FyaMoneka: Exploring the Erasure of Women Within Zambian History

by Gladys Kalichini

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for
Master of Fine Art at Rhodes University
November 2017

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Ruth Simbao

FAP Supervisor: Heidi Sincuba

ABSTRACT

This Master of Fine Art submission, comprising of an exhibition and mini-thesis, explores the erasure of women's narratives from Zambian history and collective memory. As a point of entry into the broader conversation of narratives of women marginalised in certain historicised events, this research analyses the narratives of Julia Chikamoneka and Alice Lenshina that are held in the collective memory of Zambian history. It focuses on the representations of narratives of women during and beyond colonial times, while hinging particularly on these two characters' encounters with and against British rule in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia). Titled *FyaMoneka: Exploring the Erasure of Women Within Zambian History*, the mini-thesis examines the representations and positioning of women's political activities within the liberation narrative that is recorded in the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives. This mini-thesis highlights the fact that women have been written out of Zambia's liberation narrative in the NAZ and the UNIP Archives, and remains mindful of the inherent modifications and erasures of women's accounts over time, including the obfuscation or the absence of certain archival materials. This mini-thesis prospectively reconstructs Chikamoneka's and Lenshina's narratives using traces of their histories within collective memory through re/visiting processes of re-archivisation. The exhibition, titled *ChaMoneka (It Has Become Visible): UnCasting Shadows*, explores death and representations of death, where death is conceptualised as a metaphor for the erasure of women's historical narratives, whereas the body represents the narrative. Based on an exploration of the relationship and tensions between collective memory and history, death within this exhibition is thematised as the course of fading away and a continuous process in which women's narratives are erased.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that this thesis is my own work and that all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by complete bibliographic references. This thesis is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for Master of Fine Art at Rhodes University. I declare that it has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at another university.

2 December 2017

Gladys Kalichini

Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My faith is the most important thing for me as an individual and I would like to thank God and the Rock Family Church in Grahamstown for the help and support given to me during this degree. I would also like to thank my family, especially my sisters Monica Kalichini and Natasha Kalichini, as well as friends for their emotional support. I would like to express my gratitude to my professional practice supervisors Tanya Poole (2016) and Heidi Sincuba (2017), and show even further gratitude to my thesis supervisor Professor Ruth Simbao, who worked with me and assisted me to understand and articulate the concepts I explore in this research. Further, I acknowledge the funding bodies that contributed financially to my studies: the SARChI programme *Geopolitics and the Arts of Africa* funded by the National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and the *Arts of Africa and Global Souths* programme funded by the Andrew W.Mellon Foundation.

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1

Figure 1.12. Gladys Kalichini, *Retitled – Ifishimoneka* (2016), 170 cm x 370 cm, ink and oil paint on canvas, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Chapter 2

Figure 2.1. Installation view of *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), Albany Museum, Alumni Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.2. Installation view of *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), Albany Museum, Alumni Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.3. Installation shots of *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), Albany Museum, Standard Bank Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.4. Kemang Wa Lehulere, *When I can't laugh I can't…..and Exit permit 1,2 and 3*, 2012, installation view, *Fiction as Fiction,* image courtesy of Stevenson Gallery (Cape Town and Johannesburg).

Figure 2.5. Kemang Wa Lehulere, *Does This Mirror Have a Memory* (2015), installation view, *History Will Break Your Heart*. Untitled painting by Gladys Mgudlandlu (undated), gouache on paper, recto and verso 52 x 63 cm, and drawing done in collaboration with Sophia Lehulere (2015), chalk on black board 70 x 100 cm, image courtesy of Stevenson Gallery (Cape Town and Johannesburg).

Figure 2.6. Gladys Kalichini, *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016), oil paint and fabric on canvas. Canvas size 250 x 150 cm, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.7. Gladys Kalichini, *Mortician's Diary – entry II* (2017), oil paint and fabric on canvas. Canvas size 200 x 150 cm. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.8. Gladys Kalichini, movements of black cloth over *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016), image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.9. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial: erasing erasure* (2017), digital photograph, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.10. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial: erasing erasure* (2017), digital image, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Chapter 3

INTRODUCTION

Women's Political Activities: Gaps in the Archives of Zambia

In July of 2016, I visited the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) on Nationalist Road in Lusaka in an expedition to acquire information about two women, Julia Chikamoneka and Alice Lenshina, who are central to the research that informs both my professional practice as an artist and this mini-thesis (I contextualise their narratives in Chapter 1). When I walked into the NAZ building, I was confronted by a musty room full of indexed drawers, filing cabinets and shelves that one had to go through to find information. While inside the archive building, I looked shelf by shelf for any records relating to Chikamoneka or Lenshina, but unfortunately could not find any. After searching for about five hours, I eventually went back to the front desk, where I asked if I could be pointed to records that have information about 'Women and the Liberation Struggle'. I was then shown a couple of documents that barely had any information about women, and none that were solely about women, plus an image of Chikamoneka in a protest. Thereafter, I was referred to the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives. The next morning, I went to UNIP House in Emmasdale's industrial area only to be informed that the archival material had been neglected, some of the documents had been destroyed and some information had been lost, while the surviving material had been boxed up and put in storage. Further, the UNIP offices had been relocated to a smaller office space in the central business district along Chacha Road. As I was making my way to the new UNIP office location, along a very busy and crowded Chacha Road, I noticed that the new UNIP location overlooks an old, unfinished and dilapidated building that was constructed by the UNIP government after independence. The irony in this new placement of the office is as if the sight of the run-down building across the street points out the state of the archives, which are also just as old, derelict and slowly decaying.

My interest in visiting these two particular archives to explore representations of women's political activities in relation to the Zambian liberation narrative and history was influenced by the fact that UNIP was the first ruling party of Zambia post British colonialism. Since the UNIP is Zambia's independence party, and its archives are related to the NAZ in the sense that the two archives inform one another (see Chapter 2), they seemed to be good places in which one could exhume women's narratives that are possibly invisible outside the topography of the archives. However, this experience highlighted not only the fact that women were under-

represented and were a neglected part of history within these archives, but also that history as recorded in the UNIP Archives was disappearing, and the few women in its records along with it. This experience forms a basis of my entry into the conversation on the notion of historical erasure in general and the erasure of women's narratives. The discussions in the three chapters of this mini-thesis, all of which are centred around the subject of the erasure of women's narratives, are based on the theoretical premise that there exists a relationship between memory and history, specifically collective memory as captured inside national archives.

The concepts 'collective memory' and 'history' are understood and defined in many different ways; as such, this introduction presents broad working definitions that serve as a framework within which I use these terms in the discussions which unfold in the chapters of this mini-thesis. According to Nicolas Russell (2006: 792), collective memory is a concept first coined by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs in 1925. In his book titled *On Collective Memory* (1992), Halbwachs argues that to remember or to recall means to be tied to collective frameworks of recollection that allow for collective remembrances coordinated between space and time which align to particular social and cultural groups. In simpler terms, collective memory is the shared information in the memories of two or more individuals over time, and the term is usually used in reference to the ways in which groups either remember or forget their past. Halbwachs (1992) asserts that collective memory is selective, meaning that it can at times present only selected information, but that collective memories can be shared and passed on from one generation to another. Furthermore, collective memories can be re/constructed by large and small groups of people, which is to say collective memory can be controlled and arranged (Gensburger 2016).

A simple definition of the concept of history is that it is a representation of the past. While Halbwachs' (1992) elaboration of the concept of collective memory provides a sufficient and working definition of the term within this research, defining history merely as a representation of the past is too simplistic. For this reason, I rather consider the definition of history given in terms of its relationship to memory by historian Pierre Nora in his article titled *Between*

Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire[1] (1989). Nora (1989) expands on the selective and plural qualities of memory that Halbawchs (1992) alludes to in his definition of collective memory. Nora explains that:

> History is the reconstruction of what is no longer. While memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present, history is a representation of the past. Memory, insofar as it is affective and magical, only accommodates those facts that suit it; it nourishes recollections that may be out of focus or telescopic.
>
> Memory is blind to all but the group it binds – which is to say, as Maurice Halbwachs has said, that there are as many memories as there are groups, that memory is by nature multiple and yet specific; collective, plural, and yet individual. History, on the other hand, belongs to everyone and to no one, whence its claim to universal authority. Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects; history binds itself strictly to temporal continuities, to progressions and to relations between things. Memory is absolute, while history can only conceive the relative (Nora 1989: 8).

In this quote above, it is evident that history is a more self-selective and conscious enterprise than memory is. In addition to the simple definition of history being a representation or an illustration of the past, history is an intellectual and secular production; fundamentally, it is the means with which societies organise and curate their past by arranging historical traces and memories. In defining history as a curation of past events, I am taken back to my experience of looking through the organised and indexed shelves inside the NAZ that are purported to contain Zambia's history. Using Nora's (1989) notion of history and Halbawachs' (1992) definition of collective memory, my definition of national archives in the context of Zambia, and in relation to the mis/representations of women within the liberation narrative, is that they are structures that act as a storage means for collective memories. However, within these structures recollections of past events are re/constructed in such ways that women's political activities and narratives are either invisible or curated out of history.

[1] The expression *les lieux de mémoire* in the title *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire* translates from French to English as 'The Places of Memory'. *Les lieux de mémoire* are the places where memory crystallises and conceals itself (Nora 1989: 7).

An archive in the most basic sense is defined as a repository of information or a place where historical documents are stored, thus constituting *les lieux de mémoire*, spaces of memory or memorial places. Louise Craven (2016) provides a definition of what an archive is in the traditional sense when she describes it as an accumulation of historical records or the physical place in which historical documents are located. However, it is imperative to note that the concept of the archive is a complex one. The word 'archive' can mean a simple repository as defined by Craven (2016) and conventionally referred to as a library or archive. The archive can be referred to as a concept that relates to the body of knowledge produced about the past, or in relation to complex notions of cognition, memory and processes of capturing and uncovering history as interpreted by Jacques Derrida (1996, 1998 and 2017). *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (1996, 1998 and 2017) is a meditation on archives in which Derrida explores the authority of archives that manifest as physical spaces. He argues that the concept of an archive comes from the Greek word *arkheion*: which was initially a house, a domicile, an address, or the residence of the superior magistrates, archons and those who commanded. He outlines that physical archives or archives in the traditional sense have physical locations and appear to have authority and consignation. He argues that archives shelter memories within themselves, but also that the archive shelters itself from the memory which it shelters (Derrida and Prenowitz 1995: 9); that the archive conceals memories in itself and from itself.

In *Invisible Agents: Spirits of a Central African History*, David Gordon (2012) pilots over 150 interviews/stories that follow the life of Lenshina in Northern Province, while in *Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation, and Representation*, Gisela Geisler (2004) analyses women's participation in political activities. These two texts lay the foundation for this analysis of recalling historic figures and reconstructing related events, and as a Zambian artist, I contribute by supplementing these conversations by considering the erasure of history from a gender perspective. I extend the conversation of Zambia's forgotten women to collective memory; where memory is taken as a repository of multiple layered histories that go through a dynamic process in time to produce shifts and erasures of narratives.

My MFA research analyses the under- and mis-representations of women in the national archives of Zambia, the erasure of women's political involvement and the removal of their

narratives from collective memory holders. In the practical component of this submission, which is predominantly painting, I use death as a metaphor for erasure and explore representations of death, dead bodies and Zambian customs performed during and after an occurrence of death.

The aim of the first chapter is to provide a historical and socio-political context for this research. I begin by discussing the Zambian national anthem as a non-physical commemorative gesture for independence, and then provide an alternative and counter liberation narrative that highlights the narratives of Chikamoneka and Lenshina. I discuss the national anthem as a container for collective memories of the liberation struggle and as one of the ways in which an official narrative is presented to the population. The national anthem in Zambia is usually sang at the beginning of every official gathering and celebration, including in schools and public events. The way in which I write the historical content subverts the singular Zambian liberation narrative; that is, in the same way that women are barely named in the official narration of the country's independence, I also do not identify any man by name in the first chapter. I end the first chapter by introducing my professional practice as an artist and weave the discussion of my work into the second chapter.

After the first chapter, my focus is redirected from non-physical archives to potential forms of erasure that occur within national and physical archives, more specifically within the UNIP Archives and the NAZ. In the second chapter, I discuss the relationship and contestations between collective memory and history, drawing from Nora's (1989) notions on the relationship between the two entities. Further, the chapter deliberates on concealments and modifications of narratives as potentially being forms of erasure. In the third chapter, I discuss absence as a concept in relation to notions of collective amnesia and archival silence. I discuss the way in which artists explore the notion of absence in relation to the archive, and highlight the way in which I make use of cloth in exploring absence, archival silence and collective amnesia. I end this mini-thesis with a section titled *Towards And Beyond an Ending*, that summarises and concludes the findings of this research.

CHAPTER 1

UnSilent Death: Women Within the Zambian Liberation Struggle

The story of history is just that: a story written by people with their own perspectives and biases, and one that has largely overlooked, erased and undervalued efforts by women. De/Unconstructing it, and perhaps reconstructing counter-perceptions of it, is as simple as redirecting the gaze from a single-linear historical trajectory (master narrative), and focusing it directly on the 'inconvenient' truths hidden behind 'convenient' realities (Wineburg 2001).

I begin this chapter with a discussion of the Zambian national anthem as a commemorative gesture and holder of collective memories of historical narratives about individuals who participated in the liberation struggle against British rule. I argue that as a form of a non-physical archive it fails to capture vital encounters and efforts by women, and reads largely as a masculinist-curated and -constructed narrative. In addition to this, I point to the gaps formed (misplacement and erasure of characters and events) in the process of putting the master narrative on a pedestal in physical memory containers such as the National Archives of Zambia[2] (NAZ) and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives[3] (Musambachime 1991), and in commemorative gesticulations performed to bring forth national memorials (Gould 2010). Drawing from traces found in these archives, as well as the texts *Invisible Agents: Spirits in a Central African History* (Gordon 2012), *Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation, and Representation* (Geisler 2004) and *Bemba-Speaking Women of Zambia in a Century of Religious Change: 1892–1992* (Hinfelaar 1994 and 1997), I construct and offer an alternate account of the liberation struggle of what is politically termed as 'post-independence Zambia'.

[2] The National Archives of Zambia are the largest archives in the country with more than 70,000 volumes of documents across the country. Their role is to preserve and maintain documents pertaining to the country's history (Yorke 2016).

[3] The UNIP Archives are a collection housed by the party (UNIP) that ruled Zambia between 1964 and 1973. The headquarters were initially in Emmasdale, Lusaka and moved to Chachacha Road, Lusaka at the time of this research. The archive previously underwent some revisions as documents were migrated to digitalised catalogues which included 12 of the 16 sections into which the UNIP papers are subdivided. The four series left out of the purview (UNIP 4, 7, 14 and 15) consist solely of personal administrative applications (UNIP 4) and of government and published materials (UNIP 7, 14 and 15), duplicates of which are generally available at the National Archives of Zambia and elsewhere (Macola 2007).

In this account I consciously untangle and highlight the underwritten or hidden narratives as performed by Julia Chikamoneka (b.1910 – d.1986) (Figure 1.1) and Alice Lenshina (b.1920 – d.1978) (Figures 1.2 and 1.3) within the broader context of the national liberation story and the nation's consequent emergence from colonial rule. I employ this revisionist interpretation as a backdrop for conceptualising the central theme of this mini-thesis, that is, the erasure of narratives about women through memory marginalisation. The theoretical premise that underlies the discussion in this chapter is that through archival and commemorative gestures that either leave out or edit historical events, women's accounts are faded out often to the point of non-existence (Oyěwùmí 1997; Nnaemeka 1995 and 2014). Drawing relations between the erasure of history and public memories, and death as a similar process, I term the courses of erasure as processes of death of historical narratives, and correlate the removal of female bodies/narratives about women from collective memory as death of the female body in history.

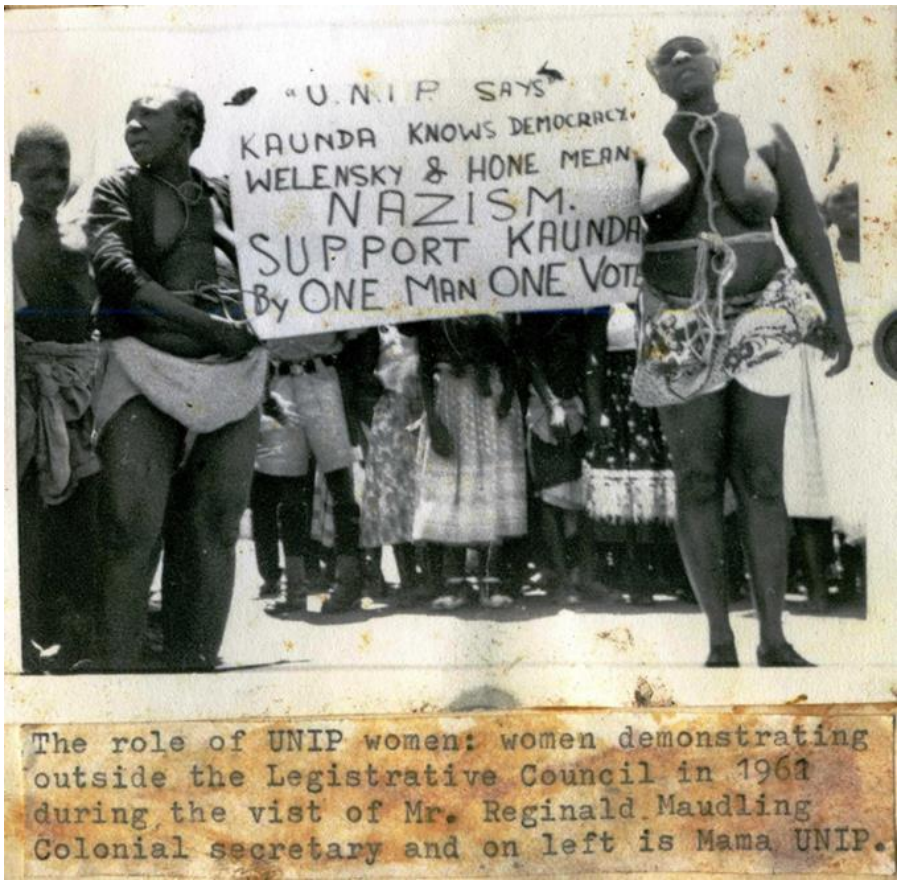


Figure 1.1. A photograph of Julia Chikamoneka (right) and Emelia Saidi (left) protesting in 1961 (undated), image courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia.

Figure 1.2. A portrait of Alice Lenshina, newspaper clipping of *The Northern News* (1964). Figure 1.3. Alice Lenshina being arrested, newspaper clipping of *The Northern News* (1964). Both images courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia.

I conclude this chapter by introducing the concept of death as erasure in connection to my professional practice – painting death as painting erasure, and painting the female body in death as painting narratives about women as casualties of history. Due to the fact that my work is process driven, when I introduce my work I start from a point in time in which I was experimenting and observing the interaction of materials that could illustrate concepts of death and life, history, memory and the archive, such as colour schemes in paintings, cloth and time. In Chapters 2 and 3, I expound on my work, based on the processes and experiments I will discuss at the end of this chapter.

Death, in the resulting body of work that forms my MFA exhibition *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), is framed as a process that is mimicked through painting, while the body/bodies is/are employed as a metaphor for narratives so as to allow for narratives to be perceived as beings with both body and spirit. From a biological perspective, different bodies undergo similar processes, as death is declared, and even beyond life, such as the collapse of functionality of vital organs like the brain and the decomposition of flesh (Hayman and Oxenham 2016). Though such intersections exist, the concept of death in my work and within the context of this research hinges on the notion that the cycle and processes of death that a

body goes through are discursive in nature, moving from one state to another in a non-singular and non-linear manner; that is, different narratives about different individuals do not shift over time in the exact same ways. I assert that the bodies (as metaphors for narratives), with their various degrees of fluidity and fragility across space and time, each negotiate and navigate mortality (erasure in memory) in unique ways – and that there exists a ruptured relationship between their life and their death within collective memory.

1.1 *Tufimone–Tubamone*[4]: Unravelling the Liberation Narrative

The Zambian liberation narrative as seen through the national anthem tells a story of the anti-colonial movement and is a form of storage for that collective memory; additionally it is a form of praise for the heroic actions by individuals and groups that took part in the freedom struggle. This sub-section aims to investigate which group, males or females, is more celebrated in the Zambian national anthem; hence the title *Tufimone–Tubamone* (let us see them).

The anti-colonial struggle, in the simplest explanation, aimed to free Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) from British rule. Most of the causes of British colonialism are generally attributed to territorial gain and access to resources, usually referred to as the scramble for Africa (Chamberlain 2014). In the case of Zambia, the underlying cause was the 1886 detection of large gold deposits in South Africa. The British South Africa (BSA) Company hoped to find more minerals in the neighbouring territories and began to move up north. When they arrived, the BSA Company ruled Zambia up until 1924, when they handed their administrative role to British colonial rule (Mebeelo 1971, Mick 2014). This new administration made it permissible for the creation of a federation, which would amalgamate Nyasaland (now Malawi), Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Northern Rhodesia (Mukwena 2016; Hamalengwa 1992).

The quest to unify these three colonies, coupled with incidences of uprisings in some African states around the same time, such as the Mau Mau Revolt in Kenya from 1952 until the early 1960s (Branch 2009), and the gaining of independence by other African states, such as Ghana

[4] The words *tufimone* and *tubamone* translate from iciBemba into English as 'let us see them'. *Tufimone* is used to reference non-humans, such as events or objects. *Tubamone* is used to mean 'let us see the people'.

in 1957 (Ohene-Ayeh 2015), partly attributed to the rise of resistance movements against colonialism in Northern Rhodesia. The resistance in Northern Rhodesia happened in the form of political protests, labour unions, religious movements (Phiri 2001), and rebellions by traditional chiefs (Mukwena 2016; Tordoff 1974). The uproars fuelled one protest after the other and eventually culminated in the 1961 riots in Lusaka, where Iain Macleod, Secretary of State for the Colonies, was met by weeping women and a half-naked Chikamoneka in objection to the British proposed constitution for Zambia (Geisler 2004) (Figures 1.4 and 1.5). The other movement that rejected colonial authority which this mini-thesis highlights was a religious one, led by a woman named Lenshina: a sect known as the Lumpa Church, active during the 1950s decade to the early 1960s (Hinfelaar 1997; Gordon 2012).

Figure 1.4. Iain Macleod and British officers, Julia Chikamoneka, Emelia Saidi and other protestors in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia (undated). Figure 1.5. Individuals participating in the protests against the British proposed constitution, in Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia in 1961 (undated). Both images courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia.

Quite obviously, the anti-colonial struggle benefited from acts of activism by many, some visible, some made visible through retelling of history, some out of sight and never visible, and by both men and women. Unfortunately, the official narration of this struggle through the national anthem casts shadows on some of the individuals who played crucial roles in this story. The national anthem as a formal memory holder of the liberation struggle is largely masculine,

commending only a few actions, mostly of men and barely mentioning any of women – 'brothers under the sun, strong and free', 'free men we stand, under the flag of our land'.[5]

Other than commemorating historical events, the national anthem also implicitly reveals the social regard of masculinity as heroic, and the socio-political attitude towards women during the colonial period and probably even after liberation. In the second verse, which is the most gendered part of the anthem, the country and the land are referred to in the form of a female in the sentences 'Africa is our own motherland'[6] and 'let us all her people join as one'[7], while all the brothers are on the land and under the sun. Even though referring to the land in the form of a female that wins the struggle against colonialism seems like a form of praise, it is quite problematic because it positions the colonial land which has been conquered as inherently female, and the woman's body is linked to land as something occupied by the men under the sun (McClintock 1995).

Women are only formally celebrated on a nationwide and political basis in Zambia on a handful of dates. On International Women's day on 8th March, on Africa Freedom Day on 25th May, and during the Independence Day celebrations on 24th October, a handful of women whose narratives are curated in ways that uphold or maintain the authority of the commonly shared liberation narrative are commemorated and celebrated. Despite the fact that women participated and continue to participate in political and social activities, there is no formalised praise or recognition for women. From her case study about women and politics in Southern Africa, Geisler (1995) adequately summarises the positioning and representation of women within the political domain in Zambia, arguing that whatever the nature of politics, women are never central to it.

While I do not point to a complete absence of applause for women, I highlight that the few existing gestures lack the presence of many women, such as Lenshina (Hinfelaar 1994; Gordon 2012), and cast other women, such as Chikamoneka, to the periphery of the collective memory pertaining to the country's independence. Further, these commemorative gestures are

5 Extracted from the second and fourth verses of the Zambian national anthem.

6 Extracted from second verse of the Zambian national anthem

7 Extracted from the second verse of the Zambian national anthem.

insufficient in capturing the prowess revealed through actions by women, largely condensing women under obscurities that intone praises of 'heroic men'. The few women who are recognised, such as freedom fighter ChibesaKunda Kankasa, Betty Kaunda, Chikamoneka (usually referred to in her role as a freedom fighter as Mama UNIP) (Makasa 1990; Geisler 2004; Sifinso 2005; Kankasa 2016), chieftainess Mukamambo Nkomeshya II (Simbao 2014: 44) and Edith Nawakwi, who is the founder and president of the Forum for Democracy and Development political party, amongst others, are perceived to mostly perform supportive and not figurehead roles. The implication made here is that the socio-political recognition of women is expressed merely in little doses, in the same way that the national anthem as a liberation narrative gives only hints of activism in relation to women, treating them as bystanders, and as an undertone. Thus, the death of narratives about women in Zambia exists not only as an abrupt and blunt exercise that palpably removes women from history, but also as a more subtle and nuanced means that dissolves them within a masculine-concentrated remembrance of history.

1.1.1 Seeing Chikamoneka

> We walked down Cairo Road. We just wanted the white man, particularly Roy Welensky (the Premier of Central Africa) to know that African people were the only people who could build their own nation, not them to build the nation for us (Chikamoneka in Geisler 2004: 44)[8].

Initially known as Julia Mulenga Nsofwa, Nsofwa changed her last name to 'Chikamoneka', because she was often arrested for inciting citizens to protest against the British colonial administration and for hosting some UNIP members that were threatened with imprisonment. She fought alongside the then only Zambian political party, UNIP, and the most prominent memory of her is her half-naked protest with Emelia Saidi along Cairo Road in Lusaka, down to the old airport, which led Iain Macleod, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to weep (Figures 1.1, 1.4 and 1.5) (Makasa 1990; Geisler 2004; Sifinso 2005; Kankasa 2016).

[8] Quoted from an interview in 'Mama UNIP Dies', *Times of Zambia* (Lusaka), 21st June 1986.

The preceding paragraph provides what is conceivably a predominantly shared collective memory of Chikamoneka. It is a strong memory. It is a memory of a black Zambian woman publicly performing an outstanding act, in a social context that adheres to traditional and religious beliefs where women are perceived as unequal to men and are required to cover their bodies and respect men in public. Further, at the time of this event it was a context that was governed by a colonial system that segregated blacks from whites and females from males (Nalumango and Sifuniso 1998; Chisembele 2015; Kankasa 2016). Though this may be a memory of an outstanding deed, it cannot be the only thing that should be retained of her.

How did Chikamoneka arrive at a point that she felt the need not only to protest as others did, but also to go a step further, and not only to weep along with other women, but also to undress? I ask this bearing in mind that, though exposure of her body may have been her way of showing her anguish and distress, culturally she could have been shunned for baring her naked body to the public. Who really was Chikamoneka? Her narrative contains blanks; it is focused only on one day out of her lived seventy-six years. Most historical accounts about different people and events are characterised by multiple layers shared from more than one vantage point, and contestations of a single narrative; how is it possible then that this woman has a single narrative, and for only one day, in almost every Zambian and colonial archive, or memory?

In an interview with Kankasa (2016), a colleague and acquaintance of Chikamoneka's, I learnt that, before Nsofwa joined politics and moved to Lusaka, she was married and worked as a Catholic sister who took care of and raised children of white missionaries and settlers. Kankasa did not at any point state exactly what it was that triggered Nsofwa to leave her life in the Copperbelt behind and transition into political activities as Chikamoneka. She only mentioned that Chikamoneka was a financially liberated widow, and was quite determined in her political endeavours. Chikamoneka could have been motivated by a personal experience that she may or may not have shared. However, during this conversation, I could not insist that Kankasa provide me with Chikamoneka's exact motivation to join politics, or even any other information that was possibly intimately shared between the two of them. The lack of disclosure could also have been due to Kankasa's failing memory, as she was in her old age at the time of the interview. Perhaps the blurred information was due to an intertwinement of self-censorship and suppression of information that is imposed by parties and entities that oppose

the disruption of a continually repeated public narrative, such as institutions authorised as containers and preservers of history or even the government. I could definitely sense that Kankasa also chose what she shared and what information she withheld, not only about Chikamoneka but also about herself, in relation to their participation in the struggle against colonialism.

Collecting information about women's participation in the colonial struggle is not a simple matter of retrieving data or documentation from somewhere or someone; it is a navigation of information that has been previously curated through the selection of what goes into the archives and what is thrown out, and material that is continuously being revised and edited. Visually and conceptually, these tensions between intimate and publicly-shared aspects of history, personal and national narratives, versus a curation or institutionalisation of narratives, are represented in my professional practice by the choice of medium, materiality and technique employed. In my process, I make use of a variety of materials to cover, expose and layer parts of the paintings. I use different painting techniques on different parts of the bodies on the canvases: some parts have quite lightly, softly and delicately applied strokes of paint to create transparent layers above other layers, while other strokes of paint are applied more swiftly and more opaquely to appear visibly dense.

Publicly visible in Chikamoneka's chronicles is that she joined politics with UNIP at a time when, as a collective body, they had begun the quest of liberation from the British colonial government. Chikamoneka, as a financially stable woman, became a member of the Women's Brigade (a branch of UNIP discussed in Chapter 3), making her house available for secret meetings by UNIP members, who were not allowed to publicly hold such gatherings by the British colonial government. The Women's Brigade generally functioned as caterers at events, housed and hid nationalist leaders threatened with imprisonment, and raised funds (Nalumango and Sifuniso 1998). The women of the brigade had stipulated roles; Geisler (2004: 43) notes that:

> The Women's Brigade of UNIP represented a respectable place for women where their moral reputation could be guarded. But it came at the price of limiting its members to supportive roles only. Brigade members were "not intended to seek political power for themselves" but they were "helping men to achieve political power".

Rather than taking up roles in the main leadership activities of UNIP, the Brigade members instead participated in funeral committees and burial societies for deceased members, and they mourned the fallen UNIP members. Geisler (2004: 44) expands on this role of women at funerals, explaining that:

> Women's Brigade members blocked off the roads to traffic before the mourning procession began, in order to ensure a single file mourners on either side of the hearse … they held hands around the grave, leading the singing which moved from traditional tunes through hymns to political songs.

By 1961, in the heightened moment of protests against colonial oppression including the colour bar, and after numerous dialogues between the UNIP leadership and the British government, independence was no longer an illusion and its granting was inevitable. The British then drafted and edited a proposed constitution for the country that Macleod would deliver to Northern Rhodesia (Mukwena 2016). By the time Macleod landed at the old airport with the drafted constitution, he was met by protesting crowds and weeping women, among whom Chikamoneka was present as agreed in a Women's Brigade meeting. However, when he arrived, she forged forward with her friend Mrs Emelia Saidi, stripped and slapped the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Figure 1.1) (Geisler 2004).

Later, in 1964, Zambia gained its independence, with a constitution heavily influenced by the British, and Chikamoneka lived to see this day. In June of 1986 she died, and was honoured as Mama UNIP by the first republican president of a free Zambia for her service to the nationalist struggle (Geisler 2004). That is it – the end; this is at most what is remembered about Chikamoneka. There is no documentation of her sentiments regarding the fact that the nation was granted independence and declared as a self-governing state, with what is essentially a British and colonial constitution.

1.1.2 Namfumu: Lenshina[9]

In the northern part of Northern Rhodesia, in Chinsali district, lived Alice Mulenga Lubusha (Figure 1.2). During the early 1950s, Lubusha declared that she had 'died and met with God', who instructed her to return to her earthly body and rid the world of all evil (Gordon 2012). After her resurrection she informed Catholic priests (males), who did not fully accept her claims (personally I doubt they believed any of her claims, they probably just humoured her), and would not allow her to preach in the church on two disqualifiers: (i) race and (ii) sex and gender. Unable to fit in and conform, she broke away from Western/colonial established religious views and formed her own church called the Lumpa Church. She baptised herself and took upon herself the name Lenshina (a Bemba conversion of the name Regina, the Latin word for Queen), and became known as prophetess Alice Mulenga Lenshina (Hinfelaar 1997).

Hinfelaar (1997) and Gordon (2012) argue that Lenshina combined parts of mostly Catholic, Baptist and Bemba spiritual and religious views to form a hybrid religion in which she acted as a spiritual medium. She was a symbol of womanhood that cleansed and connected individuals on earth to a deity in a spiritual world, a deity such as an ancestor, a God or Jesus Christ. Though the Lumpa Church had similarities with other already existing forms of worship, the religious group distinguished itself from missionaries through their ideology and conversion process. Decidedly, the conversion and rebirth process to become a new being is similar to the biblical reference of the crossing of the river Jordan, as the converts crossed over a river and were received by Lenshina and her husband on the other side (Macola 2007). As they received salvation, the converts sang:

Mu menshi ya kwa Jordani – In the waters of Jordan
Mwishina lya katebe – In the name of the strong
Iya Landelande – The immeasurable
Ne libwe lya mwalala – The unbreakable stone
(Written by Alice Mulenga Lenshina, in Hinfelaar 1994: 96).

And they confessed:

Imwe, bakatula lekeni – You, my Saviour, if you leave me alone
Nshakacita nangu chimo – I will not do anything

9 *Namfumu* translates from iciBemba to English as 'queen' or chieftainess (Queen: Lenshina).

Nalapila ne mubi – I, a sinner, repent
(Written by Alice Mulenga Lenshina, in Hinfelaar 1994: 95).

The converts returned to their villages forgiven for any supposed malevolent actions they had done before baptism and were no longer considered as evildoers. In most of the villages *ubwanga*[10] and *ubuloshi*[11] were perceived as evil and sinful practices by many local people. This is evidenced by the regular hunts to persecute practitioners of *ubuloshi* and/or *ubwanga*, and the constant confiscations and obliterations of power objects such as magic potions, beads, avatar substances, and so on. In the case of Lenshina, however, it is said that her intention was never to hunt down any participants of these practices in the villages, and the incidences in which her followers did so were not as permitted by her. Rather, out of self-conviction, individuals surrendered their charms, potions and artefacts to her (I imagine that this is quite amazing, to be able to influence the free will of humans). These self-acts of repentance encouraged the faith of other individuals in the Lumpa Church and their membership numbers grew to thousands, stretching into the neighbouring regions of the Congo and Nyasaland (Gordon 2012).

The peak of this movement coincided with the period in which UNIP was attempting to become the party that would take the country to freedom and, unfortunately for them, the Lumpa Church denounced all earthly authority and political affiliations. The two groups clashed in ideology and a violent rivalry was formed between them (the rivalry was intense to the extent that, in a given household consisting of both a Lumpa member and a UNIP member, there would be disunities). The Lumpa Church also deplored allegiance to local leadership (headmen and chiefs). One of the headmen, disgruntled by the idea of a woman-led group that did not acknowledge his authority, stated at a village meeting, '*Balya ba mayo ba la iyuma pa chifuba*' ('that woman bangs on her chest with her fists') (Hinfelaar 1994 and 1997).

[10] The practice of *ubwanga* corresponds with the use of plants, birds, animals, parts of plants or animals, and other inorganic objects like beads, etc. It is the use of charms and medico-magical substances (Musonda 1999).

[11] *Ubuloshi* is the iciBemba translation of witchcraft and sorcery; it is the use of magic usually for personal gain at the cost of another. Though *ubwanga* and *ubuloshi* can be practised jointly, they should not be confused as the same thing (Musonda 1999).

Eventually the UNIP government conspired with the British colonial government, and in 1964 tragedy fell upon the Lumpa Church as hundreds of their members were shot by the colonial military police (Figures 1.6, 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9). Lenshina, along with her husband, surrendered and was arrested; less than three months later the British government granted independence to Northern Rhodesia following UNIP's victory in the 1964 elections.

Figure 1.6. Soldiers of the Northern Rhodesian Army being given orders on how to 'deal' with the fanatical followers of Alice Lenshina (1964). Figure 1.7. Dead bodies of Acting Inspector Derek Phillip Smith and Constable Chansa being taken to the Ndola Mortuary along with an unnamed villager who was also killed in the attack near Kinsali (1964). Images courtesy of *The Northern News*.

Figure 1.8. Northern Rhodesian soldiers stand next to prisoners and wounded Lumpa members after the clash between the Lumpa Church of Alice Lenshina and the governmental army, 7th August 1964 in Chaipima, north of North Rhodesia. Figure 1.9. Villagers of Pikamalazi, and survivors of the attack wait at Lusaka hospital to be evacuated and returned home. Images courtesy of Getty Images.

In 1965, Lenshina was moved to Kalabo district, where she escaped in 1967. In May 1970 she was put under house arrest and the new government (under UNIP) ordered the destruction of the temple in Lenshina's home village, Kasomo. In 1972 she lost her husband. Later, in 1978, she died and her body was buried in Kasomo where the Kamutola church stood. Remaining traces of the Lumpa Church are minimal and split; they exist under different names, the most prominent being Uluse Kamutola, Jerusalem which is under the leadership of Lenshina's daughter and New Jerusalem.

1.2 Her UnSilent Death

The histories of Chikamoneka and Lenshina are amongst some of the most suppressed and sidelined narratives in the official account of Zambia's liberation struggle and in the general history of the country. Not only are their narratives barely present in the national archives, but their traces are fragmented and are for the most part mixed and misplaced discernments of occurrences of a past time.

The country's archives and history act as holders of memories about these astounding women – where their myths and truths are stored and entangled (Burton 2006; Hamilton 2012). Nooter Roberts and Roberts (1996) maintain that memory is not a mere repository where narratives are stored and can simply be recovered, but rather that narratives within memory can be and/or are characteristically disrupted and faded by factors such as time, space and violence, among others. I extend that these disruptions are not only brought about through endogenous factors, but also due to exogenous factors including the retelling of narratives because, as they are recollected, retold and countered by different entities, their meanings and occurring contexts shift in one way or another. Any slight modification is a form of erasure, and the smallest detail dropped or revised is a step closer to death for these narratives. That is how death through erasure can possibly happen: collective memory loss administering obsoleteness and disappearance of historical narratives about women by rendering invisibility to their accounts piece by piece.

Narratives are altered or shift endogenously due to internal factors of a memory holder, such as time and the memory failure of a living individual that witnessed an event. All of conditioned

existence (including history, memory and narratives) is transient and evanescent (Allman 2009); that is, when subjected to time, narratives pass out of sight and memory as they fade and disappear. An example of this is the earlier mentioned interview with an elderly Kankasa (2016), who struggled to recall all the events clearly in a coherent sequential manner, and she forgot some events. Exogenously, the disruption of social memories can occur when archives are selective, excisional and being edited and maintained by external influences (see Introduction). This includes instances such as when archives censor some events, or when accounts are removed or uncommemorated in archives, in turn erasing them from collective memory (Nora 1989; Russell 2006; Nnaemeka 1995 and 2014).

It is imperative for me to point out that the women I mention in my mini-thesis historically either held political positions or were individuals with socio-political influence. It is also important to add that there are other women in colonial and post-independence Zambia, like Chieftainess Nkomeshya Mukamambo II who is known for her facilitation of the *Chakwela Makumbi* (climbing the clouds) ceremony, that remain live performers and spiritual vessels of the history of women as important social figures in both contemporary and cultural Zambia (Simbao 2014: 44). Mukamambo II, in this thesis, is an example of a woman who participates in social activities such as politics, and religious and cultural happenings in the country, just as Chikamoneka was politically involved. She is a demonstration of a woman who holds a position of social authority; she does this by being a mediator between a spiritual world and a group of people here on earth, the Soli, just as Lenshina could arguably have been for her followers and the God of the Lumpa Church. In the process of *Chakwela Makumbi*, Mukamambo II lies at the grave, where she communicates with ancestors who are in a spiritual realm. She then returns to the land of the non-dead to relay this (ibid.). Mukamambo II is recognised publicly as a royal chieftainess, and she at times works with the government while still responding to her cultural responsibility of being a chieftainess. She is a signifier that women today can be a re-manifestation of women's activism and prowess.

Narratives about women in Zambia are not dead. They have never been dead, although not from the lack of efforts to kill them. They probably will never die. It is not that there will not be efforts to shutter their presence: they may be silent and further silenced but they are not dead. Reminiscences of their bodies and their tales will always re-manifest themselves in one

way or another, and so, I reiterate, these bodies are not deceased. They will not die; they must not die shadowed and soundless deaths.

1.3 Conceptualising Erasure as Death

Titled *FyaMoneka: Exploring the Erasure of Women Within Zambian History* and *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows*, both my mini-thesis and my MFA exhibition use the notion of becoming visible as a derivative of the iciBemba word *ukumoneka. Ukumoneka* in the Bemba dialect is used to mean either 'to be seen', 'to become visible' or 'to be revealed'. *Chamoneka* translates into English as 'it has been seen' or 'it has become visible'. *Chamoneka* is both a single word and two words, *cha* and *moneka* ('it' and 'seen/be seen'). In the plural, it becomes *fyamoneka (fya* and *moneka)*, 'they have become visible'. *Fya*, however, is used to refer to non-human or non-bodily objects. *Bamoneka* also translates to 'they have been seen'. *Ba* can be used to refer to more than one person and/or as a signifier of esteem to an individual when placed before a name, for example, *ba* Lenshina or *ba* Mama Chikamoneka. Whereas *chamoneka and fyamoneka* are present tense, *ukumoneka* is continuous present tense. *Chikamoneka*, as it was used by Chikamoneka, refers to becoming visible in the future.

Using the outlined histories of Chikamoneka and Lenshina in this chapter, and a backdrop of complexities of the visibility of women's participation and recognition in socio-political activities in a Zambian context, my professional practice analyses the marginalisation of narratives of women from collective memory by exploring representations of death and dead bodies, predominantly through the genre of painting. My MFA exhibition, as the result of my professional practice, thematises mortality as a metaphor that presents erasure as a process by focusing on three main conceptual categories: (i) blanks and concealments, (ii) fragility of bodies/narratives and (iii) modifications of narratives over time.

For the past two years, I have been working with oil paints, ink and pieces of black cloth in relation to the idea of 'passing out of sight' and the invisibility of bodies. Having identified Chikamoneka and Lenshina as individuals within history who are either disappearing or absent in the Zambian archive, I began to experiment on the behaviour of the materials I work with: oil paint and inks when combined with water, and when mixed with linseed oil and turpentine.

Over time, I observed that the pigment sometimes dissolved and morphed with turpentine, such that I could not separate the paint from the turpentine. This resonates with the notion of some narratives, such as that of Chikamoneka, becoming dissolved and being morphed together with the overpowering singular narrative, or a group of women's narratives being morphed together and then generalised. When mixed with water, the inks dissolved while the oil paint floated on the water and dried separately (Figures 1.10 and 1.11).

Figure 1.10. Gladys Kalichini, *Experiment 1 – 2016* (2016), turpentine, linseed oil, white and black oil paint and black ink on canvas, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini. Figure 1.11. Gladys Kalichini, *Experiment 2 – 2016* (2016), water, linseed oil, white and black oil paint and black ink on canvas. Images courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

I extended these experiments into painting female bodies in this way in order to depict what I perceive is happening to women's narratives (Figure 1.12). Occasionally, there were instances where I painted parts of the painting and then attempted to delete, remove, expunge, or cover the dark colour. Mostly the quest to remove earlier strokes proved futile; layer after layer it was impossible to completely erase it. This led me to question what erasure really is. Thus, the point of death for a body within this MFA mini-thesis is conceptually defined as the moment when erasure in its entirety is achieved, with absolutely no traces of existence of a body in any holder of its memory. Because complete erasure is impossible, death is then not absolute; it is not fixed and non-static – it is fluid and there is an element of unbroken continuity. Though there is continuousness, death is impermanent. It is only for a while (Novello 2013).

Figure 1.12. Gladys Kalichini, *Retitled – Ifishimoneka*, 2016, 170 cm x 370 cm, ink and oil on canvas, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Death is a liminal point of transit with blurred binary boundaries, in that it is difficult to tell when life ends and death begins or vice versa. I paint bodies converging towards or diverging from this point, and occupying a transitional space in between life before death and a form of life after an occurrence of death. Conversely, bodies in their physical materiality and spirituality pose the ability to move across the death point. Before the point of death bodies can exist as both flesh and spirit, just flesh, or just spirit. However, after the death point narratives will primarily exist only in the spirit. These are the forms that I conceived bodies take as they move across this frontier, just as Lenshina did: she lived as spirit and flesh, died and crossed over as spirit, then returned to flesh and spirit, and later returned to the point of death where her flesh and soul separated, and her body was buried.

My body of work renders women's narratives as bodies in a process of death to portray the misfortunate positioning of women's narratives in Zambian history, a position in which they are continuously repressed and made invisible even when detectable. In this chapter, I have highlighted a few women such as Chikamoneka, who are visible in Zambian history, as well as Lenshina, who is for the most part absent. I have described the problematic ways in which women are mis/represented in the singular liberation narrative that is masculine and only recognises efforts by men. As a final point in this chapter, the practical component of this

research has been introduced as painting death as painting erasure, and the discussions in the second and third chapters expound and deliberate further on my work in relation to in/visibility of women's narratives within the NAZ and the UNIP Archives.

CHAPTER 2

Conflicting Archives: Modifications and Concealments of Narratives as Erasure

> Memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear to be in fundamental opposition. Memory is life. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialect of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer (Nora 1989: 8).

Pierre Nora (1989), cited above, highlights the relationship between memory and history by drawing attention to the difference between them, and construes memory as a dynamic process and history as a somewhat lacking representation of the past. What is memory, what is history, how are the two related? In *Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire*[12] (1989: 2), Nora defines history as a means with which modern societies organise and construct the past, and memory as a perpetual phenomenon of remembering and forgetting the past. For the discussion in this chapter, I consider collective memory rather than individual memory in relation to the erasure of historical narratives about women within Zambian memory and history. Collective memory is multiple and intersubjective; it is memories shared by more than one conscious mind and is comprised of dynamic intersections of the group – the collective (Halbwachs 1992; Russell 2006; Lowney 2006). This kind of memory, the collective recollection or collective forgetting of past events, is typically expressed and preserved through public commemorative gestures[13] (Irwin-Zarecka 2017) and in national archives[14] (Derrida 1996 and 1998; Blouin Jr. and Rosenberg 2012; Craven 2016).

---

[12] A *lieu de mémoire* (site of memory) is a concept popularised by the French historian Pierre Nora in his three-volume collection *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, published partly in English translation as *Realms of Memory* (1996).

[13] Gestures that commemorate historical events, or honour the memory of a personage. These include activities such as erection of statues and monuments, national holidays, parades and so on (Wallis and Harvey 2017)

[14] In the Introduction of this mini-thesis, I discuss 'the archive' based on Jacques Derrida's *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (1996 and 1998) and curator Okwui Enwezor's *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art* (2008). The notion of the archive in this chapter is the archive as a physical building.

This chapter expounds on the discussion of my work as introduced in Chapter 1, and aims to discuss how the work in my Master of Fine Art (MFA) exhibition, *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), explores the relationships and contestations between collective memory and history as interrelated processes. It deliberates on concealments and modifications of narratives that occur within national archives as potentially being forms of erasure. The two main points of analysis are: (i) the way in which women are framed[15] within the archives and (ii) countering, re-narration and revisionist history as processes that modify narratives. This discussion follows an examination of the visibility of Julia Chikamoneka and Alice Lenshina, as well as other female figures within the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives, and their appearance in history and collective memory, and considers Zambian practices that surround death and mourning, such as cleansing and *chimbuya*[16] among others. The practices I refer to are not confined to any specific socio-linguistic group in the country, and could be either religious or customary/traditional, or a combination of both religious and traditional.

Zambia has two main national archives, which according to historians Giacomo Macola (2007) and Marja Hinfelaar (2004) are the largest repositories (documentations and records) of the country's history and collective memories of the liberation struggle. The first is the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ): a parastatal agency with its headquarters in Lusaka along Nationalist Road; it preserves and maintains a legal deposit of public documents (printed and unprinted) (www.nationalarchiveszambia.org). The other is the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives, with a collection of records spanning from 1959 through Zambia's independence in 1964 up until 1991[17].

[15] In the term 'frame', I include categorisations: the way some images are captioned and the manner in which narratives about women are shaped within the National Archives of Zambia and UNIP Archives.

[16] *Chimbuya* is a practice where some relatives of the deceased are covered with a white powder, usually mealie meal or baby powder, during the burial. It should be noted that it is not a compulsory activity and is performed for different reasons by various groups of people.

[17] After ruling Zambia for twenty-seven years, UNIP lost power to the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) in 1991 elections.

The National Archives[18] were established during the colonial era when Zambia and Zimbabwe were both under British rule and the nations were known as Northern and Southern Rhodesia respectively. In 1935, the National Archives opened in Southern Rhodesia, with only a depot of the archives being set up in Livingstone in Northern Rhodesia in 1947. The depot in Livingstone later closed down and its records were transferred to Southern Rhodesia; it re-opened in Lusaka in 1956. After the dissolution of the Federation[19] and the gaining of independence in 1964, the Northern Rhodesian archives ceased to be a depot and became the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) under the UNIP government. In 1969, the National Archives Act was passed, declaring the National Archives of Zambia as the sole preserver of Zambian public records (Hinfelaar 2004). The exact words in the act, under the section *The National Archives, Chapter 175 of the Laws of Zambia – Chapter 175 The National Archives Act* (The National Archives 1969), state that the act is to provide for 'the preservation, custody, control and disposal of public archives, including public records of Zambia; and to provide for matters incidental to or connected with the foregoing'. As the independence party, UNIP administered, collected and organised much of the historical documentation concerning the country's liberation narrative. Due to this political influence on the collections in both the UNIP Archives and the NAZ, the act of archiving is invariably one of both preservation and discardment, in which while revealing certain aspects of the past, conceals others (Halbwachs 1992; Ashmore et al. 2012; Williams et al. 2016; Hodder 2017). Because of this, these national collections ascribe historical significance unevenly between men and women by marking only some connections as familiar (mostly of men and of a few women) and by obscuring and displacing other efforts (mostly of women and of a few men).

The liberation narrative as held in the national archives is a discourse about the past that was produced by UNIP as the victors, and it privileges the party as they generated much of the written evidence, and organised the history which now forms the basis on which historical events and women are recalled. Even though Halbwachs (1992) argues that memory is multiple and intersubjective, essentially that there are multiple ways of recalling and interpreting the

[18] When I use capital initial letters, I am referring to the institution that was called The National Archives. When I use lower-case initial letters, I am referring to archives of the state or nation.

[19] The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, also known as the Central African Federation (CAF), was a semi-independent federation of three southern African territories, namely, Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, between 1953 and 1963 (Rotberg 1965).

same historical event, this does not apply in the case of Zambia, because the record of historical events and women's actions in the two largest shapers of collective memory do not offer diverse versions of historical narratives, but rather iterate the same singular commemorative narrative.

2.1 Passing Out of Sight: Defining the Process of Erasure in *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017)

Erasure can be defined in many different ways using many different metaphors. In my MFA submission, made up of a mini-thesis and an exhibition titled *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3), I use death as a metaphor for the process of erasure: to be specific, the erasure of women's historical narratives through memory marginalisation in masculine-dominated archives where history is preserved and narrated only from a single vantage point (the singular national storyline). Using the marginalisation of the narratives of Chikamoneka and Lenshina in collective memory as an entry point into colonial and post-independence Zambian history, this body of work explores notions of erasure, collective memory and history (See Chapter 1).

Figure 2.1. Installation view of *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), Albany Museum, Alumni Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.2. Installation view of *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), Albany Museum, Alumni Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.3. Installation view of *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), Albany Museum, Standard Bank Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Within this MFA submission, I define erasure of women's narratives and the process in which narratives fade and/or transform over time as a course of death of women's historical narratives, and perceive death both as a single point in time through which narratives cross and as a process that historical narratives go through over time. This conceptual definition is made through the consideration of transience as a concept – the passing out of sight, the ephemerality and impermanence of history, as explored through South African artist, Kemang Wa Lehulere in the works titled *When I can't laugh I can't….. and Exit permit 1,2 and 3* from the exhibition *Fiction as Fiction* (2012) (Figure 2.4) and *Does This Mirror Have a Memory 4* from *History Will Break Your Heart* (2015) (Figure 2.5). The former artwork is comprised of variously sized chalk drawings on blackboard paint, while *Does This Mirror Have a Memory 4* (2015) includes a colourful 52 x 63 cm untitled painting by Gladys Mgudlandlu, a woman artist Wa Lehulere argues has been written out of South African art history, and a 0.70 x 1 metre chalk drawing on blackboard done in collaboration with his aunt, Sophia Lehulere. These works have an ephemeral and transient aesthetic, revealed through the artist's use of chalk as a material. The nature of chalk is that it is easily erasable, and these artworks are indeed erased and redrawn when re-installing and when uninstalling them in different venues (Gule and Obrist 2015). In these acts of re/drawing and re/installation, the works shift; some details are subtly changed, while some are added and others are not redrawn (for example Wa Lehulere could draw 15 dots while installing the work in one venue, then draw 17 dots when installing the exact same work in another place).

While the topic of women's erasure is broad and that of erasure even wider as seen in the example of South African artist Wa Lehulere's work, my research is contextually specific to Zambia, in that most of the information and practices used to inform my work are from what I have personally observed and at times experienced in Zambia. Though my work is context specific, it is vital to consider the topic of erasure from a holistic perspective, to better comprehend it as a broad phenomenon and to better articulate it from a macro perspective to a micro level, such as at national level. Thus *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* is a culmination of my research on erasure as a theory, intertwined with my visual practice exploring

representations of death, dead bodies and different moments and processes that surround death in a Zambian context.

I perceive erasure, and by extension death, as a dynamic and continuous process, dis/connecting the past and the present as narratives are continuously re/erased, re/surfaced and modified. In the continuous dis/connectedness of the present and past through the point and process of death, women's historical narratives go through various levels and forms of erasure; that is, they disappear and reappear as various versions of themselves. I conceptualise death in this way to present both history and memory as continuous and ephemeral concepts, as being non-permanent and transient. Historical narratives can fade away from memory, history can be countered, and multiple versions of the same narrative can exist at the same time.

Figure 2.4. Kemang Wa Lehulere, *When I can't laugh I can't…..and Exit permit 1,2 and 3*, 2012, installation view, *Fiction as Fiction*, image courtesy of Stevenson Gallery (Cape Town and Johannesburg).

Figure 2.5. Kemang Wa Lehulere, *Does This Mirror Have a Memory* (2015), installation view, *History Will Break Your Heart*. Untitled painting by Gladys Mgudlandlu (undated), gouache on paper, recto and verso 52 x 63 cm, and drawing done in collaboration with Sophia Lehulere (2015), chalk on black board 70 x 100 cm, image courtesy of Stevenson Gallery (Cape Town and Johannesburg).

2.2 Motifs of Erasure: The Female Body and Death

I work with three main motifs: (i) death, (ii) female body/bodies at different stages of the process of death, and (iii) cloths that I use as burial cloths (See Chapter 3). For my studio practice, I consider two processes: (i) the journey and encounters that the body and soul of the deceased go through from the place of death, through the mortuary, and to the burial place, and (ii) the funeral that simultaneously occurs as part of the process of mourning.

Mourning and funerals take place after a person dies. Funerary processes and customs encompass beliefs and practices used by a culture to remember and respect the dead, from rituals undertaken, to committal and interment activities (Jindra and Noret 2013). The way in which people mourn in Zambia varies both among and between socio-linguistic groups, depending on the sex and age of the deceased, and between different religions and religious denominations[20]. However, typically when death is declared, the remains of the dead individual are usually moved from the place of death and takento a mortuary, then to a funeral home[21], where the body is washed, dressed and placed in a casket. Thereafter, the body is taken to a church or to the venue where the body may be viewed for last respects, and finally to the grave, where it is finally prayed for and committed to the earth. While the body goes through different processes as it moves from one place to another, mourners convene at what is referred to as a funeral house[22] during the three days or a week of collective mourning[23]. A central mourning room where mostly women will be during this time is prepared, and a tent is put up outside where men will be. Mourners from near and far arrive at different times, with women announcing their arrival by weeping. Some mourners visit only for a while and others set up camp for the entire duration of the funeral.

In simulating the outlined funerary process in my practice, I make large-scale paintings that are about 250 x 150 cm and larger, with female bodies in a state of passing as the main subject. My other works make use of the medium of such images of myself staging some funeral customs, as in the work titled *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017), and images of viewers of my work as they engage with the materiality of my work, such as moving a piece of cloth over paintings. With the paintings titled *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016) (Figure 2.6) and

[20] In 1991, President Fredriek Chiluba declared Zambia a Christian nation. Even though Zambia is a Christian nation, there are also people of other religious beliefs, such as Muslims, Traditionalists and others, who have different funerary processes. Further, among the Christians different individuals adhere to different church values such as Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Baptist, Pentecostal and others (Phiri 2003).

[21] A funeral home is an establishment where bodies are prepared for burial or cremation (Laderman 2003).

[22] The funeral house differs from the 'funeral home'. It is a house, or residence, where the deceased lived, or a relative's home convenient enough to host mourners. Usually, the dead body will not be taken to the funeral house.

[23] I use 'collective mourning' for the period in which friends and relatives converge at the funeral house to mourn together.

Mortician's Diary – entry II (2017) (Figure 2.7), I encourage viewers of my work to participate in covering and uncovering paintings with a black cloth, then I photograph the movements of the black cloth as its position is shifted (Figure 2.8). Through these interactions between viewers of my work, the work, and myself, the viewers are positioned concurrently as spectators and mourners while the work performs the role of bodies going through death. As the artist, I enact multiple roles, as a mourner, mortician and painter, as I oscillate between a personal psychological space, where I have to deal with the reality of death as not a pleasant topic, and a place where I understand that death in this research is a metaphor for erasure and not the actual act of losing life.

Figure 2.6. Gladys Kalichini, *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016), oil paint and fabric on canvas. Canvas size 250 x 150 cm, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.7. Gladys Kalichini, *Mortician's Diary – entry II* (2017), oil paint and fabric on canvas. Canvas size 200 x 150 cm. Image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

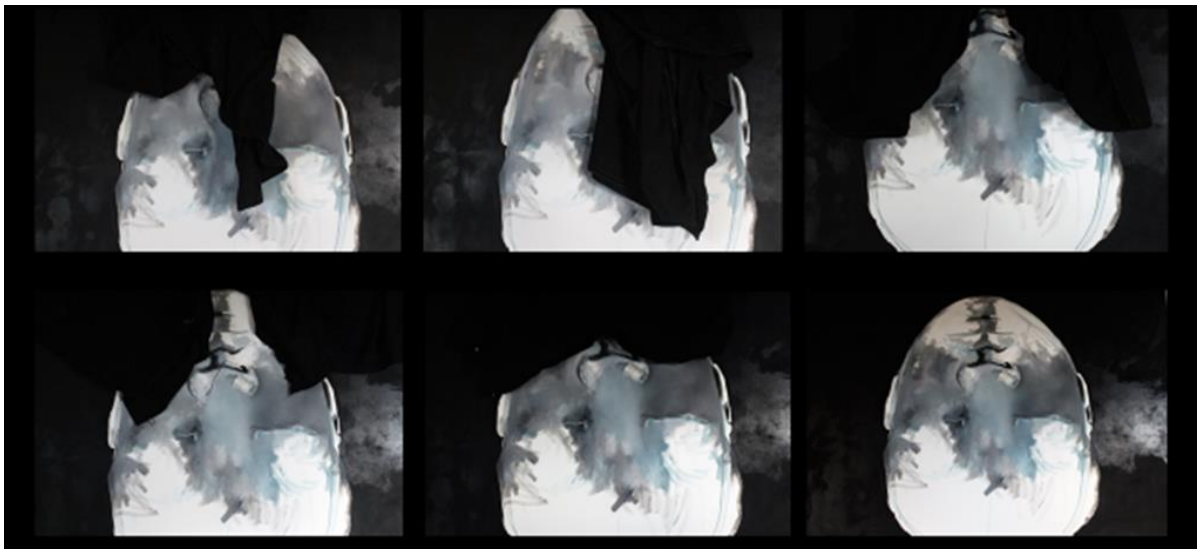


Figure 2.8. Gladys Kalichini, movements of black cloth over *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016), image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

In painting images of female bodies, I make visual references to documentations of women during and after the destruction of the Lumpa movement, and images of women participating in political protests in Lusaka in the 1960s decade, found in the UNIP Archives and Lusaka National Archives. I also draw from practices that surround death which are performed in Zambia and neighbouring regions with cultural similarities. The only time I used my body in the work is in the images in which I stage the process or ritual of *chimbuya*, as a mourner and not as a corpse. In the series of images titled *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) (Figures 2.9, 2.10 and 2.11), I am photographed wearing a black top and a *chitenge* (a cloth usually worn as a wrapper), with a white powder all over my head and body. Here, I take the role of a mourner (the *chitenge* cloth is from my brother's funeral), who mourns the parts of history that have been lost over time.

Figure 2.9. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial: erasing erasure* (2017), digital photograph, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.10. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial: erasing erasure* (2017), digital image. Figure 2.11. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial: erasing erasure* (2017), digital image. Images courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Using one's own body (the physical body when performing or restaging a ritual, and images of one's body), as well as making art through referencing the bodies of others, is not a new phenomenon in the field of fine arts. In both figure painting and photographic works, male and female artists all over the world have referenced and continue to reference the body. However, in working with the female body in particular – that is, woman's body and the socio-cultural construct of female-ness – one needs to consider meanings, readings and interpretations that are potentially embedded in the image of the female body. Critics Beth Ann Bassein (1984) and Bram Dijkstra (1998) argue that depicting female bodies in a passive state of occurring (such as that of death) in works such as my paintings in my MFA exhibition *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017) can easily be problematic, because it could be read as exoticisation and eroticisation of the female body, and that such imagery potentially constitutes a further step in the marginalisation of women (Bronfen 1992). While I am cognisant of such a possible misreading of the female figure in my work, I assert that the female bodies in my work are a metaphor for narratives about women in the national archives and history of Zambia. In painting and depicting female bodies at different stages of the process of death, my aim is to portray various possible ways in which women's narratives within collective memory are simultaneously remembered and/or erased over time. Conceptually, the female body (in this thesis, that is the body as a metaphor for narratives) signifies the body's changeability, impermanence, flux, decay, dissolution, and absence, while at the same time it refers to eternality and spirituality; it is sexless-ness and anonymity (Bronfen 1992; Burr and Hearn 2008).

In the first chapter, I argue that a few women are celebrated in Zambian history, and that the narratives of a handful of women, such as Chikamoneka, are constructed in ways that uphold the singular liberation narrative. During the Independence Day celebrations and when women are 'included' in memorialisations of the country's past, these women's narratives become spectacles that are made visible, and after re/hidden. Here a spectacle relates to images and performances of extravagant display or, negatively, as images of violence and atrocity such as death. According to Sarah Nuttall (2013), images of death, or of dead bodies, can be unsettling in their capability to deconstruct and disassemble a human being, and they can become chaotic and perilous. Spectacles, whether perceived as astonishing or as unsettling, encompass the viewer's (the spectator's) 'curiosity or contempt' and 'marvel or admiration' through much of the spectacle's (the image's or performance's) appeal derived from its visual power and ability

to hold the gaze of the viewer (Arthurs and Grimshaw 1999). As such, the female bodies in my work are rendered metaphorically as women's narratives that are shadowed and hidden under other narratives. Though some of the bodies I paint appear to be disappearing, they also give the impression of leaving a lingering presence that echoes 'see/watch or look at me'.

As an artist, as female and as one making images of women as spectacles, that is as spectacles in the positive as performers of extraordinary acts that are getting erased, I have to consider the urgency of the bodies/narratives which I paint. I am continuously navigating myself between working on these in-death-bodies in a manner that does not further displace them or render them negatively, and merely being a spectator that allows the mediums I use to interact with and against each other. Because the paintings are large, with the figures being about 1.7 metres tall whereas I am only about 1.5 metres tall, there is not a significant difference between myself (and most viewers) and the work. Even though the painted figures are slightly larger than life-size, they have a semblance to the physical appearance of human beings and may cause feelings of ambiguity when one comes into contiguity with the work. At other times, standing in front of these painted figures might feel like being in the presence of spiritual beings since the figures are slightly larger than life size. This size can possibly make the figures seem ancestral-like, because they still resemble humans but their size implies they are not of the mortal realm.

2.3 Her Body: A Spectacle of Death

The erasure of something is the removal, loss, or destruction of it. Erasure is obliteration, and to erase is to rub out. Complete and absolute erasure results in no traces of existence (see Chapter 1). However, erasure through death usually leaves behind a corpse, a body devoid of life that is usually cold and rigid, a bodily and visible trace, a spectacle of death.

As defined in the preceding section, a spectacle denotes a remarkable or deplorable sight, and involves the power and politics of viewing or seeing. Central to the view of the female body as a spectacle in this mini-thesis is the issue of patriarchal ideologies and perceptions of the past that play a part in rendering representations of women within Zambian collective memory as lacking and sometimes as invisible. In this sub-section, my focus is on the corpse as evidence of death and the female body as a spectacle in Zambia's history and national archives, and I discuss my series *Spectacles of Erasure* (2016), made up of two paintings. Both paintings are

approximately 2.5 x 1.5 metres in size, and the palette used is a greyscale (black and white) mixed with a blue hue. This series centralises the female body (both a live body and a female corpse) as a spectacle of erasure where history is shaped and conserved within archives that continuously make women anonymous in history, as women are unnamed and unrecognised, and their narratives assembled and morphed, while men are glorified and positioned as victors of the struggle for rights in the same archives (Oyěwùmí 1997; Nnaemeka 1995 and 2014).

NAZ and the UNIP Archives as official institutions exhibit Chikamoneka's prominence in political issues alongside pre-independence UNIP up until 1961, but then she is almost entirely disappeared from the records, while Lenshina is almost entirely absent. In the UNIP Archives there are boxes and boxes of documents, while in NAZ there are shelves and shelves of records, all describing how men established the political party UNIP, and the courage they exhibited in attaining the country's independence. Within these very archives one can also find information pertaining to the evolution of Broken Hill Man, or Homo rhodesiensis[24], and even trace generations and lineages of politically celebrated men. The first republican president's former residence in Lusaka's Woodlands area is referred to as a national monument, and it has been preserved and maintained over the years by the very same archival systems that have failed to mention or to find even the slightest substantial history of women in the quest of independence. Women's narratives are shadowed, or rather morphed and submerged, and only re-surfaced at the convenience of upholding the singular independence narrative. Nevertheless, if the fragments of Chikamoneka and Lenshina, as well as other women in the national archives, have anything to tell, it is that these women have resisted being written out of history.

[24] Homo rhodesiensis refers to an extinct hominin species of the genus Homo, first described in 1921 by Arthur Smith Woodward in reference to the Kabwe skull fossil recovered from a cave at Broken Hill, or Kabwe, in Northern Rhodesia.

2.3.1 A Spectacle of Erasure – Her Present Absence

Figure 2.12. A photograph of Julia Chikamoneka (right) and Emelia Saidi (left) protesting in 1961 (undated), image courtesy of the National Archives of Zambia. Figure 2.13. Gladys Kalichini, *A Spectacle of Erasure – Her Present Absence* (2017), 260 x 165 cm, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 2.12 is one of the few portrayals of Chikamoneka found in the NAZ and the UNIP Archives. The image was taken during the 1961 protests in Northern Rhodesia (see Chapter 1), and shows Chikamoneka on the left, with a black open shirt and only a piece of cloth tied around her pelvis area; on the right is Emelia Saidi wearing only a piece of cloth with a rope around her neck and stomach. The two women are holding up a handwritten sign that says, 'UNIP SAYS KAUNDA KNOWS DEMOCRACY. WELENSKY & HONE MEAN NAZISM. SUPPORT KAUNDA By ONE MAN ONE VOTE'[25]. From this image and event, Chikamoneka's body and prowess become a spectacle, a structured narrative that re/surfaces only when the discussion is about women in politics. In both archives the image is captioned:

> The role of UNIP women: women demonstrating outside the Legistrative Council in 1961 during the visit of Mr. Reginald Maudling Colonial secretary and on left is Mama UNIP.

[25] Quoted and punctuated exactly as the sign.

The caption is misleading and problematic, and erases both women in three ways. (i) The two women are not explicitly identified: Chikamoneka is referred to as 'Mama UNIP', while Saidi is neither mentioned nor recognised. The words 'Mama UNIP' make up the name which the first republican president used to honour Chikamoneka years after Zambia's independence (see Chapter 1). While this was meant to honour Chikamoneka, by itself this name – 'Mama UNIP' – does not identify her, while images with the first republican president identify him as 'the first republican president – Dr Kenneth Kaunda'. Another issue to consider is that she became referred to as 'Mama UNIP' after her death, and there is no knowing whether she would have chosen to be identified as 'Mama UNIP' or as what she renamed herself as – Chikamoneka. (ii) The date, which is written as a year, shows two years, 1960 and 1961 – this is because the number 1 at the end of 1961 is superimposed on a 0. It should be noted that the correct year of the event in the image is 1961. (iii) The third problematic thing about the caption is that it gives the impression that Chikamoneka and Saidi were merely carrying out women's stipulated duties. It does so by beginning with the order of words as, 'The role of UNIP women'. Further, the caption states that the women were protesting against the visit of Mr. Reginald Maudling at the Legislative Council. This is in opposition to the poster Chikamoneka and Saidi are holding up, which says 'Welensky and Hone' and not 'Mr. Reginald Maudling'. To redress the misinterpretation of the image, I reiterate that this image was taken during the 1961 riots against British colonial rule in Northern Rhodesia. Sir Roy Welensky was a Northern Rhodesian politician and prime minister of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, while Sir Evelyn Hone was the Governor of Northern Rhodesia from 1959 until Zambia's independence in 1964. This particular protest depicted in the image had been fuelled by earlier remonstrations against the amalgamation of the three British colonies Nyasaland (Malawi), Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia, hence, by 1961, independence was inevitable and the British government was in dialogue with the UNIP leadership and was negotiating the terms by which Northern Rhodesia would go into independence. The result of this dialogue was a British-proposed constitution for the country, delivered by Iain Macleod, Secretary of State for the Colonies. Chikamoneka and Saidi were among other women protesting and weeping as they walked down Cairo Road to the Old Airport. While protesting, the two women forged ahead from the group and undressed, and Chikamoneka slapped Macleod, causing him to weep. She was later quoted as saying:

> We walked down Cairo Road. We just wanted the white man, particularly Roy Welensky (the Premier of Central Africa) to know that African people were the only

> people who could build their own nation, not them to build the nation for us (Chikamoneka 1961).

From Chikamoneka's words, it is clear that she was protesting against a colonial-structured constitution; she wanted the British colonial government to grant the country independence and let them build their own nation for themselves. Further, this was not a usual occurrence, and it was not part of the UNIP women's roles, neither was it planned, thus positioning Chikamoneka and Saidi's performance as a spectacle (Makasa 1990; Geisler 2004; Sifuniso 2005; Kankasa 2016).

When painting *A Spectacle of Erasure – Her Present Absence* (2016) (Figure 2.13), I was initially looking at Chikamoneka's erasure from history, considering that parts of her narrative were present while others were absent, even after visiting the archives and interviewing Kankasa in Zambia. After re-examining the image of the two women, I gradually became aware of Saidi, and noticed that she is side-lined from an already marginalised narrative, even though she is present in one of the few images that speak to that narrative. By the time of this awareness, I had already painted the main figure, using Chikamoneka's posture in the image as a reference point, and had to consider how to incorporate Saidi into the work. Thus, to subtly invoke her narrative, I painted her as a shadow with its own presence behind the main figure (not as a plain and solid black patch, but as a shadow that is dynamic and continuously in flux). From closer observation of the painting, the black lines in the background and the shadow seem like they are visible through cracks on the white background (to create this effect I kept layering thin coats of white oil paint on white over a period of three months; eventually the white sections of the background became thicker).

In view of the way in which Chikamoneka and Saidi protested against the colonial regime using bodily undress, their bodies against a backdrop of a masculine and patriarchal history are the main subject of this painting and as part of the spectacles in the series *Spectacles of Erasure* (2016). The painting depicts a two-metre female standing in front of a shadow, with pieces of burial cloth collaged on the top half of the body. In this piece, I address issues of Chikamoneka's visibility within the singular liberation narrative using the main figure, and question Saidi's invisibility within the same narrative using the shadow (the body casts a shadow that is similar to it, but it is not the shadow of the body). An alternative view of the

work would be to see it as if the figure is walking out of the shadow or out of something dark like a hole or a grave.

2.3.2 A Spectacle of Death – Her Untitled Silence

Figure 2.14. Some members of the Lumpa Church killed during the shooting of Lumpa members in August 1964, image courtesy of *The Northern News*. Figure 2.15. Gladys Kalichini, *A Spectacle of Death – Her Untitled Silence* (2016), 260 x 165 cm, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

In Chapter 1, I highlight Lenshina's Lumpa Church in Zambian history as a religious movement that denounced British colonial rule and earthly authority as expressed through religious, social and political (specifically UNIP) ideologies, and that eventually had clashes with these entities. In 1964, UNIP stood against the colonial government in the presidential elections and required as many votes as possible, including votes from Lumpa members, to secure victory. However, Lenshina, as a sceptic of the UNIP leadership, did not support this party, triggering it to collude with the colonial government, and leading to the shooting of her followers. The image on the above left (Figure 2.14) shows some of the Lumpa members after they were shot dead in 1964 by the colonial military police (Gordon 2012). In the image are six corpses lying on the ground. The two most visible corpses, in the foreground (lower right side of the image), are females, whereas the sex of the others is unclear. All the bodies have cast shadows such that the distinguishing line between the body and the shadow itself is blurred.

Juxtaposed with the image of the 1964 Lumpa shootings is an image of the second painting, *A Spectacle of Death – Her Untitled Silence* (2016) (Figure 2.15), in the series *Spectacles of Erasure* (2016). This part of the series investigates subjugation and control of histories and narratives in communal memory by considering fabrications and the covering of truths through centralising the female body – the female corpse – as a complex and dynamic spectacle of death. Generally, corpses are not gendered and are defined merely as dead bodies, as inanimate and mute husks (Klaver 2004). In this work, I consider specifically female and gendered bodies in relation to politics and processes of the gaze, and objectification in relation to the concept of spectacles and spectating. The spectacle in this sub-section is spectacle in the negative sense of the word, that is, a spectacle as an image of violence and atrocity, such as the image of the six corpses after the shootings of the Lumpa members, and, in addition, the spectator as the onlooker, as the viewer of the corpse. On one layer, the corpse in the spectacle confronts its observer only with the impermanence and volatility of life – the ephemerality of memory and of history. On another layer, the husk reveals a lot to its observer by seemingly being serene and at peace (spectacle in the positive sense). Other corpses provide graphic evidence of the brutality of the violence subjected to the body through the distress, or pain and anguish, that could be etched on the corpses' facial expressions, or the distortions and awkward positions they exhibit (spectacle in the negative sense) (Klaver 2004).

The aesthetic of *A Spectacle of Death – Her Untitled Silence* (2016) displays the female body as a metaphor for women's narratives in visual terms to examine the absence of Lenshina's narrative within NAZ and the UNIP Archives. The burial cloth, which I collage on to the body by means of stapling and stitching, renders details of the body invisible but suggests an outlined visible body. The stitches that piece together parts of the cloth blend in, yet the texture of the black thread subtly contrasts against the black cloth. The staples, though well orchestrated, sometimes in a stitch-like pattern, read as being more violent and chaotic, and create tensions between the cloth and the painted corpse. In making this work, my view of the Lumpa movement within Zambian history is that of a narrative that is consciously excluded from history in the UNIP archives particularly, because while exploring the archives I could not find any documents or records about the movement. This is in spite of the fact that it was a movement which, considering the socio-political context of Northern Rhodesia and of Zambia, is spectacular, because the thought of a woman as a head of a religious and political movement,

and unconfined by socially-positioned structures of authority, is in direct opposition to the norms of the society.

Not being able to find any substantial information in the archives felt as if I had been handed a covered corpse, a narrative whose specificities were not corroborated in the official narration of the country's history. Though memories pertaining to Lenshina and Chikamoneka are absent from the national archives, and the only available information is inadequate, and mostly fragmented, and lacking as to their specificities, these women are not completely erased.

2.4 Talking with the Dead: Countering as a Form of Erasure

The last section of this chapter cogitates on dialogue between spectator(s) and spectacle(s), and considers how mis/interpretations of these dialogues potentially contribute/s to further erasing women's historical narratives. I consider ways in which communication with the dead occurs. The first is the *Chakwela Makumbi* traditional ceremony of the Soli people, in which her royal chieftainess Mukamambo Nkomeshya II performs rituals at her palace and at the graveyard in which she appeals to the ancestors for rain (Simbao 2014) (See Chapter 1).

Chakwela Makumbi, the ceremony of bringing the rains, takes place annually among the Soli people, and is facilitated by her royal chieftainess Mukamambo II, who is the successor to Mukamambo I. During the ceremony, Mukamambo II communicates with *imishimu*[26] (spirits of her ancestors), offers prayers to *Lesa* (Christ) and *Mulungu* (God), and pulls down the clouds (Simbao 2014). During this ceremony, the past (Mukamambo I, who is Mukamambo II's predecessor) endows present reality through Mukamambo II's communication with *imishimu* and the re-enactment of this ceremony, where a living individual enters into dialogue with the dead. Every year, Mukamambo II accomplishes the task of bringing down the rains, as Simbao (2014) notes; fundamentally, the conversations between her and *imishimu* are successful. If they were unsuccessful it would not rain, or there would be a drought which would require the performance of other rituals to appease *imishimu*.

[26] The Soli word for spirits is *mishimi*, however, all other vernacular words in this mini-thesis are in iciBemba. As such, I use the iciBemba translation of spirits, which is *imishimu*.

The second example of a way in which communication with the dead occurs is in the case of the morgue, a place constructed and furnished to store and prepare dead bodies for funerals. A morgue is not merely a storage space for dead bodies; it can be perceived as a mediated space with multiple dialogues. Within this space, there is the dialogue between the dead body as the spectacle and the spirit as the spectator, that is, the event and the memory which relates to that event. There is a relationship between the body and the morgue, both as a physical storage place and as a non-tangible realm that harbours spirits; dialogue between historical narratives and the archive as a physical memory holder, and in relation to non-physical ways of memorialisation. There is also the triangular conversation between the living (mortician or viewer of the body), the corpse, and the spirit (the archive or recorder of history, the historical event and the memory of the event or narrative).

The obligation of memory holders (see Chapter 1), whether the container of the memory is an archive in the form of a building or structure, or of an individual such as Nkomeshya II, or even of the spectacle as an object, is not to provide dialogue that is free from entanglement and hostility. Given that at large women are side-lined and written out of history in the singular liberation narrative presented by the national archives, revising history through rewriting and countering seems like a plausible solution to the problem of historical perspectives that marginalise women. However, most efforts to disrupt the narration of history from a single vantage point do so through the construction of counter-narratives (alternative versions of history) that are created from and exist in parallel with the same narrative they aim to disrupt. This presents two issues. The first is that continually responding to, and using the framework of, a single narrative implicitly centres it as the 'main' holder of history (Bal 2010), and reinforces the authority of the memory containers such as national archives that hold it. In the second place, as countering of history keeps occurring, multiple versions of history are formed, which is not necessarily a negative thing; however, some perspectives get diluted, as in turn do some aspects of the narratives within the multiple versions of history.

During the *Chakwela Makumbi* ceremony, Nkomeshya acts as a mediator between the past and the present, and between the living and dead as she relays information between the Soli people and *imishimu*. The act in which she pulls down the clouds is a spiritual practice that involves

conveying and interpreting information between her living followers and her ancestors. Though subjective, Nkomeshya's communication with the un/dead (spirits as the alive version of the deceased) during the ceremony is valid and relevant in the context of *Chakwela Makumbi* traditional ceremony and in accordance with the Soli tradition of rain making. The information which she relays between the two entities is open to multiple receptions and interpretations by different people, yet the main purpose of this ceremony, that is to bring the rain, is not changed. Unlike the case presented by the process of the *Chakwela Makumbi* ceremony, which is one of openness to multiple and changing interpretations of relayed information, the national archives in Zambia present one fixed historical narrative with a single reading. There is no interchange between the present and the past, and women's narratives are not well contextualised, repeating the discursive and historical erasure of their narratives.

CHAPTER 3

Dynamics of Absence: Blanks, Displacements and Misplacements of Women's Historical Narratives in National Archives

> The concept of the archive shelters in itself … this memory … But it also shelters itself from this memory which it shelters: which comes down to saying also that it forgets it (Derrida and Prenowitz 1995: 9).

Archives traditionally are designed to store and preserve memories or the past from irretrievable decomposition or loss, yet the irony is that the quotation above states that the very facility constructed to make memory permanent forgets it. In the introduction of this thesis, I share my experience of visiting the National Archives of Zambia (NAZ) and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives in a pursuit to explore the representations of women's political actions within history. The NAZ records were shallow: shallow in that the records inside the NAZ did not have sufficient information pertaining to women and the Zambian liberation struggle. This shallowness equates in essence to saying that the NAZ either conceals itself from the memories it purports to shelter, or does not hold the memory of women's political activities. The case of the UNIP archives is more peculiar than that of the NAZ in the sense that when I visited the old UNIP offices in Lusaka's Emmasdale, I was informed that some of the records had been lost, and that the surviving pieces of history had been boxed up and put in storage. In addition, the other materials were being revised and incorporated into the collection of records in NAZ[27]. Essentially, the UNIP Archives, although a structure designed to store, preserve and make memory permanent, are decomposing and disappearing away, along with some of the memories they hold.

In this chapter, I discuss the notion of absence in relation to the concepts of archival silence and collective amnesia (forgetting by the archive), using Derrida's and Prenowitz's (1995: 5) notion that the archive not only preserves memory but also forgets. In addition to this concept, I refer to Pierre Nora's (1989) theory that there exists a relationship between history and collective memory (discussed in the second chapter), as well as the notion of physical archives as described by Jacques Derrida (1996 and 1998) in *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.* Derrida (1996 and 1998) defines physical archives as constructed spaces that hold memories,

[27] See Chapter 1, footnote 3

using the Greek origin of the word 'archive' as '*arkhê'*. The word *arkhê* can be used to mean either 'according to history' or 'we recall'. Nora (1989) argues that there is a relationship between history and memory such that national archives, as structures in which history is produced and organised, influence the construction of collective memory.

In this discussion of absence as a concept, and in connection to the erasure of women's narratives in the NAZ and the UNIP Archives, I use the term absence in a twofold way. Firstly, I use the term absence as the lack of archival presence, created through the vanishing of memories over time: that is, absence as collective forgetting or amnesia. Secondly, the term absence is used in consideration of acts of re/archivation that either unregister and/or uncommemorate, remove or silence women's accounts from national memory holders: that is, absence as archival silence. Further, I discuss the ways in which I work with the black cloth as a burial cloth in some of my works in my MFA exhibition *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), as a visual exploration of the concept of absence and the disappearance of women from Zambian collective memory. As the topic of women's erasure is broad and is an issue that keeps reoccurring both in Zambia and across the borders, I also discuss the work of two South African artists, Kemang Wa Lehulere and Lerato Shadi, in relation to the notions of collective amnesia and archival silence, and in relation to my own work[28]. From my body of work, I focus on the artworks titled *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016) (Figure 2.6), *Mortician's Diary – entry II* (2017) (Figure 2.7), *UnCovering Silences of the Hidden, and the Unfamiliar* (2017) (Figure 3.1) and *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017) (Figures 3.2, 3.3, 3.4). I consider Shadi's performative installation in which she writes names of women on the walls and invites viewers to paint over them: *Seriti Se* (2016) from the exhibition *Dikadika Tsa Dinaledi* (2016), and Wa Lehulere's *The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time* (2015) from *History Will Break Your Heart* (2015).

[28] While it would be ideal to discuss the work of a Zambian artist in relation to the erasure of women's histories specifically in a Zambian context, the Zambian artists I considered explored erasure in a non-gendered manner. The artists Wa Lehulere and Shadi explore historical erasure through exploring the erasure of women.

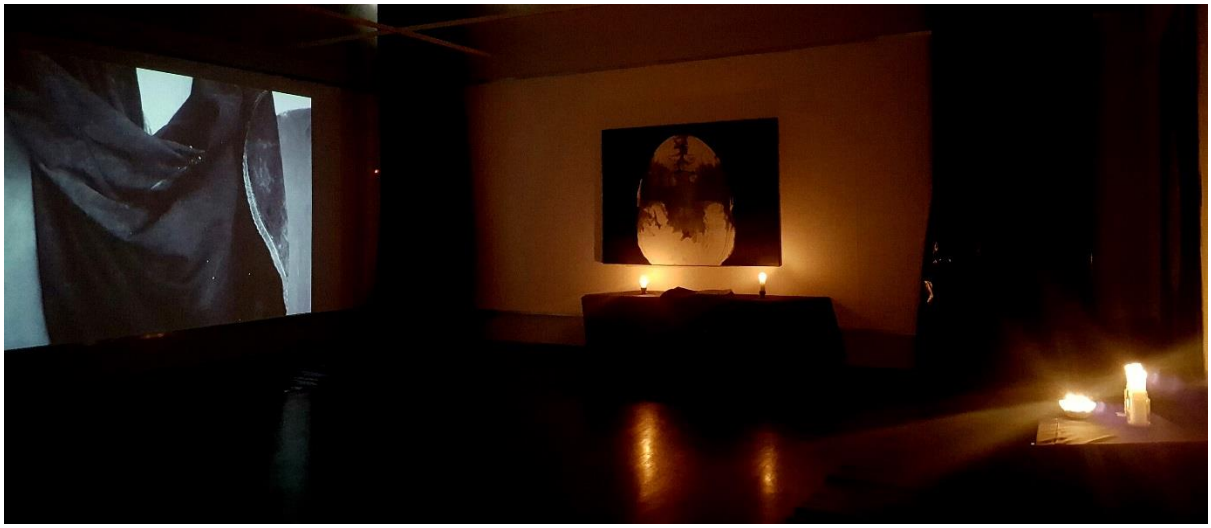


Figure 3.1. Gladys Kalichini, *UnCovering Silences of the Hidden, and the Unfamiliar* (2017), installation view, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

3.1 Aesthetics of Absence

One of the ways of addressing historical disappearance, destruction and distortion is through critical and artistic practices that focus on absenteeism and deletion. Visual artists' interrogation of absence, partiality and incompleteness relating to different kinds of archives, personal or shared, involves different kinds of aesthetic strategies (Enwezor 2008; MacNeil and Eastwood 2017; Sweeny 2015; Nannyonga-Tamusuza 2017). It ranges from artworks that involve the removal or modification of text, as is in the case of Shadi's *Seriti Se* (2016), to aesthetics that encapsulate absence relating to particular narratives within specific historical and socio-political contexts, such as my work *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017). Wa Lehulere's *The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time* (2015), a documentation of the restoration of the mural at Gladys Mgadlandlu's former home in Gugulethhu (Gule and Obrist 2015), takes an approach of unlayering obscurities to uncover a hidden image that would have otherwise remained concealed. As the restoration process unfolds, holes and patches are created, through which parts of the mural that are under seven coats of paint and two layers of plaster are revealed.

Over the past years there has been a growing preoccupation with the idea of the archive in the contemporary art world (Enwezor 2008: 254), with various artists from different parts of the world interrogating and critiquing different kinds of archives in relation to history and memory.

Most analyses, including the works that are discussed in this sub-section, point to the archives as having gaps and not giving full representations of history, and the work tends to take positions that dissociate with history (history as organised within archives that have single and often only partial perspectives). Nora (1989) notes that collective amnesia, or partial history, occurs when memories become detached from the past as groups select certain dates and people to commemorate, and deliberately eliminate others from representations of history and within archives. In proceeding through this subsection, I discuss the ways in which the aesthetics and motifs employed in my works titled *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017), Shadi's *Seriti Se* (2016) and Wa Lehulere's *The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time* (2015) affirm notions of collective amnesia and archival silence.

3.1.1 Compromised Memory and Disappearing History: The Burial Cloth as a Motif of Collective Amnesia and Archival Silence

Figure 3.2. Gladys Kalichini stitching a piece of black bark cloth onto *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017), image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

My visual practice is concerned with depicting how women's narratives are collectively remembered and forgotten through collective memory or through being absent in collective memory holders, as argued by Nora (1989). As such, the motif I use in exploring historical erasure through a lens of absence is cloth. I work in collaboration with different types of cloth, including *chitenge* material, thick black cloth, white cloth and bark cloth[29]. In the image above, I am stitching a piece of black bark cloth from Uganda onto one of the painted canvases of the artwork titled *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017).

Traditionally, this particular bark cloth that I use in my work is crafted from the *mutuba* tree (*ficus natalensis*) by the Baganda people of the Buganda kingdom in the south of Uganda. The preparation of the bark cloth starts during the wet or rainy season as this is the time when the inner bark of the *mutuba* can be harvested while it is moist. Thereafter, the bark is worked on in a long and strenuous process that involves the beating and flattening of the bark with different types of wooden mallets to give it a soft texture. Since the bark is extracted while the tree is humid and still alive, the artisans work in an open shed to prevent the bark from quickly dying and drying. After the bark is flattened and dried, it is dyed either a cyan, white or black colour, and then used for various purposes such as coronations, healing ceremonies, funerals and as burial cloth (Nakazibwe 2005).

Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives (2017) is an artwork that comprises of two separately painted large canvases with a piece of bark cloth (about 50 x 100 cm) that is stitched to join the two canvases to form an 800 cm long central piece. Another 200 cm long piece of bark cloth hangs on the left hand side of the central piece, while thirteen paintings stretched onto wooden frames (all sized 50 x 65 cm) hang on the right hand side. In this particular piece, which is the largest piece in my exhibition titled *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), I do not paint any female or human-like figures; rather I use black, white and cyan oil paints to paint an image of an empty mass grave, with only shadows and soil. I use the black bark cloth as burial cloth, just as the Baganda people use it to wrap dead bodies. Decidedly, I do not paint on the bark cloth, but loosely hang it as burial cloth which is no longer wrapped around a corpse

[29] I work with various materials such as paint; however, my perception is that I collaborate with cloth. I do not perceive cloth as a dead object, but rather as alive and able to perform.

to invoke a sense of emptiness, absence and decay of bodies from a grave. The production of bark cloth in Uganda significantly declined in the twentieth century, and began to slowly fade out because of the introduction of cotton cloth by Arab caravan traders in the nineteenth century (Nakazibwe 2005). In my work, and within the context of my exhibition, the bark cloth also operates as symbolic forgetting and disappearing, and as something in the process of becoming erased.

Figure 3.3. Gladys Kalichini, *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017) installation view, Alumni Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 3.4. Gladys Kalichini, *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017) installation view, Alumni Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

3.1.2 Absence in Shadi's Seriti Se *(2016) and Wa Lehulere's* The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time *(2015)*

Lerato Shadi is a South African woman[30] artist whose work centres on matters of agency and disruption in relation to history. Though she comes from a context different from that of Zambia, her work also interrogates a conflicted relationship between memory and history similar to that explored in my research, and she concentrates on the movement of narratives in hostile spaces. The performative installation *Seriti Se* (2016) explores politics of historical erasure, specifically the erasure of black females and their achievements and contributions within various fields, by thematising everyday violence enacted within institutional structures and systems (Shadi 2016).

Seriti Se (2016) was part of Shadi's exhibition titled *Di Dikadika Tsa Dinaledi* (2016) at Goethe on Main in Johannesburg. In this piece, Shadi inscribes the names Margaret Sloan-Hunter, Tracy Africa, Wilma Rudolph, Phillis Wheatley, Poomoney Moodley, Zora Neale Hurston, Phyllis Ntantala, Yennenga and over eighty more names on the walls of the gallery with black paint (Figure 3.5). Shadi argues that the names she writes onto the walls of the gallery are names of women who have either been marginalised or unrecorded in history, and that their efforts have been ignored. After the names have been written onto the walls, the exhibition is opened, and as viewers walk in they are confronted with a wall full of names that they possibly do not recognise, or know. The visitors to her exhibition are encouraged to participate in covering any of the names inscribed on the wall with white paint. As the process of removing the names on the wall begins, the names become fewer in number and Shadi's writings begin to disappear and become absent (Figures 3.6 and 3.7).

The word *seriti* in the title *Seriti Se* translates from Setswana to English as 'shadow'. If *seriti* means a shadow, then where is the shadow/s in the visual artwork *Seriti Se* (2016) and how is it used in relation with erasure? What happens after women's names are erased by acts of covering them with white paint? What happens, then, to the textual traces left behind, if indeed there are any? What lurks behind the white paint? Is the text repressed by shadows of viewers

[30] In in her catalogue *Noka ya Bokamoso*, Shadi refers to herself as a woman artist rather than a female artist.

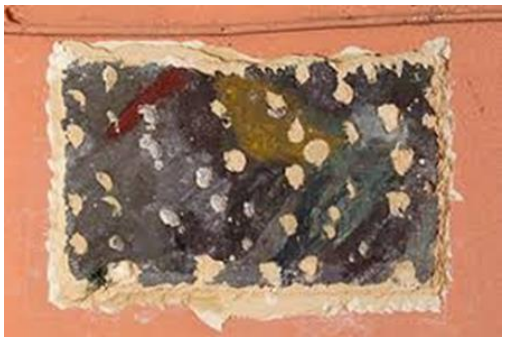
who participate in deleting the names, or do the traces underneath the paint then become shadows? These are important questions to ask in trying to understand how 'this shadow' – '*Seriti Se*' – is used and what it refers to within the context of Shadi's work. Does she use 'this shadow' to imply traces of these women's names on the wall, about whom no information is available in the exhibition? Joan Legalamitlwa (2016), curator of the exhibition *Di Dikadika Tsa Dinaledi* (2016), argues that since there is no information provided about who the women on the walls are, it becomes the responsibility of the individual who erases a name to research and learn about the woman whose name they erased, thus reversing the process of erasure. Alternatively, is 'this shadow' a reference to institutional structures and systems that shadow women? This artwork articulates contradictions of what it means to oppose the invisibility and subjugation of black women's narratives in their acts of defiance against the politics of invisibility, and to be in collusion with actions that reinforce their silence (Shadi 2016).

Figure 3.5. Lerato Shadi writing women's names on the walls of the gallery, installation process of *Seriti Se* (2016), Goethe on Main, image courtesy of Goethe on Main.

Figures 3.6 and 3.7. Lerato Shadi, *Seriti Se* (2016), viewers participating in erasing names on the walls of the gallery, images courtesy of Goethe on Main.

My artwork, *Empty Graves – Unarchived Narratives* (2017) does not speak of complete absence, because of the burial cloth used to represent traces of an erased or decomposed body, and neither does Shadi's *Seriti Se* (2016), because of the textual traces or names that remain after the performance. *Seriti Se* (2016) creates a palpable sense of silence by prompting absences created through acts of painting over women's names and returning the walls of the gallery back to their initial empty state. In having viewers erase the inscribed names by painting over them, absence is created by removing presence. Wa Lehulere's *The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time* (2015) offers an opposite reading from that of Shadi's performative installation in that it starts from a point of absence and ends by creating presence.

The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time (2015) (Figures 3.8 and 3.9) is a video documentation of the restoration process of South African artist Gladys Mgadlandlu's mural at her home where she lived in Gugulethu, Cape Town. The restoration process involved the removal and chiselling out of the layers of plaster in order to reveal a mural picturing a colourful bird painted by Mgadlandlu. In the video, the setting is inside a home, and there are hands peeling away layers of paint and plaster in a rectangular shape, gradually exposing a piece of a hidden mural, buried by new inhabitants over time. When the restoration process begins, Mgadlandlu's mural is absent and invisible, but through actions of removing paint and plaster, the mural becomes present and visible. The colour of the wall at the beginning of the documentary is a dark peach-like colour, while the lower layers are a cream white-ish colour. The reduction of colour through the movement from a darker peach to a much lighter colour could be interpreted as the reversal of erasure, as the presence of the solid colour wall is replaced by lighter coloured shades of plaster, and finally a yellow wing and red beak are revealed.



Figures 3.8 and 3.9. Kemang Wa Lehulere, *The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time* (2015), from the exhibition titled *History Will Break Your Heart* (2015), video stills, images courtesy of Stevenson Gallery.

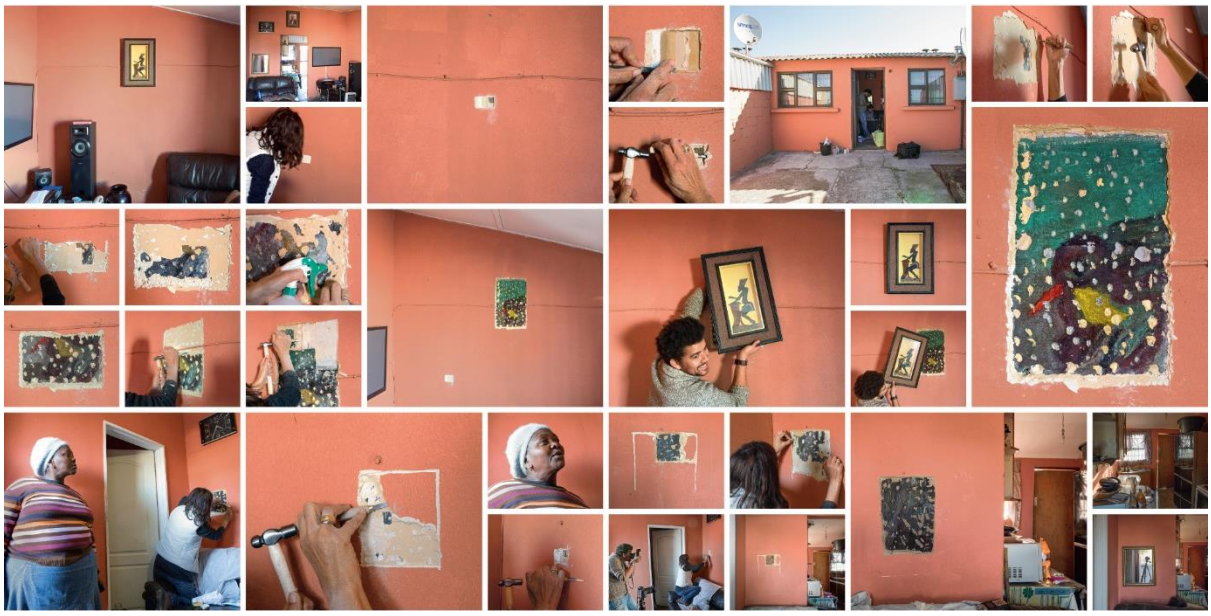


Figure 3.10. Kemang Wa Lehulere, *The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time* (2015), video stills, image courtesy of Stevenson Gallery.

In the image above, Wa Lehulere works in collaboration with his aunt, Sophia Hulere, who remembers seeing the mural inside Mgudlandlu's house when she was a young girl (Obrist and Gule 2015). Though Wa Lehulere begins this restoration process from a point of absence, and ends up with the visibility and presence of the mural, erasure remains an unlinear process. A linear process can be traced to say it starts at point A and ends at point B; *The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time* (2015) is an intertwinement of the process of erasure in which, as parts of the mural become visible, its obscurities become invisible and vice versa. However, at the end of Wa Lehulere's process in restoring the art work, the mural still is not completely present: there are still parts of it that are absent, parts that will possibly never be fully restored.

3.2 Paradox of Absence: *UnCovering Silences of the Hidden, and the Unfamiliar* (2017) and *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017)

> Archives are spaces configured by both scarcity and abundance. As much as they are haunted by ghosts and scattered with fragments and traces … traces are measured by the thousand in ways that are both 'unsettling and colossal'. (Farge and Davis 2013: 4)

The few presences of women in the official political and socially authoritative collections of records of activities in Zambia during the colonial era and the post-independence period demonstrate the national archives to be structures with partialities embedded in them. They are

holders of collective memory in which the visibility and presence of a few is created through the obscurification and erasure of others (Nora 1989). In this last section of Chapter 3, I discuss my collaboration with cloths in my works titled *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) and *UnCovering Silences of the Hidden, and the Unfamiliar* (2017) as a way of visually interrogating absence by means of rendering visibility or invisibility, as well as using fabric as a an object of memory.

At most of the funerals I have attended in Zambia, I have noticed that there is usually a white bed sheet and a blanket placed inside the casket. In rural areas, where at times mourners are unable to purchase caskets or coffins that can close, either a piece of cloth is used to cover the coffin, or a piece of flat board is used and a cloth is put over it (Figure 3.11). When the casket is closed or covered the body is out of sight, yet its presence remains. I use a thick black cloth in my work to cover paintings (as bodies) in order to explore this idea of paradoxical absence in which something or someone's visibility is removed and their presence is maintained. The family *chitenge* material which is worn during the burial is significant in the Zambian culture, because after the funeral it becomes an item that still holds the presence and memory of the deceased.

Figure 3.11. In the image is a funeral in a rural part of Zambia. A piece of *chitenge* cloth is used to cover the coffin. Image courtesy of http://www.edgardebono.com/african-funeral/funeral-coffin-africa-traditions

Figure 3.12. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial – Erasing Erasure* (2017), digital photograph, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Burial – Erasing Erasure (2017) is a series of digital images in which I am photographed wearing a black t-shirt and the *chitenge* fabric from my brother's funeral (this piece is introduced in Chapter 2). In these images, I stage a performance known as *chimbuya,* where a white powder is poured over close relatives of the deceased during the burial ceremony at the graveyard. For my brother's funeral, my family refused to have a white powder poured onto us, or even to participate in a ritual to cleanse away the presence of my brother. The *chitenge* I wear in these black and white images has two different blues with hints of pink. For my brother's funeral, eighteen metres of this fabric was used. My two sisters, my cousin and I all had to wear a two-metre piece of this fabric, while my mother wore a much longer piece. Since the funeral, the fabric has been kept as a reminder, as a trace and as a memorial of my brother's life. Though his physical body is absent or no longer visible, the memories we share are monumentalised in this fabric because I, all my sisters and my mother each have a piece of this fabric and are not allowed to either destroy or lose it. For me as an artist, and as a researcher, this fabric is a way of interrogating notions of memory and erasure using a personal experience with memory and with losing something through death. The word 'burial' in the title *Burial:*

Erasing Erasure refers to the day on which my mother, sisters and I wore this fabric, for the burial of my brother. The phrase 'erasing erasure' evokes a sense of performing the undoing of the process of death (death as erasure), and of crystallising some people, and some events, in time. In *ChaMoneka: UnCasting Shadows* (2017), the images of the series *Burial: Erasing Erasure* (2017) are projected as a slide show onto a white fabric, pointing out and replicating the materiality of memory.

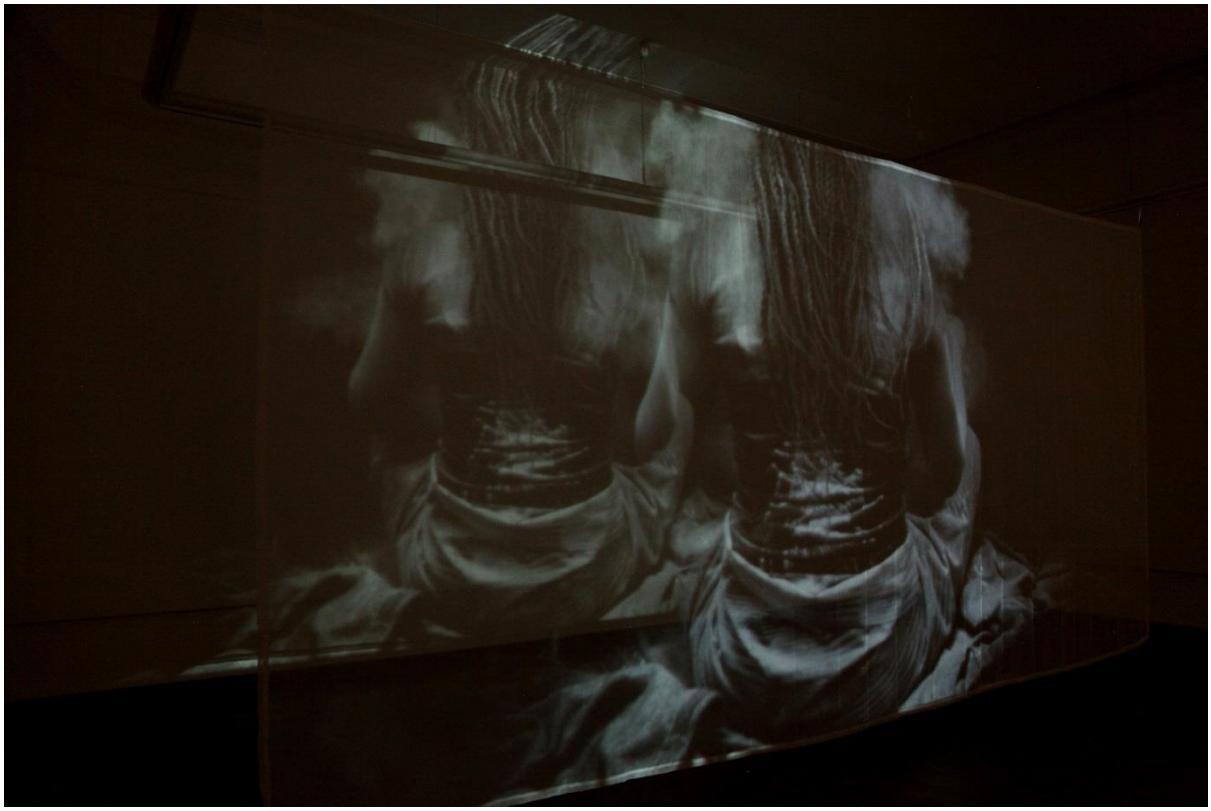


Figure 3.13. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial – Erasing Erasure* (2017), digital photograph, installation view, Alumni Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

Figure 3.14. Gladys Kalichini, *Burial – Erasing Erasure* (2017), digital photograph, installation view, Alumni Gallery, image courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

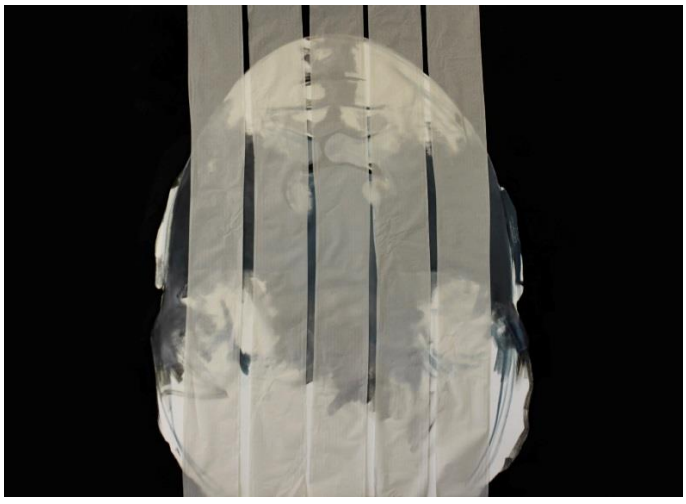


Figure 3.15. Gladys Kalichini, *UnCovering Silences of the Hidden, and the Unfamiliar* (2017), digital photograph. Figure 3.16. Gladys Kalichini, *UnCovering Silences of the Hidden, and the Unfamiliar* (2017), digital photograph. Images courtesy of Gladys Kalichini.

UnCovering Silences of the Hidden, and the Unfamiliar (2017) considers the in/visibility of women's narratives within the archive and fabrication as a function of veiling and structuring

of truths. This piece is a loop of a collection of photographs of burial cloths covering and uncovering the paintings titled *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016) and *Mortician's Diary – entry II* (2017). The paintings are of portraits of female bodies, which are metaphorical for narratives about women. When the burial cloth is moved across and over these paintings, it veils and unveils parts of the bodies. When the painting is completely covered, the visual confronting the viewer is a flat black rectangle; however, when it is moved, parts of the body are revealed.

Viewers of the paintings *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016) and *Mortician's Diary – entry II* (2017) are encouraged to touch and move the pieces of cloth that cover parts of the work. The paintings that viewers uncover and cover are inverted portraits of bodies from the shoulders up, like giant upside-down identification photos. The images projected on the wall are a collection of images in which the cloth was moved while the paintings were in the studio. Usually when people visit my studio, I have a discussion with them, explaining what the work is about. I begin by enlightening them on the central theme on which all the work is based – that is, the erasure of women's narratives. I then talk about the two paintings as representations of dead bodies on a tray. The reason that the bodies are upside down is because the paintings are painted from the point of view of a person, such as a mortician standing in position at the head of a table looking over a body on a tray. After the short discussion, I encourage them to participate in either covering or unveiling the paintings, and most people agree to participate in moving the cloth. Each time the cloth is placed differently from how they found it, some parts of the paintings are revealed while other parts get hidden, rendering some parts of the painted body visible and others invisible. Personally, I have only moved the cloth a few times, always attempting to make the most part of the body visible, but this is because I understand the implied violence imposed on the visibility of the bodies in the paintings.

UnCovering Silences of the Hidden, and the Unfamiliar (2017) is a slide show of ten selected images that document the movement of thick black cloth (as burial cloth) on two paintings. In the images, the burial cloth is fixed and placed in different positions on two different paintings. It is first placed and moved across a painting with a defined face on the corpse, the painting is titled *Mortician's Diary – entry I* (2016). As the slide show continues, the cloth moves on a painting with a blurred face without defined facial features: this is on *Mortician's Diary – entry*

II (2017). Some of the images are focussed on parts of each of the painting, while others are captured with the entire painting within the boundaries of the digital image. Rather than attempting to fill in archival gaps, this piece highlights the ways in which, over time, women's narratives are losing their specificities and fading out. By digitally capturing the coverings and uncoverings of paintings with cloth, this work points to the difficulty of uncovering the truth about women's historical narratives in the male-dominated National Archives of Zambia and UNIP Archives. During the exhibition, I encourage visitors of the exhibition to continue with this process and participate in moving the burial cloth and taking photograph. This piece is a continuos piece, I will make more diary entries and continue to document movements of different types of fabric on paintings.

3.3 Towards and Beyond an Ending

Women's erasure within Zambian history can partially be attributed to only documenting them as members of messianic movements, such as in the case of Lenshina, as traditional leaders, and as assistants of men in political activities, without detailed analysis of the specific historical circumstances in which they lived (Gordon 2012, Geisler 2012). Narratives and histories concerning women have for long been subjected to patriarchal structures that are hostile and only obscure them. A consideration of the UNIP Women's Brigade attests to this; the brigade was established by Kenneth Kaunda, a man, only as an auxiliary to the main party body that consisted only of men. Further, men directed the brigade's organisation; they decided when and where the women would meet and what they would discuss, and they appointed its officials and dictated the brigade's policies and activities (Geisler 2012). Even though this is the context that was presented, some women such as Chikamoneka rebelled and refused to conform, and began to perform as they saw need. Chikamoneka, in the most prominent collective memory of her, the half-naked protest, went against what was agreed upon in one of the UNIP Women's Brigade meetings, and she forged ahead out of the crowds and undressed during the 1961 riots in Lusaka protesting against the British-proposed constitution (Kankasa 2016). Lenshina, on the other hand, was in the Northern part of the country, having denounced all earthly and colonial authority, and declined to give her support to the masculine-dominated UNIP (Gordon 2012). In the same manner that these women refused to be subdued, though their narratives have been cast behind shadows, they protest against being forgotten.

This research does not exhume all the women's narratives that are possibly hidden and remain buried and entangled within the history of Zambia's independence, nor does it uncast all the shadows that render women's narratives invisible and absent[31]. It highlights the hidden narratives of only two women, Julia Chikamoneka and Alice Lenshina and argues that women have been unacknowledged, uncredited, and unarchived in the official narration of the liberation struggle. There is absence and incompleteness in the official records of Zambian history in terms of actions performed by women towards the country's liberation from British colonialism in the NAZ and the UNIP Archives. In each of the chapters of this mini-thesis, I have interrogated the erasures of Chikamoneka and Lenshina from Zambia's collective memory and within the national archives, specifically in the National Archives of Zambia and the United National Independence Party (UNIP) Archives, which are considered to shape and contain Zambia's liberation narrative.

Absence is not the state of not being present inside memory; rather it is the state of not being represented within the national archives. Traces of Zambian women's political and historical narratives inside the NAZ and UNIP Archives, like the textual traces left behind in Shadi's *Seriti Se* (2016), lurk under shadows that take away their presence. Similar to Mgudlandlu's mural in Wa Lehulere's *The Lady Bird in Nine Layers of Time* (2015), they are hidden under layers of a singular remembrance of history. Over time, their presence has been lost, leaving their burial cloths loose and their graves empty. However, the memory of these courageous women is not yet lost; like the funeral *chitenge*, they ought not to be lost, because though they are hidden and unfamiliar, they can be uncovered.

[31] This investigation of the mis/representations of women within dominant liberation narratives will be furthered in my PhD research. I will also extend the discussion of the national archives and collective memory to address issues pertaining to how collective memories manifest outside the official archives, as well as beyond national memory that is state sanctioned.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allman, J. (2009). 'The Disappearing of Hannah Kudjoe Nationalism, Feminism, and the Tyrannies of History'. *Journal of Women's History*, 21(3), pp. 13–35.

Arthurs, J. and Grimshaw, J. (1999). *Women's Bodies: Cultural Representations and Identity (Sexual Politics)*. A&C Black.

Ashmore, P., Craggs, R. and Nate, H. (2012). 'Working-With: Talking and Sorting in Personal Archives'. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 81(38), pp. 8–22.

Bal, M. (2004). Over-writing as un-writing: descriptions, world-making and novelistic time. In M. Bal (ed.) *Narrative Theory: Critical Concepts in Literary and Cultural Studies*, pp. 341-388. Bassein, Beth Ann. (1984). *Women and Death: Linkages in Western Thought and Literature*. Greenwood Press.

Bloch, M. and Parry, J. (1982). *Death and the Regeneration of Life*. Cambridge University Press.

Blouin Jr. (2014). *Media History and the Archive*. Routledge.

Blouin Jr., F. X. and Rosenberg (2012). *Processing the Past: Changing Authorities in History and the Archives.* Oxford University Press.

Bond, M. (2014). *From Northern Rhodesia to Zambia. Recollections of a DO/DC 1962-73*. Bookworld Publishers.

Boogerd, D., Bloom, B. and Casadio, M. (2009). *Marlene Dumas*. Contemporary artists, Art & ideas. Phaidon.

Borges, A. (2013). 'Violence in a time of liberation: murder and ethnicity at a South African gold mine, 1994', by Donham, Donald L., with photographs by Santu Mofokeng. *Social Anthropology*, 21(2), pp. 258–260.

Branch, D. (2009). *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization*. Cambridge University Press.

Brennan, M. (2002). *Painting Gender, Constructing Theory: The Alfred Stieglitz Circle and American Formalist Aesthetics*. MIT Press.

Bronfen, E. (1992). *Over Her Dead Body: Death, Femininity and the Aesthetic*. Manchester University Press.

Brown, R. B. and Davis-Brown, B. (1998). ‘The making of memory: the politics of archives, libraries and museums in the construction of national consciousness’. *Sage Journals*. 11(4), pp. 7–32.

Burr, V. and Hearn, J. (2008). *Sex, Violence and the Body: The Erotics of Wounding*. Springer.

Burton, A. (2006). *Archive Stories: facts, fictions and the writing of history*. Duke University Press.

Chamberlain, D. (2014). *The Broken String: A short story*. Pan Macmillan

Chamberlain, M. E. (2014). *The Scramble for Africa*. Routledge

Chisembele. S. (2015). *Zambia, The Freedom Struggle and the Aftermath: The Personal Story of Freedom Fighter and Leader Sylvester Mwamba Chisembele*. Sylsop Books.

Coelewij, L, Sainsbury, H. and Vischer, T. (2014). *Marlene Dumas: The Image as Burden*. Tate Publishing.

Craven, L. (2016). *What are Archives?: Cultural and Theoretical Perspectives: a Reader.* Routledge.

Derrida, J. (1996, 1998 and 2017). *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. University of Chicago Press.

Derrida, J. and Prenowitz, E. (1995). ‘Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression’. *Jstor*. 25(2), pp. 9–63.

Dijkstra, Bram. (1998). *Georgia O'Keeffe and the Eros of Place*. University of Chicago Press.

Enwezor, O. (2008). *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*. International Center of Photography.

Farge, A. and Davis, N. Z. (2013). *The allure of the archives*. Yale University Press.

Geisler, G. (2004 and 2012). *Women and the Remaking of Politics in Southern Africa: Negotiating Autonomy, Incorporation, and Representation*. Nordic Africa Institute.

Gensburger, S. (2016). *National Policy, Global Memory: The Commemoration of the “Righteous” From Jerusalem to Paris, 1942-2007*. Berghahn Books.

Gewald, G., Hinfelaar, M. and Macola, G. (2011). *Living the End of Empire: Politics and Society in Late Colonial Zambia*. Brill.

Gordon, D. (2012). *Invisible Agents: Spirits of a Central African History*. Ohio University Press.

Gould, J. (2010). *Left Behind: Rural Zambia in the Third Republic*. African Books Collective.

Gule, K. and Obrist, H. U. (2015). *Kemang Wa Lehulere: Standard Bank Young Artist Award*. Standard Bank, Stevenson Gallery (Cape Town and Johannesburg).

Halbwachs, M. (1992). *On Collective Memory*. University of Chicago Press.

Hamalengwa, M. (1992). *Class struggles in Zambia, 1889-1989 & the fall of Kenneth Kaunda, 1990-1991*. University Press of America.

Hamilton, C. (ed.). (2012). *Refiguring the Archive*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Hayes, P. (2009). 'Santu Mofokeng, photographs: "The Violence Is In The Knowledge"'. *History and Theory*, 48(4), pp. 34–51.

Hayman, J. and Oxenham, M. (2016). *Human Body Decomposition*. Academic Press.

Heidenreich-Seleme, L. and O'Toole, S. (2012). *Uber(w)unden: Art in troubled times*. Jacana Media.

Hinfelaar, H. F. (1994, 1997). *Bemba-Speaking Women of Zambia in a Century of Religious Change: 1892–1992* (Vol. 11). E. J. Brill.

Hinfelaar, M. and Macola, G. (2004). *A first guide to non-governmental archives in Zambia*. The National Archives of Zambia.

Hodder, J. (2017). *On Absence and Abundance: Biography as Method in Archival Research*. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/area.12329/full

Hodgkin, K. and Radstone, S. (2005). *Memory, History, Nation: Contested Pasts*. Transaction Publishers.

Hutton, P. (1993). *History as an Art of Memory*. UPNE.

Irwin-Zarecka, I. (2017) *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory*. Routledge.

Jindra, M. and Noret, J. (eds.) (2013). *Funerals In Africa: Explorations of a Social Phenomenon*. Berghahn Books.

Kamima, T. (2012). *The legend of Lenshina and her holy war* – Volume 8. Hanson Kamima Foundation

Kankasa, C. (2016, July 7). UNIP Member, The Republic of Zambia, Lusaka. Personal communication.

Klaver, E. (2004). *Images of the Corpse: From the Renaissance to Cyberspace*. Popular Press.

Krishna, K. and Mulenga, F. E. (2004). Contribution of Zambian Women and Indian Women to the Struggle for Freedom: A Legend of Courage and Compassion.

Laderman, G. (2003). *Rest in Peace: A Cultural History of Death and the Funeral Home in Twentieth-Century America*. Oxford University Press.

Legalamitlwa, J. (2016). *Noka Ya Bokamoso*. The National Arts Festival, Grahamstown.

Lowney, J. (2006). *History, Memory, and the Literary Left: Modern American Poetry, 1935-1968*. University of Iowa Press.

MacNeil, H. and Eastwood, T. (eds.) (2017). *Currents of Archival Thinking*, 2nd Edition. ABC-CLIO.

Macola, G. (2007). *One Zambia, Many Histories: Towards a History of Post-Colonial Zambia*. Brill.

Makasa, K. (1990). *Zambia's March to Political Freedom*. Kenneth Kaunda Foundation.

McClintock, A. (1995). *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. Routledge.

Mebeelo, H. S. (1971). *Reaction to Colonialism: A Prelude to the Politics of Independence in Northern Zambia 1893-1939*. Manchester University Press.

Mukwena, R. (2016). *Zambia at Fifty Years: What Went Right, What Went Wrong and Wither To? A Treatise of the Country's Socio-Economic and Political Developments since Independence*. Partridge Africa.

Musambachime, M. C. (1991). 'The Archives of Zambia's United National Independence Party'. *Jstor*, 18, pp. 291–296.

Musonda, D. K. (1999). 'The Christian approach to ubuloshi (witchcraft and sorcery)'. *African Christian Studies*, 15(2), pp. 37–59.

Nakazibwe V. (2005). *Bark-cloth of the Baganda People of Southern Uganda: A Record of Continuity and Change from the Late Eighteenth Century to the Early Twenty-first Century*. Middlesex University.

Nalumango, M. and Sifuniso, M. (1998). W*oman Power in Politics. Zambian Women's Writers Association*. The University of Michigan Press.

Nannyonga-Tamusuza, S. (2017). Dialogic Archival Documentation: Decolonizing the Archive to Repatriate the Past to Present Indigenous Users. Rhodes University. Lecture at 5pm on Monday, 4 September 2017 at ILAM.

The National Archives. (1969). *Chapter 175 The National Archives Act* (1969). Government of the Republic of Zambia. www.nationalarchiveszambia.org

Nnaemeka, O. (1995). 'Feminism, Rebellious Women, and Cultural Boundaries: Rereading Flora Nwapa and Her Compatriots'. *Research in African Literatures*, 26(2), pp. 80–113.

Nnaemeka, O. (2014). 'Negro-Feminism: Theorizing, Practicing, and Pruning Africa's Way'. *Development Cultures; New Environments, New Realities, New Strategies*, 29(2), pp. 357–385.

Nooter Roberts, M. and Roberts, A. (eds.) (1996). *Memory: Luba art and the making of history*. Museum for African Art.

Nora, Pierre. (1989). 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire'. *Jstor*, issue 26, pp. 7–24.

Novello, H. L. (2013). *Death as Transformation: A Contemporary Theology of Death*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Nuttall, S. (2013). 'Wound, Surface, Skin'. *Cultural Studies*, 27(3), pp. 418–437

Obrist, H.U. and Gule, K. (2015). Kemang Wa Lehulere: Standard Bank Young Artist Award. Standard Bank, Stevenson Gallery (Cape Town and Johannesburg).

Ohene-Ayeh, K. (2015). *Notion 0603*. iubeezy.wordpress.com

Oyěwùmí, O. (1997). *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*. University of Minnesota Press.

Phiri, I. A. (2001). *Proclaiming Political Pluralism: Churches and Political Transitions in Africa*. Greenwood Publishing.

Phiri I. A. (2003). ‘President Frederick J. T. Chiluba of Zambia: The Christian Nation’. *Journal of African Religion*. 23(4), pp. 401–428.

Rotberg, R. I. (1965). *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: The Making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964*. Harvard University Press.

Russell, N. (2006). ‘Collective Memory before and after Halbwachs’. *Jstor*, 79(4), pp. 792–804.

Sifuniso, M. (2005). *Footprints in History*. Zambia Women Writers Association (ZAWWA) Press.

Simbao, R. (2014). ‘Cosmological Efficacy and the Politics of Sacred Place: Soli Rainmaking in Contemporary Zambia’. *African Arts*, 47(3), pp. 40–57.

Sweeny, R. W. (2015). *Dysfunction and Decentralization in New Media Art and Education*. Intellect Books.

Tordoff, W. (1974). *Politics in Zambia*. University of California Press.

Wallis, J. and Harvey, D. C. (2017). *Commemorative Spaces of the First World War: Historical Geographies at the Centenary*. Routledge.

Williams, A. J., Jenkings, N., Woodward, R. and Rech, M. F. (2016). *The Routledge Companion to Military Research Methods*. Routledge.

Wineburg, S. (2001). *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past*. Temple University Press.

Yorke,E.J. (2016). *Britain, Northern Rhodesia and the First World War: Forgotten Colonial Crisis*. Springer.