which involves inclusion and exclusion come into being. The siblings, especially those who are male and order, show their brothers and sisters affection only when they live according to their terms. If they do contrary they are snapped at and considered the other who is different and must be treated with resentment. In *B/ H*, Bavino observes that “a brother who on a sister’s birthday bought chocolates for a present. three rands. a cigarette pack he’d have to do without. sacrifice of a chain smoker”, is the same person “who slapped [his] sister the very next day for standing on the street corners with boys who whistled at the gate [...]” (25-26). Bavino’s observation suggests that the mentality governing the oppressive familial polity in Rampolokeng’s novelistic cosmos is driven not by humanizing but the politics of oldness and masculinity.

In the above case, the brother resents his sister’s discovery of her womanhood since it appears to inaugurate her shift of allegiance from the patriarchal tiered

familial structures of power to a new form of bodily government. He violently counters her bio-physical urgings of becoming a woman “and the rage of a newly found womanhood retorting against unreason” (26). He answers the sister with more violence as a way of teaching her to talk to her elder brother with respect when she questions his double standards: “do you want to sleep with me if you beat me up like your bloody child? heh, who says anything when you bring your bitches grovelling in at night into this house” (26). The sister is denied access to the symbolic and she is reduced to nothing when she tries to rise against her brother’s phallic swirl: “pain in another slap in the face teaching a sister the way of good speech in front of one’s elder brother” (26). If race is the ‘other’ who is different and must therefore be resented, it is plausible to argue that race and racism begin in the family.

In (post)apartheid South Africa systemic racism of the ideology creates an avalanche between the Whites and the Blacks which disavow the humanity of the Blacks while approving that of the Whites as revealed in both *W/ H* and *B/ H*. The blacks are socially disallowed to form familial bonds with the whites through the Immorality Act of 1927 which was amended in 1950 to prohibit sex between Whites and all non-whites. In *B/ H*, the narrator notes that “black and white in love” is “an act of immorality” (49). The narrator’s observation means that colour has replaced humanity and those who defy the colour code are reduced to subjects of resentment. Bavino notes, “a car white with black stripes flashed past, bastard car. a youth in tattered jeans. in a t-shirt shouting freedom now spat on the shoe of the colour blind man. the spittle looked insane on the glistening shoe” (49). The spittle is a signifier of resentment and when it lands on the well-polished shoe it calls into mind the repulsion at the centre of discontent emanating from the production phallus that pounds the blacks into no-thing. The blacks feel dissatisfaction with their sister who has defied

her social curse of poverty and erected a bond with the phallic white: “bloody prostitute, you’re eaten for money. you let us your brothers go hungry but you run to these whites to let them eat you, hm? you’re rotten man, this thing is an aids carrier...” (49). The Black girl is robbed off her humanity and referred to as a thing, a rotten thing which carries a fatal disease. The Black expressing discontent here seems to talk not just for his own sake but for the sake all the Blacks experiencing *jouissance* at the enjoyment the white seems to experience with the Black girl.

In *W/ H*, the child narrator notes that one of his uncles burns his wife and a brother-in-law inside his house when he wakes up from his drunken stupor and finds them making love right there in his eyes. The narrator observes, “on one of those days he’s brandy & coked out on the bed when a knock on the door sends her checking to ascertain things. then she opened the door & her brother-in-law ... gets into bed with her” (65). As the couple engage in sex they push the narrator’s uncle off the bed which wakes him up. On seeing the thrashing couple something in his being snaps and propels him into action. He secures the door knob with a wire and goes to a neighbouring home where he empties some petrol from a car into a container. He then sprinkle the petrol around the house and sets the house on fire. Lacan’s phallic *jouissance* could be used to explicate the contestation of power in this case. The narrator’s uncle experiences a phobic feeling that his brother-in-law is having all the fun with his wife while he himself is left with nothing despite being the one entitled to full enjoyment. His ego is bruised and he seeks to recover the *jouissance* apparently stolen by his brother-in-law by eliminating the thief and the accomplice together with the setting (the bed in the house).

The phallic waste seems to follow constantly and with time there is a fatal transformation of the subjects of the familial phallus. The narrator in *W/ H* notes that

his uncle – the one who burns his wife for being unfaithful – had been a loving husband and a caring father before the sludge of death filled his being replacing all traces of humanity. The narrator observes, “images flashed the years & were projected onto that sight of him sleeping there. he used to be a different creature. a man in love with a woman & caring as much as that situation called for” (64). Bavino suggests that the loving and caring man has been repressed by the illicit movement of the phallus into his uncle’s marital space as the wife cheats on him without any discretion. The man’s lost humanity seems to pitch the familial universe into fatalistic pandemonium that see the afflicted man burn his wife and her lover to death with no human compulsion but crushing phallic jouissance. The irony of the whole situation is that when he comes from jail he brings a different woman home every night and beats them up after having sexual intercourse with them. He becomes a subject of the phallus and his promiscuity is a way of proving that he has not been castrated which is what he feels when his wife cheats on him. He beats the women after having sex with them due to the repulsion he experiences when he commits adultery for which he killed his wife. However, his demolition by the tide of the phallic slime is heightened when he batters and strips his own mother as he searches for money on her person. The narrator observes that his uncle would, “strip her naked to prove she had no money hidden anywhere on her person. nothing is sacred. especially everyone else has moved on. or backwards” (67). The narrator’s uncle experiences repulsion because others seem to be doing well but he is still grappling with existence. He also experiences the abject when he moves back to the two deaths he caused. Finally, he starts battering his mother for providence with the justification that she brought him to this world and was therefore obligated to care for him especially now that he could not fend for himself having stopped working.

Discontent is further experienced due to the anticipatory egoistic zoning of the subject into certain economic categories meant to further the interests of the Name-of-the-Father. In *W/H*, the narrator expresses discontent at the way his father looks down on him for becoming a poet instead of a lawyer. He notes, "...THE MAN, meaning my mother's husband was later to say: 'a poet... what is a poet? i put four years of life into making this man something exemplary... & what does he do he goes & calls himself a poet... i can't believe it'" (67). The Man resents the narrator for not pursuing a career that would bring in a lot of money and the prestige of class. He feels cheated for having invested in the narrator's education because his phallic aims have not been achieved. He therefore reduces the worth of the narrator as a poet into excrement: "he writes things & then goes & makes some noise on some silly shit stage. & he can't even do it well, mind you. if he sang it would be something but what does he do? he talks. [...] poet...pooo... sies!" (67). The excremental resentment expressed by the Man against the narrator instigates discontent which makes the narrator mitigate his circumstances by explaining the perilous illegal things the family had been made to do for the Man. He gives the narrator marijuana to sell in order to get some money but the narrator ends up smoking most of it. The Man turns to the narrator's mother and his twelve year old sister and they do not disappoint him. The Man proudly recounts how the narrator's mother would skilfully hide the marijuana beating all security agents. It could be that the Man in the family expected the rest of the family to handle the slime of production for him despite any risks involved. At the end all glory belongs to the Man. Subsequently, the phallic exploitation in the family drives the subject into discontent and it is for this reason that the narrator moves away from the Man in search of his own home.

For Bavino, the Man in the family (the familial phallus) as revealed in both *B/H* and *W/H* drives the subject in (post)apartheid South Africa into discontent due to its death drive and attendant ejaculatory waste which slowly forms a crust of stench on humanity. Family members lose love for one another as they struggle to overcome the unyielding tide of the symbolic order. With each traumatic separation caused by the phallogocentric violence at the heart of the movement of the phallus, family members drift apart and finally treat one another as the ‘other’ who is different and deserving resentment or even elimination. The systemic racism of apartheid in South Africa can be plausibly explained through the familial phallus.

## **2.5 IN THE TIME OF NO SPACE**

In the preceding sub-chapter it is evident that humanity is driven into discontent by the pounding flow of ejaculatory waste from oppressive State Apparatuses. In *B/H*, Bavino rightly observes that “man was born in prison, lives trying to break through, futilely, dies in the cage of his own fate” (45). In effect, this sub-chapter attempts to explicate how the human space and time, admittance or seclusion, drives the subject in both *B/H* and *W/H* into discontent. The agents of admittance or seclusion are the judiciary, the police/ security forces and the prison. The three agents are meant to sanitize humanity by ensuring that law breakers are apprehended, taken to court and their innocence or guilt proved for either acquittal or imprisonment depending on how the coin of justice spins out.

The subject in *B/H* is driven into discontent because the Word (law) which governs admittance or seclusion is rotten: “the WORD has never been a bullet-proof vest” and it is governed by “the predator-instinct” (8). The law is supposed to secure the security of all its subjects but the law in place here is skewed against the blacks as

the narrator affirms, “rome declares its evidence of western civilization’s superiority” and “the mud-races squirm” (8). The Blacks are locked out of the law which pitches them into a dehumanizing spatial and temporal space as they are shepherded into cells or hunted down like animals by the security forces. In *B/ H*, Bavino is hunted down by the entire security force which seems to chain all space: “THE STREETS ARE CUFFED, CORNERS MANACLED...” (8). Bavino has no place to turn and it would be quite difficult for him to escape the police dragnet. The security forces deceptively smack and bind space so that even before Bavino is apprehended and taken to court for judgement he is already condemned and thrown out of the human space into an animal-like cage.

The state’s governmentality appears to be geared towards total control of the subject’s physical and psychological space. The narrator observes that the security forces are so prying that “they’d police dreams too if they’d sneak into heads. they’d tried though. cracking skulls to touch the consciousness” (8). The narrator’s observation implies that the security forces drain the the subject’s physical space through the dragnet and then try to squeeze out the psychological space out of the subject through meting out violence on them. Bavino is made homeless by the agents of law: “i’m a sewer-rat on a case, sucking on a cigarette. first sight of D. final hour D has pain in the abdomen. & i, a throb in the brain. casualties walking. going no place. ‘cos nowhere is HOME” (9). The agents of law have crushed Bavino’s human space driving him into the drain which threatens his existence. He is running away from the death (the guns) carried by the police who are hunting him down but he comes to another form of death in the name of starvation. It can be plausibly argued then that Bavino’s humanity has been cuffed and manacled and now everywhere he turns he

encounters death. He lives in the time of no space and consequently experiences a sharp sense of discontent.

The brutality of the security forces on the blacks is indescribable. In *B/ H*, Bavino writes, “this U.S. BRUTAL GLOBAL POLICE SYSTEM. To fight terror the structure must self-destruct. Being must animal, cold-arse-assassin, sub-terra state of disgrace. Thrives on disease. Uniforms are just outward manifestation” (8). The narrator’s observation means that the security forces are governed by the very violence they are mandated to keep away from humanity. They are a reverse kind of crime set in motion to apparently curb crime in the streets. It is also evident that the security system operates at the rhythm of death drive which is communicated by the phrase ‘must self-destruct’. The agent of law here becomes both the order and executioner of the blacks who are perceived by the white-skewed system as excrement: “extermination far from the back alley. no, right up it . amid the faeces” (8). The back alley indicates that the order to kill is not justifiable but extrajudicial and therefore a contravention on the subject’s human space. For Bavino, the Black subject in (post)apartheid South Africa is driven to discontent by the brutality of the security forces which reduces the Blacks into excrement as already observed from the examples given above.

The constitution governing (post)apartheid South Africa is described by the narrator in *B/ H* as a phallic system which pounds the Blacks into discontent. Bavino observes, “the glorious constitution is breaking down my system. lives levelled out at ground called zero & so gore is a staple diet on television” (13). Bloodletting is caused by the security forces as they batter the Blacks whom they accuse of all manner of crimes. The existence of the Blacks is pushed down the drain of time. The narrator observes that “JUSTICE’s WAR teachings... intellectualise action actualise

theory, amilcar cabralise history is a posterity quotation” (16). The narrator’s observation implies that the state has uncanny strategies of advocating for justice by treating the subject in an intelligent and educated way that avoids its practical and emotional aspects, and subsequently the state comes up with a very apt theory which is ironically never executed. The narrator appears to be of the view that the (post)apartheid South African government is not committed to promoting justice for the Blacks and that the government deceptively engages in abstraction meant to give the impression that it is actually looking into the plight of the Blacks.

The Blacks are pounded into psychological smithereens by the law agents. The law treats them as sub-humans who must be confined in order to keep the sanity of humanity from disorder. Bavino considers the skewed law as “backward-writ” and its Black subject as having been reduced into “zombie” (34). The (post)apartheid South African law is thus faulted for restricting the Blacks from entering in the space of humanity as the word ‘backward-writ’ implies retrograde official document that demolishes humanity by slapping restrictions on what people can do. It has already been observed that there are Black and white schools that allow admittance or seclude on account of one’s pigmentation. The zoning of schools on pigmentation is an architecture of exclusion that pitches the Blacks into pedagogics of suppression rather than empowerment. Even other social amenities jurisprudence is offered in a discriminative manner. In *W/ H*, the narrator observes that the police employ ‘Backward-writ’ when they apprehend Bavino for beating up a man who had broken a bottle on his girlfriend’s face: “when they came in shiny buttons & boots to herd me to the kraal the girl was trembling in the back of the van & we held hands while they guffawed & told us to fuck while they watched. one said he’d fuck me up the arse with a button if we didn’t” (10). It is evident from this quotation that the police who

come to arrest Bavino are criminals themselves. They order Bavino and his girlfriend to engage in sex as they watch which traumatizes the couple as their private space is taken away from them.

In fact, the phallic violence inherent in the security officers comes to the fore when one of them threatens to shove his baton up Bavino's bottom if he declines to stage pornography with his girlfriend for them. They watch the pornography with two of them almost bursting their zippers as they struggle with the vile thought of raping the girl. Later they cherish beating up Bavino as the girl watches. When Bavino bleeds one of the officers bring a salt shaker and shakes it above the welt. When the girl screams they holler loudly. The police officers torture Bavino until they experience a tide of libido which slopes them into taking his girlfriend by force in some dark corner down the ringing corridors. Bavino is glad when they are released and they step into rain. He hopes the rain will wash away the gory on his body together with the ejaculatory waste dumped into the girl. However, he discovers that the agony is buried too deep for water to clean. For Bavino, there seems to be no ethereal intervention to purge the slime of dehumanization that he experiences in the hands of the security forces.

The judiciary, the security forces and the prison seem to be vocational grounds for criminals who masquerade as agents of the law. In *B/H*, Bavino calls the three agents of the law as "Sinvocations" (35) which threaten their subjects with life as well as death. If the subject seems to prefer death to escape from the slime he has been pitched into, the wheels of law knock him into subjectivity by threatening to keep him alive. If he is desperate to live, death is dangled right before his eyes. Subsequently, the Black subject has no refuge to turn to, either in life or death. The law is meant to ensure life but it has transmuted itself into a human-eating ogre. The 'no-place-to-

turn' circumstances drive the Black subject in both *B/ H* and *W/ H* into discontent. The fate of the Black subject is made worse by the fact that the cuffs and manacles extend from the legal agents of the law to another kind of law in the streets which draws blood just like the first one.

The people in the streets, both friends and enemies, also become judges of morality and regularly try and sentence those caught breaking 'the law' in the streets or wherever they are found. In *W/ H*, a character called Tizzah is betrayed by a friend whom he has protected with his life. Tizzah gives his knife to the boy whom he is shielding from some dangerous thugs in order to go for more knives at Bavino's place. However, when he turns to pick something, the boy swings the knife at his neck but Tizzah manages to block the blow but not the trap. Others waiting outside for a signal from the boy rush in and overpower Tizzah. The narrator notes that "the wounds in his body couldn't be counted when they dragged him outside. put him into the car-boot & drove out with him to some wood [...] & stopped the car in the woods & set it alight" (74). It is evident that the boy is used as a bait to lure the condemned man into the receptacle of death, a death sentence had been passed against him by his friends. Between enemies, the other perceived with resentment for biological reasons such as their pigment or whatever other reason is given for considering them the other is condemned without the chance of mitigation. In *B/ H*, Bavino witnesses how a Boer is condemned for making a joke about sex being the same across people of all colour. Bavino declines an offer from a commercial sex worker which sets off the joke. Bavino writes, "from bull to rabbit to hen. the man was amazing, just splendid. from off white to pale to beetroot. heads hung out of cars to share the joke and shear the joker. the drama was fine, the stage was not" (47). The narrator's observation indicates that the Boer is just sharing a joke with fellow humans but the reverberation

of pigmentation spoils the well-intended humour. One of the men interprets the joke as a crime which proves the insanity of the joker: “are you mad bloody boer...?” (47). The spiteful question has a racial tag on it.

For Bavino, life for the blacks has become a sewer whose stench reeks from outside and inside the subjects of the skewed (post)apartheid South African law. The blacks’ time is manacled and so far no revolution seems to be capable of turning the phallic tide away from the destruction of humanity. In *B/H*, the narrator asserts, “for what is revolution but the setting alight of the wood of time, history, of future, of the past, of present, to make way for the seed of another reality, another truth, another time, another life. out of bimbo’s, out of the mouth of hamburgers” (49). Bavino’s observation implies that revolution does not seem capable of wiping away the morass in the hearts of human beings. Subsequently, the political revolution in (post)apartheid South Africa becomes another form of death which drives the blacks into discontent. In times of revolution, violence flows both ways, from the whites to the blacks and from the blacks to the whites, so that at the end everybody is a loser, a loser of humanity.

The narrator appears to be of the opinion that the Black subject in (post)apartheid South Africa, and the world over, is at the wrong end of existence as revealed in his two novels. The Blacks’ pigmentation seems to run contrary to that of the law which is apparently White. The whiteness seems to rent the law a phallic character which attempts to grind the Blacks into a receptacle for its ejaculatory waste. Subsequently the blacks are hunted down by the security agents for their crime of being Black; apprehended, pre-judged, found guilty without trial and thrown into a physical and psychological cell. The physical and psychological violence meted out on the Blacks by the law agents squeezes itself into the human space in the hearts of

the blacks charring their humanity. They are left with no space for anything else but trauma and a sharp feeling of discontent.

## 2.6 CONCLUSION

The chapter has examined how the injustices embedded in the State Apparatuses in (post)apartheid South Africa drive the Black subject into discontent in both *B/ H* and *W/ H*. From the foregoing, it is evident that ‘man’ is the cause of discontent for the Black subject. Whether we talk about religion, education, the family or the law enforcement agents, the Blacks are driven into discontent by patriarchy and its attendant devastating conquering disposition and violence. The question that this chapter seems to call to mind is: what colour is patriarchy? If the Blacks are driven into discontent by patriarchy, does it then follow that the colour of the phallus is white? The phallus is a signifier of the death drive which turns humanity into a man-eat-man society. For Rampolokeng, the phallic nature of the agents of state initiates a tide of libido which deceptively excites the black subject into becoming a receptacle for its ejaculatory waste. With the temporal flow of the phallic tide, the black subject’s human space – both physical and psychological – is reduced into a sewer and the stench of dehumanization pitches the blacks into discontent.

The next chapter is going to examine phantasmagoric dissidence in both *B/ H* and *W/ H*. Its main aim is to discuss how the author deploys the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence as an attempt to challenge the (post)apartheid South African government and its austere State Apparatuses to stop pitching the blacks into oppressive social circumstances.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.0 THE PHANTASMAGORIC DISSIDENCE IN *B/ H* AND *W/ H*

In the beginning our soul  
 experiences sensations...  
 These consist of the diverse colours,  
 resistances, smells or sonorities... At a  
 later stage, our sensations become  
 linked... The sensations become  
 thought; the soul thinks after  
 having felt  
 (Wagner, *Teodor Wyzewa's Manifesto*)

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The epigram above communicates the process by which the subject psychologically makes sense of their world. At first, the mind appears to perceive sensations as an avalanche of projected assorted psycho-sensual data. Later, the mind is able to make out the association(s) among the diverse, chaotic information. Through the linking of the sensations, the mind is able to think about lived experience and to come up with efficacy of responding to the sensations of being. Subsequently, this chapter examines how Rampolokeng uses the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence in *B/ H* and *B/ W* as an attempt to protest against the oppressive forces which subjugate the Blacks through State Apparatuses. As theorized in chapter one the fragmentations in the two novels are considered in this study as 'literary slides' which the author projects in the dark room of the psyche of both the blacks and the whites as an expression of discontent and dissidence. Chapter two has examined how the Black subject in (post)apartheid South Africa as revealed in both *B/ H* and *B/ W* is driven into discontent by the injustices inherent in the State Apparatuses but this chapter entails examining how the narrator projects discontent as a background that dissolves into dissidence in a phantasmagoria. The 'phantoms' of phantasmagoria are

lantern projections which are skilfully manipulated so that the audience sees them emerging from nowhere – as though from their own unconscious mind – since the screen and the lantern are concealed. In the same way, the spectres in Rampolokeng's novels seem to loom suddenly out of 'darkness' since they lack anchoring due to the fragmentation of thematic, characterization and stylistic body that normally gives a text a sense of unity.

It is theorized in this chapter that Rampolokeng uses two kinds of phantom in his attempt to challenge the official sanitized perceptions of the State Apparatuses which are deceptively used to dehumanize the Blacks in order to subjugate them. The first spectre is that of insanity which is characterized by irrationality and psychosis. This spectre threatens the status of the State Apparatuses by dissolving them into insane beings or institutions which devour humanity in contrast to the sanitized readings they pass on to their subjects. The phantom of insanity also challenges the inertia of the State Apparatuses by projecting their labour as transforming the subjects into psychotic beings who from then on are driven by only one desire: irrationality, death of the man controlling the State Apparatuses. The second kind is the phantom of hysteria which is governed by mania and frenzy. The phantom of hysteria challenges the injustices inherent in the State Apparatuses by melting them into a swirling passion which drives them into shameless outbursts. For both phantoms of insanity and hysteria, libido is the underlying electrifying element and as indicated in chapter two libido is governed by the death drive.

### **3.2 PHANTOMS OF INSANITY AND DISSIDENCE**

In *Illusions Past and Future: The Phantasmagoria and its Specters*, Tom Gunning observes that the church had been deposed by the French Revolution and

that it was one of the themes projected in phantasmagoria. Gunning writes, “The power of the Church had been crushed and its minions expelled” (2). The founder of phantasmagoria in Paris, Robertson, situated his phantasmagoria in the deserted monasteries of the previously clean and forbidding convent of the Capulchins whom the insurgents had smoked out. The crumbling walls of the convent were the first sensation people approaching Robertson’s phantasmagoria experienced. Likewise, the narrator begins *B/ H* by projecting a literary slide that challenges the sanitized infallibility of the Church. The narrator transforms the idea of Holy Trinity which is at the heart of Christian belief into a formidable insane being “all at once triple faceted, triple faced” and going around with an exposed phallus which some crazy subjects ‘were saluting” (3). The image of God passed on to Christians is of a supreme being who despite being masculine lacks the phallus or has no use for it as he can create by just uttering a word. Subsequently, the narrator’s projected image of God with a phallus being worshipped by some Christians is meant to shock the (post)apartheid South African government into re-examining the way religion is used to psychologically reduce the Blacks into subjects of oppression.

Like in Robertson’s phantasmagoria in which the audience was plunged into pitch darkness and made to experience horrific or abject sounds before the spectres happened in the darkness, Bavino first projects moans of a sexual nature, “a-man! a-man! a man!” which makes the subject to wonder who could so shamelessly engage in sexual intercourse in a public place using darkness as a veil but moaning so loudly that everybody could hear. The reader (used in this study to mean the target audience for the narrator) is likely to experience an ambivalent feeling of sexual arousal and shame. The second moan, “ah-men! ah-men!” seems to shock the reader into

imagining the unthinkable: that the moaning woman (metaphorically used to represent (post)apartheid South Africa) is being willingly affronted sexually by a gang of men; and then, the moaning terrifyingly transmutes into what appears to be intense cries of sexual ecstasy, “a lay loo yeah! a lay loo yeah!” (3). The perversion calls to mind the Biblical case of Sodom and Gomorrah in which the two cities were destroyed by God for engaging in homosexuality, and a feeling that Bavino might be challenging God for permissibly looking on as the whites oppress the blacks. The shock that grips the reader is to find that the object for all this sexual worship is God’s phallus.

The narrator further manipulates the slide so that Bavino – a township name in (post)apartheid South Africa which means ‘everyman’ – who is inside the Church goes out “behind the tent to moisten the ground there,” and finds a sexual spectre involving a man and a woman on the ground. The woman makes moaning sounds that really shock the reader: “jesus! jesus!” and she is described as an image of destruction thus, “she had her legs spread wide as the fallen walls of jericho for the second coming,” and the phallus projected at the beginning of the slide dissolves into a man who is “feeding her the holy spirit in solid form” (3). The crushing of religion into pornography as projected on a hidden screen makes the subjects of religion to contemplate deeply on the way religion has been turned into a tool of self-gratification and oppression. The narrator shocks the agents of religion into shame by projecting into their psyche images of themselves as a grinding phallus. As the slide ends the minion of religion represented by Lord Enter is expelled from what he passes himself on to the faithful with his phantom harbouring insane desire of defiling “all the holy virgins” and even the mistress of evil, Mamoloi (5). The priest seems to have crossed from heaven to hell.

The narrator then inserts another literary slide in which a character called Tizzah comes in and seeing “boers over the heads of people sleeping in chairs and on benches and on the ground curled up like praying muslims and let loose with a bearded jihad of his won in voice and automatic gun shooting those pink demons and shouting murder! Murder!” (6). The phantom of Boers grinding the blacks into curled up forms sleeping in the cold dissolves the Boers into irrational beings bent on destroying their fellow human beings. The transformation of Tizzah into Muslim jihadists killing the Boers is an insane spectre meant to shock the Whites in (post)apartheid South Africa into stopping the injustices they mete out on the Blacks in the name of religion. The Blacks sleeping out in the cold are transformed into zombies: “people raised drugged heads and bavino calmed [Tizzah] down and fed him a german sausage and vodka and minutes late let his sleeping form gently down flat on to three chairs put side by side” (6). Here, the narrator appears to project Tizzah in his deplorable state to communicate the extent to which the Blacks have been dehumanized by the oppression of the Whites in order to shame the Whites into reflecting on the injustices inherent in their oppressive tendencies. The literary slide then projects the phantom of insanity with “kiddos came back from burning the truck when the excitement had worn down and snores gave the only sound” (6). This spectre of insanity is meant to shake the (post)apartheid government by resurrecting the phobic object experienced during the Soweto uprising of 1976 when irate children burned down buildings and vehicles especially police trucks in order to express discontent and dissidence against the introduction of Afrikaans into the school curriculum. Finally, the slide portrays the group of blacks snoring and there is “the occasional bass rumble or alto of gas escaping from a rectum and the mumble of someone gulping it down” (6). Here, the narrator projects the occasional breaking of

air as the oppressive way the Blacks were expected to address the whites during the apartheid era being an indication that the whites are apparently superior and as a way of admitting to the inferiority of the Blacks. The Whites are transmuted into a fart while the Blacks become subjects of the fart as they gulp it down. The phantom of a fart points out to the Whites the stench they give off whenever they reduce other humans into excrement.

The next literary slide is dubbed “PROLOGUE” and it indicates a woman “near breaking point” with a man’s voice towering over her wishing her to break: “let her break. shatter. fragment. million bloodsplashedpieces” (6). The sinister voice of this insane phantom of violence puts the readers into a phobic trajectory as they anxiously wish the spectre of death away. However, the spectre of death gains identity through the voice of the narrator who announces, “i watched her. I’ve done all bleeding week” (6). The reader is shocked to realize that death and suffering are being meted out from familiar quotas and that what they gawk at as phantom of death is actually a split of themselves projected as external object in congruent with Melanie Klein’s theory of projective identification. In *Projective Identification: The Fate of a Concept*, Elizabeth Spillius and Edna O’Shaughnessy observe that for Melanie, “something of oneself that is very unpleasant or something that one feels one does not deserve to have is attributed to somebody else [...], this something, good or bad, is split off from the self and put into the object” (16). Some equilibrium is regained a moment later when the narrator comments that he has been watching the suffering woman through the lens which creates some distance between the narrator – and by extension between the reader – and the phobic suffering of the woman.

The narrator then projects the suffering of the woman onto the narrator who comments: “a trapped mouse. i feel her fear. touch her fright. smell her panic. the taste of it is in my mouth. my stomach rumbles. thunder coming to her. a mad train. hurtling through time caught in a jammed moment” (6). The woman transmutes into a trapped mouse and her fate is projected as that of being crushed under an insane train doing a speed of death. The mouse is imprisoned by a spectre of ‘jammed time’ which freezes it on the track of death. The resentment of death felt by the narrator travels through all his senses and finally dams out as a stomach rumble. The narrator then assumes a masochistic character: “dark is my friend. she’s a deer. frightened. those eyes are going to pop. i can make them pop. burst. explode. scatter to hit the distant wall” (6). Bavino uses this phantom of insanity dressed up in supremacy pretensions to challenge the whites’ towering attitude which slopes the blacks into discontent. The slide continues to develop and the woman-mouse looks at the narrator straight in the face but she cannot see him because her eyes have dissolved into graves. The narrator comments that his friend is dark and that she is a deer. He notes that she is frightened and that her eyes are about to pop. The narrator’s chilling voice is quite unsettling when it egoistically boasts that he is in a position to make her eyes pop, burst, explode and scatter to hit the distant wall. The insanity of the phantom seems to climb up into scary heights as the reader sees themselves as the target of the death through projective identification.

The phantom’s bloodcurdling voice comments further, indicating a desire to shift its violence from the eyes into some other part of the woman-mouse-deer and hesitantly goes for the mouth: “i need some other part. maybe the mouth. one between the fangs and she won’t be biting any hearts” (6). The phantom threatens that when it

puts a shot though the fangs it will neutralize her ability of biting off any hearts. It violently declares its intent to “open that cave right up to the back,” and to set her on fire, “that hair flames. is fire. one in the head. turn it red like hell. fire with petrol” (6). The bloodletting turns into fire. The phantom boasts that another shot in the head would turn it red like hell. The narrator uses this phantom of insanity – which seems to possess the ability to degrade the woman into a mouse, a deer and a trapped prey; and finally to blow her head into burning hell-fire – in order to produce abject images meant to challenge the (post)apartheid South African government’s dehumanization of the blacks through oppression. By projecting a phantom loaded with death and hell-fire, Bavino seems to be reminding the (post)apartheid South African government the violent circumstances that resulted during the apartheid era as the blacks fought against the injustices of the white rule. Many petrol bombs were detonated with whites as the target and wanton bloodletting threw South Africa into a red ball like hell-fire. The social mayhem in (post)apartheid South Africa arouse due to the existence of a predator-prey swirl of libido in which the hunter and the hunted lost anchoring as the clamour for freedom intensified.

In the case of the woman-mouse-deer there seems to be no escape. She turns at the mention of petrol which produces curses from the phantom as it realises that she knows of its presence: “she turns. she’s too thin. ghostly. the bitch. she knows i’m here” (6). The development of the prey into a seeing object shocks the phantom into realizing that its evil motives do not go unnoticed. In *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan Through Popular Culture*, Slavoj Zizek summarizes Lacan’s perception of the idea of gaze: “the eye viewing the object is on the side of the subject, while the gaze is on the side of the object. When I look at an object, the

object is already gazing at me, and from a point which I cannot see it” (109). Žižek’s observation means that the object of violence in Bavino’s literary slide is already gazing at the phantom of violence even before the phantom begins to look at her. The narrator appears to use the idea of the gaze to prick the conscience of the (post)apartheid South African government into realizing that the Blacks are aware of its encroaching oppressive tendencies despite their apparent resilience. The phantom seems to be looking at a splitting of itself – its conscience – projected on the object when it says that the object looks too thin and ghostly.

Indeed, the sheer insanity of this phantom spitting violence comes to the fore when its voice starts a count for the death blow on the object. The voice uses a descending count from ten and there is tension in the air. An inner voice momentarily holds the phantom from squeezing the trigger of death but the rush of libido eggs the spectre on. However, the woman-mouse-deer turns disrupting the passion of the phantom: “nine. don’t pull. between the eyes. squeeze. she turns again. fear is sweat in the pores of the air. heavy. bombarding me. envelope of fright” (7). The gaze of the object makes the phantom of insanity to soak in fear. Every time the phantom is about to pull the trigger of death, the object turns and the spectre sees in her a devil-like character of spoiling his perfect moment. There is an ambivalence of sensations of phobic fear/ phallic courage, hate/ love, and death/ life which charges the air with the “heat locomoting predator & prey to a dread embrace of blood” (7). With every count the object turns into labour to feed the passion of the predator – through the alterity of fear and courage.

At the sixth count the narrator observes, “the sacrifice for a belly-god looks straight at me. the ritual must begin” (7). The narrator appears to suggest that the way

the object looks at the predator makes it to burst into action and as though on a concealed cue the object changes into a pornographic mode: “she bedroom eyes this rust gone to rust. standing straight, she’s a prick, but she quivers, shivers, trembles, is a vibrator” (7). The idea of the female object becoming the phallus which is implied by the words ‘prick’ and ‘vibrator’ echoes Homer’s observation that following Lacan’s idea of ‘das Ding’ (that Thing), in courtly love: “the lady is the objet a [...] – that impossible object cause of desire that inaugurates the movement of desire itself” (107-108). The narrator seems to imply that at the core of the violence perpetuated in (post)apartheid South Africa – and even the world over – is the flow of the tide of libido. The count in the narrator’s literary template could therefore be perceived as pornographic – leading to a libidinous orgasm. At the count of five, the predator becomes feverish with sexual desire: “i could ram it down her throat, make it fall on her heart molten sperm. melt frigidity” (7). The narrator appears to suggest that for the predator, the object is quivering for its sperm. At the count of four, the predator seems to be held back a bit as it ponders over death: “messy, yes, there’s no cleanliness in death, but death can be cleansing, it will be, here. i could tear her apart at the waist. births uncome” (7). The narrator seems to suggest that the predator resents the ejaculatory waste that comes with the little death. He observes that death can be messy and that there is no cleanliness in death but looks forward to the cleansing it offers when ejaculatory waste is dumped into the object.

At the count of three, the predator-phantom is swirling in a tide of death: “tear her bleeding thing open. enlarge her death-hole. too small perhaps. maybe that’s why. holy. pure. jesus donkey on a carpet of napalm” (7). The narrator appears to imply that the predator desires to tear the object’s bleeding thing open in order to enlarge her

death-hole which seems to be too small denying it smooth entry. The death-hole dissolves into the Biblical virgin donkey on which Jesus entered Jerusalem. The donkey is projected on a carpet of gasoline jelled with aluminium soaps probably to ease its entry into the holy city. The narrator seems to be threatening the stasis of religion by projecting Jesus in such a sacrilegious manner. At two, the narrator observes that predator switches into justifications for making the kill: “soma are plain fucking scared of the throb of life. symbol of the future. breath in” (7). The predator seems to resent those who are too cowardly to plunge into death which he describes as the symbol of the future.

At the last count the narrator comments that “she’s there, in the centre, is the centre. the pulse. the heart of this misery. she’s beautiful. too bad” (7). The narrator appears to suggest that the conquest of the woman becomes the centre of the predator’s existence. The predator seems to mourn her beauty which death will drain away in a second. He shoots death at her and, “her head breaks open like a rotten egg of red & bone a pulpy mess a choked throttled scream & torn flesh & bleeding walls of flying glass and flailing hands clutching at nothing of life & she grows still as the air comes alive & i laugh” (7). The commentator’s voice booms with laughter as he sees the woman kicking the bucket. The literary template ends with news report, “next morning news report a man shot through the head with a powerful sniper’s rifle and a woman held, found in the vicinity, in possession. breaking sticks! crumbling stones! i mixed up my up my fucking sexes!” (7). Bavino suggests that since the woman has been caught with sticks and stones and not a sniper rifle she is being accused falsely. In annoyance at the arresting of the woman on what appears to be trumped up charges, the commentator reports, “i ball the sheet in the hole of my hand and throw it

out of my south African window” (7). The narrator seems to suggest that the news is trash.

The literary slide Bavino dubs PROLOGUE in *B/ H* gives anchoring to the signifier of the phantom of insanity used to protest against the oppression of the blacks. The apparent mix up in the sexes is a phobic message to the (post)apartheid South African government that the hunter – the oppressors of the Blacks – may become the victim of the labour of their passion when the tide of death meets the gaze of the object. The narrator also seems to imply that by projecting death drive at the Blacks, the Whites also make themselves susceptible to the tide of death. The injustices meted out on the Blacks roll out from the slide as phobic object as the woman is reduced into a crushed object-subject which lacks human definition but appears as trapped mouse, then deer and as a combination of all three objects to become woman-mouse-deer. As indicated in chapter two, man is at the heart of discontent as he projects his phallic waste into a woman. From Bavino’s template it is evident that man is the target of dissidence. The man in the slide insanely finds pleasure in hunting the woman down as a death game. Here, Bavino dissolves the manhood of oppression into a predator-prey death drive and as explained in chapter two death drive cannot fulfil its aim which is realized as libido. Subsequently, the man is not satisfied after rakishly killing the woman and therefore he frames up another woman in order to feed his insatiable phallic jouissance. The woman whom the man is hunting down is dark which brings into play the politics of race still reverberating in (post)apartheid South Africa as revealed in Rampolokeng’s novels. The narrator uses the woman to represent the marginalized groups in South Africa.

In *B/ H*, the literary slide that follows is about a black man by the name Bavino whom the State said is on the run. The streets are projected in cuffs and manacles but the object of the security forces is still at large. By dissolving the security forces into a steely phantom apprehending the streets futilely, the narrator challenges the excessive force used by security agents to crack down blacks on trampled up charges. Bavino is accused of murder, and the announcer of the incident indicates that the crime Bavino has committed is regularly committed by the state but in an official sanitized capacity: “BAVINO ON THE RUN: STATESIDE” (8). The state is thus projected as a mad man suffering from multiple personality disorder hunting down his own crime. Other security forces across the world are brought on “like else-filthy-where & other proppers-up-of-obscene-power. moscow, antwerpen, dessau, paris... & HERE & NOW” (8). The power of security agents across the world from Moscow to Paris swirl with historical infectious insanity of hurting humanity especially the marginalized groups. The disease seems to have caught up with (post)apartheid South Africa presented as ‘HERE AND NOW’. The narrator challenges the sanitized state police violence through this phantom of an insane criminal running across the world from historical time and space to the present moment and space.

In another slide, Bavino presents the “THE RUNNING NIGGA” rambling against the oppression of the state: “this shit is toxic. they spurt ‘fight on terror-war’ mental excreta. and being a receptacle, i feel third-worlded to a chamber-pot. see, i’m psycho-ramble & ramble when the powerful defecate” (11). The narrator suggests that the nigger is on the run from the state which has declared him a terrorist. The blacks feel marginalized as they have apparently been reduced into a pounding container for

the mighty world powers. The narrator points out the human waste resultant from the political pretensions thus: “& the desert is blood-hot. have you seen the sand dance? the sun bleed? i have. in the east it goes down with a wound in the middle” (11). The narrator seems to be referring to the Desert Storm Operation which, to quote The United States General Accounting Office (GAO) report of July 1996, “was primarily a sustained 43-day air campaign by the United States and its allies against Iraq between January 17, 1991, and February 28, 1991” (1). Bavino observes that throughout history the Blacks have always found a way of defeating or coping with suffering: “put bellies to dance but can you exorcise the blues? enfranchise all the hues? try even the rainbow refuse. the classic dream deferred is a scream transferred bobbing/ bopping ...” (11). The Blacks are impoverished by the (post)apartheid South African government and its austere State Apparatus so much that they can hardly afford basic needs.

Bavino uses the phantom of an insane Nigga who rambles against the oppression of the state in order to penetrate into the psyche of the oppressive government with the view of making it re-think its perception of the Blacks. The narrator reminds the South African authorities that they can subject the Blacks to misery but they can never annihilate the Blacks’ inherent resilience to oppression. Michael ‘Hawkeye’ Herman observes that “the blues is a musical style created in response to hardships endured by generations of African American people” (“Blues History”). Bavino projects the classic dream as the beauty attained by co-existence of colours as in the rainbow. The Whites appear to run contrary to this beauty and subsequently store for themselves a scream which will occur when the other colours rise up against their oppression.

The narrator revives the slaves' phantom of insanity as they defied white oppression in order to scare the South African authorities into discarding dehumanization of the Blacks. The narrator projects this resistance thus: "yes kgositsile, it was said once 'we are music people.' i feel it bounce across trans-atlantic sound waves. it's dread sounds 'n sights in these armageddon nights. moved from the black mamba right in reason to this season without sense" (11). Bavino manipulates the slaves' phantom of insanity so that like in phantasmagoria it moves towards the reader which is meant to scare the South African authorities and any other oppressive systems into stopping their senseless degrading of human life otherwise judgement time is near as indicated by the spectre of "john henry's hammer is sucking death" (11). This phantom sucking death is enhanced by "[...] battle lines, between 'fight' in new york & 'resist' in beirut. The bush-backed & the bushwhacked" (11). President George W. Bush of USA had sanitized the use of violence to apparently fight terror in Beirut but the American government was accused of committing atrocities against humanity which is what they had ostensibly set out to stop. The flow of death tide from the Whites gives the targeted colours a right to resist, "& begin. & get in right2fight flight. powered by no jargonauts. but the talk of the street-walk. not slam-jam-whammy" (11). When the Blacks are oppressed by the Whites they give out their pre-chant grunt which calls for the blood of the oppressors.

Bavino further builds the phantom of insanity by projecting images of the knife and the axe eating in order to break the chains of oppression. The narrator notes, "i've seen the knife-bite & the axe eat. the chains rattle. heard the slave-tone & the baas-beat. it runs in thin & comes out round in the echo-chamber. across the centuries. & the waves. sea & air. brains in battle" (15). Here, the narrator seems to be

reminding the (post)apartheid South African authorities that oppression of the blacks during the trans-Atlantic slave trade culminated into violence against the state. Subsequently, the authorities will face the same fate if they do not cease their oppression on the blacks. In addition, Bavino points out to the (post)apartheid South African authorities and other oppressive states that no state is so superior that they cannot get a backlash of the tide of death they mete out on the blacks. To prove his point Bavino observes, “the ‘greatest nation’ can get worked. & wacked. just like the worst & last on the wrecked/ wretchedness-scale. What chord was struck on that two-sevens-clash-anniversary of tosh’s murder?” (15). Bavino’s observation implies that nobody is insulated against the tide of death and therefore all nations ‘small’ or ‘great’ should stop inaugurating death tide by stemming social injustices in all sectors of life. The narrator challenges the insanity of ordering extermination of human life with impunity by projecting a phantasmagorical situation where “the mystic said: ‘kill dem dead before dem spread...’ & palestine catches its children mid-air. lana. & lebanon is on the lawn” (15). The conflict between Israel and Palestine is used by Bavino to paint an image of a mad phantom feeding its ego on human blood and using religion as a justification for the genocide.

For Bavino, the mystic extermination of human life is “genocide thumb-printed with jesus’ sandals trampling the life out of question, the existence of minds at work” (96). The narrator uses the sacrilegious image to shock the authorities out of their turning religion into a tool of serving their own selfish interests at the expense of the oppressed groups across the world. As examples of lives put into drainpipes through dehumanization that bears the thumb-print of religion, Bavino observes of Africa, “that is a dream that went the way of dinosaurs and cro-magnon man when

tarzan zoomed skywards in elevators,” and of South America, “a souled south america sold into the culture of pestilence diseases and death” (96). Bavino’s observation implies that the West’s political pretensions have robbed Africa of her dream for development through economic and political oppression. By comparing the African and South American dreams to Dinosaur, the narrator seems to be of the view that Africa and South America’s visions of transforming themselves into more meaningful political blocks, such as the United States of America, have been crashed by the whites’ colonial hegemony which has fragmented the two continents.

The narrator employs the phantoms of James Bond with “that giant phallus shooting rockets into the womby fallacy of heaven” and Van Der with “vulture to jackal style” reducing humanity into skulls in order to challenge the Whites to stop their meaningless wars on humanity. The narrator draws these insane phantoms of war from a film entitled Moscow Raid. Films are used by the powers of the world to inject the apparent superiority of the Whites into the brains of humanity. The narrator makes James Bond to dissolve into games bond to communicate the fatal psychological games the powers of the world play at the expense of the marginalized groups. Bavino communicates the attendant trauma of these war-games through a sacrilegious phantom thus: “and then someone wet dreams themselves fucked by jesus and it’s aids in the chapel, in the church, in the cathedral, in the vatican, aids all the way up the erect staircase of heaven” (97). Here, Bavino expresses deep-seated resentment at the way religion is used to inaugurate and justify atrocities on humankind.

For the narrator, race profiling is borne out of the grinding greed for power. “race profile comes womb-blast sound style,” observes Bavino, “amputee to stirrup”

(90). Race is like some kind of curse that smacks the Blacks with destitution and servitude. The Blacks try to reclaim their stolen humanity with “monastic” and “paranoia in power-hall’s foyer” governed by “schizophrenic insurgence” (90). The insane resistance phantom of the Blacks is meant to bring the (post)apartheid South African government back on the track of humanity with the strong message that if it continues to oppress the Blacks it should be ready to face a new kind of religion of madness. The Blacks are portrayed as having learnt the deceptive means the Whites employ to trap them into servitude. The phantom of Karl Marx is projected resisting White man’s oppression: “mirror runs joke god embalmed reflection” and “enter marx-ark sanctuary in global desert storm flood (atomic garbage buoys ghost-ship)” (90). Karl Marx’s resistance is fuelled by the waste humanity has been reduced to by the Whites’ superiority creed. In another literary slide dubbed ‘sham-manic,’ Bavino indicates that oppression is an ingredient of chaos and that no heavenly consideration abide in such a situation. For the narrator, the blacks resist oppression by rejecting the ideals furthered by all the state agents that have been used to reduce them into excrement. That the Blacks soar above the apparent power of the oppressing agents: “if the lord is WORD i’m walking transcript” (94). The narrator’s observation implies that a fatal duel ensues as the Blacks resist oppression. White supremacy, for the narrator, is like the ascension of Tarzan into the skies in the classic myth and that it holds nothing but an attempt to pitch the Blacks into obscurity. The narrator projects the phantom of “gorilla troops” invading “the tarzan cot” with “t/rifle-cradle blasted rock-steady music” as a warning to the oppressive (post)apartheid South African authorities that the same fate would befall them if they continued to oppress the Blacks (93). The message seems to be: stop oppression or go the way of the Tarzan.

The economic oppression of the blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa is projected in a literary slide with the Blacks mining platinum in the bowels of the earth. Bavino projects the blacks as the ill-fated father of Oedipus whom the whites (Oedipus) have forced to work in the mines in order to kill him and then take over his precious possession. The Black miners boast of nothing from their labour apart from stumps gotten from dynamite blasts as they mine platinum. However, the blacks are shown rising up against economic oppression with carnal fires: “madam will you desist... selling me tranquillity miracle laws enforce romantic notion claws out African forgiveness capacity white-hammered down subconscious level feel subliminal abuse beneath these high fashion views in psycho-raptures [...]” (92). The narrator implies that the dehumanization the Blacks are pitched into sublime into psycho-violence against the agents of the oppression. Subsequently, the blacks cut a phantom of a crazy animal fighting for its life. The intense feeling of lack which inaugurates the tide of death, for, Bavino, explains the Whites’ inhuman dealings with the Blacks and the subsequent backlash as resistance which is also governed by violence. The narrator notes, “this is MASS confess absolute [...] consign soul to satan how the life wheel turn b/ lack arse-haul back uterus-ward kill oedipus complex ignites homicidal desires bursting pancreas subsistence explosive power scents [...]” (92). Here, the narrator projects the Blacks as a mad phantom harbouring satanic homicidal desire against the whites for robbing them of their humanity.

For the narrator, the Whites have a worrying tendency of manufacturing deceptive creatures with the aim of using them to knock other humans into subjectivity. “our monsters of frankenstein,” Bavino writes, “that rise and rule over their creators. flesh, bone and the elasticity of a lying tongue. we house and hotel

them in warmth, out of the cold anonymity” (95). Bavino’s observation implies that ideological structures such as religion and race are creations of the whites meant to ground other human beings into a receptacle for the whites’ phallic waste. Frankenstein is a novel written by the English author Mary Shelly which is about the young obsessed scientist Victor Frankenstein who creates a grotesque human being from parts of exhumed corpses. It follows then that the oppression-creatures created by the Whites are constructions of death and afford humanity not an iota of life but massive death. For Bavino, the future of (post)apartheid South Africa is being suffocated by a phantom of death operating through the State Apparatuses. The narrator notes that the oppressive structures in (post)apartheid South Africa have “got nation-foetus in a wrench,” and that the foetus suffocates in “drowned amniotic” and “catch the rebirth stench” (102). The ban of apartheid in the 1990s culminating into the 1994 General Elections which ushered in the first African president raised the Black South Africans hopes that oppression would come to an end allowing the country to have a rebirth.

However, systemic racism of apartheid continued to suffocate the life of the Blacks creating a sharp feeling of discontent. The narrator observes that “hate is maternal to (a) trick-bed seed apathy trickle down children bleed topical waste scrap/crap pile up dark inside the masoch kist” (102). The narrator’s observation is congruent with Kristeva’s theoretical conceptualization of the maternal. In “Julia Kristeva’s Psychoanalytic Work” Rachel Widawsky notes that for Kristeva, “the depressed narcissist neither mourns the abject nor confronts his concealed hatred of it, as Freud would have it. In her view, the depressed narcissist defends against the process of separation” (64). It is logical then when the Blacks rise against

discrimination and oppression by killing the phallus in the phantom of insanity projected by Bavino thus: “last coffin nail in the phallus scrotum in a trash-bin bassonic acid wreck black ovaries genocide program structured clinical” (102). Bavino’s observation implies that the blacks are like a woman who cuts the phallus of an oppressive man in a manic flow of insurgence after realising that his merciless repeated pounding is going to wreck her cradle of life.

For the narrator, the insane phantom of the Whites’ oppression against the Blacks becomes lodged in the Black’s psyche and the Blacks are left with nothing to sacrifice for (post)apartheid South Africa apart from their sanity. Bavino notes, “anyway, i’ve only my sanity to lose. or have lost. beyond that i can sacrifice nothing, my lambs have gone up in smoke. one anyway, the other went down the drainpipe of a future i’m perhaps going to, but it walked into the past” (106). The narrator employs the phantom of Blacks who have been reduced into mental degenerates to warn the (post)apartheid South African authorities that if they continued to oppress the Blacks the country would have more black psychopaths than healthy Black working population. The Blacks are haunted by phantoms of injustices and, for the narrator, they are forced to spend most of their time trying to recover their lost sanity. Indeed, the blacks lose their identity: “where am i? i’m here, of course. in this asylum of protection against my own thoughts. i’m my own threat” (106). The Blacks appear to have become psychotic and to echo Kristeva they are gripped by phobic fear that all meaning is breaking down and that their life has lost meaning.

At the end, the Blacks are haunted by nightmares in which the phantom of an insane woman wishing with all her being to cut off the phallic in a maternal resistance. Bavino observes, “she writes the blade slicing through the essence of the

cosmos, earth, time, place, star, moon in universal stoppage of all existence's values. Beyond mathematics, beyond bible, beyond successes and failures" (150). Bavino's observation implies that the blacks' resistance is a phantom that does not respect any values. This irrational spectre is meant to touch the abject space of the (post)apartheid South African authorities so as to shake them from their phallic stupor and bring them back to their senses.

The phantoms of the Whites' oppressive phallus continue to pursue the blacks with death even at their psychotic bed which tilts them over the precipice. The Blacks are robbed off their only possession: nightmares. When the blacks have completed writing their story of death, Bavino notes, "... and the pen falls castrated, its life masturbated out in blood slashing this sheet with shit that is my fiction. the blood scrolls' signature of someone other at the end of my story" (150). The credit of writing the story is grabbed from the Black narrator's hands just when he is about to put his signature which implies that the bloody resistance against whites' oppression sucks off the Blacks' remnant humanity. The tide of death swirls around making the revolutionist to become the oppressor against fellow countrymen whose contribution to the liberation cause he utterly dismisses: "credibility at what blood-price blackheart?" (150). There is continued death with the new regime.

### **3.3 PHANTOMS OF HYSTERIA AND DISSIDENCE**

As indicated in chapter one, hysteria is a manic condition brought about by infantile experience which is either incomprehensible or traumatic but is retained by memory unconsciously and reactivated at a later time and space in a different capricious context eliciting novel meanings whose polity is race and racism, inclusion and exclusion, and power contestation and its subversion. In the preceding sub-

chapter, it is evident that insanity is inaugurated by the phobic fear of the emptiness of the signifier. However, hysteria is initiated not by the emptiness but by the filling of that emptiness with the repressed phobic object. In his phantasmagoria, as Gunning observes, “Robertson promised apparitions of the ‘dead and absent’ would appear” (3). His observation implies that Robertson was promising reactivation of the traumatic and incomprehensible in order to subject his audience to the phobic object with the hope of inaugurating a critical psychic re-examination of their existence. In *W/ H*, the narrator uses phantoms of hysteria to dissent against the sanitized oppression in (post)apartheid South Africa perpetuated against the blacks through the State Apparatuses.

Bavino projects the first spectre of hysteria as whirling haze which envelopes its subject blurring their vision. “i got out of it in a haze,” the narrator observes, “ a mist both whirling outside me and in. i blinked in the sun. i stopped from a stagger & sat down hard in a mud patch. the walls closed me in. out of them” (7). Bavino’s thought implies that the phantom of hysteria haunts its subject by throwing them into a psychological enclosure whose insurgence against the somatic disorients the subject. The oppressive haze throws the subject into disarray since it keeps changing in form and locale. The narrator observes, “it was then and now a transitional phase. it is personal, it was national. i woke out of it like a dream, euphoria swirling around and in” (7). The narrator’s observation implies that the haze is a kind of displacement which removes the subject from the reality around them and swings them in a pendulum of time and space. For the black subject in this case, the haze is projected as personal in the present temporal space and then as national in the past temporal space. The mist unfolds like a euphoric dream.

However, the ecstatic haze soon crumbles down into disillusionment as the subject realizes that it is not real. Bavino uses the spectre of whirling haze to challenge the (post)apartheid South African authorities to stop oppressing the blacks because soon the euphoric mist blocking the blacks' sight from what the authorities have taken from them will break down. For the narrator, the blacks will start demanding for their rights when the swirling haze dissolves into disillusionment: "only it had taken disillusionment to get me back to reality or what i had been made to see as it. the doors closed behind my time and now open on that which was made unmine" (7). There is a gap in the reality constructed for the black subject which resonates with Lacan's objet petit a. Homer notes that "the objet a [...] is the left-over of the real; it is that which escapes symbolization and is beyond representation" (88). Homer's observation implies that the black subject experiences a void in the signification chain which initiates the whirlwind of the repressed narcissist into the symbolic.

In the first literary slide, Bavino projects the substance of the enveloping haze as swinging from the present to the past and from personal to national without going into the detail of the traumatic and incomprehensible experiences contained in it. The literary slide the narrator puts next displays the spectre of hysteria that touches on the personal. It is somatically perceived through the ears as a repulsive fracture of bone and then through the eyes as a blow splitting the lip of the narrator's mother. Bavino notes, "i heard a sickening crack of bone and saw the blow split my mother's lip and throw her against the wall" (7). The child narrator is overwhelmed by phobic anxiety of the mother being hurt but through Klein's projective identification he splits the wall upon which his mother is thrown into his psyche and it becomes a defence

mechanism sheltering him from realizing the full psychic impact of the phallic violence meted out on the mother. The child is thrown into disarray when he notes the phallic pleasure on the face of the father represented as a grin.

The screaming from his sister in the next room crumbles the narrator's defence mechanism and the full impact of the violence against his mother came down hard inside his head. In "Reliance or Maternal Eroticism," Kristeva notes that there is a unique space existing between the mother and the child before the child is born into the symbolic order: "khora, as [Plato] calls it, is a space before space, a nurturer-and-devourer at once, prior to the One, the Father, the word, even the syllable" (72). Kristeva's observation implies that at the psychic level the splitting of the mother's lip is the sickening splitting of the vagina during birth and the eventual phobic separation of the child from the amniotic reliance. The separated child may need a smack to shake it into the new reality away from the amniotic cushion. It is also plausible to argue that the narrator's sister screamed the walls down because the splitting of the mother's lip registered in her psyche as the splitting of her own vagina as she could see herself reflected in the mother. Bavino uses the spectre of hysteria involving the sickening crack of bone to warn the (post)apartheid South African authorities that if they do not stop oppressing the blacks the phobic object of separation (discrimination) residing in the kernel of their being will soon come rushing out as hysterical insurgence. For the narrator, the blacks may presently fail to reverse the phallic flow of violence as indicated by the narrator's futile attempt to stop his father from beating his mother but like the narrator they are constantly screaming at the phantom of violence repressed in their unconscious mind.

Bavino communicates the violence of the hysterical dissidence expected in (post)apartheid South Africa if the authorities fail to wake up to the call of their amniotic obligation to all South Africans irrespective of their colour as distant sounds of gunshot and a lonesome scream. The narrator observes, “we heard gunshots in the distance & a scream. lonesome. so tired” (7). The narrator’s observation implies that the phobic object of the violent revolution witnessed in South Africa as the Blacks fought against apartheid would come rushing into the symbolic order and its target would be the man who has been bashing the mother. The lonesome scream in the midst of gunshots communicates the singularity of the oppressed blacks’ resistance as well as the violence hitting the loathsome target. The child and the mother rediscover the mother-infant dyad which now gains new reverberations insurgent to the symbolic order. Writing of the narrator and his mother Bavino observes, “my mother’s hand clutched mine. tight” (7-8). For Kristeva, Homer notes, “The khora is not a fixed place, however, but an endless movement and pulsations beneath the symbolic” (118). It could then be conceivably argued that the amniotic (nurturer) resounds to momentarily bridge the rapture of the mother-infant dyad which is represented somatically as the tight clutching of hands between mother and child. At the same time the khora as a devourer finds new pulsations not for ejecting the child from the amniotic but to devour the symbolic.

In another literary slide, the narrator projects the sickening-crack-of-bone phantom of hysteria dissolving into a widening stomach-turning crack in the mother’s face in temporal space as perceived by the child. “mother your face cracks against my every minute,” the narrator notes, “when hunger’s heat grows i go out to the abattoir to scavenge for the skins they tear off the chickens & throw out. bring them to mama

[...]” (8). The narrator’s observation implies that the child is trying to repair the mother’s split lip but he cannot find anything with which to successively mend the rapture. When the child comes back home with some chickens’ skins, the mother goes out to scavenge for tomato and onions but her going out could be interpreted as repulsion at the sight of the skin split from her lip and its awful substitution with that of chicken. The repulsion wells from the phobic object of the splitting of the mother’s vagina during child bearing. “Mama” is a word used in (post)apartheid South Africa to refer to the country and the attachment the Blacks have for her.

Subsequently, Bavino is talking about the splitting of (post)apartheid South Africa into fragments by the phallic injustices meted out on the Blacks through the State Apparatuses. For the narrator, the Blacks endeavour to repair the rapture on the face of their country by trying to eke out a living against all odds in a skewed economy that favours the whites at the expense of the Blacks. The narrator seems to be sounding a stern warning to (post)apartheid South African government to cease the oppression of the blacks in order to seal up the split in the country. Bavino observes that when the narrator child is crawling in the abattoir collecting stray chickens’ skins he is kicked by one of the people working there which makes the narrator mad. The narrator notes, “[...] someone held me back when I wanted to slice him like he did the chickens” (8). The message Bavino seems to be communicating to the (post)apartheid South African government is that the blacks will rise into insurgence if oppression continues to encroach into the little space afforded the blacks in the country’s skewed economy.

The narrator indicates that the child feels a sharp sense of powerlessness when he realises that he cannot repair the mother’s broken lip. Therefore, the child goes

looking for the mother in girls in the streets. However, he manages to see not the united but the split mother in the girls. In one of the literary slides, the narrator projects the child narrator stabbing another boy with a knife for breaking a bottle on his girlfriend's face: "her cries had made [the narrator] go dig out the old knife" (10). The split in the mother's face continues to widen as the child tries to mend it. In the next slide, the mother's split dissolve into rape in which the narrator's girlfriend is gang-raped by the police officers who had apprehended the narrator together with his girlfriend. "i could hear her moans. still do. coming down the passage of my mind," the narrator observes, "then they let us go [...] in the light i saw the goo slide down her legs" (10). Later, the narrator screamed alone as he saw the night as a phantom engulfing him with tentacles around his neck. The stench of defilement stuck to the girl and then seemed to invade the psychic space of the narrator so much that he developed phobia of nights.

Moreover, the narrator learns that the girl had already been defiled long before by her father. The narrator relays his disappointment thus: "she told me in the rain about how she woke up to boys after her father had introduced her to what they had between their legs" (11). Worse still for the narrator the girl told him how her father had murderously made her to sit on a hot stove after discovering she was going out with boys. The girl's genitals were charred. Bavino observes, "the more she tried to wriggle off the stove the more she got burnt in other places than her buttocks & she felt the fire shooting up her vagina. slicing across memory time & place" (11). The narrator experiences repulsion at the dehumanization of the girl. It could be believably argued that the narrator's search for the mother both in the past and the future becomes futile since his attempt to reconstruct his split mother is fruitless and at the

same time the girl in whom he hopes to find the mother is already deformed. The trembling of the girl makes the narrator's nerves to shudder. The mother-infant dyad is once more momentarily regained: "i held her hand tighter than anytime else" (11). However, after releasing the girl's hand the narrator experiences a sharp feeling of castration as though time has locked him out of the symbolic order.

The phantom of hysteria is further projected as a psychopathic vibrator moving up in the mother represented as Sangoma who is a South African traditional healer or herbalist. The narrator is taken to a Sangoma by his mother in order to heal him of his phobic fear of nights. The Sangoma makes incisions on the body of the narrator with a dirty dusty razor. She then rubs snuff and some other stuff in the little wounds she had made on the narrator and forces him to drink a lot of water. On her order the narrator sticks two fingers deep into his mouth and he vomits. The Sangoma then moves on to read the life of the narrator from the vomit: "she saw stories of early death & foreboding times for me in my vomit" (12). The narrator sees in the exorcism of his demons a sexual character more potent than frenzy. The narrator accordingly observes, "somewhat perversely the tension rose past hormonal riot level. it was a weird version of sexual frenzy. she was hissing orgasmic. wriggling her body on the reed-mat first slowly then accelerating as possession took over her torso" (12). The eroticism of the Sangoma charges the air with a sexual frenzy that hits the narrator's hard giving him an erection that he cannot hide from the healer.

It could be argued that the gyrating Sangoma is represented in the psyche of the narrator as his erotic mother whom he desires sexually unconsciously but has been snatched from him by the symbolic order. He experiences repulsion at his erection because deep in him he inhabits the phobic fear of rejection by the erotic mother.

Indeed, when the Sangoma slaughters two chickens and smears the blood over the narrator he says he does not lose consciousness but he has been doing it ever since. The narrator experiences hysteria at the sight of blood. The narrator's frantic search for the mother is further thrown into disarray by the phantom of his mother as the gyrating Sangoma and the chickens' blood smeared over him which seems to be represented in his mind as the floods of menstrual cycle – denying him the very amniotic space that he yearns for. The narrator notes that the Sangoma “was moving like she had a psychopathic vibrator going up her” (12). Bavino uses the phantom of hysteria involving the psychopathic Sangoma to challenge the sanitized oppression of the blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa by pointing out to the authorities that continued oppression is going to cause pulsations of the devourer inherent in the khora and hence kill the rebirth of the country.

The violence inherent in the psychopathic vibrator resounds in the narrator as sexual promiscuity and masochism. The narrator inserts another literary slide to project this violent character attained from the psychopathic vibrator. Subsequently, the child narrator announces to the reader, “i'm always taking girls off into the long grass & the toilets & sticking my penis inside them. like this one here, she's always getting boys to go with her” (13). The narrator seems to harbour pleasure in causing the girls untold pain and he, therefore, apparently perceives his penis as a knife with which he repeatedly stabs the girls' vagina. The narrator's arrogant masochistic stance seems to be built on his futile attempt to find the mother. It is tenable to argue that the narrator sees in the girls the unattainable erotic mother whom he must now devour for rejecting his labour meant to seal her split lip and suffocating him in a blood bath during her periods. The child narrator also feels repulsion at the mother's apparent

masochistic character because it is a reflection of himself. The child narrator expresses his repulsion of the girl thus: “always running her hands on [boys’] pants-front i think she’s a little weird. & she’s a montage of burn marks. especially around her vagina. that i think is what excites about her” (13). The narrator cannot stand the sight of the girl’s deformed vagina which is represented in his psyche as the image of his deformed mother whom he is trying to wipe out of his existence for she stands for what was taken away from him and is now unattainable. The narrator employs the phantom of hysteria with the child repeatedly trying to kill the deformed mother to challenge the (post)apartheid South African government into waking to the reality that oppression of the blacks is repulsive and might soon turn into a feeling of murder which is likely to throw the country into chaos.

The literary slide projecting the spectre of the child repeatedly trying to murder his deformed mother ends with the girl being snatched from the narrator and then recurrently raped by a gang of boys. The narrator reports, “but once i was deep inside the girl when i felt a cold metal object poke into my ribs. i looked up into the smiling faces of some boys i was sweet with. but they were not being nice, told me to get finished so they could have a go” (13). The narrator’s words suggest that he had momentarily found the absent mother but before he could establish a firm relation with her some violent boys whom before then he counted as his friends forcefully took her away from him and gang raped her – deforming her even further. The narrator experiences an overwhelming sense of castration as he helplessly watches the gang rape his girlfriend. The narrator gives the details thus: “i tried to talk to them but one kicked me in the face & it threw me off. they had me pinned down with a knife at my neck while they took turns. five of them. she had an insane grin on her face

throughout” (13). The implication of the narrator’s situation is that he is caught in a jamb of pain which seems to freeze him in time as he mourns the defiling of his girl. The narrator apparently sees himself in the insane grin on the face of the girl.

In “Mourning and Melancholia,” Sigmund Freud notes that in the act of “mourning it is the world which becomes poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself” (254). Freud’s observation implies that for the narrator the world becomes poor since he has lost both his girlfriend and the boys he was sweet with. At the same time his ego is deflated which pitches the narrator into melancholia. He therefore considers the girl as insane and experiences repulsion at her sight. The message the narrator is communicating to the (post)apartheid South African authorities is that the Blacks’ oppression is slowly leading to insurgence expressed as repulsion and that if the situation is not checked soon the Blacks are going to lose a sense of belonging which could initiate hysteria in form of chaotic violence. Bavino is undoubtedly sounding a warning that the raping of (post)apartheid South Africa through oppression is bound to reduce the country into an insane society. The repercussion of raping the country through oppressive channels whose phantom comes in the next literary slide is pre-announced by the narrator at the end of this slide thus: “i heard later when she’d grown up a bit she killed her father near blind father & was taken to the mental asylum. but i didn’t see her there when i went” (13). The narrator’s observation implies that the daughter who could be perceived as the rebirth of the mother has been reduced into an empty signifier. In the context of (post)apartheid South Africa, it means that the rebirth of the country from her painful history of apartheid is being threatened by sanitized oppression of the Blacks.

The narrator's 'absent' girlfriend has gone through a lot of suffering in the hands of the father. Homer observes that for Lacan the symbolic order is "governed by the paternal metaphor and the imposition of paternal law" (58). It then follows that when the girl kills her father she is in essence rising against the symbolic law. "the father was epileptic," the narrator explains, "& as was the fashion he was always creeping into her. rushing jumping her all the way into her teenage years" (13). Following Lacan's argument about the father being the symbol of law, the narrator's observation implies that the (post)apartheid South African law is executed in a way which is oppressive. The hysteria that is initiated by perennial oppression may burst out in fatal bolts of violence directed at the apparent source of oppression. In the case of the girl in the current literary slide as projected here, the narrator notes, "she thought at first he was in particularly intense coming mode. but she then got terrified scared to shredded nerves. realizing he'd conked cold inside her. all the while gushing out thrashing about her. way up inside her folds" (13). The sudden death of the father as he rapes his daughter is apparently the end of the girl's oppression. The narrator's observation, nonetheless, projects the dead father still gushing ejaculatory waste into the girl's receptacle.

The spectre of the dead draining ejaculatory waste into the living throws the girl into a succession of manic violent activities directed at the dead father. She rolls him off after he stops thrashing inside her and then goes to the kitchen for the axe. She chops at him and bits of bone fly all over the place together with the blood and the gore from the torn brain ligaments. The observation from the narrator that "much of it we have seen already, stepped over it & kept walking without glancing over the shoulder. walking to far sunsets. us born at world's end" implies the filth in the

(post)apartheid South African law which throttle freedoms hoped for by the blacks in the rebirth of the country has made some black South Africans to migrate to other countries where humanity is upheld by the law (14). The earnest attempt to dissect the body of the dead father in order to identify the core of evil which makes him so heartless to his own daughter, is a futile exercise as the father was dead even when he was alive and is now alive as a phobic object even in death.

The narrator describes the girl's phantom of insanity, thus, "she couldn't stop chopping at him. couldn't break him down to finer particles. she said later she wanted to get at the core of his dirt. to smash the essence of his being. to touch the heat of his evil" (14). The narrator's observation implies that the enraged girl is trying to identify the core of evil in her monstrous father in order to destroy it. The narrator is indubitably warning the (post)apartheid South African authorities that the country is bound to break into chaos if the evil inherent in her constitution is not addressed and a level playing ground established for all the daughters and sons of the country irrespective of their pigmentation. The evil in the law is apparently singled out as its phallic nature because the hopping mad girl "cooked the genitals in a different pot because she relished them the most" when she decides to cook her father's mutilated body (15). The narrator is therefore rising insurgence against the pounding phallic element in (post)apartheid South Africa which reduces the Blacks into smithereens while uplifting the whites to gloating economic heights.

Bavino does not seem to run dry of literary slides. He projects another slide in which a man called bobby cuts off the phallus of another man he accuses of raping his girlfriend. The narrator observes, "well his girlfriend was raped by her uncle, a man from up the street" (20). When Bobby learns of his girlfriend's rape the narrator notes

that he loses his sanity and in a manic frenzy takes a knife and forces the rapist to drop his pants. Then, “he slowly & carefully drew his butcher knife out & sharpened it on the concrete floor. the noise grated against my nerves but it drove the man’s eyes straight to the groin. then it was bobby proceeded to slice the man’s phallus off” (20). Bavino is emphasizing the point that the (post)apartheid South African government needs to stem the phallic oppression inherent in the country’s law before the phallic tide dissolves into death and chaos in a backlash. Oppression is also projected as the main cause of crime in (post)apartheid South Africa. The narrator observes of Bobby, “he walked around with bullets in his body over the years. from licenced guns & illegally owned ones. thugs & policemen alike shoved missiles into his body” (21). The narrator’s observation indicates that (post)apartheid South African government seems to be killing her Black population by oppressing them to the level that they are forced into crime as they try to bridge the gaping hole in their psyche created by castration.

The phantoms of hysteria continue to pop into the darkroom of the reader’s psyche. A particularly intriguing one is that of girls on the rampage. When the narrator comes across one of the girls she is quite a sight: “& there was muddy brown liquid running down her legs. & dried grey,” and she tells the narrator, “you know bavino those stupid little horny cowards thought they were doing me down... but they didn’t know they were actually doing me a fucking favour” (28). The girl is on the rampage to defeat the phallic tide by making herself so deep that no phallic flow can ever fill her receptacle. She is full of resentment at the phallus and her mission seems to spite it by locking it out of her somatic feelings. The girl tells Bavino, “it’s just a pity i couldn’t even feel them. not one. not once you know i knew they were

swimming around there trying to hit the bottom... but man, they should have got bigger brothers to do it you know” (28-29). For the girl on the rampage the men do not satisfy her irrespective of their number. Maybe through constant drilling her well has become too deep and therefore she requires stronger phallic machinery to reach her. The narrator is definitely cautioning the (post)apartheid South African government that oppression instigated against the blacks is eroding the moral standing of the country and her people and that soon the blacks are not going to uphold the law but they will look down on it as a thing that lacks potency in their lives.

The narrator observes that the girl on the rampage joined others and they formed a gang meant to knock men out of their pedestal of phallic power: “quite a few guys walking around toting restless phalluses fell under the bite” (29). The girls lay a trap for men by sending out one of their beautiful ones to the streets and as it is wont to happen some man or other becomes attracted to the girl and when she accepts his advances he thinks he is quite lucky. However, the man is led into the den of the girls and forced to go with all of them in turns until he is almost dead. After they crash his phallus they throw him into the streets as a warning to other men harbouring restless phallic motives against women. Bavino observes of the man’s horrific experience in the hands of the girls, “the man would plead for mercy scream shout & crawl around & get laughed at when not being made to eat clits & buttoles & get rubbed up around the mouth of the vagina. all of them. there were numerous such cases” (29). Bavino’s observation implies that the phallic hysteria which makes man desire to manically stick their phalluses into women meets its match when women come together – in tandem with Hélène Cixous’ the cry of the Medusa – and turn the phallic tide against man in a sexual frenzy.

In *Medusa and the Mother/ Bear: The Performance Text of Hélène Cixous's L'Indiade Ou L'Inde de Leurs Rêves*, Judith G. Miller observes that "as fashioned by Cixous, the Medusa's laugh becomes the rallying cry of the liberated female creator" (135). The narrator is unquestionably presaging the (post)apartheid South African government to reconsider their position on the oppression of the blacks before the blacks could gang up and revert the oppressive phallic stream against the government. Bavino projects a spectre of "a man down the street who used to draw respect from out of the flesh of people with a knife-blade," and points out, "well he gets no such anymore since the sharks took chunks of his flesh off him until he was a shrivelled up worm dragging himself down the street crabwise" (29-30). The phantom of hysteria projected showing the bully of a man being castrated by a couple of irate vaginas is meant to shock the (post)apartheid South African government into realizing what could happen to it if the blacks joined hands in an insurgence against the oppression being meted out on them.

For the narrator, the rebirth of (post)apartheid South Africa is another death for the blacks because the baby could not allow itself to be born properly. In the literary slide containing this spectre of a monstrous baby Bavino observes, "the child turned in the mid-wife's hand took a big bite of her fleshy neck tore through the sweat dried into salt & got to vein. slashing through. shitting the distance between vulva & cot dead" (40). Bavino's observation implies that in the context of (post)apartheid South Africa the new political leaders who took over after the 1994 General Elections did not live to the dreams they were championing during the liberation struggle against apartheid. The freedoms fought for and hoped for by the blacks did not materialize since the law governing the country is still skewed against the blacks. The

oppression that reduced the blacks into scatological did not fade away but seemed to bite even harder. The narrator observes that the atrocious baby, “splashed in the red & faeces waded to the shore of a window ledge. bursting free. the half-monkey from africa navy blue against flaming vagina chewing through melon shaped breast the mother thrashing around the doctor dead” (40). The narrator’s observation implies that the (post)apartheid South African leaders continued the oppression of the blacks instead of stopping it.

The baby born ‘splashed in red and faeces’ implies a dirty child who is violent and corrupt. The baby kills his mother as he is being born. It could be argued that like the baby the (post)apartheid leaders kill the dreams for the country when they allow corruption and oppression of the blacks to continue. Instead of nurturing the country, the new dispensation devours (post)apartheid South Africa by perpetuating phallic death. The birth of the baby becomes like rape on the mother leading to a lot of bloodletting and flow of excrement. Bavino notes, “the skull’s grip came loose. it shattered hitting reality caved in squashed. the worms cut through the stomach of the hydra & the spit & amniotic fluid & green-yellow mixed with red splashed out” (40). The baby breaks the womb and the amniotic fluid flows out together with blood. The amniotic fluid normally cushions the baby from external pressures and enables it to live safely deep in the mother. However, the spilling of the amniotic means that the nurturer has been killed and the baby cannot survive.

In an earlier literary slide the narrator projects the phantom of hysteria in which a man kills his grandmother, mutilates her in order to remove her ovaries which he keeps preserved in a jug on the mantelpiece. His mother’s last wishes had been that he should never forget where he comes from and it seemed quite clear in his mind that

he had come from the womb “so he’d slashed the beloved old woman up on her death-bed. the film of her eyes had cleared as rummaged down there. she’d tried to raise her head. that messed up the operation somewhat. but he’d smashed the stupid wrinkled face up with a one-two perfected over a decade of street hustling” (38). The man then proceeded to submerge the ovaries into his mother’s amniotic fluid which she had kept when he was born. The spectre being described here is of an exceedingly selfish person bent on preserving their own life at the expense of those who nurtured them into maturity. The mother had not lived for long weighed down by the birth of the child. However, “she’d kept singing that stupid song all the time” that her son should never forget his cradle (39). Now the man is in a frenzy because of a rat which has attacked the ovaries in the jug. There is also the snake eating the ovaries and then the cat. The snake is a python smirking and winking like some whore conning a target. A neighbour lunges at the cat and the rat which collide and the man is on the death bed “wet stinking of his urine & faeces” (39). Bavino is unquestionably challenging the (post)apartheid South African government against self-preserving tendencies like the ones witnessed during the apartheid regime. The narrator clearly projects the phantom of hysteria borne in self-preserving regimes and its attendant violence.

The death of the oppressive man, the one who had thought he could live forever by devouring his mother’s amniotic and his grandmother’s ovaries, is supposed to usher in the sun rise but instead “sunset scours the sky” (39). The spectre of hysteria in the church comes into sight and “the wind howls again. cleaning the eye of the sacred cross. where the horned beast defecates. fornicates in its dream of blasphemy. masturbating itself against the polished gloss of the christ statue over

church hillside” (39). Here, Bavino is indicating the rot in the church and how it is stifling the blacks’ dreams of freedom in (post)apartheid South Africa. Like in Robertson’s phantasmagoria which criticized the tyranny and hypocrisy witnessed in the old church, Bavino is challenging the oppression instigated by the church against the Blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa. For the narrator, the rebirth in (post)apartheid South Africa is threatened by phallic hysteria which manifests itself as oppressive tendencies and clamour for material acquisition at the expense of others. The narrator observes of the celebratory mood in (post)apartheid South Africa, “in victory comrade, we burn in the voortrekkerhoogte monument the faces of tyranny on banknotes. Here some dope for the junkie hippie jan van riebeek” (39). The narrator’s observation implies that the new leaders in (post)apartheid South Africa are feverish with the thought of the material possession they could accumulate in the light of their ascension to political power.

Bavino projects the spectre of tyranny dissolving into a priest defiling a boy in the church and asking a deacon not to interfere: “deacon...don’t please...,” the narrator observes, “he’s pinning a little boy under his cudgel. pumping hard & fast. on the wall the crucifix shakes falls in orgasmic fervour” (39). Bavino’s observation implies that the oppression perpetuated against the blacks through the church is sanitized as witnessed by the deacon’s complacency in the conspiracy against the faithful. The injustice being perpetrated against the little boy terrifyingly permeates into the air with the priest gloatingly intoning, “i’ll gut you... little rot face...” and the narrator explaining that “he’s trying to split the child up. from anus up” (39). Irrefutably, the narrator employs the spectre as dissidence meant to unsettle the (post)apartheid South African government from its sanitized oppression of the blacks.

The phantom of the manic priest defiling a little boy transmutes into feverish applause ringing and rebounding on the fallen wall of Berlin in a cinema hall. Bavino observes of this cinematic spectre, “gather around everybody. we now introduce to you a real live flesh & blood victim of apartheid... bah bah blacksheep for your viewing pleasure...” (39). The narrator’s observation implies that the plight of the blacks during the apartheid era has been commercialized through the film industry and the applause of the audience as they watch fellow human beings being defiled attests to the masochist character of the Whites’ oppressive tendencies.

For the narrator, the (post)apartheid South Africa has been reduced into a public toilet with nauseating smell of human excreta. Everybody in the country seems to be holding an erection for which they line up in front of the toilet waiting for their turn to rump into some poor woman fallen in a drunken stupor inside the toilet. The spectre of hysteria is the very air that the people in the queue gulp down as they shout at each other to be done quickly lest their erections burst into violence. Writing of this impatience Bavino observes, “there’s a serpentine queue there turning around the corner. the head deep inside the dark door. the tail shuffling about in patience’s loss. asking: ‘hey maaan why don’t you fuckers finish in there we have work to do some of us” (57). Bavino’s observation implies that in (post)apartheid South Africa the political positions especially the presidency have become like a pleasure-hole for which politicians line up to have their turn during General Elections. Those who unfortunately fail to make it into the government in a given term wait impatiently at the door of power and make a lot political noise calling for the end of term for the ones currently in government. When someone seems to be going ahead of the queue there is hysterical shouting, “hey fuck you there trying to sneak in front there we’ve

all got erections don't we? get your shit-arse-little-prick to the end of the line..." (57). At this point, the narrator is incontestably challenging the conspiracy characterizing the contestation of power in (post)apartheid South Africa with its attendant culture of corruption and intolerance.

The hysteria of the politicians dissolves into a frenzy which grips the information industry with reporters sanitizing the filth uttered or done by the (post)apartheid South African government. Bavino observes about the manic character of the reporters, "pull apart the statement cut between the lines for the real shriek of sense said tattered nerves beat down to hysteria" (86). Bavino's observation indicates that the reporters try to look for sense from political statement even when it is clear that what the political authority has said is utter nonsense. The media houses raise the politicians into pedestals of absolute oppressive power: "the leader made the pillars shudder with mere force of thundervoices..." (86). The narrator notes that the press crew tremble in awe despite the fact that what the leader has said is pure nonsense. For the narrator, the (post)apartheid South African leaders lack the substance needed to steer the country into celebrating humanity due to their turning the politics of their country into a vile religion lacking in any ethereal intervention but laden with rot and death for the blacks. Bavino observes that (post)apartheid South African politics comprises of "expressions of recognition's sweat in the place where a dead sun-religion was revealed in blood drip down to dust otherside of the street going nowhere but down" (86). Bavino's observation implies that the (post)apartheid South African politics flap on the wings of the oppression of the Blacks.

The narrator appears to employ phantoms of hysteria involving dehumanization of women by the pounding phallic tide in order to challenge

(post)apartheid South African government to stop ripping the country apart through oppression of the Blacks. Bavino seems to perceive (Post)apartheid South Africa as a mother for all South Africans and mourns her defilement by the politicians who are bent on enriching themselves at the expense of the Blacks.

### **3.4 CONCLUSION**

The chapter has examined how Rampolokeng uses the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence as an attempt to protest against the Blacks' oppression that is propagated by the state and its oppressive State Apparatuses. From the foregoing, it is evident that the narrator presents dissidence against the oppression being perpetuated against the blacks by the (post)apartheid South African government in a way that is similar to dissidence portrayed in Robertson's phantasmagoria which used phantoms of the 'absent' and the 'dead' to reach out to the psyche of the audience in order to make their souls feel the taste of their existence. Bavino employs phantoms to communicate the insanity and hysteria at the core of (post)apartheid South African culture of oppression and intolerance. The narrator indicates that oppression in (post)apartheid South Africa has dissolved into a signifier of pigmentation with the blacks at the receiving end. The Blacks are driven into insanity by the Whites' oppression extended from the Apartheid era. Subsequently, the narrator exploits phobic objects from the violence in apartheid era to challenge the (post)apartheid South African government to stop the oppression of the Blacks in order to avoid slipping back into the dehumanization characterizing the Apartheid regime. The narrator also clearly communicates the repulsion the blacks feel at the sight of oppression by injecting the excremental into the labour of the phantoms of insanity

and hysteria. Therefore, Bavino challenges (post)apartheid South African government to stop turning the country into filthy sights by stemming oppression of the Blacks.

The next chapter examines how Rampolokeng uses stylistic strategies as markers of discontent and dissidence in both *B/ H* and *W/ H*. The chief aim is to discuss how Rampolokeng manipulates the linguistic means at his disposal in his two novels to mark the Blacks' discontent and dissidence against the (post)apartheid South African government and its oppressive State Apparatuses.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.0 STYLISTIC STRATEGIES AS MARKERS OF DISCONTENT AND DISSIDENCE IN *BLACKHEART* AND *WHITEHEART*

“The Whorf hypothesis has a corollary: if it is true that our language determines our perception of reality, then whoever controls language controls the perception of reality as well. If language can be controlled then would-be despots have available a subtle and efficient means of restricting thought”

(Meyers 1980: 163)

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Whorf hypothesis is a theory developed by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf which states that “the structure of a language determines or greatly influences the modes of thought and behaviour characteristic of the culture in which it is spoken (“Dictionary.com”). Following the spirit of this principle of linguistic relativity, this chapter examines how Rampolokeng uses stylistic strategies as markers of the Blacks’ discontent and dissidence in *B/H* and *W/H*. The chapter is systematized into two sub-topics based on the paradigms of discontent and dissidence. The first part examines how the author uses stylistic strategies as markers of discontent while the second one discusses how the author uses stylistic strategies as pointers of dissidence. Stylistic strategies are the linguistic means a writer employs in a given text in order to construct the meaning they would like to communicate to the reader. For Rampolokeng, language seems to be a tool he organizes in a unique way in order to express dissatisfaction and dissent against oppressive forces in (post)apartheid South Africa which operate through the language of the State Apparatuses to subjugate the blacks. In *Jacques Lacan*, Homer notes that “Saussure revealed how there was a ‘structure’ within us that governed what we say; for Lacan that structure is the unconscious. The unconscious is produced through language and governed by the

rules of language” (42). Homer’s observation implies that language is controlled by the unconscious. Discontent and dissidence emanate from repressed traumatic experiences. It follows then that for Rampolokeng to express the blacks’ discontent and dissidence against the oppression being instigated by the (post)apartheid South African government and its austere State Apparatuses in the novelistic world of *B/ H* and *W/ H* language becomes the very signpost of his message.

#### **4.2 STYLISTIC STRATEGIES AS MARKERS OF DISCONTENT IN *B/ H* AND *W/ H***

The main aim in this section is to examine how Rampolokeng communicates the blacks’ discontent through language in order to challenge the oppression being perpetuated against the blacks by the (post)apartheid South African government. In both *B/ H* and *W/ H*, Rampolokeng tells the story of the blacks’ oppression and their feeling of dissatisfaction through a character called Bavino. As discussed in chapter one, Bavino is a township name in South Africa referring to ‘everyman’. It follows then that when Rampolokeng assigns the name Bavino to the narrator in his two novels he is defamiliarizing himself from the text to allow the blacks to narrate their ordeal of oppression that threatens to tear their lives apart. Even when the story assumes the omniscient narrator or authorial intrusion, Bavino’s voice is not lost as the reader is reminded of his presence through direct speech. In *B/ H*, for example, Bavino’s voice interludes in the all-knowing authorial description of the sermon taking place in Lord Enter’s tent. The author describes how Bavino goes behind the tent to moisten the ground there but he finds a couple engaging in sexual intercourse and he steps hard on the man’s buttocks while voicing his disgust, “fucking hell!” at the obscene spectacle with the woman crying in orgasmic pleasure

“jesus! jesus!” (3). Though the woman seems to be enjoying herself, her powerlessness is communicated descriptively accordingly: “she had her legs spread wide as the fallen walls of jericho for the second coming” (3). Bavino appears to be disgusted due to the way religion is willingly invoked in oppressive contexts.

The author has used paratext as a stylistic strategy to mark the blacks’ discontent in both *B/H* and *W/H*. The paratext in the two novels definitely influences the reader’s interpretive position or direction. In *B/H*, the title is presented in two parts which are in the uppercase but they are topographically different in terms of font colour and semantic gravity. The first part, **BLACKHEART**, is written in bold and it appears to be designed as a deliberate stylistic cue which points out that the blacks’ psychic oppression profoundly defines their existence. The second part is in parenthesis, (*EPILOGUE TO INSANITY*), and it implies that blackness is politically structured and could be used to explicate the blacks’ chaotic life. The other paratext in *B/H* is “raspek due moss k. sete-msiri” (2) which appears to be the author’s dedication for humanity. This semantically impenetrable clause implies that the reader will have to think critically in order to reconstruct meaning from Rampolokeng’s novelistic cosmos. It also seems to metaphorically communicate the murky life of the blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa. A critical examination reveals that the clause is made up of fragments whose structural deployment into a whole unit renders their miniature semantic gravity impotent. The fragment “ra” drawn from “raspek” could be translated as “out or exit,” while “raspe” means “crucifixion,” and “k” becomes the symbol of the constant (humanity) in the structural formulation. Further, “due” could mean yet to be realized, and “mo” drawn from “moss” translates to “you” while “oss” means “us”. “sete” translates to “seven” while “msiri” is “confidant.”

Reconstructed “raspek due moss k. sete-msiri,” suggests that the author is making a case against the crucifixion of humanity on the cross of violent racist crimes implied by “k.” which seems to refer to the ku klux klan, an organization of white men in the US who commit violent racist crimes.

In *W/ H*, the title suggests that whiteness is a prelude to hysteria. The black subject appears to lead a frenzied life engendered by the racially instigated oppression. The dedication, “for ous lala,” implies that whiteness is a symbol resonant with satanic oppression (suggested by the coded Biblical symbol of Satan, 666) since “f” is the sixth letter of the alphabet while “la” is the sixth note of a major scale in music. The splinter “o” could imply “pint” while “ou” may be translated as “a fruit-eating Hawaiian honeycreeper with a stout bill and green and yellow plumage.” Therefore, “for ous lala” suggests that whiteness is a signifier of monstrous evil which sneaks onto the blacks and swops the sweetness of the blacks’ existence with emptiness.

In *W/ H*, there is more paratext in the blurb which appears to affirm Rampolokeng’s commitment to using his novelistic space to speak for humanity:

I’ve never celebrated nor embraced  
 negativity in my life. every single  
 thing I have tried to do or written  
 has come out a need to actually  
 eradicate or wipe out whatever it  
 is that seeks to destroy the soul

of other people

The next paratext appears to imply that Rampolokeng deploys topographical conformity or nonconformity in his novelistic universe as a linguistic weapon against the oppressive forces in the society:

I respect the WORD. People talk

about wordplay, I don't play with

it... it's one of the most powerful

weapon in the world

For Rampolokeng, literary expression is not just a matter of playing around with words but it is a potent means of communicating dissatisfaction at the oppressive forces in the society as well as subverting those malevolent characters that degrade humanity.

Bavino notes how the State apparatuses instigate oppression against the blacks and jots down his observations which come to the reader as the fragmentations in the text. The author implicitly indicates that *Blackheart* is composed of Bavino's notes by naming one of the sections in the novel "BAVINO-NOTES" (128). Nonetheless, while complaining about the decapitating state instigated oppression, the narrator observes, "i can't use my other hand to write these notes" which explicitly indicates that the narrator is writing notes about the blacks' ordeal (100). In the writing of notes the rules of grammar are considered not a paradigm of the conventions governing the exercise. When writing notes a person is given leeway to use abbreviations, symbols, incomplete sentences and even to form their own words which will help them to

conceptualize the experience they are recording. Rampolokeng uses Bavino's notes as a linguistic strategy for expressing the blacks' discontent against the oppression directed at them by the (post)apartheid South African government through its austere State Apparatuses. The strategy enables the author to overlook the rules of grammar in order to decentre, destabilise and carnivalise the linguistic domination of English so that the Blacks' oppressed voice emerges to express dissatisfaction and dissent against the monolithic linguistic structures of power employed by the State Apparatuses to propagate oppression against them.

The language in Bavino's notes contains markers of the Blacks' dissatisfaction at the raw political deal given to them by the (post)apartheid South African government and its oppressive State Apparatuses which renders them homeless.

Bavino writes:

skank-vaulted

green bay dance is cum-shot-rain translucence in jelly-belly squirm

electrocution vibration at roots-foundation paralyses anal-isis this

human alteration

major capital label it corporate hate global degenerate red-line

D-strict

con-fused below the O-deal in suspenders freak fall phallus-call

bent on judgement (128)

The example above demonstrates how Bavino employs lexical deviation to form new words in order to mark the Blacks' discontent. English allows the joining of separate

words to form hyphenated compound words such as mother-in-law but the rule is restricted to a small group of words. The narrator deviates from this rule when he uses the hyphen to join 'skank' and 'vaulted' to form a new word 'skank-vaulted' in order to mark the Blacks' discontent. By 'skank' the narrator seems to be referring to 'skunk,' a small black and white North American animal with a long thick tail. It produces a bad smell when it is threatened. Bavino appears to employ the colours of the skunk to communicate the reality of (post)apartheid South Africa as a rainbow nation. The odour the skunk gives off when it is threatened could be perceived as a representation of the stench of the social oppression resulting from the subjugation of the blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa. Through 'vaulted,' the narrator suggests that the rainbow nation has been repressed due to the oppression perpetuated by the State Apparatuses such as religion; since 'vault' means an underground room where people's bodies are buried especially under a church. As 'vault' could also mean to suddenly put someone in a successful or important position, Bavino appears to be of the view that discriminatory perception against the blacks threatens the rainbow nation with social disintegration.

Bavino also deviates from the lexical rule for constructing new words when he uses a hyphen to join 'anal' to 'isis' to form 'anal-isis' which appears to phonologically represent 'analysis,' and hence the neologism introduces the idea of elliptical displacement. The letter 'y' in the orthography of 'analysis' is phonologically displaced by the sound /i/ in pronunciation. By the coinage, Bavino suggests that the blacks are expressing discontent at the phallic oppression being meted out on them by the oppressive (post)apartheid South African government and its austere State Apparatuses. The letter 'y' can be used in notes to mean 'why' since

the letter and the word have the same pronunciation. It follows then that the unusual interrogatory ‘why i?’ can be formulated by tracing the movement of the elliptical displacement. Bavino appears to suggest that analysing the relationship between the blacks and the whites in (post)apartheid South Africa reveals an unhealthy binary construction. Since ‘anal’ has to do with excrement while ‘isis’ refers to an Egyptian god, Bavino seems to be questioning why the Whites have reduced the Blacks into excrement while elevating themselves into god who sternly towers over the Blacks.

Bavino also blends neologism with metonymy and ellipses to mark the blacks’ discontent. In the nominal phrase ‘red-line D-strict’, the capital ‘D’ stands out from the rest of the words in what appears to be graphical foregrounding. ‘D’ seems to metonymically refer to DA, a lawyer who represents the state against a person or organization accused of committing a crime. Bavino, therefore, seems to imply that the blacks are perceived as criminals whom the state must watch closely. ‘D’ could also mean the mark a teacher gives a student to indicate that he is below average which implies that the narrator is of the opinion that the blacks are considered to be substandard. Other impressions communicated by ‘D’ are: the second note in the musical scale of C major, implying that the blacks are rated as ‘second-hand’ humans; or the Roman numeral for five hundred, which seems to communicate the long temporal space that marks the blacks’ ordeal. Bavino qualifies the nominal phrase with ‘corporal hate’ and ‘global degenerate’ and it is therefore plausible to conclude that ‘red-line D-strict’ implies the dehumanization the blacks are subjected to by the austere State Apparatuses which leads to the death of the blacks’ identity. The second part of ‘D-strict,’ that is ‘strict,’ implies definite rules that someone expects people to obey completely – the narrator appears to suggest that the (post)apartheid South

African government expects the Blacks to comply with its apparently oppressive laws. Phonologically the coinage reads ‘District’ – a political area of a town or country – and subsequently it implies that there is an elliptical displacement of letter ‘i’ in the spelling of the neologism which seems to mark the blacks’ loss of identity due to the pounding state oppression. ‘D-strict’ is qualified by another neologism formed from a combination of ‘red’ and ‘line’ or a split of ‘redline’ using a hyphen. In English, redline is a business word meaning to refuse to give financial help to a person or a business but the coinage ‘red-line’ goes beyond this meaning. It seems to imply a border marking off the blacks’ insolvent district whose dire poverty is a constant source of embarrassment and resentment for the blacks.

It appears that the blacks feel cheated by the (post)apartheid South African government. Bavino coins a new word by joining ‘con’ to ‘fused’ through a hyphen or perhaps by splitting the word ‘confused’ into ‘con-fused’ in order to express the blacks’ discontent at the raw deal offered to them by the (post)apartheid South African government from which the country had futilely hoped to gain rebirth into a humane society devoid of oppression based on pigmentation. On one hand, by ‘con,’ Bavino suggests that the (post)apartheid South African government makes the blacks to believe that the political deal extended to them is true while in reality it is loaded with deceit meant to continue oppression against them. Feasibly, ‘con’ also means constable or conservative, and hence the narrator suggests that the constitution of (post)apartheid South African government is meant to maintain the status quo using militarized means. On the other hand, ‘fused’ suggests that the oppression of the blacks is a time bomb which is going to explode soon unless the government promptly takes appropriate measures to stop the blacks’ nightmare. All in all, the neologism

marks the blacks' muddled life induced by the new realities of state oppression in (post)apartheid South Africa. Bavino marks the blacks' affliction through the elliptical replacement of 'r' with a hyphen to form a new word 'O-deal' whose apparent silent 'r' inferentially stands for the absent 'real'— the blacks' political deal which seems to be just a claim but not the truth. The narrator foregrounds the emptiness of the blacks' political deal by writing 'O' in the upper case which suggests zero. The falsity of the political deal is communicated through the expression 'freak fall phallus-call'. By 'freak,' the narrator suggests that as in 'freak of nature' (post)apartheid South African government has developed unexpected disgusting oppressive phallic features which work against the blacks; 'phallus-call' communicates the pounding nature of the state instigated blacks' oppression.

Bavino further employs lexical deviation by using the slash in his notes to ungrammatically split some words in order to mark the new homonymic realities of oppression for the blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa which result from otherwise perceptibly different stations. Part of Bavino's notes below demonstrates how this stylistic strategy marks the blacks' discontent against the state oppression:

harvest sins planet cleanse ceremony

in infection search & snatch-

(eunuch lodges a misogyny charge)

operation all r/ ailments in sub-verse-sych

'we shall over-harm' how grotto verse stinks

booty-nation's crippled soul

(93)

Bavino uses the slash to mark off 'r' from 'railments' opening the homonymic realities of the blacks' world of oppression so that the word reads 'railments' and 'ailments' at the same time in order to communicate the emerging realities of the blacks' ordeal in (post)apartheid South Africa. The narrator appears to use 'railments' to express the blacks' strong feeling of anger at the state's compoment which seems to have gone off the rails so that instead of healing the blacks from the wounds of apartheid it pitches them into worse infirmities.

Bavino marks the blacks' ailments through syntactic and lexical deviations. At the syntactic level, the narrator employs a fragmentary style which overlooks the rules of punctuation as well as those concerning the structure of sentences in English. For instance, 'harvest sins planet cleanse ceremony' stands out not as a complete sentence but as two fragmented phrases. Even the spacing between them is unusual. The phrases give an imagist impression of a 'surgeon' taking a damaged organ or cells from someone presumably to ceremoniously cleanse them. The next sentence fragment, 'in infection search & snatch-', is created by extracting 'operation' from its unmarked position in 'snatch-operation' and being postponed to a marked position both by the parenthetical, (eunuch lodges a misogyny charge) – which occupies a separate line – and by being pushed away from 'snatch-' into a line further ahead. The discontinuity created by separating the compound word, 'snatch-operation', helps the narrator to communicate the blacks' discontent at their fragmented life; since 'snatch' means to quickly steal something from someone, Bavino suggests that the (post)apartheid South African government has politically stolen the blacks' potency. 'snatch' could also be used in a vulgar sense to mean a woman's vagina, and therefore the narrator seems to be expressing the blacks' castration and reduction into a

receptacle for the state's phallic waste. The parenthetical interruption communicates the marginalization of the blacks and the anger/ hatred they feel at being made impotent – misogyny refers to the feeling of hatred a dislodged man has for women. Bavino expresses the blacks' discontent as the feeling of powerlessness experienced by a eunuch who has been robbed off his manhood by a bully whom he is now pressing charges of misogyny against. For Bavino, the (post)apartheid South African government and its inhuman State Apparatuses seem to be bent on maliciously destroying the blacks' soul. Bavino observes that the State gloats over its intention to 'over-harm'. The blacks are perceived as inferior to the whites and as dirty people who constantly stink. The dehumanization becomes lodged in the blacks' psyche which is implied by 'sub-verse-sych'. The blacks' soul has been crippled which makes them to experience discontent.

In another section Bavino marks the new realities of the blacks' oppression through lexical, syntactic and phonological deviations. Bavino writes:

birth-sentence in constitution-clause

genesis beat suspended on shit

revelation tongue leap to stagger talk-

hawk turned at funk-angle cosmophobic

perversity cuts & pastes soul-w/ hole (101)

Bavino deviates from the syntactic rule of prose which expects a novel to use language in its ordinary form as opposed to poetry. The narrator fragments the sentences into phrases which he then assigns different lines making the novelistic

expression to assume a poetic mode. The fragmentary style helps Bavino to mark the fragmented realities of the blacks' existence through terse, definitive sentences. The first sentence comprises of only three words but it pithily communicates the blacks' discontent with the (post)apartheid South African constitution which seems to contain a clause that obfuscates the freedoms of the blacks. Through neologism, the narrator marks the blacks' dissatisfaction with "birth-sentence" and "constitution-clause" which appear to suggest that there is a clause that seems to inform the blacks' condemnation on account of their pigmentation. The word "genesis" in the second line has the same meaning as "birth" and Bavino appears to use it to emphasize that the new dawn in (post)apartheid South Africa introduces new realities of oppression for the blacks. The line "genesis beat suspended on shit" suggests that the rebirth expected in (post)apartheid South Africa is shattered since "beat" means crushed while "suspended" gives the idea of deferment, and "on shit" implies social filth.

Bavino employs syntactic discontinuity to mark the blacks' discontent. For example, in "revelation tongue leap to stagger talk-" the narrator disrupts the expected sentence order by omitting the definite article anticipated before "revelation" and heaping verbs together in unconventional position so that "leap," is complemented by the infinitive "to stagger" which is then followed by "talk-" and which having been split from the neologism "talk-hawk" seemingly functions as both verb and noun in the sentence. The narrator appears to be of the opinion that after the blacks discover that there is an apparently oppressive clause in the constitution, the state tries to sway them to perceive it in a different light. The next line, "hawk tuned at funk-angle cosmophobic," is also syntactically deviant. The unmarked sentence would perhaps be "It is a hawk which is tuned to funk and is cosmophobic." The versification of the

sentence enables Bavino to succinctly communicate the blacks' discontent at the state's belligerent attitude towards the blacks. The narrator extracts "hawk" from its unmarked position and places it in an unusual marked position through obligatory adjunct fronting in order to emphatically communicate the state's pugnacious attitude which pitches the blacks into discontent.

Bavino also employs lexical deviation in order to phonologically mark the blacks' discontent. For instance, in the sentence "perversity cuts & pastes soul-w/hole," he joins the word 'soul' to 'whole' through hyphenation and then slashes off the 'w' leaving 'soul-w' on one side and 'hole' on the other which seems to imply that the blacks' soul is snatched from them through the whites instigated oppression. The narrator uses the slash to open the homophonic realities of language in order to mark the blacks' discontent. "Whole" and "hole" are orthographically and semantically different but phonologically the same. Bavino suggests that for the blacks' existence has been reduced into an abysmal emptiness which deprives them wholeness and pitches them into discontent. The narrator also implies that the whites – through intransigence – have fenced off humanity for themselves while locking out the blacks. Since the soul's wholeness or fragmentation is expressed in relation to the constitution, Bavino appears to be saying that there is a clause in (post)apartheid South African constitution which edifies oppression against the blacks and seems to lock them in prison from the point of birth due to their pigmentation.

Further, the narrator employs lexical and syntactic deviation to metaphorically mark the blacks' discontent. Bavino observes that the blacks' existence has been reduced into suicidal tendencies because the blacks are always at the verge of collapsing from all kinds of ailments gotten from the filth of the state oppression and

degradation of the blacks' soul. On this Bavino writes, "mosh bent/ urge to dive exist more than alive pit-rise venom-spit" (103). Mosh is the pushing and punching done during heavy metal, rock and punk music in order to relieve stress or anger, and sometimes its fatal when one is trampled on or suffocates in the dark pit in which it is done. The narrator displaces the blacks' discontent with "mosh bent" without giving any explicit linguistic signal that he is comparing one with the other, and hence he metaphorically marks the blacks' ordeal. Bavino's uses the slash between the two phrases 'mosh bent' and 'urge to dive' to syntactically mark the blacks' discontent at the new realities of state oppression: the blacks harbour suicidal tendencies because they perceive death as a way of escaping from the harsh realities they are forced to live in.

Bavino also uses lexical and syntactic deviations together with neologism to mark the blacks' discontent at being commoditized by the state:

hostile thru no style but quest for survival

commodified/ codified on the splayal-anus run alluvial

mouth gaping to prayer around phallus cum-grabbing nun

slobber-ras/ arse-mode-brigade praise (103)

Bavino's slash between 'commodified' and 'codified' enables him to communicate the blacks' ordeal in a novel way that succinctly expresses their being reduced into commodities and being categorized as manure for the whites' capital. In 'slobber-ras/ arse-mode-brigade', Bavino gives a twist to 'slobberous' changing it to 'slobber-ras' and then links it to 'arse-mode-brigade' using the slash in order to communicate the perversion at the heart of the whites' oppression against the blacks. Bavino uses the

sacrilegious image of the faithful with their mouth around the phallus and a nun salivating at a vile the thought of engaging in sexual perversion. The faithful reach orgasmic stage but have nothing to show for their labour.

Bavino uses syntactic and lexical foregrounding to mark the blacks' discontent at being subjected to oppression by the state and its oppressive State Apparatuses. For example, in a section dubbed "JESUS FLASH" Bavino communicates the blacks' discontent at the way religion is used to dehumanize them. Bavino notes:

dead creation WORD incarnate

colour me heathen

(hallucinated liberated)            (99)

Bavino marks religion as one of the causes for the blacks' discontent. He places the words 'hallucinated' and 'liberated' in parenthesis in order to foreground how religion is used to give the blacks false hope of freedom. For Bavino, religion first degrades the blacks into heathens and then dangles the fantasy of liberation at them by demanding that they be submissive to the religious commandments. Bavino uses parenthetical foregrounding to signpost religion as a kind of prison that serves the ill-motive of the state and its austere State Apparatuses of pitch the blacks into a hallucinatory enclosure meant to detach them from the reality of oppression furthered by the state. The narrator lexically marks the blacks' discontent at the state's religious pretensions by shifting "word" from its unmarked lower case position into the unusual marked upper case position, "WORD," which makes it to tower over the rest of the words.

Additionally, Bavino organizes syntax into the stylistic trope of a play to metonymically and dialogically mark the blacks' discontent at the way the mighty powers of the state rob them off both their labour and natural resources through chauvinistic militarized operations officially decontaminated as fight for human rights. Bavino writes:

cry sexism and lets sleep madame x'sm.listen:

cock: oil is a powerful aphrodisiac!

pit: fuckers of the world ignite! I mean, suckers of the world eunuch!

cock: (knock knock) Hussein?

pit: Kuwait and blood sea!

cock: uzi!

pit: floozy!

cock: (gulf) cry sis, it's a moscow raid. (97)

Bavino's observation implies that the whites are driven by the urge of phallic conquest which expunges their conscience as they employ militarized means to knock the blacks down in order to rob them off their precious possession. Bavino appears to be referring to the Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent invasion of Iraq by United States of America and its allies. In *Operation Desert Storm: Evaluation of the Air War*, United States General Accounting Office notes that "Operation Desert Storm was primarily a sustained 43-day air campaign by the United States and its allies against Iraq between January 17, 1991, and February 28, 1991" (1). The narrator seems to deploy "cockpit" metonymically to refer to the warplanes used to drop

bombs on Kuwait and Iraq in order to demonstrate the phallic nature of militarized oppression.

Bavino splits ‘cockpit’ into two voices ‘cock’ and ‘pit’ which metonymically project the voice of the phallus (cock) luring the blacks (pit) into becoming a receptacle for their phallic waste. The eroticized dialogue between Cock and Pit is used to mark the political conspiracy of the powerful nations against third world countries. Bavino uses parenthetical foregrounding, (knock knock) to communicate the way the whites’ phallus – whites’ oppression – grinds on the blacks repeatedly in order to mercilessly exploit them. Bavino seems to put ‘gulf’ in parenthesis in order to foreground how the blacks are singled out as a receptacle for pouring the whites’ phallic rot. ‘Gulf’ is an abyss and it communicates the blacks’ discontent at being reduced into a repository for the whites’ chauvinistic oppression. “Hussein” appears to be a historical allusion referring to Saddam Huissein, Iraq’s president who attacked and occupied Kuwait until his army was forcefully ejected by the United States military.

Bavino also uses epistrophe or epiphora, the repetition of a word or phrase at the end of successive clauses, to mark the blacks’ rhyme of discontent at the music of oppression and destitution they are forced to dance to by the whites’ economic world. Bavino observes in his notes:

severed tongues’ vibrations    bitchy sensations    (scratch)

disused minds’ excavation    metaphor    (matter of thought)

play-words    armoured toys    (cut killer lines)

brain slam-dunk    (junk-yard punk bard)

WORD-cry centralise intelligence create cretinous populace

dry-eye-cry in white-wallet wash (102)

Bavino's forms parenthetical phrase and repeats it at the end of successive clauses – (scratch), (matter of thought), (cut killer lines) and (junk-yard punk bard) – to create an epiphora meant to mark the blacks' discontent at the vicious cycle of oppressive circumstances they are made to oscillate in. By 'scratch' Bavino seems to suggest that the blacks' existence appears to have been reduced into a scrape through state oppression which seems to be informed by an oppressive constitutional clause. For Bavino, this clause is like 'play-words' or 'armoured toys' which look innocent but when they are executed they cause oppression. According to Bavino, the state isolates the blacks for manual work (excavation) and seems to abandon their intelligence. The narrator is of the view that the (post)apartheid South African law condemns the blacks as having an inferior brain – since 'slam' means condemn while 'punk' means inferior – and that on this coordinate of oppression the blacks are reduced into slaves for the whites whom the constitution seems to favour.

Moreover, Bavino employs lexical and syntactic deviation as a pointer of the blacks' discontent at the official sanitized whites' oppressive tendencies. Bavino observes that the crimes committed against the blacks by the whites seem to be officially supported and justified by the (post)apartheid South African government. Bavino notes:

dopest flow-streams at the rope (longer than blueness)

filthy-mentality soap to cleanse triple k's greatest white hope

(bathe purity-sin in Caucasian uterus)

i was born a scream thru a torn-seam

in chalk-lit night & a tropical lie-land

(salvage soul in guilt projection towards savage salvation

    speak to the mind in my hand) (103)

Bavino's observation suggests that the whites' desire of conquest over the blacks reaches its zenith when it becomes apparent that their noose of oppression is choking the blacks to death. Bavino joins the word 'flow' to 'streams' to form a new hyphenated word 'flow-streams' which crisply communicates the blacks' grim realities of oppression in the hands of the whites. Through the use of the hyphen Bavino is able to communicate how the whites' phallic tide chokes the blacks with ejaculatory waste pitching them into discontent. The narrator notes that the intoxicating depth of the whites' masochistic attitude against the blacks is greater than that inherent in drugs or the unfathomable blue sea. Bavino also forms the hyphenated word 'filthy-mentality' to communicate the whites' vile perception of the blacks and how it is used to officially sanitize – cleanse or make clean – the whites' oppression against the blacks. For Bavino, the greatest aim of the whites can be summarized as 'triple k's' – implying the ku klux klan, an organization of white men in US who commit violent racist crimes. The narrator seems to be challenging the whites' inebriating phallic desire to gain conquest over the blacks; attain orgasmic pleasure through exploitation of the blacks; and to finally subvert the blacks into a perpetual receptacle for their ejaculatory waste.

The narrator is of the opinion that pigmentation seems to exonerate the whites from any crimes they commit against the blacks. Accordingly, Bavino joins the words

‘purity’ and ‘sin’ to form ‘purity-sin’ and notes that when ‘purity-sin’ is bathed in the ‘caucasian uterus’ it becomes clean attracting no reprisal from the law. By joining ‘purity’ with ‘sin’ Bavino forms a new word to mark the blacks’ discontent at the impunity of the whites’ oppression. ‘Caucasian’ has to do with white man and therefore the narrator is certainly suggesting that when one is born white they are apparently accorded the right to trample on the blacks with immunity from the law. Bavino also forms the hyphenated word ‘torn-skin’ as an attempt to communicate the blacks’ dissatisfaction at being slashed from humanity through the whites’ instigated oppression. Through ‘torn-skin’ the narrator appears to intimate that the blacks’ existence is marked for oppression right from birth. The narrator forms the words ‘chalk-lit’ and ‘lie-land’ to communicate the blacks’ dingy actuality as well as the blameable whites’ oppression. On one hand, ‘Chalk-lit’ hints at something illuminated/marked by some scribble/writing or chocolate, a brown colour used to describe the blacks. On the other hand, ‘lie-land’ suggests annexation of Africa by the whites which is given grounding by the qualifier ‘tropical’– steamy. Bavino’s ‘lie-land’ also carries an erotic ring which gives the impression that the whites have turned the blacks into a land for their phallic waste.

Exploiting the nonlinear space inherent in note writing, Bavino employs syntactic deviation by collapsing the capitals which are normally expected in linear space –the cosmos guided by specified rules – at the beginning of sentences and proper nouns into the lower case perhaps as an attempt to find a neutral ground for all humanity. The following example demonstrates this point:

power’s paranoia. tarred membranes.

superiority’s pretensions stripped down to cowering nakedness,

fright hides behind flags.

i count them from one to fanaticism.

being bared is not as romantic as ginsberg in buddhist pose

supposed.

no clothes yes but hidden behind a beard (13)

Bavino's observation appears to suggest that supremacy is nothing more than affectations and that when the pretensions are withdrawn terror would be discovered seated at the base of power. The narrator attempts to make his observation on power clear by alluding to Allen Ginsberg whom according to Poetry Foundation attracted a lot of attention when the San Francisco Police sued the publisher of his poem "Howl" which they had declared obscene because of its graphic sexual language. In the courtroom, prominent literary figures among them Mark Schorer spoke in defence of the poem by mitigating that Ginsberg uses the diction and rhythms of ordinary speech and that the poem of necessity employs the language of vulgarity. Judge Clayton W. Horn presiding over the case ruled that "Howl" was not obscene. The corollary that appears here is that what is used to condemn Ginsberg is language and it is language – through mitigation – that acquits him. It follows then that by collapsing the capitals in the language he uses Bavino is expressing the blacks' discontent at the whites' supremacy imposed in language.

Nonetheless, when Bavino employs capitals – but not conventionally – he does so to syntactically and graphologically foreground power contestation and its subversion. The capitalized words tower over the rest of the text either to indicate the

whites' pretensions of supremacy or the blacks' discontent and dissidence at the whites' instigated oppression. Bavino writes in his notes:

swamp-thing 'friends & other strangers'

flaming flesh-pit spawn vile conception

twisted embryo to foetal deformity

WORDlines in decomposition birth opposite extremity

THE END is a lie comes hot-fast where rape-rift forms

funeral flowers burial blooms

(POWER's doom my bodiliness weight)

death-site's grave but slime lubes/ oils ogre-eye (41)

It is evident from this example that Bavino capitalizes 'word' and joins it to 'lines' to create a contrast of upper and lower case in his new word in order to contest the blacks' discrimination which appears to be informed by the (post)apartheid South African constitution. By "but slime lubes/ oils ogre-eye," Bavino suggests that the new realities of oppression in (post)apartheid South Africa seem to have turned the blacks into filth which emollients the tyranny of the state. The state's apparent tyranny has the "twisted embryo" of the (post)apartheid South African rebirth into a "foetal deformity". Bavino seems to make "THE END" to stand out in order to mark the blacks' grim future in the present realities of state oppression. The narrator employs the contrast of the upper and the lower case in "POWER's doom" to communicate how the state appears to use its political power to obfuscate the blacks' chance of having a fair existence.

In another section of his notes, Bavino further employs graphological foregrounding through the unconventional use of capital letters and spacing of words to mark the blacks' discontent at the whites' ripping oppression. The narrator notes that the blacks are forcibly made to own manual labour by the whites through perennial exploitation and that the blacks' existence is marked by a throbbing trauma:

mad-cranium on the block is a mine MINE

i'm beef in brine with my continent corn-head born dead continent

mind is confine I ACT OUT tongue-delay thought-decay

dream-contortion throbbing raw THE WOUND forever

opens... (41)

The narrator appears to give "MINE" prominence through capitalization in order to communicate how the blacks are strapped into slavery for the whites and made to perceive slavery as their fate. 'MINE' may communicate possession; an underground tunnel from which coal or other minerals are extracted; the process of extracting minerals from the earth's bowel; and a bomb normally hidden in the ground which explodes when something or someone touches it. The narrator gives the idea that the blacks' life has been reduced into a ground for the whites' exploitation and that the blacks' existence is threatened with exhaustion. The blacks' oppression also seems to be a time bomb which is bound to explode unless the government stops its oppressive tendencies. The blacks seem to be confined to the roles cut out for them by the whites' oppressive tendencies. By assigning prominence to "I ACT OUT," the narrator is undoubtedly suggesting that the blacks' reduction into mere actors for the whites is overwhelmingly oppressive and a constant source of discontent among the

blacks. The trauma resultant from the whites' oppressive trends is foregrounded in "THE WOUND" which the narrator says "forever opens..." causing the blacks a lot of perennial pain.

Apart from the orthographical oriented strategies, the author employs fusion by transgressing into areas which have been prohibited for long by (post)apartheid South African official politics in order to express the blacks' discontent at the whites' instigated oppression. The narrator, for example, makes the religious to freely interact with the sacrilegious so as to mark the blacks' discontent at the oppressive State Apparatuses used by the (post)apartheid South African government to exploit the blacks. The narrator notes that Bavino leads a life full of misery: "of sliced penis wriggling not dead but guillotined in razor of disgust. hated sodomy deep coming out the mouth ejaculating on the cement floor balls on crane behind between frozen buttocks of shock. wine of jesus rocks exploding in stomach crushing tearing to pieces faeces liquid putrid" (44). The narrator communicates Bavino's wretchedness through the perverted sexual image of being sodomized and adds a spin into the works by describing the ejaculatory waste draining into Bavino's mouth and anus as "wine of jesus". The narrator appears to hold the view that the oppression perpetuated against the blacks by the (post)apartheid South African government and its austere State Apparatuses is not different from a forcible perversion committed by a homosexual against a fellow human being. The "wine of jesus" seems to infer to the intoxicating trajectory of any kind of phallic oppression. The dehumanizing aspect of the whites' oppressive tendencies is neatly communicated through the image of the apparently clean/righteous engaging in pervasive sexual activities and ending up in nauseating decomposing faeces. In effect, the author fuses the sexual with the religious to

succinctly communicate the blacks' discontent at the disgusting whites' oppressive arc.

The author also fuses the historical, the present and the sexual to communicate the blacks' discontent at the whites' imperialistic oppression against mankind. Bavino notes:

dirt road born (in) no poverty-romance

slavery-beat for liberation-movement

(feathers on tar raffle)

imperial chimp tunes to strike up a limp shuffle

rectal eye hit tossed off

in black breeze klan hung high

pimp punt poison cuntal sacs to floppy phallus drip-dry

we exit in diseased body bags (59)

Bavino reinterprets the historical experience of slavery metaphorically as sexual perversion in order to communicate the blacks' discontent at the whites' perennial imperialistic tendencies. The narrator appears to perceive the agents of imperialism as a pimp – someone who earns money by finding clients for prostitutes – whose efforts brings disease to the Africans for forcibly luring them to sleep with disease-infected whites. 'klan' alludes to the ku klax klan and hence it implies the racist violence of the whites' phallic oppression against the blacks.

Bavino uses the nonlinear nature of language to mark the blacks' discontent through word play. The narrator notes that "as for words, lyrics and lines of verse, literature and the enlightened form. words are collections of letters. take a certain collection of alphabets, juggle it around and shout 'arse' and people prick their ears. but both sides are the same. the arse and the ears" (20). The narrator appears to suggest that words are nonlinear and hence their interpretation should also be nonlinear. Bavino holds the opinion that since both 'arse' and 'ears' are made up of the same letters they are inherently the same in terms of composition and meaning and their only conceivable difference is the point of reference. The narrator explains that for the 'arse' and the 'ears,' "the difference [is] that the ears take in shit and the arse lets it out roaring and making waves in the toilet-bowl or when your heels deep in a rural tug-of-war with sanitation and running water" (20). The narrator appears to suggest that linearity is what constitutes the difference in attitude for the reception of the two words. The narrator is undoubtedly challenging the linear perception which is used to sanitize the blacks' oppression by assigning them a sub-human tag through the language of the State Apparatuses.

In *W/ H*, the story of the blacks' traumatic existence in the cruel grip of the states' phallic oppression is told by Bavino, a child narrator. Like in *B/ H*, the text is fragmented and seems to be telling bits of an unconnected story. Bavino appears to employ the fragmentary style to parallel the blacks' wrecked existence, and to challenge the reader to critically search for meaning from the rubbles in order to gain insight on the blacks' new realities of oppression. At a closer look, the novel reveals that the fragmentations are entries in Bavino's private journal which he keeps as a record of the imprints of the experiences that have shaped the blacks' life in

(post)apartheid South Africa. This fact is implied at the end of the novel when Bavino indicates the period covered by his journal: “johannesberg 1992 – stuttgart 1997” (93). The entries unfold in prose and they appear easier to make out than the notes in *B/ H*. However, the unconventional use of grammar is still evident in the text which could be accounted for by the fact that the journal, like the notes, is a personal record and it may adopt a style not governed wholly by the conventional use of language but trading some personal linguistic inclination. Stylistic strategies employed in the text are markers of the blacks’ discontent with the (post)apartheid South African government and its oppressive State Apparatuses.

To begin with, the narrator employs the image of the ripped mother to mark the blacks’ discontent. The mother is portrayed wallowing in misery due to the phallic violence meted out on her by the father figure in the family. Bavino notes in his journal, “i heard a sickening crack of bone and saw the blow split my mother’s lip and throw her against the wall. he had a grin on his face as he advanced” (7). The narrator’s disgust at his father’s violence is marked by the word ‘sickening’ while ‘crack of bone’ harrowingly confirms the destructive swing of violence. The split on the mother’s lip seems to indicate the separatist effect of violence on the human body. The narrator appears to hold the opinion that oppression initiates the painful feeling of dehumanization and pitches the victims into discontent. The narrator experiences dissatisfaction at his father’s violent tendencies and notes, “i started to run towards mama & a huge boot rushed at me” (7). The narrator’s instinctive attempt to protect his mother is met with more violence from the father – but now aimed at the mother’s sympathizer – and it throws the narrator into discontent.

The symbol of the torn mother runs through the text and the narrator appears to use it to represent the ripped (post)apartheid South Africa. The author is of the view that the rebirth expected in (post)apartheid South Africa after the 1994 General Elections was hoped to permanently stop the battering of the mother and usher in a people who responds to the nurturing instinct of the mother with love. However, the blacks' hope of an oppression free nation is dashed by the new political leaders. Bavino notes:

the leaders were now out of leper holes. the land freed. or  
 so declared by those who should know. the lot of those of  
 us declared undesirable ill-fitting mental-defectives were  
 forced-fed a radicalisation. yes i woke out of it walking (23)

The narrator appears to suggest that (post)apartheid South Africa has not attained true freedom when he states that the leaders are elevated 'out of leper holes' and that the land is freed, and then follows it up with an alternative voice 'or so declared' which apportions the freedom to some but not all South Africans. Bavino expresses the disappointment of 'the lot of those' declared unfit by the new (post)apartheid South African government. By "the lot of those of us declared undesirable," Bavino seems to be communicating the blacks' discontent at the apparently discriminatory tendencies of (post)apartheid South African government. Through the assertion, "yes i woke out of it walking," the narrator seems to equate the rebirth to a mere dream. Bavino marks the blacks' trauma at the seemingly failed rebirth thus: "through the ages i hear my mother's body hit the shuddering wall & jar me back to now" (24). The narrator seems to be of the opinion that for the blacks the phobic object of the

ripped (post)apartheid South Africa – represented by the mother’s torn body – appears to reverberate in their existence.

The narrator also employs symbolism to mark the blacks’ discontent at the oppressive dispensation of the (post)apartheid South African government. The narrator uses the image of the daughter to represent the rebirth of the mother (the country) which was expected after the 1994 General Elections. The daughter, like the mother, is ripped by the father figure. The narrator seems to use the symbol of the raped daughter to communicate the blacks’ discontent at the collapse of the expected rebirth as (post)apartheid South Africa appears to be locked in the zeitgeist of apartheid. Bavino notes about the father who rapes the daughter, “& as was the fashion he was always creeping into her. rushing jumping her all the way into her teenage years” (13). The narrator’s language points to the discontent he experiences at the dehumanization of the girl whom he perceives as the future as the mother has become exhausted through perennial phallic oppression. This becomes evident when the narrator describes his relationship with the new girl – personification of the expected rebirth in (post)apartheid South Africa – in erotic terms. Bavino notes that when the girl wriggles she gives him the idea of “a rabbit trying to get free of carnivorous fangs dripping its life juices into the dirt” and “it impaled [him] deep inside her being” (24). The narrator’s language appears to suggest that rebirth is marred by the clutch of apartheid’s dehumanization which is now reordered into new realities of oppression.

For the narrator, the idea of conquest which was at the heart of apartheid seems to be lodged in the new government something that gives him a sickening sensation. The narrator expresses what he perceives as false celebratory mood in

(post)apartheid South Africa through the image of sexual orgasm that leaves someone trembling at the thought of the violence meted out in the process of finding the phallic pleasure. Bavino notes that “the girl is now gone so’s the warmth & i shudder in the heat. trembling post-orgasmic as my genitals seek to disappear inside my bowels” (24) The narrator seems to use the symbol of the absent girl to mark the blacks’ disappointment at the failed rebirth while the idea of the narrator trembling post-orgasmic but with shrinking genitals appears to point to the castration experienced by the blacks when the rebirth fails.

The narrator further marks the Blacks’ discontent through the symbol of the child born in defective circumstances. The child represents the zeitgeist of apartheid which seems to reverberate in (post)apartheid South Africa. Bavino observes that “the child turned in the midwife’s hand took a big bite of her fleshy neck tore through the sweat dried into dirty salt & got to the vein” (40). Bavino’s notion of the child biting into the midwife’s neck appears to communicate the monstrosity of the infant whom the narrator employs to represent the constitution of the (post)apartheid South Africa. The narrator describes the child as “the half-monkey from africa navy blue against flaming vagina chewing through melon shaped breast the mother thrashing around the doctor dead” (40). The narrator’s description of the child implies that the (post)apartheid South African constitution is not wholly human as part of it discriminates against the blacks by robbing them of their humanity. Bavino’s description appears to indicate that the psycho-violence inherent in the constitution is communicated through the image of the ‘flaming vagina’ which gives an idea of burning and bloodletting. The narrator observes that the child receives degrading thrashing from the midwife, an old lady who “in a short while [...] was going to be

pensioned off into the cold staring walls & a skull grim house” (40). The narrator seems to suggest that the midwife cares little for the child because she is about to retire.

Bavino employs the symbol of the midwife to represent the new (post)apartheid South African leaders and their ostensibly belligerent attitude towards the blacks. The midwife has led a long traumatic life and when she reminisces on her past the pain comes rushing into her mind which makes the child to lose meaning. Bavino observes that “she bends down to wipe the drops of blood on her shoes. the pain of arthritis shoots through her bones,” and she curses, “little ugly devil dogshit!” (40). The narrator’s observation appears to imply that the sight of the child is sickening to the midwife as it reminds her of the abyss in her life. According to the narrator, the midwife puts her hand under the child’s head and feels the warmth and stickiness and knows that her hand will come out soiled with gore. She then looks far away, “across time & space to where she was a little girl. it was hostile distance. so she smashed the child’s head down hard on the cold concrete” (40). The narrator is undoubtedly using the symbol of the midwife welling with bitterness for years drained away in a painful past to communicate how the newly elected (post)apartheid South African leaders – especially the old ones like Mandela – killed the country’s rebirth by being governed by bitterness of the oppression experienced during the apartheid era. The narrator notes that the child suffers many bouts of sickness after being knocked on the cement by the midwife: “he is always falling ill. weak constitution & skin & bone. death is a thought forever hovering around in the air vulture fashion” (40). The impending death of the (post)apartheid South African rebirth portrayed by the narrator as the imminent death of the infant marks the blacks’ discontent.

Another stylistic strategy used by the narrator to mark the blacks' discontent is satire. The narrator portrays the (post)apartheid South African government and its austere State apparatuses in ridiculous circumstances which bring to the fore her laughable weaknesses and folly especially on her dehumanization of the blacks. Bavino notes that "total power vests with the LEADER & he wields it alone. throws the crumbs to lackeys with their tongues up his rectum" (50). From the narrator's observation it appears that the leader is a glutton who wears pretences of supremacy while reducing everyone else in his government to minions whom he rewards with morsels on condition that they stick their tongues into his anus. Bavino observes that the leader, "deified to death he's ceased to be human. There are no faults on the leader not a crack in the eyes of the world" (50). Bavino satirizes the leader by portraying him as being consecrated not to holiness but to death which implies that he has become death itself. The narrator points out that "all sights zoom up there. kwashiorkored eyeballs wade through the mist of hunger & stare. hard. at the leader's full-bellied talk. hungered tongues hang out providing a thick-furred carpet for the LEADER to tread right up their heads" (50). Bavino's satirical description of the leader walking on a carpet of the blacks' hungry tongues denotes the blacks' discontent at the (post)apartheid South African government and its oppressive State Apparatuses.

The narrator further marks the blacks' discontent by employing the satirical image of the (post)apartheid South African political leaders lining up in front of a public toilet waiting to have their turn at a drunken woman who has confused the gents for the ladies. The narrator observes that "the smell of human excreta calls you from across the street before you see the one public toilet" (57). It appears to be

ridiculous that with this nauseating stench there is a big queue of frantic leaders each holding an erection and waiting for their chance to drain their phallic waste into the woman fallen in the reeking toilet. The narrator observes the laughable hysteria which characterizes the leaders in the queue thus: “hey fuck you there trying to sneak in front there we’ve all got erections don’t we?” (57). Bavino seems to apply a pun on ‘erections’ so that it also reads ‘elections’. By so doing, the narrator seems to be pointing out the phallic nature assumed by the (post)apartheid South African politics. The lewd edge of the politics is communicated through some leaders’ sneering comments: “by the time you get in it will be like old panties with the elastic band gone slack... just look at this sewerage here can’t you see the semen of the men who went in there before? that bitch must be full to the ears with it by now you better go look for some rags to wipe her [...]” (57). The narrator satirizes the (post)apartheid South African political leaders through “the irony of instant deflation”.

In *Syntactic Aspects of Poetry: A Pragmatic Perspective*, Dr. Khalil Hassan Nofal notes that in the irony of instant deflation the introductory words “lead us to expect, at last, some significant insight into something – the rhetorical build up in the language promises something significant; the [last] words indicate an immediate deflation” (54). In *W/H*, the narrator notes, “there’s a serpentine queue there turning around the corner” (57). The queue raises the narrator’s curiosity but he disappointedly discovers that all the men in the queue are waiting to stick their phalluses into a drunken woman fallen in the filthy toilet. The narrator appears to be mocking the masculine politics and libidinous power contestation in (post)apartheid South Africa in which leaders contest in elections with the aim of looting the country’s resources. It is evident then that the narrator indisputably employs the

image of the stinking public toilet as a stylistic strategy to mark the blacks' discontent at the ripping of their country by political leaders through corruption.

Additionally, the narrator employs nonlinearity as a strategy to collapse the concept of time in order to signpost the blacks' discontent. Bavino observes, "the years converge on my mind. & merge get fused bore through to the otherside. people events times all conspire to occupy my mental space. i can't make out when what happened. but all moments are transition time" (55). The narrator's description of time communicates the blacks' discontent at the way the (post)apartheid South African government and its austere State Apparatuses have swept the ground under their feet denying them any kind of anchoring in the country. Bavino appears to suggest that for the blacks time is a transitional concept since they are always in this or that revolution but they never seem to get out of the oppressive circumstances marring their existence. The narrator notes, "time floods my mental space i said. years converge & it's occupation time inside my head. my mind... it's all fractured. fragments. bits. pieces. broken. i try to gather my thoughts. but i can't hold them down enough to make sense" (59). Bavino appears to imply that the blacks' existence has been reduced into smithereens by the whites' instigated oppression. For Bavino, the blacks cannot make sense of their fragmented life and they seem to exist in an abyss of painful thoughts: "they pin to the ground i carry inside me. kneed my brains in the muddy waters of my existence. they take me over. fly my imagination's rotten remains in the wind broken at every turn of my parted buttocks" (59). Time seems to mark the perennial perversions committed against the blacks by the whites' oppressive tendencies. Bavino appears to suggest that for the blacks time is like a flood of traumatic perversions threatening to burst the walls of their brains.

Bavino also employs the child's narrator by assuming his childhood voice when narrating the story as a stylistic strategy to enable him to communicate the blacks' ordeal candidly and without the pretensions which characterize adults. The narrator, for example, notes:

but still i couldn't stop going into girls. but i can't kiss. not  
 when they stick their tongues down my throat. but it's sweet  
 when i'm between their legs & i go on forever until i get  
 bored or someone sees us. that's because nothing comes out  
 of my penis. my friends say it's because i'm still young. i've  
 no tjor. i could have the earth for a vagina & bring it down to  
 the tip of my penis & the streams would never run dry (19)

The narrator honestly notes his irresistible sexual indulgence with girls with its excitations and disappointments. The narrator notes that his experience with girls is different from that of his older friends since he apparently goes on forever without attaining any orgasmic flow. For the narrator, sexual intercourse is prohibited by boredom or the guilt of being spotted by other people. His friends tell him that he is able to move on forever because of his youth but the narrator feels somewhat disappointed for not reaching orgasm. The innocence of the narrator marks the blamelessness of the common black population in (post)apartheid South Africa before they become marred by the whites' oppressive tide.

From the examples given in the foregoing it is evident that the author uses various stylistic strategies especially those based on linguistic deviation to mark the

blacks' discontent in both *B/H* and *W/H*. The next subtopic examines how the author uses stylistic strategies as markers of the blacks' dissidence against the whites' instigated oppression in the two novels.

#### **4.3 STYLISTIC STRATEGIES AS MARKERS OF DISSIDENCE IN *B/H* AND *W/H***

This section first examines how the narrator employs stylistic strategies in *B/H* to mark the blacks' dissidence against the whites' oppressive tide and then moves on to *W/H*. Some stylistic background information on the two novels has been given in the preceding subtopic but it appears worthwhile to remember that for both novels the story is told through a character by the name Bavino which is a township name in (post)apartheid South Africa meaning 'everyman'. It follows then that the narrator's ordeal is by extension the blacks' tribulations in the cruel grip of the whites' initiated oppression. Bavino declares his writing mission as "i write the bloodline" which appears to imply that he writes about the blacks' genealogy of oppression inaugurated by the whites' forbidding phallic law.

To begin with, the narrator employs lexical deviation by using the slash to split up words in order to mark the blacks' dissidence against the whites' oppressive tide. Bavino notes, "this is MASS confess absolute [...] consign soul to satan how life-wheel turn b/ lack arse-haul back uterus-ward kill oedipus complex ignites homicidal desires bursting pancreas subsistence explosive power scents at the noose [...]" (92). By splitting 'black' with a slash to form 'b/ lack', the narrator appears to communicate the blacks' dissidence using the explosive /b/ sound and at the same time justifying the blacks' dissonance with 'lack'. Bavino seems to use 'lack' to communicate the blacks' castration (feeling of powerlessness) initiated by the whites'

ripping oppressive tide. Homer notes that for Lacan, “Desire and the unconscious are founded through the recognition of a fundamental lack: the absence of the phallus” (72). Following Lacan’s argument it could be plausibly argued that the blacks’ dissidence is inaugurated by the desire for the (lost) phallus. The narrator portrays the blacks towing their desire through the whites’ arse into the uterus with the aim of killing Oedipus complex. The narrator appears to be of the view that ‘lack’ prompts the blacks’ perversion of the (post)apartheid laws as dissidence against the oppressive State Apparatuses.

The narrator portrays the blacks dissenting against the oppression instigated by the (post)apartheid South African government and its formidable State Apparatuses with their simple but effective weapons. Bavino notes:

distilled eye-water

chilled thru the brain paved crack...

stitched rubber-stopper plugged

with gutter-bomb rock/ et wing-strings

flabber-mouth fly/ bounce still flap the stack (92)

The narrator employs the slash in ‘rock/ et’ to communicate the idea that the blacks dissent with simple weapons such as rocks but they are as lethal as a missile. Bavino appears refer to the Soweto uprising of 1976 in which school children protested against the introduction of Afrikaans in the education curriculum and when the police appeared to quell the protest the irate students threw rocks at them. Many students died in the fracas and the apartheid South African government was heavily sanctioned

by many countries all over the world. The narrator also seems to suggest that blacks' protesting noise, implied by 'flabber-mouth fly/ bounce,' is a powerful weapon against the (post)apartheid South Africa and its oppressive State Apparatuses. Bavino seems to suggest that 'flabber-mouth fly/ bounce' puns with 'flabby-mouth fry bones' which portrays the blacks' mouths wide open in protest and also the whites flabby mouths sagging after being hit by the flying missiles – rocks.

The narrator also marks the blacks' dissidence through the deployment of classical myths coupled with lexical deviation. Bavino notes that the blacks are determined to dissent against the whites' supremacy pretences: "re-moss the dream-pool gorilla troops to tarzan cot t/ rifle-cradle blasted rock-steady music royal court subjugated wills loyal bought chandelier withered ideals sub-terra-meals slithered across emasculation tables" (93-94). The narrator appears to employ the classical myth of Tarzan and the Gorillas, in which Tarzan ascended into the sky leaving the gorillas behind, to challenge the whites' elevation of themselves into heavenly heights from which they lord it over the blacks. Bavino uses the hyphen to form 're-moss' which seems to communicate 'remorse' of the blacks after realizing that the whites have stolen their dream; removing moss from the rocks in order use them as missiles against the oppressors and; redirecting the signal of worship of the whites' assumed supremacy to that of attacking it – implied by Moss code. The narrator uses t/ rifle to mark the blacks' dissidence. The narrator appears to use the slash to communicate the crack (damage) intended on the whites' pretences of supremacy while t's explosive sound expresses the ricocheting rifle. By 'rock-steady music' the narrator seems to imply that the blacks' resistance against the whites' phallic tide is persistently waged and it will bear fruit despite the blacks' unsophisticated weapons.

Additionally, the narrator deploys syntactic and lexical deviations to parenthetically mark the blacks' dissidence against the whites' orchestrated oppression. Bavino notes that the blacks' dissent against the (post)apartheid South African government and its oppressive State Apparatuses is prompted by the phobic fear over the apparent killing of the rebirth – the very rebirth expected to end oppression in the country:

base vibe cut chord earth a death-place got nation-foetus in a

wrench

drowned amniotic catch the rebirth stench

menstrual cyclical hate is maternal to (a) trick-bed

aparthy trickle down children bleed

topical waste scrap/ crap pile up

dark inside the masoch kist (ball & chain to the brain) (102)

The narrator uses a fragmentary style in which the sentences have been reduced into rabbles through the use of disjointed phrases with no commas or full stops and having unusual spacing in order to mark the blacks' chaotic frame of mind as they protest against the state's oppressive tendencies. The narrator uses the hyphen to create the compound words "death-place" and "nation-foetus" to mark the blacks' new realities of oppression. The narrator attributes hate to maternal and seems to suggest that the menstrual flow is a blood bath resulting from the killing of the masochistic seed inside the mother's ovaries. It follows then that the blacks' dissidence against the whites' phallic tide could be interpreted in the light of phallic backlash in which the woman

instigates a blood flow that checks the pounding phallic tide albeit for a moment. By employing (a) to mark the blacks' dissidence the narrator appears to allude to Lacan's **objet petit a**. Fink observes that for Lacan, "the object (a) is the leftover of that process of constituting an object; the scrap that evades the grasp of symbolization" (94). It follows then that the blacks' leftover as the whites try to pound them into objects through oppression seems to be dissidence. Bavino also appears to suggest that the blacks are dissenting against castration because it seems to psychologically imprison them.

Further, the narrator marks the blacks' dissidence through obscene, vulgar and iconoclastic images in what appears to be a sacrilegious attack on religion. The narrator notes:

conspiracy vision trance senders' gnost-exhortation to religious

orgasm

genital transformers magic scream in exotic convulsions

napalm green twilight element

flawed god flatulence smash

de-sensate switch-bitch (91)

The narrator seems to suggest that religion – as a State Apparatus – is a libidinous and pervasive machination meant to exploit the blacks. By "genital transformers," the narrator appears to imply that the minions of religion are governed by a pervasive libido which disgustingly rubs the blacks the wrong way. The narrator describes God as flawed and full of pretentiousness of supremacy which appears to be an attack on

the state's pomposity perpetuated through religion. Bavino's declaration that God's supremacy is going to be smashed seems to communicate the blacks' attack on the state's self-deification.

The narrator also marks the blacks' dissidence against the whites' militarized oppression through syntactic and lexical deviations together with graphological foregrounding involving a contrast of upper and lower case, normal and italicized words as shown in the example below:

reverse disastrous perverse hilarious

disillusion eternal smudge on power-rug

military intelligence THE MAN stuck to boot-sole

squashed on army-cabbage patch

*this bestial revolt lays me on the gnarled flesh-carpet*

*slave black market concerns congealed animal stink*

*high on burnt blood-flour drug*

*them in forward-speak give out coward reek rotten-membranous (91)*

By writing "THE MAN" in the uppercase, Bavino appears to suggest that the whites have elevated their manhood to heavenly heights through militarized means. The narrator attacks the whites' bloated manhood by portraying the pretentious man being stuck pervasive phallic backlash – implied by "boot-sole". The military – as a minion of the whites' flatulence – is depicted as a "coward" reeking with fear. The narrator seems to employ the italics to communicate the backlash of the phallic flow in form of the blacks' bestial revolt. The blacks are disgusted by the animal stench slapped on

them as they are sold into slavery by the whites. Bavino appears to be of the opinion that the blacks' stench has congealed and they are now giving it off to the whites as dissidence.

In *W/ H*, Bavino marks the Blacks' dissidence against the whites' libidinous oppression by employing stylistic strategies that satirize the symbol of man – the phallus. To begin with, the narrator tells the story of a girl who hacks her father into chunks of meat to protest his pervasive sexual oppression on her. The man repeatedly rapes his daughter from her early years up to her teenage but he develops a heart attack one day while he is on top of her. The girl decides to chop her father's body into pieces in order to identify what makes him to be so treacherous to her. The narrator notes, "she couldn't stop chopping away at him. couldn't break him down to finer particles. she said later she wanted to get to the core of his dirt. to smash the essence of his being. to touch the heat of his evil" (14). Bavino seems to suggest that the blacks' dissidence against the whites' oppressive tide is meant to find out what makes the whites so cruel to the blacks. The narrator notes that the girl "got a knife & sliced him up into strips & strings of meat hanging there. she wanted to suspend him from the clothesline to air. to get the stench of the THING out of his flesh" (14). Bavino gives the impression that the man's stench of oppression recedes in the phallus and hence dissidence is an attempt to get rid of the rotten phallus. The narrator observes that the girl "cooked the genitals in a different pot because she relished them the most" when she decides to stew her father (15). By separating the phallus from the rest of the body the girl seems to have singled out the source of oppression.

Secondly, the narrator employs the image of some girls on the rampage to mark the blacks' dissidence against phallic the oppression instigated by the

(post)apartheid government and its ascetic State Apparatuses. The narrator notes that the girls “formed a gang. & the streets knew them as sharks. they did things to men. those women. they were girls really. quite a few guys walking around trotting restless phalluses fell under the bite” (29). Bavino’s observation seems to imply that the girls are out to trap twitchy phalluses as some kind of attack on manhood. The narrator observes that the girls completely smash manhood, like “there’s a man down the street who used to draw respect from out of the flesh of people with a knife-blade well he gets no such anymore since the sharks took chunks of his flesh off him until he was a shrivelled up worm dragging himself down the street crabwise” (29-30). Bavino’s observation implies that though the man’s bloated manhood throws people into fright it cannot stand the girls’ united protest. The narrator appears to be of the opinion that when the blacks come together they will defeat the State Apparatuses’ formidable phallic oppression.

Further, the narrator marks the blacks’ dissidence through the subversion of the austere State Apparatuses’ legality by representing them as the symbols of destruction. Bavino notes that “religion & institutionalised education have geared to indoctrination of human mutation’s creation. in-bred blood-lust creatures the anti-violence machine” (43). The narrator’s observation implies that religion and institutionalised education are inhuman organizations which serve the oppressive motives of the (post)apartheid South African government. The narrator observes that religion and institutionalised education are “the storm of civilisation coming from high up the bleach scale,” and that, “the tide of a so-called normal man’s poisonous assimilation carries with it the rain of castration” (43). Bavino appears to be of the opinion that the two institutions oppressive and they make the blacks’ powerless.

Hence, the narrator declares the blacks' desire to protest against the oppression instigated through religion and institutionalised education thus: "ah the need to kill off political pretension. to be steeled against romanticised ideological assumption/consumption" (43). For Bavino, religion and institutionalised education are oppressive ideological State Apparatuses whose affectation needs to be smashed.

The narrator also employs the bestial-sex image which portrays a pervasive relationship between a woman and a dog in order to justify the blacks' dissidence against the state's phallic tide. The narrator explains to the reader, "we hadn't been there for ten minutes & cold out there & sitting in her bedroom when a huge dog came dragging its thick fur & tongue across the room. dripping yellow at the fangs & all hostility not even staring me down giving me disdain from its peripheral vision" (47). The narrator appears to suggest that the dog perceives him as an opponent because of its phallic interest in the woman. Therefore, it displays a hostile disposition towards the narrator. The woman seems to represent the expected rebirth of the state after the 1994 General Elections while the dog stands for the zeitgeist of apartheid which appears to reverberate in (post)apartheid South Africa. Bavino seems to be taken aback by the woman's reaction and what transpires between her and the dog: "& she smiled liquid when it snuggled up to her lap. & she ran her hand over its back & then its head. when she ran a finger right across the middle of its head it purred. its tongue slid wet out of its mouth" (47). The woman appears to be attracted to the dog and the narrator's presence does not seem to be important to her any longer. The narrator explains that before long, "the dog's tongue was sliding up her thing. on the outside & then changing position slightly it worked its way inside" (48). The narrator seems to be of the view that the woman enjoys the sexual perversion and appears to

have no space for a human relationship. The narrator explains that when the woman starts hissing softly at first and then harder, he bursts into action and throw away the book he was reading: “pumped to explosion movement aim a kick hard at the dog’s side & send it sprawling with its underside to my sight & a gigantic pink headed erection between its hindlegs” (48). Bavino appears to be of the opinion that (post)apartheid South Africa is admissible to perversion which makes her to neglect humanity. The blacks’ dissidence then seems to be initiated by the pervasive political behaviour of the oppressive State Apparatuses.

Bavino also employs the masochistic symbol of the casualization of death to mark the blacks’ dissidence against the (post)apartheid South Africa death tide being instigated by the oppressive State Apparatuses. The narrator observes that “at the rainbow’s end is the age of death band gore-lipped image on life’s front-cover. death is source of amusement in the tabloids” (53). The narrator’s observation implies that death has become an ordinary occurrence which does not carry the solemn feeling of human loss. By “the rainbow’s end,” the narrator appears to allude to (post)apartheid South Africa which is described as the Rainbow Nation to express its dream of rebirth expected after the 1994 General Elections. Since tabloids are newspapers with fairly small pages mostly containing stories about famous people and not much serious news, Bavino seems to suggest that death has become as object of worship in (post)apartheid South Africa. The newspapers appear to be an agent of the state meant to bleach the state’s death tide so that the oppressed remain calm. However, the narrator attempts to reverse the newspapers’ hegemonic discourse by employing the uppercase as he declares the blacks’ dissidence against the state’s oppression: “I’VE LEARNT TO EAT CARRION. word. sit at table with the smell of blood. walk death

world streets” (53). The narrator syntactically marks the blacks’ dissidence by the deployment of the upper case while making the assertion that the blacks have become used to the sight of death. Bavino appears to be of the opinion that the state should stop slighting human life before the tide of death turns on it.

Bavino communicates the text’s potency to mark the Blacks’ dissidence against the state’s phallic tide in the assertion: “i move between word & sword into wordsword” (81). The narrator appears to be of the view that the Blacks’ existence is a transition between the poles of a flawed constitution (word) and its agents of execution (sword) which instigate fatalistic oppression on the blacks. The combination of the constitutional and militarised oppression creates a formidable evil force working against the Blacks. However, Bavino carnivalises “wordsword” – gives it a multiplicity of voices – in order to communicate both the Blacks’ oppression which is apparently supported by the (post)apartheid South African constitution as well as the Blacks’ dissidence against it. The combination could be interpreted as the word denoted by the sword; instilling fear into the blacks in order to subjugate them: or the blacks’ protest (words) against the oppressive law (word). The narrator suggests that for the blacks life is governed by death “& it’s mean cold & later than mere rage sitting on a live-wire in blackness against whiteness. later than broken glass of class war. it’s illuminated here, the brightness of a mad world” (81). The narrator suggests that the blacks fight against racial-based oppression which later transmutes into class codified oppression. For Bavino, the Blacks are locked in a vicious cycle of state initiated oppression which has reduced their existence into a world of mad word and counter-discourse.

The narrator also employs the imagery of venereal diseases to mark the blacks' dissidence against the whites' instigated oppression. Bavino observes that the Blacks are advised to stick to their own because engaging in sexual intercourse with the white would infect them with terrible venereal diseases: "in the streets they said if you tried doing it with people of other races worse could happen to you than anything else in existence. they said stick to your own & all you'll catch is some yellow smelly liquid running out of dingaling that's called crap [...]" (16). Bavino's observation implies that the Blacks avoid intimate interaction with the whites as an expression of dissidence. For the Blacks, close interaction with the whites is associated with diseases which infect the very cradle of life – the sex organ. The narrator notes that the diseases which could be gotten from sticking to your own are tolerable and even curable: "they say it pulls at your genitals until you feel you have metal bubbling up between your legs & you walk funny. or else you get bitten a little bit by the small teeth some dirty girls have in their vaginas. they call such girls piranhas or jaws after the film with the murderous shark" (16). The narrator seems to be of the opinion that the blacks believe that they can at least cope with their own problems but life becomes unbearable to imagine having an intimate relationship with the oppressor. The narrator notes that the Blacks give an example of a boy who worked for a white woman who lured him into a sexual relationship. The narrator observes that one night the boy's parents heard him screaming in the toilet: "they broke down the door to find him facing the toilet bowl with his dick throbbing alive expanding & contracting standing like he was pissing" (18). The narrator appears to suggest that the tale of the boy and the white woman is told in order to discourage the Blacks from having close association with the whites and therefore it marks the Blacks, dissidence against the whites' phallic oppression.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined how the author uses stylistic strategies as markers of the Blacks' discontent and dissidence in both *B/H* and *W/H*. From the foregoing, it is evident that language is a tool used by the (post)apartheid South African government and its oppressive State Apparatuses to subjugate the Blacks. Consequently, the author uses topographical conformity and nonconformity as a strategy for marking the Blacks' discontent and dissidence. The author is able to rewrite, distort, decentre and carnivalise English by employing nonlinear linguistic categories, such as notes and the journal, as imaginative structures to govern the two texts. The author assigns the notes and the journal to a character called Bavino so that the story in the two novels is told not from the author's explicit point of view but from the perspective of Bavino who represents the Blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa.

The final chapter gives the summary, the findings, recommendations and the conclusion of the study.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.0 SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Summary

The work in this thesis is reported in five chapters. The first chapter deals with background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, research assumptions, justification of the study, scope and delimitation, literature review, theoretical framework and research methodology.

Chapter two responds to the first objective which tries to examine how oppressive social forces operating through State Apparatuses in *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart* instigate discontent and dissidence. The objective is formulated with the assumption that State Apparatuses, as structured in the two novels under study, are used to perpetuate social oppression against the subject.

Chapter three emanates from the second objective which endeavors to investigate how the narrator projects abject images from the lived experience of Apartheid in order to challenge systemic racism of the ideology as portrayed in *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart*.

Chapter four is the last analytical section which responds to the third research objective of the study. It discusses how the narrator uses language to mark discontent and dissidence in Rampolokeng's novelistic world.

Lastly, chapter five gives the summary, findings, recommendations and conclusion of the study. All the three objectives of the study have been fulfilled and the research assumptions proved through textual data collection and analysis.

## 5.2 Findings

The following findings have been made in this study:

- a) That the author uses the novelistic universe of *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart* to communicate the complexities of celebrating humanity in a culturally diverse community whose subject is influenced by the aberrations of the lived experience of Apartheid even after the apparent official ban of this oppressive governmentality in the 1990s.
- b) That State Apparatuses create discontent and dissidence in the Black subject due to the excremental vision embedded in their oppressive structures.
- c) That state-operatized religion, institutionalized education, and the family with its oppressive patriarchal structures secrete and excrete the Black subject from the body politic making them to experience psychological deficiencies.
- d) That Repressive State Apparatuses, such as the juridical structures, are used to reduce the Blacks' space into a prison, thereby, creating discontent and dissidence in the subject.
- e) That the narrator projects specters of insanity and hysteria as novelistic phantasmagoria in *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart* in order to challenge social oppression in his society.
- f) That the aesthetics of discontent and dissidence gain expression at the intersection between language and psychology and, therefore, literariness and philosophical appeal have the potential for linguistically marking

psychological dissatisfaction and dissent through the relativity of linguistics.

- g) That Rampolokeng uses literariness and philosophical appeal in his prosaic works in a unique way whose critical examination reveals new interesting insights of reading and interpreting psychological literary writings.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

This study makes the following recommendations of critical engagement:

- a) That Rampolokeng's psychological novelistic universe should be given more critical thought so that his uniquely metaphorical language is not unduly slapped with the charge of lacking political correctness.
- b) That Rampolokeng's prosaic works employ an ingenious literary expression which potently communicates the lived experience of Apartheid in a way that would help the reader to gain new and interesting insights on literature and its efficacy as a therapy for repression. Consequently, this author's novels should be studied more extensively.
- c) That the author's apparently impenetrable novelistic world could help to further the idea of linguistic relativity and hence add to the existing corpus of knowledge on the relationship between theory and literary texts.

### **5.4 Conclusion**

Analysing Rampolokeng's novelistic world of *Blackheart* and *Whiteheart*, this study identifies two important insights on psychological literary writing whose aesthetic mode of expression is discontent and dissidence. The first one is that the

author's novelistic space can be conceived as the mind's toilet. The toilet is perhaps the most important facility in any civilized society though we hardly think about its existence until we get the urge to excrete human waste from our bodies. The toilet serves many purposes apart from affording us the space for relieving ourselves of urinal and faecal matters. It could be used for washing and dressing up, vomiting, inserting and disposing menstrual pads, releasing obnoxious gases, spitting catarrh and even easing tension. The second discernment is that the writer's novelistic cosmos can be thought of as the toilet paper for cleaning the human mind. After excreting we need to use some appropriate substance to dab ourselves clean. For the physical, maybe toilet paper is that substance but for the psychic, literature is perhaps the best sanitary canvas. Toilet paper has a long history which will be used to explicate the conceptualization of literature as the paper/ canvas for sanitizing the human society. At the heart of the argument in this chapter is that both the toilet and the toilet paper sterilize not just the somatic but also the psychic.

Rampolokeng's novels can be conceived as a toilet in that they serve as an outpouring of human experiences from the mind. The author is indeed emptying 'the bowels of the mind' into literary space which could then be plausibly described as toilet. When the reader engages with *B/ H* and *W/ H*, they find themselves being critical of the way the author has used language because they are in essence looking up at the mind's toilet which might spell sanitary or unhygienic decomposing human thoughts. The condition of the toilet depends on the efficiency of the systemic operation of the society since the toilet is a highly socialized facility. A well-functioning society can be made out from its remarkable sanitary standards. Likewise, literature which uses 'clean' language maybe taken to denote the efficiency of the

social systems of the entity it represents. A clogged or overflowing toilet portends a failed social system which releases a lot of wastes. In the same breath, *B/ H* and *W/ H* portray a lot of gore, faecal matter, obscene, sacrilegious, crass and vulgar images together with obnoxious human stench which represent the excretory waste from a mind bloated with the trauma of the social dysfunction of the author's (post)apartheid South African novelistic world.

Rampolokeng's literary space is the mind's toilet in the following ways. First, as Milton C. Albrecht notes in *The Relationship of Literature and Society*, "the idea that literature reflects society is at least as old as Plato's concept of imitation" (425). In the toilet there is usually a mirror which helps people to groom after relieving themselves. Equally, *B/ H* and *W/ H* can be imagined as containing a mirror which helps society to correct its comportment after relieving itself of systemic waste. Rampolokeng's novelistic world seems to echo Arjun Appadurai's idea that persons and things are invested with the properties of social relations. In *B/ H* and *W/ H*, the mind comes out as an entity which contains a social life whose excretion function is served by literary expression. The mind is generally perceived as that part of a person that thinks, knows, remembers, and feels things. Since it is also possible to talk of the society's mind when referring to a societal consensus, it is plausible to argue that the mind is in essence social. It follows then that a society that is keen on reading literature with the understanding that it is looking at itself in the literary mirror plastered on the mind's toilet is likely to discover any discomfitures of its social operations and correct them before they go out of hand.

Second, in the toilet there is ordinarily a washing basin in which people clean their hands, mouth and even face after defecating or vomiting. In the same measure,

Rampolokeng's novels have a sanitizing element in that they point out the (post)apartheid South African's disconcertments as a prompt to the society to clean itself up. For example, in both *B/H* and *W/H* Rampolokeng prods the (post)apartheid South African government to wash away its oppressive tendencies which have pitched the blacks into discontent and dissidence. If the government reads Rampolokeng's novels with the frame of mind that it is visiting the mind's toilet, it might be able to accept criticism from the literary channel with an open mind and then proceed to clean up any oppressive tendencies that may characterize its State Apparatuses. Literature undoubtedly offers potent toileting prompts to the society to wash off its sloppiness, dirties and ugliness which result from social injustices.

In addition, the toilet helps the society to flush away human waste together with its unbearable stench. Similarly, the author uses *B/H* and *W/H* as excretion space to purge the mind off the disagreeable debauchery engendered by the blacks' oppression which is instigated through the (post)apartheid South African government and its oppressive State Apparatuses. Pungent tension building up in the mind due to the oppressive social circumstances is purged through the author's novelistic ventilating. However, if society is not given a chance to ventilate in the mind's toilet, the stockpile of overbearing emotional ordeal may lead to insanity. When someone becomes insane they are linguistically said to go out of their mind. The fact that the society extracts mad people from its midst and locks them away in sanatorium may perhaps be used to plausibly theorize that the society lives in the mind and that an insane person is considered to have become detracted from the society. Therefore, literature affords people a toilet in which to vomit, urinate, let out obnoxious gases or

defecate traumatic emotions from their mind – bloated or constipated by the bitterness of social injustices – and hence enable them to continue living healthily in the society.

Nonetheless, if the mind is not healthy, its toilet will be clogged with all kinds of human waste making it to give off an awful stench. The wellbeing of the mind depends on the sanitary conditions of the society. If the society is, for example, suffering from dementia – a serious illness affecting someone’s brain and memory in which they gradually stop being able to think or behave in a normal way – the mind may subsequently develop incontinence and hence its toilet is likely to be messy. In “Managing Toilet Problems and Incontinence,” Alzheimer Society notes that “incontinence is the involuntary leakage of urine or faeces, or both” (1). It follows then that instead of the mind’s toilet cleanly purging decomposing thoughts and emotions, some ugly little stains may be left on its floor at first. Then, as dementia reaches its advanced stage the mind loses all its bowel control and excretes anyhow and anywhere leaving many smelly ugly puddles on the floor of the mind’s toilet. In *B/ H* and *W/ H*, the novelistic (post)apartheid South African society appears to be suffering from some kind of dementia which slopes it into littering the mind’s toilet with detrimental scatological matter.

Some readers may dismiss writers whose work openly portrays gory and faecal matter as obscene or insensitive but when literature is perceived as the mind’s toilet it becomes evident that such writers are only honestly writing about the unsanitary state of the mind resulting from a dementia-crippled society. It could be reasonably argued that the writer is a public health officer who writes down observations on the condition of the mind’s toilet in order to offer prompts on the hygiene of the society. The public health officer is not vilified for asking the society

to clean up its public toilet. In fact, the officer may even legally order the closure of a public institution on the grounds that it is not salubrious owing to its lack of clean toilets. Equally, the author of *B/H* and *W/H* should not be sanctioned for portraying a blocked mind's toilet in his literary work and even suggesting that the (post)apartheid South African society has become insalubrious due to its failure to manage its toilet problems and incontinence. In any case, generally speaking, the literary writer like the public health officer operates in the interest of the society.

Without a doubt, the writer acts as a prompter to help the apparently demented society to identify and use the toilet promptly and in the right manner. Resonating with Alzheimer's Society's idea of toileting, Rampolokeng plasters a metaphorically distinctive sign which includes both words and pictures (symbols) on the mind's toilet in such a way that it is visibly within the diseased society's line of vision. Subsequently, *B/H* and *W/H* graphically describe the filth of the society as a way of pointing out that the society is not using the toilet neatly but heaping scatological anyhow making the environment unsavoury for human habitation. The author puts a bright mark on the mind's toilet to prompt the seemingly perverted society from mistaking people's bodies for excretion receptacles. In Rampolokeng's novelistic space, the (post)apartheid South African institutions or persons who harbour pretensions of supremacy and consequently regard any section of humanity contemptuously may be said to have metaphorically dumped undesirable excretion substances on those social segments they discriminate against. The author may plaster vividly descriptive symbols displaying the human anatomical orifices against the mind's toilet with some literature pointing out that the human body is not a toilet in order to prod the degenerate person or institution to stop degrading human beings.

Moreover, the literary writer may break the locks of the mind's toilet and leave the door ajar in order to make it easier for the frenzied to access it. The privacy that normally goes with the use of the toilet is somehow compromised and the writer may peep on the toilet user occasionally but clandestinely to find out how they are toileting. Then, the writer may give a description of the toilet user pointing out their toileting awkwardness with the aim of prodding them to make proper use of the mind's toilet. For example, the toilet user may be unable to undo, remove and replace their clothing easily so that they urinate or defecate on themselves in a way that slopes their dignity. In *B/H* and *W/H*, for instance, the author peeps at the minions of religion in the mind's toilet and discovers that they are excreting in a perverted way which degrades humanity.

Rampolokeng's novels could also be looked at as the canvas or paper for cleaning the soul's bottom. The soul is generally taken to be the mind/spirit of a person; that is, the part of a person that is capable of thinking and feeling. The bottom is an excretion orifice for faecal matter and its outer surface is normally stained after someone has defecated. Toilet paper or sanitary canvas is, then, used to dab the bottom clean. It could be theorized that the mind has a bottom through which it excretes emotional waste and that the literary text is the inky toilet paper stained after wiping the soul's bottom. Metaphorically, the mind is perceived as having body organs which explains the use of expressions such as in your mind's eye. It is, therefore, reasonable to conceive the mind as having a bottom. The expression a load/weight off somebody's mind suggests that the mind ventilates to relieve itself of burdensome emotions; in other words, the mind is capable of excretion and hence it could be perceived as having a bottom. In *B/H* and *W/H*, the topographical space is

stained with undesirable scatological substances wiped off the mind's bottom which is soiled as harrowing repressed feelings are being excreted from the mind.

Sanitary paper has a long history but the intriguing bit for this study is its association with the Roman Goddess Cloacina. For Ian Marxted, the Romans used printed paper as sanitary canvas “[which they] read first, and then sent [down the toilet] as sacrifice to Cloacina...” (2). Likewise, *B/H* and *W/H* are sanitary canvas which the author uses to wipe the mind's bottom and then reverently presents the soiled tissue paper as an offering to the Goddess of filth. As “Cloacina” is derived from either the Latin verb “cloare” or “cluere” (to wash, to purify or to clean) or, from the word “cloaca” (sewer), the novelistic space serves the purpose of cleaning, washing and purifying the society. The kind of scatology on the mind's tissue paper depends on the society's diet and its gut digestive efficiency. *B/H* and *W/H* are soiled with a lot of unfavourable systemic waste from scatological categories such as unfair discrimination, abuse of religion, political oppression and economic exploitation of some segments of the society.

*B/H* and *W/H* could be perceived as the paper for wiping the soul's bottom if the ventilating of ideas from the mind is considered as some kind of excretion. What the writer manages to put into paper is just a small fraction of the ventilating since there is a limit of symbolization when ideas are put into writing. The portion of the mind's ventilating that escapes symbolization can reasonably be considered as the waste that drops from the mind's bottom into the toilet. The printed pages of a literary text could thus be looked at as the stained toilet paper which represents the fragments of the scatology wiped off the mind's bottom. It follows then that literature is something that people use for purging emotions and which they may discard after

apparently serving its purpose but its potency is left inscribed in the mind as a kind of covenant meant to ensure the wellbeing of the society. A person may discard the text after completing reading it but the spirit of the text – the reader’s impressions from the text – resonates in their lives.

The use of inscribed toilet paper reveals some of the ways in which literature wipes the soul’s arse. Marxtd notes that “In Japan a set of caricatures of dollar bills has been produced for the American market inscribed ‘United Seats of America’ and signed ‘Lou Stool’” (4). In the same spirit, Rampolokeng’s novelistic space could be perceived as the inscribed toilet paper which the author uses to address very serious social concerns in a light-hearted frame of mind with the aim of purging the soul of deep-seated emotions. The toilet paper is something people use and discard without giving it much serious thought. *B/H* and *W/ H* act in the same manner as the inscribed toilet paper in that they wipe the soul’s bottom by imaginatively communicating grave social apprehensions in a way which transforms them into a comical trope that helps to purge the mind of the oppressive emotions.

Indeed, Rampolokeng’s novels could be theorized as a psychiatrist for the mind. Tissue paper rolls have been produced with cartoons bearing such captions as ‘Psychiatrist has a silent P,’ and others with crossword puzzles. After defecating, a person feels unclean but when they wipe themselves with toilet paper they attain a sensation of being both physically clean and psychologically sound. *B/H* and *W/ H* could be said to wipe away oppressive feelings from Bavino’s mind and thus helps the society to maintain sobriety even in the face of social challenges. The two novels spin out as crossword puzzles inscribed on toilet paper in order to prompt people to think critically about sanitation as they defecate so that they may discover the true value of

hygiene in the society. Like the crossword puzzle inscribed on toilet paper, the novelistic space can be perceived as a word game which people might not take seriously but it has insightful potential of stimulating people into discovering simple yet noble ways of ensuring the wellbeing of the society.

The quality of tissue paper may provide either a smooth or rough surface for wiping the bottom. Rough toilet paper may be designed to withstand loose bowel movement. *B/H* and *W/H* seem to be designed as rough canvas that can resist the detrimental faecal matter from the oppression-disturbed mind. The novelistic texture in Rampolokeng's novels appears crass, obscene and sacrilegious, perhaps, because it has the capacity to withstand the phallic waste from the apparently dysfunctional (post)apartheid South African society portrayed in the novels. The author seems to use *B/H* and *W/H* to wipe the soul's bottom in order to get rid of the phobic object that appears to prohibit the blacks in (post)apartheid South Africa from reinventing themselves into new freedoms which would aid them to break down the chains of the realities of oppression. The presence of loose bowel movement or other toileting problems justifies the use of a rough toilet paper in order to prevent it from breaking and consequently soiling the person's hands.

Perceiving Rampolokeng's novels as both the mind's toilet and the paper for wiping the soul's bottom opens potential research areas which may shed more light on the nature and purpose of literature when carried out. It might be possible to have a toilet's or sanitary theory of interpreting literature. The study appears to invite us to do more research on how literature ensures the wellbeing of the society by granting the mind a space in which it could excrete accumulated emotional waste. It also raises the new theoretical perception of literature as the mind's toilet and the paper for

wiping the soul's bottom and the potential insights such a conception rents on the nature of literary expression. Finally, the study seems to bring to the fore a potentially new ground for scholars and critics to deploy the conception of literature as the mind's toilet and the paper for wiping the soul's bottom in order to engage with Rampolokeng's novelistic universe in new ways that would unlock the true value of literature.

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