Power in Africa: A Comparison of Selected South African and Nigerian Dystopian Fiction

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Abstract

Dystopias have frequently been explored in literature to better understand the present and imagine the effects of certain elements of society if taken to a logical extreme. In this way, dystopian fiction can act as both cautionary tales and a form of social commentary. This can be explored within the context of African dystopian fiction where power is a recurring theme, highlighting the anxiety and turbulent history several countries on the continent continue to face. To demonstrate this, I compare selected South African and Nigerian Dystopian texts. With regards to South Africa, I analyse novels by South African science fiction authors Lauren Beukes and Lily Herne, namely *Moxyland* (2008) and *Deadlands* (2011) respectively, to investigate how South Africa's past under Apartheid shapes the segregated societies presented. Nigerian dystopian texts by Biyi Bandele-Thomas, namely *The Sympathetic Undertaker And Other Dreams* (1993) and *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* (1992), are discussed with regards to the way Nigeria's colonial past and several military juntas have contributed to the kinds of corruption that are depicted. I argue that all four texts warn of the dangers of power, albeit in ways that pertain specifically to their countries of origin. With regards to the South African texts, readers are shown the ways in which those in power can manipulate the desire to survive to keep those they subjugate dependent and, consequently, obedient through what Judith Butler terms 'passionate attachments'. In the case of the Nigerian dystopias, I argue that Bandele-Thomas's texts warn of tyranny and effects of the corruption that result from misused power strategies.

While the dire settings of dystopian fiction may be grim enough, on their own, to motivate change in the real world, this may not be enough to prevent the texts from becoming pessimistic and fatalistic outlooks. Hence, I seek to understand how the selected novels maintain hope and, consequently, convince readers that the depicted dystopias are ones that can be avoided. Typically, dystopian literature fosters hope by setting the narratives in the future, giving readers hope that they may take steps today to protect their societies from becoming like the damned worlds described by dystopian authors. However, the selected texts are not set in the future. Hence, I explore three literary techniques that might foster hope within the selected African dystopian texts in lieu of temporal distancing. They are, namely: identification with the protagonist, defamiliarization and cognitive estrangement.

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Contents

Introduction

Imagination may be one of the human brain's most phenomenal powers. While the psychic function might, arguably, be present in other animals (Robert Mitchell 326-38), the level of complexity with which it occurs in among human beings is quite unique. The proliferation of art, media and stories that colour cultures around the world is testament to the imaginative life that runs parallel to the material lives of our species. A child might 'spend time' in Narnia and feel emotional responses to Aslan's death as though it occurred in the material world, while fantasy franchises such as 'A Song of Ice and Fire', which features dragons and magic, continue to draw adult fans from varied walks of life. The ability to see that which is not there may appear detrimental to any living thing that needs an accurate view of reality to survive. However, imagination is in fact vital to the success of human beings. Counterfactual thinking, for example, refers to the cognitive ability to imagine how things could have turned out differently. This is useful because it allows for one to imagine what futures one has avoided, missed out on or might create by selecting one set of actions over another. For example, you have chosen to read this paper. That decision also implicitly includes choosing not to do other things at this very moment, such as riding a bicycle. While you cannot do both simultaneously, you can imagine what things would be like had you chosen to ride a bicycle instead and, consequently, you can determine whether that reality would be more desirable than your current one. This information can then be used to make better decisions in the future (perhaps deciding that outdoors activities are preferable to reading). Despite its 'counterfactual' nature, imagination can provide greater truth about one's immediate reality by revealing what possible realities one has excluded. For this reason, imagination is an important part of one's cognitive toolkit and "the loss of the ability to imagine alternatives as a result of injuries to the prefrontal cortex is devastating" (Ruth Byrne 135).

From serving as a means of avoiding undesirable realities to entertaining us during moments of boredom, imagination finds varied use in human lives. "At one end of the counterfactual spectrum, imagined alternatives entertain and amuse us in fantasy and fiction, and they flourish in literature, film, and theatre" (Byrne 136). Imagination can also serve as a teaching tool, as seen in most religions, especially Abrahamic ones, through myth and storytelling. Viewed from a Jungian perspective, the truth value of these holy texts lies in their ability to describe the human psyche and facilitate individuation. The narratives of these religions lay out a schema for how one should comport oneself. This is done by encouraging devotees to imagine the nature of the reality their actions will bring about for them. In the Christian tradition, this can be abstracted as such: actions that please God (i.e. that are good)

will result in a desirable future for you (i.e. paradise in heaven). Conversely, actions that displease God (i.e. sins, which are bad) will result in a tragic future for you (i.e. torment in hell). Through these stories, readers are taught that certain actions produce good realities while others produce bad ones. The objective is, therefore, to determine how to avoid the worst realities while selecting actions that will bring about the best outcomes.

Art, by nature polysemous, has a myriad of functions. Some art contains that impulse, also found in religion, which strives to imagine whether certain actions will bring about heaven or hell (or, in more general terms, pleasure or pain). Such an impulse can be found within utopian and dystopian art. Of interest to me in this thesis is dystopian literature. These texts typically draw from elements in the writer's immediate society which threaten to bring about a dystopian future. For example, in the East, Russian novelist Yevgeni Zamyatin's *We* (1924) portrays a society in the distant future where rigid conformity is enforced by a totalitarian state and individuality is crushed. According to Kendall Bailes, Zamyatin might have been inspired by Alexei Gastev, an important figure during Soviet industrialisation and a proponent of Taylorism which "asserted that the workers themselves would become increasingly mechanized and standardized, like cogs in a vast machine" (378). The novel makes several references to Taylor, with the protagonist claiming that "Taylor was undoubtedly the greatest genius of the ancients" (Zamyatin 32). Just as the Biblical Gospel of Luke depicts how greed lands Dives in Hades, so too does *We* reveal how industrialisation can lead to a bad reality. In African dystopian literature one finds similar trends, with the writer's society and its history being used as inspiration for imagining how certain actions might bring hell. Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* (2010), for instance, is set in a dystopian Darfur and depicts how one tribe, the Okeke, are oppressed by another tribe, the Nuru, who justify it by referring to a holy book shared by the two tribes. Okorafor has stated that her novel is inspired by the (as of 2019) ongoing war in Darfur which has seen similar campaigns of the ethnic cleansing of black Africans by Arab militiamen (420).

As seen, dystopian writers provide social commentary by critiquing actions committed by people in their society in the past and present and imagining how they might result in a dystopian reality. In doing so, dystopian writers warn readers of the possible dangers in the present that might produce dystopian worlds in the future. This is done within the realm of fiction, so that readers need not experience the dystopia first-hand to know to avoid actions which bring it about. In this way, dystopian literature can be thought of as offering cautionary tales. The ability for dystopian texts to caution readers enough for them to take action in reality can be with seen with Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985)

which tells of a dystopian hyper-patriarchal state where women are treated as reproductive resources. Its influence is seen in many modern women's protests where women dress up in the red cloaks worn by the handmaids of Atwood's novel. The red cloak has become a feminist symbol of resistance not because it is believed that society is doomed to become like the Republic of Gilead, but rather because it is believed that it is in women's power to prevent their society from turning into Atwood's dystopia.

While imagination might be foundational to dystopian literature, it fails to account fully for how dystopian fiction is able to influence readers and inspire real-world action. Hence, there remains the question of how dystopian fiction goes beyond merely describing unpleasant realities and instead cautions and inspires readers to avoid the depicted dystopia. It could be said that in the realm of religion, Christianity achieves this through the counterbalancing of hell and heaven. While the possibility of eternal torture might be disheartening, the prospect of paradise gives Christians hope that, should they adhere to the correct soteriological preconditions, they might avoid the worst possible reality. Hope, which can be defined as the expectation of positive outcomes, is made possible through the inclusion of an alternative to hell and a promise that salvation is possible. Consequently, devotees are prompted to perform righteous actions and avoid temptations that will lead to the dystopia of hell. The example of Christianity, and other religions which function in a similar manner, demonstrates that hope is a possible antidote to dystopian fiction's potential to sow pessimism. So how are dystopian novels able to maintain hope despite presenting readers with imaginative versions of hell?

One possible answer might, quite obviously, lie with the fictionality of dystopian literature. While it might often be based on reality, readers always have the opportunity to close the book. Readers only inhabit the dystopia in imagination and, with that, comes the hope that they might be able to take steps to prevent that imaginary world from becoming a real one. While this hypothesis might provide some insight, it remains an insufficient answer. The mere fictionality of a dystopia offers no hope or promise that there actually exists a pathway to avoid it.

To further explore this question, I have selected four African dystopian texts to analyse. From South Africa, I have chosen Lauren Beukes's *Moxyland* (2008) and Lily Herne's *Deadlands* (2011), while from Nigeria, I have picked *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* (1993) and *The Sympathetic Undertaker and Other Dreams* (1992), both by Biyi Bandele-Thomas. The texts have been chosen, mainly, for three reasons. Firstly, they draw strongly from the histories of the settings they depict. Secondly, they all deal with a

common theme – power. In each of the four texts, there are examples of deliberate uses of power strategies which benefit a select few powerholders to the detriment of larger society. By comparing the depictions of power in the South African and Nigerian novels, a contrast emerges which reflects the histories of the countries. The South African novels feature power as an authoritarian force, as was the case during Apartheid. The product is an excessively ordered society which excludes all who cannot assimilate. On the other hand, in the Nigerian novels, power is a force which sabotages society through corruption. The product in this instance is a chaotic society where opportunities for stability are few. Thirdly, the texts all deal with their themes through various forms of fragmentation, which provides a useful point of comparison. This is not unexpected, as the histories of Nigeria and South Africa both feature a great deal of socioeconomic fragmentation that has resulted in stratified societies. Furthermore, the clashes between modernity brought on by colonialism, and the indigenous cultures and traditions of African natives, have resulted in African subjects who experience a split within themselves as they try to navigate this environment. Consequently, their psyches become microcosms of a fragmented society. This fragmentation is represented metaphorically in the texts through split narratives, characters with double lives and multiple personalities, and segregation between groups in the depicted settings.

My investigation will begin with an analysis of how the histories of South Africa and Nigeria mould the dystopian worlds depicted by Beukes, Herne and Bandele-Thomas. Following this, I shall analyse the literary techniques used by the dystopian authors to better understand how they are able to foster a feeling of hope that the depicted dystopias, as bad as they may be, might be avoided by readers through actions taken today.

Chapter One: African Dystopias

Dystopia Defined

Art often imagines the ways society could be if certain factors were different. One of the earliest examples of this in literature can be found in Plato's *Republic* (380 BC), a series of books in which he discusses what an ideal nation would be like. The result is a city-state run by a philosopher king and a proposal to ban certain kinds of poetry. Plato's republic could be considered a utopia, as it fits into the definition offered by Peter Land who loosely describes utopias as constructed "imaginary worlds, free from the difficulties that beset us in reality" (1). Hence, utopian literature can be thought of as attempts to imagine what the characteristics of the best possible reality or realities would be. Utopian stories, which appear in cultures around the world, express a "desire for a better way of being" (Land 9) and thus, through their optimism, can inspire the pursuit of the depicted ideals.

The disappointments and deaths caused by the Soviet Union's quest for a socialist utopia, Salafi pursuits of an Islamic caliphate utopia and other failed utopian projects that pepper human history serve as reminders of how tricky the business of utopian imagining is. Imagined ideals may at times be impractical, and pursuing them may be akin to chasing rainbows. Furthermore, as the National Socialist German Workers' Party's aspiration for an Aryan utopia reveals, what is one person's heaven can easily be another's hell. For these reasons, when viewed through a pessimistic lens, utopias can be distorted into anti-utopias that highlight how virtues typically associated with paradise can lead to the opposite. Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) contains an example of this kind of "formal reversal of the promise of happiness in utopia" (Krishan Kumar 104). Here, Swift satirises the association of rationality with utopia, as one would find in *Republic,* by leading the protagonist to a hyperrational society of horses called Houyhnhnms. The Houyhnhnms have arranged their lives solely around rational behaviour and are "wholly governed by it" (Swift 234). Having achieved impeccable rationality, they no longer grow or develop because that would be a deviation from their state of perfection. However, without progress and change the society of the Houyhnhnms could be seen as meaningless because it essentially continues to exist simply so that "the same process may continue indefinitely" (George Orwell 1968; 409). Hence, Swift's imagining of Houyhnhnm society suggests to readers that teleological progress through rationality to reach utopia might lead to a dead end. Similar sentiments in other anti-utopian texts lead Kumar to claim that such stories reveal a view that achieving a utopia "would violate the restlessness and striving that are an essential part of the human spirit" (102).

The cultural significance of popular utopian projects cannot be understated, for through them one can filter out the most important values and aspirations of a society. However, it is also necessary to consider how unattended vices can trigger the demise of a nation and how actions taken today can lead to hell tomorrow. For this reason, we also have art which depicts societies that contrast with the Edenic imaginings of utopias. These are known as dystopias and can be defined as "fictional portrayal[s] of a society in which evil, or negative social and political developments, have the upper hand" (Gregory Claeys 107). Dystopian literature is characterised by its "critique of existing social conditions or political systems" (Keith Booker 3) and typically explores the tragic ways societies can fail. Although it often features dark and dreary settings, the genre does not simply attempt to depress readers with its gloom but, instead, is used by "writers with an ethical and political concern for warning us of the terrible socio-political tendencies that could, if continued, turn our contemporary world into the iron cages portrayed in the realm of utopia's underside" (Raffaella Baccolini *et al* 2). While I agree with Baccolini *et al* that dystopian fiction can certainly serve as a warning, my investigation seeks specifically to explore why it is so effective at doing this. Thus, the question is: how do dystopian works serve as cautionary tales rather than simply depicting an undesirable imagined reality?

One of the ways dystopian literature may provide warnings is by presenting a bleak and broken society while still leaving an opportunity for readers to have hope that the depicted dystopia can be avoided. A demonstration of how this might be achieved can be found within religion. The revelation to John, which appears in the last book of the Christian Bible, describes an apocalyptic future where plagues and beasts cause suffering. However, the horrid prophesy is capped with the final defeat of Satan and a vision of a new heaven and Earth. Through this, devotees are given hope that, should they take the correct actions today, they might receive grace, have their names recorded in the book of life and enjoy paradise for eternity. This hope is further fostered by the fact that the apocalyptic events occur in the future, opening the possibility that steps might be taken today to ensure that people are granted salvation from the lake of fire. Similar uses of time to maintain hope can be found in the dystopian works of H.G. Wells. In *The Time Machine* (1895), the protagonist travels to the year 802 701. While it initially seems as though humanity has reached a golden age, the time traveller soon discovers that the class differences of his time have been exaggerated in the future until the rich and the poor appear to be two separate species. The story could therefore be read as a cautionary tale which warns of the dangers of inequality should it be allowed unmitigated growth. That the story is set in the deep future puts considerable

distance between readers' current reality and the depicted one. This creates hope that the depicted dystopia might be averted provided dystopian elements in the present are addressed timeously. In the case of *The Time Machine*, this would include ensuring that the chasms between socioeconomic classes do not continue their techno-accelerated expansion.

Although it is true that many dystopias are set in the future, there are noteworthy dystopian works which do not utilise temporal distancing. A popular example is William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954) which features an uninhabited island where British schoolboys, without law and authority to discipline them, degenerate into savagery. Despite taking place outside of any setting familiar to most readers, it still manages to critique society by, as Golding puts it, tracing "the defects of society back to the defects of human nature" (qtd in Bufkin 40), leading critics such as Adnan Al-Zamili to describe it as a "symbolic and dystopian novel" (155) which challenges notions of socialisation as the source of human corruption. Similarly, the selected South African texts have no temporal distance and instead use technology to create a cyberpunk dystopia, in the case of *Moxyland*, and fantasy creatures to create a zombie dystopia, in the case of *Deadlands*. Bandele-Thomas's texts are set in a contemporary Nigeria and they too do not utilise temporal distancing. I would argue that all four texts, despite not utilizing temporal distancing, are still able to maintain hope. Hence, although plenty of dystopian literature sustains hope by setting their societies in the future, my investigation will focus on how the selected African dystopian texts are still able to achieve this despite the lack of temporal distancing.

Of the several literary elements commonly used, I have identified three which might shed light on how dystopian texts manage to make hopeful cautionary tales out of their dark worlds. They are, namely, identification with the protagonist, defamiliarisation, and cognitive estrangement. The first literary element, identification with the protagonist, is located in the relationship between readers and the literary characters of a text. When readers are sufficiently absorbed in a narrative, they may find themselves in the metaphorical shoes of a protagonist, empathising with them and sharing their viewpoints. Just as one might imagine seeing things from the perspective of a friend, or sharing in the joy of a sibling's victory, so too can one live vicariously through literary characters as though the protagonists of stories were flesh and blood. When the connection between readers and the protagonist is strong enough, readers might even have their beliefs and perspectives influenced by the protagonists. When discussing identification in fiction, John Tchernev makes a similar argument and claims that "identification involves taking the perspective of someone else, and therefore perhaps seeing a new viewpoint on an issue. This can lead to changes in the

audience member's subsequent attitudes and behaviours" (7). When identification occurs with the protagonist of a dystopian novel, it may open avenues for hope to enter. Instead of facing the depicted dystopian world with despondency, readers might mirror the protagonist's optimism. With this in mind, it is no surprise that in dystopian fiction protagonists are typically hopeful. In many cases this hopefulness is the driving force behind the plot. As Maria Varsam explains, "it is usually the protagonist's desires and hopes for a better present or future that distinguish him/her from the rest of the population" (205). A prime example of this can be found in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) where, despite traversing a post-apocalyptic world of ash and cannibals, the unnamed protagonist is still able to preserve enough hope to get him and his son through each challenging day. The protagonist's hopefulness is underlined by subtle symbols of hope surrounding him such as his son who can "be seen as a Messianic figure, as representing hope for the future" (Inger-Anne Søfting 710) and the later found abandoned sailboat which is named "'Pajaro de Esperanza' - bird of hope" (Erik Wielenberg 2). If a dystopian writer is able to facilitate identification between readers and a hopeful protagonist, readers may adopt the protagonist's hope and avoid a fatalistic view of the depicted dystopia that is unlikely to inspire any action outside of the text. When discussing how one might measure identification, Jonathan Cohen outlines four essential dimensions to consider, namely cognitive empathy, affective empathy, sharing the character's goal, and absorption. According to Tchernev, it is the combination of the last two of the four dimensions listed by Cohen that is responsible for the "sensation of becoming or merging with a character" (5). The four dimensions of identification will be considered when analysing identification in the selected African dystopian novels.

A second technique that could foster hope in present-time dystopian literature is defamiliarisation. This is a term coined by Viktor Shklovsky and is described by Keith Booker as a process whereby readers are placed in a world which is different to theirs to allow for a novel view of certain aspects of society. Shklovsky claims that when one becomes habituated to the world one perceives, it will tend to automatically enter the unconscious. Hence, familiarity can cause one to be incapable of 'seeing'. According to Shklovsky, a function of art is to turn the familiar unfamiliar and, in doing so, once again "make the stone stony" (162). When discussing defamiliarisation, Varsam argues that it "is the key strategy all utopian literature employs to some degree for the explicit purpose of social critique via renewed perception. Applied to dystopian fiction, defamiliarisation makes us see the world anew" (206). Defamiliarisation makes itself useful in dystopian literature by allowing the author to present a world that is recognisable yet unfamiliar enough to cause one to scrutinise

the society instead of unconsciously accepting it. An example of this can be found in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), a popular dystopian text by George Orwell. The novel features a protagonist named Winston Smith who lives in Airstrip One, a province which supersedes Great Britain. The nation can be described as dystopian due to the existence of extreme surveillance which effectively prohibits privacy, and of government organisations which, through aggressive propaganda, disseminate falsehoods as obvious as "2+2=5" (334). While *Nineteen Eighty-Four*'s ruling party, Ingsoc, might be fictional, the party's desire to achieve constant surveillance can be read as a defamiliarized and prophetic depiction of modern-day surveillance both online and through public CCTVs. Consequently, to this day, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* is often used as an example of how societies can become dystopian if the public surrenders their rights to privacy and allows states to hold a monopoly on information. Defamiliarisation also leaves an opportunity for readers to maintain the hope that they still have the chance to avoid the depicted world. This is enabled by the balance of similarity, which allows critiques of the fictional world to be applicable to the real world, and difference, which reminds readers that the fictional world is not real. Hence, it could be argued that through defamiliarisation, "dystopian fictions provide fresh perspectives on problematic social and political practices that might otherwise be taken for granted or considered natural and inevitable" (Booker 17).

Cognitive estrangement is a third technique that may offer a chance at hope in dystopian literature. Darko Suvin applies the concept of cognitive estrangement specifically to science fiction, as it "describes an alternative imaginary universe but develops it with cognitive, 'scientific' rigor" (Gregory Renault 114). He derives the idea of cognitive estrangement from an amendment of Shklovsky's concept of defamiliarisation (although the validity of this link has been questioned by Simon Spiegel) and is based on Bertolt Brecht's concept of estrangement. According to Brecht, "a representation which estranges is one which allows us to recognise its subject, but at the same time makes it seem unfamiliar" (qtd in Suvin 6). Cognitive estrangement, when used in dystopian science fiction, might caution readers of potentially dystopian elements while still providing hope that the depicted dystopia might be averted. This requires the fictional dystopia to be familiar enough to the real world for criticisms of the imaginary world to be applicable to the reality readers exist in. However, it also needs to be made unfamiliar enough to allow readers to take solace in the fact that the depicted dystopia is not an exact mirror of their own. It is only if there is some difference between the fictional world and reality that readers might find hope that they can avoid dystopian doom. As an example of how cognitive estrangement can be used in dystopian

fiction, Molly Brown turns to South African Young Adult dystopian novels such as *The Slayer of Shadows* (1995) by Elana Bregin and *Zoo City* (2010) by Lauren Beukes to highlight the trend of placing female protagonists into dystopian settings which are "at once both profoundly unfamiliar and recognisably South African" (31). Drawing on Brown's research, one could argue that using cognitive estrangement as a tool is useful because, as Brown summarises, the "reader is freed to explore current issues at a safe emotional remove" (31).

Dystopias in Africa

As previously noted, the dystopian writer imagines how certain actions taken today could lead to society becoming dystopian. Oftentimes, this is done by drawing inspiration from potentially dystopian elements in the past and present of the geographical region the text is produced in. This is true of Western dystopian literature and the United Kingdom is a good example. In the sixties, English writer Anthony Burgess published *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) which features a dystopian society where a group of youths led by Alex seek gratuitous violence for entertainment. Their episodes of rape and brutality generate fear among the elders of the community, as seen when an old man being beaten by Alex and his gang complains that "it's a stinking world because it lets the young get on to the old like you done, and there's no law nor order no more" (Burgess 17). This is arguably a reflection of the late 1950s when English "newspapers were monotonously bewailing the rise of mass delinquency" (Martin Amis para 8). The eighties saw the release of *V for Vendetta* (1982). The graphic novel imagines a dystopian UK where the neo-fascist political party Norsefire has taken over. Like Burgess's novel, *V for Vendetta* draws from societal trends by borrowing elements from Europe's fascist history. The dystopian world depicted has been so effective at warning readers against authoritarianism that its influence can be seen in real world protests, as is the case with the aforementioned *The Handmaid's Tale*. In 2019, protestors in Hong Kong wore Guy Fawkes masks – also worn by *V for Vendetta*'s protagonist who takes on the British government - during their demonstrations against Chinese government (Joanne Ma para 2). Several more dystopian works that imagine the victory of the axis powers demonstrate a post-WWII anxiety in the West regarding fascism and the vulnerability of democracy. From this, it is clear that to best understand Western dystopian literature, it is vital to explore the socio-political histories and current trends of the societies being depicted. African dystopian literature also features reimaginings of existing societies and, like their Western counterparts, are deeply connected to both past and present socio-political events. In

the selected texts, the role power plays in bringing about a dystopian world mimics the oppressive power strategies that have been seen throughout the course of African history. However, this is only apparent if one first investigates the history of the continent.

Africa's history is one which features widespread colonialism from Western powers that has permanently changed the daily lives of many African populations. Inadvertently or not, it has also led to inequality, patterns of poverty that tread along racial lines, and the exploitation of indigenous people. Furthermore, many postcolonial states are faced with troubles that include grappling with newfound independence, addressing past injustices and finding ways of functioning which allow them to engage with a highly capitalistic world while negotiating cultural demands within an African context. The project of building a successful postcolonial African state is a complex one that different countries have experienced varying levels of success with. However, while the idea of independence from colonial rule has, for some, inspired hope of a utopian African future, the existence of political, social, economic and health disasters have twisted many of those visions into dystopian ones. These dystopian visions often find their way into literature. Due to the size of the continent, the histories of each of the countries vary significantly and thus the contexts in which dystopian literature arises differ. Hence, rather than discuss African dystopian fiction as a broad topic, it is more useful to focus instead on trends of dystopian literature in specific countries. I have chosen South Africa and Nigeria to investigate because both countries are hotspots for African literary production and have had tumultuous histories that involve colonialism and the struggle for post-independence stability. Most importantly, power has played a crucial role in the fates of these African countries and their citizens.

a) South Africa

Colonialism and Apartheid shape much of South Africa's recent past. Some literature during the twentieth century depicts this period of the country's history as dystopian. This includes Arthur Keppel-Jones' 1947 novel *When Smuts Goes*, a fictional rendition of the National Party's rise to power, and Alex La Guma's 1972 novel *In the Fog of the Seasons' End* which is set in Cape Town and describes some of the brutality anti-Apartheid activists faced. Moreover, in many contemporary South African dystopian novels, including *Deadlands*, *Moxyland* and the 'Elevation' series by Helen Brain, dystopian aspects of the country's history under Apartheid creep in. Because the selected South African dystopian novels are influenced by both pre- and post-democratic history, it is important to explore the Apartheid

regime and how it continues to affect conceptions of South Africa in the present.

Pre-Democratic Dystopia

Beukes's, Herne's and La Guma's aforementioned novels are set in the Western Cape, a province that plays an important role in both colonial and Apartheid history. Hence, it is useful to begin the delve into South Africa's history here. During the 1400s, the Cape was discovered to be a convenient intermediate point in the European sea route to India. Bartolomeu Dias was the first Portuguese mariner to reach South Africa, and the Portuguese controlled the maritime route to Asia until 1595 (Roger Beck 33-34). A few years later, Commander Jan van Riebeeck landed at the Cape on the 6th of April 1652 to set up a refreshment station for the Dutch East India Company (VOC) (Beck 35). As employees retired and settled there, the population grew. This was accelerated by the influx of slaves brought in from West Africa, Angola as well as Dutch colonies in Batavia, India and Ceylon (Beck 36). The arrival and growth of European communities drastically changed life for the native Khoikhoi pastoralists that inhabited the land. Despite opposing the encroachment of the Europeans into their territory, by 1800 "European expansion had destroyed nearly all Khoikhoi groups within the Cape colony" (Beck 39), leaving them with the dilemma of either working as servants on settler farms or eking out a living on the remaining land not controlled by settlers or Bantu tribesmen. Eventually, the Dutch government gave the VOC the right to establish colonies under the Dutch flag, resulting in the Cape becoming a Dutch colony. The settlers began to call themselves Afrikaners and Cape Dutch "gradually evolved into Afrikaans" (Beck 39). In 1795, the Cape colony was seized by the British after troops forced the Dutch to surrender (Beck 52). Tension between the two colonising powers continued until the Boer War of the early nineteenth century where the "British fought to bring all of South Africa under imperial rule and to gain total control over South Africa's mineral wealth" (Beck 102) while the Afrikaners "fought to defend their independence" (Beck 102). Fransjohan Pretorius notes that this was not strictly a battle between colonising powers because "blacks became involved in and were affected by the war" (242) too. The Afrikaners lost the war and, in 1909, the South Africa Act joined the four British colonies to form the Union of South Africa and a parliament was set to be established in Cape Town (Beck 109). J.B.M Hertzog, the Orange Free State leader, demanded complete South African independence and, in 1914, formed the National Party which received support from "lower-class Afrikaners, especially the poorer farmers who were losing their land to commercial agriculture" (Beck 113), and "Afrikaner intellectuals and professionals who resented English

dominance in business, government, and the professions" (Beck 113). This independence would come a few decades later through the Constitution of 1961 (Nancy Clark *et al* xiv), but by then Apartheid was well underway.

Beck defines Apartheid as "the system of racial discrimination and white political domination adopted by the National Party while it was in power from 1948 to 1994" (135). According to Hermann Giliomee, it was not a radical new policy, but an offshoot from segregation policies that were followed from 1902 to 1948. Beck explains that the system was so encompassing that "South Africans lived, worked, and played out their lives at racially segregated offices, businesses, schools, colleges, beaches, restrooms, park benches, restaurants, theatres, and sports fields" (135). Furthermore, only whites could vote during this time, allowing for an oppressive minority rule.

One of the ways segregation was enforced was through anti-miscegenation laws upheld by the Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 and the Immorality Act of 1950. Another way people were segregated was through Acts that separated residential areas based on race. Urban cities were deemed white areas while settlements were reserved outside the city for people of colour. A famous example of forced segregation occurred in District Six, which makes an appearance in *Moxyland*. It was originally a cosmopolitan area in the Western Cape. However, because of its proximity to the harbour, the city centre and Table Mountain, it was declared a whites-only area. As a result, many people were forcibly removed and relocated to the Cape Flats. According to Beck, this had a "devastating impact on family and community networks" (138). These themes resurface in *The Thousand Steps* (2016), Brain's first novel in her aforementioned dystopian fantasy series. The book features Ebba, a red-haired girl who, due to looking like the mythical Theia of the Holy Book, is chosen to collect four amulets that will save Table Mountain (which, semi-submerged by water, has become Table Island). Drawing from dystopian elements of South Africa's past, Brain's Cape Town features segregation similar to that of the Western Cape under Apartheid. The underprivileged, known as the "sabenzi" (24), live inside bunkers within Table Mountain and work as slaves while the elite live on the little remaining hospitable land above the surface. Although Ebba begins life with the sabenzi, she is elevated to live with the elite and, despite the privilege that comes with it, misses her old community dearly. Hence, just as communities were ripped apart by forced removals during Apartheid, Ebba too has her family network disrupted by her 'elevation'. This technique of using dystopian elements of Apartheid in fictional worlds is found too in the selected South African dystopian novels I analyse.

Resistance to Apartheid came from many vectors, including from authors such as "Alan Paton, Breyten Breytenbach, André Brink, Nadine Gordimer, and Athol Fugard" (Beck 147) who used literature to speak out. One of the biggest political opponents of the National Party and its regime was the South African Native National Congress (SANNC) which was formed in 1912 and came to be known as the African National Congress (ANC) in 1923 (Jackie Grobler 317-9). The organisation gave rise to several notable freedom fighters such as Albert Luthuli and Nelson Mandela. In 1960, the Sharpeville Massacre occurred, an event that garnered international attention and outrage. When protestors convened outside a police station to protest pass laws, police opened fire and killed 69 people (Beck 151). Another notable protest occurred on the 16th of June 1976 when students in Soweto marched to Orlando West Junior Secondary School. Teargas and bullets were used by police (Beck 169), resulting in the famously photographed death of twelve-year-old Hector Pieterson. Subsequent waves of protests meant that by the end of the year, the government "issued an official (although likely underestimated) casualty figure of 575 dead" (Beck 170). International condemnation and sanctions put pressure on the South African economy and, when F.W. de Klerk came into power, Apartheid laws were slowly repealed. In 1994, the first democratic election was held, and the ANC was voted into power, allowing Nelson Mandela to become president just four years after serving a 27-year prison sentence. When democracy was won, a wave of optimism swept the nation. Along with this came the idea of the prosperous, racially integrated 'rainbow nation'. The idea became so popular that the rainbow became a "shorthand for a nation seeking reconciliation and unity after decades of racial and political tensions" (Dickow *et al* 176). However, in the subsequent years, the reality of the country has left many people with different expectations disappointed. As I shall discuss, post-1994 South Africa came with its own set of dystopian elements, many of which are direct consequences of Apartheid.

Post-Democratic Dystopia

While the system has long been abolished, the architecture of Apartheid remains to this day. As Cheryl Stobie explains, "although laws legislating difference have been dismantled, the ideology underpinning them has been internalised. Instead of opening up the future in a shared fashion, what has occurred is simply a fight among the elites for the spoils, leaving little or nothing for the needy" (367). Aerial photos taken by Johnny Miller reveal that economic divisions created by Apartheid still stratify the Western Cape. Using a drone, he captures how the segregation is not created by any natural phenomena but instead is caused

by the manmade divisions of Apartheid. This is seen with photos Miller has taken of Manenberg. This township was created in 1966 for coloured people after District Six and other areas were declared whites-only regions (Julian Jacobs 112). Lynsey Chutel *et al*, in an article discussing Miller's photography, explains that "South African cities and towns were designed to give white people access to the central business districts and homes in the leafy suburbs. Black people had to live far outside of the city, only venturing in for work" (para 4). This necessitated forced removals of non-whites to places such as Manenberg for the purpose of creating whites-only areas in strategic locations such as District Six. These forced removals which destroyed communities are the theme of Richard Rive's *Buckingham Palace, District Six* (1987) which tells a fictional story about District Six community members who are forced out of their homes by the Apartheid government. The book also features memories from Rive's childhood. He recalls "the air of expectation on Christmas Eve and then the reality of Christmas in District Six during the days before we were shifted to Hanover Park and Bonteheuwel and Manenberg" (72).

In post-1994 South Africa, Manenberg mostly retains its pre-democracy demographics. Furthermore, housing continues to be a problem and the widespread poverty breeds crime and gangs, leading Fran Blandy to describe it as a bleak place characterised by "overcrowded blocks of shoddy flats" (para 6). The lack of change since 1994 has not gone unnoticed by the community. When Blandy interviewed a local about the promises of the rainbow nation, the interviewee dispelled the notion that desegregation has occurred because "nobody is coming

together they are still living separately, blacks on that side, coloureds on this side and whites more in the upper-class area" (para 9). The divisions revealed by Miller's photography support Chutel *et al*'s claim that "while Apartheid has been over for more than two decades integrating these living spaces has remained a challenge and socioeconomic inequality is still stubbornly divided along race" (para 4).

Shane Graham has proposed that a post-Apartheid anxiety has gripped the country, motivated in part by fear of change and violent crime. One of the sources Graham cites for his claim is Jacob Dlamini's text *Native Nostalgia* (2009) which discusses the possibility of the existence of a nostalgia for a pre-democratic past. In the introduction, Dlamini provides statements from South Africans who reveal a dissatisfaction with post-1994 society and a longing for certain aspects of the past. Some interviewed claim that they miss the control of movement present during Apartheid, which prevented the influx of "outsiders" (2), and others reveal their disillusionment with the ANC. While many South Africans were optimistic about democracy, concerns about a loss of social order have replaced romantic views about the country's future. Dlamini concludes that "the sentiments confirm that people's lives have changed – though not in the way often imagined" (6). Thus, one could argue that anxieties surrounding life in the new South Africa have resulted in some portions of the population believing that their survival was more secure during Apartheid. The success of Dlamini's text has led to many academics discussing the pessimism surrounding the present and the subsequent nostalgia. Aghogho Akpome writes that the South Africans interviewed by Dlamini in the introduction of the text "all lament, in different ways, the country's current socio-political situation" (40). Issues brought up include "disillusion[ment] with what is perceived to be poor and corrupt governance, the apparent absence of overall social order, and increasing collective violence that dominate mass political expression in the years after the TRC" (40-1). These difficulties, waning faith in the government and the resultant post-Apartheid anxiety suggest that dystopian conceptions of contemporary South Africa are not uncommon.

The pessimism and fear discussed can also be found in recent South African dystopian fiction. For example, in Beukes's *Zoo City*, Johannesburg is depicted as a noir dystopian world where criminals are magically attached to animal familiars they cannot distance themselves from and thus are forced to constantly bear a symbol of their guilt. The city provides a suitable setting for a South African dystopia due to the prevailing poverty and xenophobic attacks fuelled by "people anxious about 'foreigners' limiting access to resources" (Stobie 374). Because of its reputation as the City of Gold, Johannesburg has

attracted large populations of immigrants and refugees. However, in a social climate where resources are scarce and one's existence is precarious, the arrival of 'outsiders' can exacerbate already problematic anxieties, leading to xenophobia. This manifests in *Zoo City* through the xenophobic slurs directed at Benoit, the protagonist's Congolese boyfriend, which dehumanise and position him as an Other. As I demonstrate in Chapter Two, these anxieties concerning social exclusion and alterity are explored by Beukes once again in *Moxyland* which features a persistent motif of societal fragmentation along race and class.

b) Nigeria

Nigeria is a West African multi-ethnic state which is notable for having the highest population on the continent and, as of 2014, the largest economy (Daniel Magnowski para 1) too. The achievement is more impressive when one remembers that the country rose from a history of slavery. Slave trade in West Africa began in the 1600s and it was only with the Abolition of Slavery Act of 1833 that Britain began taking steps towards ending it (Joseph Hanlon para 2). During over two centuries of slavery, the trade became an integral part of the economy of the Nigerian region and by 1800 many states were "heavily dependent on slavery and the slave trade for their political stability and economic wealth" (Toyin Falola *et al* 60). Nigeria was one of the countries caught in the European "scramble for Africa" (Falola *et al* 86) of the late 1800s. This eventually led to Britain granting a royal charter to the National African Company in 1886, giving it the power to "control the political administration and trade policies of any local territories" (Falola *et al* 99) in the Nigerian region. The NAC was renamed the Royal Niger Company and came to control "the trade on the Niger between the delta and Nupe and on the Benue as far as Yola" (Falola *et al* 99), but their reign did not last forever. In 1900, the territory owned by the RNC was transferred to the British Crown and the Northern and Southern Nigerian Protectorates were formed (William Geary 8). Frederick Lugard, a British colonial administrator, united them in 1912 (Margery Perham para 7), formed the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria and fined-tuned an indirect system of governance which used existing "traditional leadership agents, initiatives, and structures - including chiefs - to maintain a firm grip" (Hassoum Ceesay 23) on the colony. During this time, colonial imports such as the English language (Osayimwense Osa 38) and Christianity (Emmanuel Ayandele 151) continued to spread as government systems were established.

British rule did not go unchallenged. Demand for independence was fuelled by growing nationalism (James Coleman 239) and political parties such as the Nigerian Youth Movement which emerged in 1934 (Shola Omotola 620). Anti-colonial movements in

Nigeria after World War II eventually resulted in the Federal House of Representatives granting the country full independence as of the first of October 1960 (Ubaka Chika *et al* 65). Nigeria struggled to gain peace, however, for the perceived "ineptitude, parochialism, injustice and corrupt tendencies" (Adegboyega Ajayi 138) of the government resulted in a military coup d'état in 1966. After Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was overthrown and killed (Richard Sklar 524), the military seized control of the country.

Tension between Nigerian ethnic groups also hindered Nigeria's peace following the country's independence from British rule. A catalyst for this tension was the fact that "the creation of Nigeria by the British was an arbitrary decision" (Michael Gould 186) based on Britain's interests in West African trade rather than the compatibility of the cultures of the ethnic groups in the area. Ethnic conflict and post-coup violence resulted in Lieutenant-Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu announcing that Biafra would secede from Nigeria in 1967. The large amount of oil in the area made this an unattractive prospect to many powerholders, including the British whose main interest "was to ensure a conducive environment for the flow of Nigeria's oil to its territories" (Chibuike Uche 124), motivations influenced by "disruptions in the Middle East" (Uche 124) which limited oil supply from this source. Armed conflict broke out between Biafra and Nigeria, resulting in the Biafran war which lasted from 1967 to 1970 when the secession was renounced. A Supreme Military Council headed by General Murtala Ramat Muhammad took control of Nigeria in July 1975 (Daniel Matthews 1) and, after a coup d'état, a Supreme Military Council led by Muhammadu Buhari took over in 1983 (Harris Lentz 598). Nigeria was ruled by several Generals during these two juntas until 1999 when, following a democratic election, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was voted in as president (Cyril Obi 374).

Post-Democratic Dystopia

Like several other African states, Nigeria has faced many problems in its transition to democracy. One of Nigeria's biggest hurdles lies with corruption which unfairly distributes the wealth generated by the country. According to Ajayi, "mismanagement of the national economy and embezzlement of public funds" (141) has led to welfare programs being abandoned, thus "condemning many people to abject poverty while the small 'tribe' of the ruling elite (military and civilians) are stupendously rich" (141). Social ills that pervade Nigeria have resulted in dystopian imaginings of the country. Rita Nnodim has noted that contemporary Nigerian novels often deal with the struggles of trying to eke out a meaningful existence in "spaces largely experienced as dystopian" (321). In the texts by Bandele-Thomas

which will be discussed, corruption is placed at the centre of all dystopian elements. Thus, it is important to investigate the relationship between corruption and dystopia in post-1999 Nigeria.

The misuse of funds and state power in Nigeria has impeded its growth despite being a country rich with natural resources. As Michael Ogbeidi has stated, "it is an incontrovertible fact that corruption has been the bane of Nigeria's development" (3). According to Ogbeidi, corruption in Nigeria since 1999 has occurred within a culture of impunity. This has allowed N23 billion to be stolen by federal ministers through fraudulent activities "ranging from embezzlement, payments for jobs not done, over-invoicing, double-debiting, inflation of contract figures to [the] release of money without the consent of the approving authority in ten major ministries" (Ogbeidi 17). Such activities resulted in the Institute of Development Research of the Ahmadu Bello University ranking political parties in Nigeria as the third most corrupt institution (Ogbeidi 16).

As with many other African countries, the abundance of valuable natural resources has been a double-edged sword. Through oil exporting, Nigeria has generated significant economic activity. However, the precious resource also brought with it several problems for the country. The country's oil boom has its beginnings in the Niger delta where the Shell-BP Development Company struck oil in 1956 (Falola *et al* 181). It is believed by some that oil incentivised the military to claim political power and enact their juntas, leading Max Siollum to suggest that "Nigeria's crude oil wealth paradoxically became an impediment to its democratic development" (2). Furthermore, a strong reliance on oil resulted in a fluctuating economy and a negligence of other sectors such as agriculture. Most importantly, it also opened avenues for prolific corruption and thus all the wealth developed benefitted mostly those who "had access to state power" (Falola *et al* 181). Even after the democratic elections of 1999, oil still attracted those eager to misuse power. During Olusegun Obasanjo's presidency, he was "fully in-charge of the petroleum ministry, where high-level corrupt practices took place with impunity" (Ogbeidi 16), including cases of hundreds of thousands of barrels of oil sold in 2002 not appearing on financial records.

Views of Nigeria as a dystopia infested with corruption can be found among some Nigerians, resulting in a grim perspective of the country's future. Surveys done by Afrobarometer reveal that after the euphoria of transitioning to democracy in 1999, "Nigerians are broadly discouraged by the performance of their political system" (Peter Lewis 2). This pessimism has also been noted by scholars such as Olanrewaju Fagbohun who suggests that corrupt practices such as parochialism, which Fagbohun describes as "a political

landscape in which the major political parties focus on the interest of relatively closed social or communal groups rather than on the interests of the nation as a whole, and show clear favouritism toward group insiders" (6), have left "widespread disillusion with Nigeria's political system" (6). As one finds in South Africa, the literature of Nigeria also expresses the post-democratic pessimism which befalls the people. The novels of the Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka are a good example. Solomon Azumurana argues that Soyinka's *A Dance of the Forests* (1963) "links the hopeless past with the fruitless present to project a bleak future" (71) in a way which utilises both dystopian and utopian elements. Some critics have interpreted Soyinka's pessimism in his works as a grim yet realistic outlook on his country. Odun Balogun, for instance, has, in an article which discusses pessimism in Soyinka's work, asked what "has been the reality of Nigeria since independence if not a recurrent cycle of elite corruption, deceit, exploitation of the masses, political and economic chaos, and circumvention of freedom through the barrel of the gun?" (512). This suggests that the dystopian elements contained in Soyinka's novels are interpreted not as strange imaginings of Nigeria, but rather as familiar depictions of the afflictions of society. Soyinka himself has made similar summations of his work and has claimed that "the realism which pervades some of my work which has been branded as pessimism is nothing but a very square, sharp look" (40).

In both South Africa and Nigeria, social and political power play a pivotal role in the sequence of events. Whether it be the dictatorial rule of the military in Nigeria or the separatist government in South Africa, the narratives of these countries can be discussed in terms of power struggles. Consequently, the recurring theme of power present in the selected dystopian texts will be used as a point of comparison. In the case of the chosen South African dystopian novels I shall focus on how they represent power as an authoritative force, ordered through law and legislation, which provides survival for some and thus inspires passionate attachments despite its oppressive nature. With the Nigerian novels, I shall focus on how they depict the ways corruption by people with power can cause chaos and calamitous consequences for a country. To do this, the concept of power, within the context of this thesis, will be clearly defined and discussed in the next section.

Power Contextualised

Erika Gottlieb describes dystopia as a place which is "ultimately a moribund, death-bound society that is incapable of renewal, where the ruling elite cling to their existence as parasites on their own people, whom they devour in the process" (41). From this description, it follows

that at the heart of most dystopias lies the use of power gone wrong. Germany during the Third Reich, Stalinism during the existence of the Soviet Union and, more contemporarily, North Korea and its one-party system, are all stark reminders of the relationship between power and dystopia. Similarly, in Africa, a long history of colonisation by European powers and slavery at the hands of both Western and African leaders have resulted in a dystopian existence for huge populations of natives. Hence, not unexpectedly, dystopias in fiction frequently feature power as a critical element which brings about a dystopia. For this reason, understanding African dystopian fiction requires an understanding of the role of power in African history as well as in the selected texts.

A discussion of power is impossible without a clear, contextually relevant definition. The word power has numerous uses in the fields of science, sociology, economics and philosophy, with varying implications. When discussing power in the societies of the chosen dystopian texts, I am referring to, broadly speaking, subjugators' ability to control the behaviours of subjects. This kind of power, within the context of the thesis, can be classified as social power, with political power as a subcategory of this. Dennis Wrong has tightened this definition by limiting it to "direct, intentional efforts by a specific person or group to control another" (676). However, I would resist such a definition due to the complications involved with telling apart intentional and unintentional efforts. Additionally, Wrong categorises power as merely an effort, whereas I would agree with Robert Bierstedt's claim that power is inherently successful, as "when it is not successful it is not, or ceases to be, power" (733).

Social power, according to Bierstedt, permeates almost all facets of society and can be found in even the most innocuous relationships such as that of parent and child, or a teacher and student. Bierstedt clarifies the concept of social power by differentiating it from other terms it is usually conflated with. Of relevance to this thesis is the distinction between power and influence. As Bierstedt explains, "influence is persuasive while power is coercive" (731). Thus, influence is submitted to voluntarily while power puts one in a submissive position. Furthermore, influence and power can occur separately from each other. This can be illustrated if one considers the life of Nelson Mandela. During his presidency, he was in a position where he had both power and influence. However, during his prior incarceration, he had little capacity to make subjects of or exert control over others, hence he had little power. Despite this, his reputation allowed him influence while being imprisoned.

Power can be gained through three sources, namely resources, numbers of people and social organisation (Bierstedt 737). A police unit in a county, for example, has the power to

maintain a monopoly on force. This power is derived from the number of police officers in the unit, resources such as firearms and money which can be used to convert power into force, and social organisation (the legal system) which grants it power manifest as authority. These sources do not function separately but instead interact in complex and dynamic ways when power is produced.

Also important to this thesis is the distinction between power, force and authority. Bierstedt summarises the differences as such: "(1) power is latent force; (2) force is manifest power; and (3) authority is institutionalised power" (733). Force, therefore, refers to the reduction of alternative actions to the ones imposed on a subject by a subjugator. For example, holding somebody captive through the threat of lethal violence limits their options to either obeying or being killed. When social power is formally organised, it then becomes authority. For example, an armed warden keeping prisoners compliant is exercising a form of authority, as their power over the incarcerated is granted through the formal organisation of the law. From the above, one can conclude that both force and authority are derivatives of power.

Both Michel Foucault and Bierstedt do not conceive of power as a function of voluntary consent. When clarifying himself on the coerciveness of power, Foucault writes that "power is not a function of consent" (1982; 788), although "the relationship of power can be the result of a prior or permanent consent" (1982; 788). Despite the similarities, Foucault and Bierstedt do not give identical definitions of power. One of the areas of disagreement concerns whether power is action or potential. Bierstedt, among others, have characterised power as a form of potential. In Bierstedt's view, "power is always potential" (736) because when it is put into action it becomes something else (i.e. force or authority). Foucault, on the other hand, posits that "power exists only when it is put into action" (1982; 788). When one considers that Foucault believes that the exercise of power "consists in guiding the possibility of conduct and putting in order the possible outcome" (1982; 789), one may agree with me that it more closely resembles Bierstedt's definition of force. While this misalignment of ideas is a significant one, the problem need not be resolved in this thesis as the relevance of Foucault's theories to my research lies in their demystification of the unpredictability and complexity of power. Thus, for the scope of the thesis, the distinction between power and force made by Bierstedt will be important as it allows one to more clearly distinguish power as potential from power as action (which, as does Bierstedt, I shall refer to as force or, when formally organised, authority).

When power is misused for personal benefit, corruption occurs. Providing a wide-scoped definition, Carl Friedrich claims that political corruption occurs whenever

> "a power holder who is charged with doing certain things, that is a responsible functionary or office holder, is by monetary or other rewards, such as the expectation of a job in the future, induced to take actions which favour whoever provides the reward and thereby damage the group or organisation to which the functionary belongs, more specifically the government" (qtd. in Thomas Leonard 397).

Political corruption describes acts done by upper level powerholders such as governors, ministers, presidents and other high-ranking officials. Examples of political corruption include, but are not limited to, bribery which involves situations where "societal interests use extra-legal payments or bribes to influence the content of state policy or its implementation" (Stephen Morris 11); extortion which refers to "the use and abuse of state power by public officials to demand extra-legal payments or rents in return for providing a legitimate or illegitimate service" (Morris 11); and nepotism whereby positions are appointed on the basis of familial relations. In lower level institutions, the misuse of public resources for private gain is referred to as "administrative" (Morris 10) or "bureaucratic" (Morris 10) corruption and is typically performed by civil servants who have constant contact with the public. It often involves "smaller and more routine payments" (Morris 11), unlike the larger scale corruption committed by state officials.

In my analyses of the selected texts, my investigation into the role of power in the depicted dystopias will make use of Bierstedt's theorizations of power. I shall also make use of Foucault's bottom-up approach to understanding power. The French philosopher suggests one "make an ascending analysis of power" (2003; 30), beginning analysis where it is exercised over individuals before investigating whether it links to "produce broader and more persistent societal configurations" (Bob Jessop 36). Doing so does not downplay the importance of the government and state in the social power of a society, as he also contends that in contemporary societies all other power relations must refer to the state not because it is their source but because power relations have increasingly fallen under state control, leading them to be "progressively governmentalised" (Foucault 1982; 793).

To provide a brief outline of my thesis: the next chapter will discuss the selected South African texts where Cape Town is used as the setting. While the dystopian worlds

presented are teeming with zombies, nanobots and genetically modified police dogs, these fictitious renditions of familiar places reveal truths about reality and caution readers of potentially dystopian elements in society. Following this, Chapter Three will discuss the two selected Nigerian texts by Bandele-Thomas which vividly illustrate how corrupt power strategies can have consequences that devastate unintended targets. Chapter Four will feature an analysis of how the fallen societies depicted in the four selected texts are capable of inspiring hope within readers despite being set in Hadean versions of real-world locations and lacking temporal distancing.

Chapter Two: Cape Town Reimagined

The function of dystopian literature varies depending on the geographic location and time period it is produced in. For instance, dystopian literature produced by a prosperous country during times of peace might serve a greater entertainment purpose while dystopian literature produced in a war-torn country under dictatorship might have more political motives. During Apartheid, dystopian literature was one of the ways stories of the struggle were shared and experiences were expressed. These texts made socio-political observations and even served as forms of resistance against the racially separatist regime. Because of this, the dystopian books produced were important forces, as "the struggle writers of this time exposed the ills of their society through literature" (Joan-Mari Barendse 2012; 1). With the end of Apartheid and the beginning of democracy in 1994, one might expect the production of dystopian literature to cease. However, dystopian literature continues to be published. This can be attributed to the fact that the reality of post-Apartheid South Africa contrasts greatly with the promises of prosperity imagined in the new 'rainbow nation'. Post-Apartheid South Africa has seen ongoing crises such as high crime and HIV rates which have been difficult to mitigate. According to Barendse, writers respond to this "through portrayals of a dystopian future South Africa in this period" (2012; 1). Such portrayals can be found in contemporary works like *Apocalypse Now Now* (2013) by Charlie Human, a dystopian novel set in Cape Town which follows the adventures of a teenage boy named Baxter Zevcenko as he searches for his kidnapped girlfriend. His school, Westridge, features power struggles between gangs and can be seen as "a microcosm of the political, economic and military forces that shape the world" (Human 8). Furthermore, the protagonist has a split personality which serves as another example of the theme of fragmentation appearing in African dystopian fiction.

These texts, it could be argued, perform a different function from their pre-1994 counterparts. Rather than serve as a repository of struggle stories, these novels instead are cautionary tales which warn readers of potential dangers that threaten societal stability in South Africa's newfound democracy. Cautionary tales typically use imagined scenarios to illustrate what happens to those who disregard prohibitions. In doing so, they warn readers against falling victim to the same pitfalls. For example, the Bible, in the Book of Genesis, features the narrative of the fall of man which warns of the dangers of disobeying prohibitions. The selected South African dystopian texts contain elements that suggest they too could be read as cautionary tales. These stories take power strategies used during Apartheid and reproduce them in alternative settings, demonstrating that past methods of oppression can reappear in the present and future. By describing the horrible dystopian

societies that these power strategies produce, readers are cautioned against allowing those power strategies to take root in their own reality lest they find themselves in a similar hell.

As a post-Apartheid South African author with novels set in Cape Town, K. Sello Duiker's writing is perhaps most emblematic of this new trend of dystopian fiction which attempts to grapple with post-Apartheid social issues. *Thirteen Cents* (2000), told from the perspective of a street kid named Azure, offers descriptions of a divided Cape Town. Azure's life as a homeless child who is forced to scavenge for his survival, navigate an underworld of gangsters and self-medicate with drugs contrasts greatly with the affluency of the clients who come to him for sexual services. *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001), also by Duiker, features a protagonist named Tshepo who works as a sex worker in Cape Town. In addition to the economic divisions which can also be found in *Thirteen Cents*, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* exposes social divisions in Cape Town that occur along lines of race and sexuality. Tshepo feels the need to hide his attractions towards men and, instead of expressing the homosexual aspect of his identity, he conceals it. Rather than boast about his attractions, Tshepo states that "it is embarrassing to think about a man like this" (220). Due to the perceived emasculating properties of homosexuality, I would argue that *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* depicts Cape Town as a location where counter-heteronormative identities are pushed to the fringes of the mainstream where they exist as secluded communities. This is most clearly illustrated through Steamy Windows, a massage parlour that also functions as a gay brothel. During the time Tshepo spends working there, he discovers that many of the male patrons are married and lead seemingly heteronormative public lives. Their visits to Steamy Windows become the only time where they can explore their sexuality with other men in ways that diverge from heteronormative expectations. Hence, in response to a segregated society that pushes homosexuality to the outskirts, clients must fragment their own lives. Both novels, with stark realism, present a dystopian Cape Town where those on the margins of society are forced to live directly alongside the privileged. These images of a segregated Cape Town reveal post-Apartheid schisms in society and, by demonstrating the negative effects of segregation, caution readers against allowing such elements to continue flourishing.

While cautionary tales do have the potential to provide warnings to readers and share moral lessons, they are not infallible and have the potential to be perceived as didactic or overly moralising. When this occurs, the story may be interpreted as being patronising, and any attempt to teach will be compromised. Hence, this is an important pitfall to avoid. It is useful to begin an investigation into possible solutions by returning to the cautionary tales

found in many religions. In Christianity, cautionary tales with moral lessons are sometimes told through parables. A popular example which has stood the test of time is that of the parable of the sower which uses seeds as a metaphor to illustrate the different ways the Lord's message can be received, along with the consequences. Such parables are effective because, rather than merely lay out a moral instruction, they teach through subtext and metaphor. Might the South African texts also rely on indirect methods of communicating their central points in order to avoid patronising didacticism?

To discuss the ways the new wave of post-Apartheid dystopian fiction function as cautionary tales, I shall analyse *Moxyland* and *Deadlands*. Both texts are set in fictionalised versions of Cape Town. As previously discussed, the city is an important location in South Africa due to its history of segregation and forced removals. As we have seen, many pre-1994 dystopian elements in South Africa can still be found in the city in modern times. This is most apparent with the continued segregation which compels inhabitants of the same city to experience entirely different realities depending on the socioeconomic class they inhabit. The city contains some of the most noteworthy dystopian elements of both pre and post-democratic South Africa, making it a fitting setting for both *Moxyland* and *Deadlands*.

The analysis of each text will begin by, firstly, clarifying why the texts can be considered dystopian. This will be followed by a discussion, using Bierstedt's theories which outline three sources of power, concerning how the power strategies of Apartheid are reimagined in the South African novels. Bierstedt's framework is useful for understanding South African history because Apartheid was an intersection between race and politics. Race is inextricably tied to power because "racial discrimination is ultimately based on power relationships between a dominant and subordinate group" (Hubert Blalock Jr 53). Politics too cannot be explained without taking power into account because politics often involves "both a struggle for power and a struggle to limit, resist, and escape from power" (Wrong 675-6). After focusing on the on the power strategies used by oppressors, the analysis will turn to the oppressed subjects in the novels to investigate how their subordination is internalised through the passionate attachments they develop for their subjugators. This will be done with the intention of discovering how these dystopian renditions of Cape Town offer social critique and caution readers. The analysis will also pay attention to the ways the novels are able to convey their cautionary aspects without becoming excessively moralising.

Lauren Beukes's Moxyland

Beukes is a South African author who earned her MA in creative writing from the University of Cape Town. As *Moxyland* and the aforementioned *Zoo City* demonstrate, Beukes's writing often features reimagined South African post-Apartheid cities and is invested in interrogating social issues that contemporary readers are likely to easily identify and resonate with. Bethlehem suggests that Beukes's first-hand familiarity with the settings is responsible for the complex engagement with South African cities found in her texts, writing that "a lived knowledge of [South African cities'] workings deposits a certain epistemology of the South African city between the lines of her fiction" (525). Despite the focus on South African locations and issues, Beukes's novels still manage to draw international appeal and praise. This is made evident by the numerous international literary awards she has won including the British Arthur C. Clarke award (Stobie 367). Part of what may account for Beukes's appeal is her writing style which, in *Zoo City* and *Moxyland*, combines elements of humour and conversational language which raise the entertainment value of her novels without sacrificing the social commentary provided by the gritty depictions of contemporary South African CBDs. As Phoenix Alexander writes, Beukes offers her own specific brand of dystopian literature which is "violently funny, seemingly inescapable, enmeshing itself as it does in twenty-first century pop culture" (158).

The world to which readers are introduced in *Moxyland* is decidedly dystopian. It features a Cape Town segregated by what Beukes has termed a "corporate Apartheid state" (qtd in Louis Bethlehem 523). Technology, and cell phones in particular, are one of the prime causes of the dystopian society. Several other scholars have also categorised *Moxyland* as dystopian. Deirdre Byrne *et al*, discussing *Moxyland* as a dystopia, takes note of the importance of power in the novel and claims that Beukes "presents a dystopian world where corporate power dominates individual subjects" (74), while Helen Kapstein considers the novel to be a "dystopian, futuristic South Africa, exploding in various epidemics and contagions" (54). The novel, as a dystopian text deeply intertwined with the setting and history of a South African city, fits comfortably with other dystopian texts by Beukes such as the aforementioned *Zoo City* which provides a dystopian take on Johannesburg.

The idea of technology as a gateway to a dystopian world has been explored in both fiction and non-fiction. It appears prominently within anarcho-primitivist philosophy where technology is conceived of as a hinderance to human flourishing rather than a benefit. Such ideas are expressed by Henry David Thoreau in *Walden* (1854). The text describes the author's attempt to lead an independent life of solitude in the woods. Technology, from

Thoreau's perspective, breeds dependency and, consequently, thwarts the freedom that comes with self-sufficiency. Hence, Thoreau claims that "men have become tools of their tools" (12). In contrast to the idea of technology as the path to progress, *Walden* paints a simplistic, luddite life as a utopian one. Thoreau's ideas are echoed by later anti-industrialists such as Ted Kaczynski, more commonly known as the Unabomber, who, in *Industrial Society and its Future* (1995), argues that "it is not possible to make a LASTING compromise between technology and freedom" (15). Similarities between the worldviews of the two has been noted by J.C. Oleson who writes that "both claimed that, if people could divest themselves of property and shake off their dependence on technological systems, we could be free" (226). Within the realm of fiction, the idea of technology as a pathway to dystopia can be found in Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) which explores how biotechnology in the wrong hands can allow for our species to be controlled at the genetic level. Through indoctrination and artificial wombs used to engineer humans, individuals are divided into strict castes, society becomes excessively ordered and one's destiny is determined by the carefully controlled circumstances of birth. Consequently, technology becomes a hinderance to freedom rather than an avenue to it.

Moxyland, as *Walden*, *Industrial Society and its Future*, *Brave New World* and many other texts do, positions technology as a tool which has the potential to bring about peril as easily as paradise. In *Moxyland*, this is done by focusing on the ways technology can be used by those in power to enact totalitarian control over citizens and resuscitate power strategies of the past. Such possibilities are explored through the cyberpunk subgenre characterised by its depiction of "a technologically-enhanced urban society" (Robin Wilkinson *et al* 60). This subgenre is fitting for the thematic concerns of the text because it typically "considers how digital and cybernetic innovations have altered the human condition" (Wilkinson *et al* 60). In *Moxyland*'s metropolis, cell phones are necessary accessories for navigating the city. Due to this forced reliance on technology, stratification caused by economic disparity is exacerbated. The story reinforces this with a split narrative which is a common feature of "later cyberpunk and critical dystopia" (Stobie 373), allowing readers, in this case, access to the perspectives of four characters who inhabit different socioeconomic strata in Cape Town. One of the protagonists is Kendra Adams who, after dropping out of art school, is voluntarily injected with nanotechnology which causes her to become addicted to the soft drink Ghost. She crosses paths with Toby who records his life all hours of the day and takes pride in womanizing. Closer to the lower end of the social hierarchy we have Tendeka, who enlists the help of disconnected street kids during his activism, and Lerato who grows up as an

orphan with HIV but manages to climb the business ladder and earn herself some social currency. Through these four characters, the different ways in which Beukes's Cape Town is segregated are revealed. Additionally, corporations are an overarching vector of power that weaves through all four narratives and remains an inescapable shadow that casts itself over every Capetonian by making technology a prerequisite to social mobility.

By focusing on the possible ramifications of an increasingly techno-driven society, *Moxyland* demonstrates that power strategies used in the past are not exclusively relegated to the annals of history. Rather, the strategies can take on new forms and, by putting on corporation-tailored skin, are able to continue subjugating and segregating citizens living in a post-1994 democracy. To investigate this further, I shall analyse the role of power in the text, focusing on how the power strategies depicted are moulded by South Africa's past but find use in a post-1994 environment where they are aided by technological developments. The three sources necessary for power to occur (numbers, resources and social organisation), as outlined by Bierstedt, will be used to structure the investigation.

In *Moxyland*, the masses are under the control of corporations and the state which use the South African Police Services (SAPS) to exact their power. The police force mimics South Africa's Apartheid police force but with a cyberpunk twist. Although it is never explicitly stated, it is unlikely that the fictional police force outnumbers the masses. Hence the main sources of police power in *Moxyland* lie primarily with resources and organisation. With regards to resources, the Apartheid police force had their German Shepherd police dogs. *Moxyland*'s counterfactual police force receives a technological upgrade from their historic predecessors and are accompanied by genetically modified dogs known as Aitos. Guns, during Apartheid, were an effective means of maintaining power through force. Those guilty of attempting to subvert the status quo could be subject to violence (as seen during the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960 and the June 16 Soweto youth uprising of 1976). In *Moxyland*, police get an upgrade in weaponry which proves far more effective than firearms, so effective that they seldom need to be used. If citizens in *Moxyland* are found misbehaving, the police have access to "defusers" that cause the perpetrators' cell phones to zap them with a surge of electricity. The force of the shock is demonstrated when the police use a defuser against Tendeka who "drops straight away, jerking epileptic" (2014; 21). Through this debilitating weapon police can control people, limiting their scope of possible actions to either complying or facing crippling pain.

When an Aito mauls a street kid, Kendra takes a photo despite knowing that "you're not supposed to photograph police procedurals without a media permit" (2014; 128). When

she's confronted by a policeman, she immediately apologises and promises to delete the photos before scurrying off, feeling "an instant wave of guilt" (2014; 129) and "burning with humiliation" (2014; 130). This is an important scene, as Kendra's own guilt demonstrates that the demands of her subjugators have been internalised, making her a more pliable subject of their power. The phenomenon of subjects internalising authority, leading to self-discipline and self-punishment, is explained by Foucault. According to Anita Välikangas *et al*, "Foucault highlights that subjects are not controlled by only external forces, but that power is often internalised" (18). A symbol Foucault uses to represent this can be found in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975) where he describes the Panopticon, a prison designed by Jeremy Bentham. The prison has all the cells facing a tower in the centre of the building where a supervisor sits watch. Because the prisoners cannot see into the tower, they are forced to assume that, at any moment, the supervisor is facing them. Hence, the prisoners behave as though they are being watched even when they are not, creating "a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers" (Foucault 2012; 201). By creating the illusion of the omnipresence of authority, subjects can be made to self-discipline. Because characters in the novel must constantly have their cell phones on them to navigate their world, power becomes seemingly ubiquitous as their cell phones can, at any moment, be used by police to punish them. The reimagining of guns into defusers that give characters the illusion of carrying authority with them everywhere demonstrates how technology might extend the reach of those in power to produce near-absolute control of their subjects.

Another resource that was at the disposal of the Apartheid police force were bioweapons. During the regime, Wouter Basson was the head of Project Coast, a clandestine chemical and bioweapons program. According to Chandré Gould *et al*, one of the aims of the project was to develop "chemical warfare agents that could be used by security forces to control crowds" (1). In their United Nations report, Gould *et al* claim that a more irritant new generation of teargas was developed which came to be known as Teargas CR. The gas was five to ten times more potent than traditional teargas and was used to "suppress domestic opposition to Apartheid" (8). The use of bioweaponry in Project Coast was also meant to have a racial component. Gould *et al* reveal that during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Doctor Daniel Goosen confessed to him and Basson discussing the development of anti-fertility drugs to administer to "black South African women without their knowledge" (65). In fact, "many projects were registered at RRL to investigate the production of a male and female anti-fertility vaccine" (65). Though likely impossible, Dr Goosen also revealed that research was under way to develop bacteria that would target only

black people (Singh 06). Through such uses of biopower, black populations could have been controlled and their power squelched.

Control maintained through a focus on bodies and their lives can be categorised as biopower. According to Katia Genel, biopower is concerned with population control and "intervenes in different processes such as birth, death, and illnesses, which are considered to be factors in the reduction of force" (46). This is based on Foucault's first volume of *History of Sexuality* (1976) where he argues that biopower is a "calculated management of life" (1978; 140) which makes use of various "techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations" (1978; 140). Biopower can also be used for racial discrimination. Connections between biopower and race are made by Foucault in *Society Must Be Defended* (1976) where, according to Bethlehem, he makes explicit that "biopower mobilises categories of race in order to exert discriminations" (530). Specifically, Foucault points to anti-Semitism in the nineteenth century when the state, to defend the 'purity' of race, justified other races being "driven out for both political and biological reasons" (Foucault 2003; 89). Clearly, the aforementioned Project Coast too consisted of power strategies which made use of biopolitics and biopower.

In *Moxyland* similar bioweapons and biopolitical strategies, fictionalised and futurized, are used by the SAPS. During a protest police release a fine mist which infects the protestors with the M7N1 virus, supposedly "for their protection" (2014; 208). The protestors are then told that the virus will kill them unless they report to an immunity centre within forty-eight hours. The use of bioweapons could be considered a form of power manifest as force because the options of the infected are limited to either turning themselves in or dying from the virus. Although *Moxyland* can be read as a depiction of a "regime that maintains rigid social divisions on the basis of class rather than race" (Bethlehem 523), Kendra's interaction with biopolitics may, in a Project Coast-like fashion, racialise the way power functions in the novel. As Byrne *et al* highlight, "Kendra is the only character in *Moxyland* who is explicitly positioned in terms of race" (78). This is suggested too by Jennifer Schmidt who explains that "Kendra does not refer to herself as 'white' but references to her pale skin, green eyes, and visible bruises that sharply contrast with her own pigmentation support this reading, as does her use of the multivalenced term, 'Ghost girl'" (117). Being a 'Ghost girl' injected with nanotechnology has its advantages, the most notable being immunity to illness. This comes in handy when Kendra is infected with the M7N1 virus but is protected by the nanobots in her veins. However, Kendra was only eligible to receive the injection because she is "the perfect ambassador for the brand" (Beukes 2014; 5) who embodies the "media ideal of

the young, white, thin female body" (Byrne *et al* 78). Thus, Kendra represents a racialised use of biopower whereby the lives of those who conform to ideal whiteness are spared while others are not. Hence, once again we find an element of Apartheid being brought into an imagined cyberpunk setting. However, its effect is even more devastating, thanks to nanobot technology that protects those who are racially privileged.

As the analysis of resources demonstrates, technology, in *Moxyland*, provides a portal for power strategies of the past to reappear in often improved ways and to subjugate South Africans as they did during Apartheid. These dark imaginings do not merely entertain readers with a dystopian version of Cape Town, but also warn them that the power strategies depicted are not merely relics of the past and that technology can facilitate their re-emergence. Thus, *Moxyland* can be thought of as a cyberpunk dystopian cautionary tale illustrating the pitfalls that emerge when corporations use technology to reproduce old power strategies and oppress the masses. This hypothesis might be tested further by analysing the third source of power, organisation.

Social organisation, Bierstedt argues, is an important source of power because, when used correctly, it can allow a minority to hold power over a majority. Hence, a "well organized and disciplined body of marines or of police can control a much larger number of unorganized individuals" (Bierstedt 737). During South Africa's pre-democratic past, the South African Apartheid police force organised themselves through legislation that included statutes, Bills and Acts. Similarly, in *Moxyland*, the legal system is used by SAPS to organise its resources effectively. Toby notes that the police need "extra paperwork" (2014; 21) to use over 200 volts, as this qualifies as potentially lethal force, revealing a bureaucratic system which organises the use of power. Furthermore, when SAPS use the M7N1 virus, they reference "statute 41b, Extreme Measures, of the National Security Act" (2014; 206) as the guide for their actions. The organisation between the government and the corporations also allows for greater use of power on the citizens. As a form of punishment for disobedience, police may 'disconnect' offenders, meaning that their cell phones will no longer allow access to many parts of the city. Once disconnected, a person is essentially "relegated to homeless[ness], out of society, cut from the commerce loop" (Beukes 2014; 85). This mutual relationship between corporations and government results in people being enslaved by tech companies and forced to obey the government lest they relinquish their freedom and mobility. The limitations and exclusions to which characters with no cell phones and SIM IDs are exposed can be seen when Tendeka and his boyfriend, Ashraf, have great difficulties travelling through Cape Town. Upon being disconnected, Tendeka is unable to gain entrance

to the D-line underway stop on Wale Street. Because of this, he and Ashraf are forced to bribe a taxi driver instead of taking the train.

While the corporate state employs social organisation to bolster its own power, it also inhibits the masses from socially organising. One of the ways this is achieved is through segregation. This power strategy utilises the divide-and-conquer tactic which attempts to break large masses into smaller factions and, in doing so, reduce their power. Bhaso Ndzendze has argued that the "so-called 'divide and conquer' tactic was the bedrock of Apartheid" (para 09). During Apartheid, divisions were drawn along the basis of skin colour which resulted in power struggles between races instead of unity. Through the creation of homelands, even individual races were broken into smaller subcategories which further hindered unity and organisation. As Ndzendze explains, "homelands partitioned in terms of linguistic and cultural distinction served to split the Black peoples of this nation" (para 9), making the disunified masses easier to control. As Beukes's imagined Cape Town reveals, similar divisions can be forged on an economic basis. To function and thrive in *Moxyland*'s Cape Town, a cell phone is vital. However, not everyone can afford to own one. Thus, technology becomes a resource which widens economic disparity, as those without access to cell phones are barred from the very facilities they would need to lift themselves from their poverty. For this reason, Tendeka's boyfriend calls the street kids without cell phones "disenfranchised. Society's dropouts. The lost generation" (2014; 171). Thus, because technology is such a vital part of traversing the city, economic class becomes a factor which creates a division between the connected who are granted access to mainstream society and the disconnected who live on the outskirts.

Cell phones and their SIM IDs in *Moxyland* echo the use of passbooks in South Africa during Apartheid. Due to pass laws, blacks had to carry passbooks to legally travel from homelands into urban areas. The high arrest rates of blacks without passbooks lead Michael Savage to conclude that pass laws were used to "control the freedom of movement of the African population and to circumscribe their access to labour markets in both urban and rural area[s]" (181). Beck notes that "Africans, Asians, Coloureds and some whites vehemently protested these laws, but the government made such opposition a criminal act itself" (139). On top of enforcing strict segregation, pass laws also had economic effects on black populations. The restricted access to urban areas limited employment opportunities for the black population, causing Savage to propose that the laws which restricted movement were meant to exclude blacks from the white economy when their labour was not needed.

The divide-and-conquer strategy enabled by the pass system of Apartheid is re-used in a technologically advanced way in *Moxyland*. The strategy functions in the same manner as, in both cases, the segregation results in economic disempowerment and reduced mobility. However, the cell phone is superior as it, without the need for human labour, denies the disconnected access to the city, resulting in their complete separation from mainstream society. By depicting this, *Moxyland* demonstrates that banning passes, on its own, is not a sufficient means of eliminating the power strategies seen with the pass system. Instead, the strategies can transform themselves to fit a technologically superior environment. Beukes's Cape Town might be fictional, but it bears enough resemblance to the real Cape Town for social commentary to be drawn. For instance, in modern times access to the internet is an increasingly important part of engaging with society. Those with internet access enjoy E-commerce opportunities and greater means of communication. These advantages have come to Africa through the recent boom in internet connectivity "due to the use of cell phones" (Arthur Goldstuck 38) which makes internet access easier and cheaper. However, those without cell phones – who are typically already economically disadvantaged – are likely to lack access to internet. This has the potential to exacerbate existing class chasms between those who are connected to the internet (and enjoy the subsequent benefits) and those who are not.

Disease is another basis for division used by the government in *Moxyland* to segregate the population. To do this, strategies of biopower are employed. During Lerato's narrative, readers are shown the ways in which individuals are excluded from the city through biopolitics. Lerato is an AIDS baby who, through her cunning, earns herself a comfortable corporate lifestyle. However, the threat of her exclusion still looms due to her condition. When entering OR Tambo airport, she is stopped and asked for her immune status. It is only her privileged position in society that grants her the bargaining power to escape being refused her flight. Biopolitics affect Lerato again when she is unable to travel to the Ciskei for her parents' memorial because a new round of quarantine results in her being turned away at the first checkpoint. In these examples, the population is controlled and the movement of bodies are restricted and segregated on a biological basis. Similar biopolitics are seen through the geographical layout of the city. The bustling metropolis where the privileged dwell is kept separate from the Rural which is the home of the underclass. Those who are able to afford to keep themselves healthy are allowed access to medical care in the city while those in the Rural are left to fall victim to contagious disease. When commenting on the Rural inhabitants, Stobie describes them as a "shadowy underclass periodically quarantined as a

result of terrifying ‘outbreaks’ of some unspecified contagious illness, which suggests and extends present-day anxieties about HIV/Aids and tuberculosis” (371). There are also psychological effects. Being labelled as ‘sick’ limits a person’s mobility and imbues them with stigmas and dehumanising stereotypes. Kendra experiences this when Mister Muller, not knowing that Kendra’s nanobots protect her from the M7N1 virus, tells her she’s sick. She realises that being attached to that label “feels like a personal attack on my genetic potential” (2014; 255).

These dystopian uses of biopower are not unlike the biopolitical strategies used in South Africa’s history. During the early 1900s, the hay imported from Argentina to feed British horses had rats. The fleas on the rodents carried the bubonic plague which spread throughout Cape Town and led to the first forced removals in 1901 (Sean Field 17). With the Cape government blaming blacks for spreading the disease, the Public Health Amendment Act of 1897 was evoked to relocate them to Uitvlugt. The areas reserved for blacks were, according to Field, unhealthy places with constant outbreaks of typhoid, pneumonia, cholera and bronchitis. Additionally, the divisions between the Rural and the rest of the city are comparable to the photographs taken of Cape Town by Johnny Miller. Once again, we find an artificial segregation of society, this one created by class rather than race. Furthermore, in both cases, segregation creates a positive feedback loop which only encourages further segregation. Those who are deemed ‘sick’ are relegated to live among others deemed ‘sick’ where they receive poor health care while those labelled ‘healthy’ have greater access to healthcare facilities, further increasing the gap between the two.

Comparing the use of organisation and of resources as power sources in *Moxyland*, a pattern emerges. In both cases, the novel illustrates how technology can facilitate the return of old power strategies and produce undesirable realities. These imagined reproductions of Apartheid power strategies allow *Moxyland* to function as a cautionary tale. In the same way that the Biblical story of the fall of man warns of the dangers of temptation by illustrating how it leads to suffering, Beukes’s novel warns of the dangers of re-emerging Apartheid power strategies by illustrating how technology can lead to continued social stratification. This warning is especially pertinent within a South African context because of the setting. However, the warning is also applicable in a wider context because the power strategies depicted are not exclusive to Apartheid and instead have manifested in several countries throughout time.

Although the actions of the police force, government and corporations affect the characters in many ways, it is important to note that not all strategies they employ are

manifestations of power and instead fall into closely related concepts. For instance, influence is also used to control the citizens. Corporations use various tactics to influence people into becoming consumers. This is done, for example, through Sponsorbabes such as Kendra who, as Toby points out when he spots her corporate logo tattoo, are used in a business strategy which involves handing out "free stuff to the cool kids" (2014; 17) in hopes that everyone will notice and buy the same products. Readers are made aware of the widespread aspirations for ideal body standards through the existence of anti-aging nanotechnology moisturiser and the fact that even in the virtual reality game Pluslife, in which people are free to do as they please, desires for ideal bodies still influence players. As Tendeka notes, "even in game space everyone wants to be skinny and beautiful" (2014; 111). Schmidt also suggests there is a racial component to the use of Sponsorbabes, contending that Kendra's suitability as a Sponsorbabe "reveals that it is white skin that is the implicitly designated ideal 'surface'" (2014; 114). Because this method of social control is voluntary and not coercive, it does not qualify as a use of power under Bierstedt's framework. However, it is still an effective means of affecting people's behaviours and turning them into consumers of corporate goods. By illustrating how people can be influenced by corporations, and consequently controlled, *Moxyland* warns and alerts readers of similar ways they might be influenced in reality.

To completely understand the role of power in *Moxyland*, an analysis of SAPS and the corporate state alone is insufficient. As previously stated, Foucault suggests a bottom-up approach to analysing power. Jen Pylypa summarises Foucault's views, stating that "we are all the vehicles of power because it is embedded in discourses and norms that are part of the minute practices, habits, and interactions of our everyday lives" (23). This is seen in the ways characters like Kendra internalise authority and self-discipline accordingly. The bottom-up approach also reveals the way larger systems of power are created in the everyday interactions between people. This can be demonstrated through analysis of gender power relations. Kendra, as has been discussed, is used by corporations as a Sponsorbabe to sell soft drinks. Her suitability to the task is made possible through her youthful body which serves as an "'erotic' spectacle" (Schmidt 112). Doing so is arguably a form of objectification whereby women are reduced to mere instruments or bodies that exist purely for the pleasure of others. However, in *Moxyland*, such paradigms seem not to be the product of corporations, but rather appear to be created in the daily lives of ordinary characters. A dominating form of masculinity which subordinates women and is contingent on heterosexual success pervades *Moxyland*'s Cape Town, as is illustrated through Toby. Through his denigrating disposition towards women, he displays a misogynistic attitude, as depicted when he says "the last

person I was this interested in was Tamarin, and she was psycho deluxe, especially when she bust me and Nokulelo together. But what was she expecting when I was still with Jenna when we hooked up? Forget the rational, they always think they can change you" (2014; 68). Here, Toby reveals a kind of masculinity which objectifies women as tools of sexual pleasure. Furthermore, by suggesting that women cannot be rational, he conforms to patriarchal ideologies of women being inferior. This dominating form of masculinity appears be normative in Toby's society. When describing his livestream, Toby lists "sexploits with beautiful girls" (2014; 17) as one of the main features. The fact that he has a following which gives him 558430 unique daily hits suggests that his particular expression of masculinity is both accepted and celebrated. Unfortunately, this results in malevolent power strategies being used against women. As Robyn Wilkinson writes, Toby is a "highly sexist character who approaches his trysts with women with a high degree of arrogance and callousness" (39). Wilkinson suggests that Toby's desire to reduce women to sexual objects stems from a need to have "control in the casual relationships he pursues" (39). Thus, objectification works as an attempt at a power strategy which seeks to maintain authority over women by denying women agency and reducing them to tools for sexual pleasure or to boost his viewership. Similar displays of misogynistic masculinity are displayed by Kendra's manager/boyfriend Jonathan who also attempts to control her. Like Toby, Jonathan casts objectifying gazes upon Kendra, who states that he gives her "the full-body up-down, like he does to the models in casting" (2014; 61). This could be read as a "habituated execution of the male gaze" (Schmidt 117) which is subordinating as it positions Kendra as an object for Jonathan's viewing pleasure.

Just as corporations use women like Kendra for their own ends, so too do average citizens like Toby. This is necessary as, were it not for the power strategies among ordinary civilians which subordinate women and reduce them to erotic objects, Kendra's use as a Sponsorbabe would not be possible. Hence, we find that a bottom-up approach to power, as Foucault suggests, reveals how "power relations at the micro-level of society make possible certain global effects of domination" (Sawicki 28). Furthermore, Toby's masculinity may be just as normative in the real world as it is in *Moxyland*. As research by Peter Theodore *et al* reveals, "contemporary society deems heterosexuality an essential condition of masculinity" (32). In a South African context, Kristin Dunkle *et al* explain that "qualitative evidence from South Africa and other settings suggests that 'successful' performance of masculinity often depends on both heterosexual success with women and, in the context of entrenched gender hierarchy, on the ability to control women" (173).

My investigation into *Moxyland* began with the hypothesis that the text is a post-Apartheid dystopian novel which functions as a cautionary tale, warning that old power strategies, helped along by the growing power of technology, can be moulded to produce oppression in a post-1994 setting. Analysis of the sources of power in the novel lend evidence to this hypothesis, as they each imagine how strategies used by South Africa's Apartheid police force could be reproduced in technologically superior ways, demonstrating that the power strategies of the past cannot be killed simply by changing laws or ushering in a new political party. Such social commentary is especially relevant in a South African context where the racial divisions carved by Apartheid are regularly re-inscribed on economic grounds. The growth of technology has the potential to further stretch those divisions, as those without access to technology and the internet are disconnected from the ever-increasing digital sphere of society. This also creates a dependence on the corporations that sell the technology necessary to participate in mainstream society. The threat of re-emerging Apartheid power strategies is stressed again through the depiction of technologically improved biopolitical strategies which, as was the case during Apartheid, use categories of race, sickness and health to control the population. By playing out all these power strategies in a dystopian setting, Beukes outlines a hell to avoid and, consequently, warns readers of potential dangers should the same mistakes made in the novel be replicated in reality.

Lily Herne's Deadlands

Sarah Lotz is a South African author who has also published novels under the pseudonym Lily Herne (as is the case with *Deadlands*) and S.L. Grey (as is the case with *The Mall* (2011)). *Deadlands* is the first novel in the 'Mall Rats' series, and features a post-apocalyptic Cape Town overrun by zombies known as Rotters. Large swaths of the population are ruled by an oppressive group, the Guardians, who are opposed by an underground resistance group known as the ANZ. Although not much information is given regarding the apocalyptic events which give rise to the zombie infestation, Herne does reveal that "the War" (14) took place during the 2010 FIFA World Cup Tournament. When some contagion starts turning people into zombies, a mysterious group of beings known as the Guardians come to the rescue. Not much description is given of them, though we are told that they are "not people like us" (51). They serve as the closest semblance of a government state, although they more closely resemble a cult as their followers are referred to as Resurrectionists who offer unwavering loyalty to the Guardians. The novel, with its accessible prose, action scenes and heroic protagonist who seldom has a shortage of snappy quips, slots in well within the Western teen

zombie horror genre which tends to draw young adult audiences. However, references and allusions to South African society and history allow the text to resonate locally without losing broader appeal. For instance, the naming of Malema High School, references to the 2010 FIFA World Cup and the use of Cape Town as a setting all position the text as decidedly South African without making it inaccessible to anyone without prior knowledge of the country. The novel has been classed as dystopian by scholars such as Russell West-Pavlov, who considers *Deadlands* an urban dystopia, and Margeaux Erasmus, who interprets the Rotters as symbols of insatiable consumerism.

Tatum Davis underlines that segregation caused by race, class and geographic divisions continue to plague post-Apartheid cities in South Africa, hence "science fiction emerging among South African authors – set in very specific locations – reflects the dynamic that characterises the contemporary South African city" (62). *Deadlands* continues this trend in South African science fiction by turning Cape Town into a city segregated between survivors in the enclave and zombies in the deadlands. The city is also segregated between supporters of the Guardians and supporters of the resistance group. The segregation between groups is an example of the theme of fragmentation found in all four selected texts. Given the setting of *Deadlands*, the fragmentation depicted may be a metaphorical representation of the fragmentation that shapes Cape Town's history. To investigate this further, I shall analyse the ways power strategies used during Apartheid are reimagined in *Deadlands*. This will be done by discussing the three sources of power which grant the Guardians their control of Cape Town before comparing how their power strategies – such as the use of biopolitics and spatial engineering - mimic those used by the Apartheid government. Running throughout the analysis will be a concern with how these depictions of segregation and reproduced Apartheid power strategies assist in turning the dystopian narrative into a cautionary tale.

Like *Moxyland*, power in *Deadlands* can be explained by making use of Bierstedt's framework to outline the three sources of it. The power strategies employed by the Guardians are often re-renderings of Apartheid strategies. Their success, even in a wildly fantastical setting, is testament to the robustness of the strategies and an indication that they are not contingent on Apartheid to flourish. Of the three sources of power, resources, once again play a pivotal role in granting power to oppressors. To emphasise the importance of resources as a source of power, Bierstedt explains that when there are two groups "nearly equal in numbers and comparable in organisation, the one with access to the greater resources will have the superior power" (737). The monopoly the Guardians have over resources grants them enough power to force citizens to offer up their children, as illustrated through the Lottery. Every

year, the people are expected to sacrifice teens in the Lottery for the Guardians to gift them with goods such as food and building materials. For example, the Guardians agree to begin introducing electricity to the enclave but, as Comrade Nkosi notes, "there is a price to be paid for this" (35). Thus, that year, the people are willing to give up five teenage sacrifices for the Lottery. The similarities between the resources-related power strategies of *Deadlands* and Apartheid are best seen through the instances of biopower. However, to better understand that, the role of zombies in the text must first be demystified.

One of the most valuable resources Guardians have access to are the zombies. Being monsters, the zombies contribute to the dystopian atmosphere of the novel. Monsters frequently serve a cathartic function by representing the anxieties of the zeitgeist. A widely recognisable example of this is Godzilla. The monster, whose franchise began in 1954, is produced by nuclear radiation, threatens to destroy Tokyo and has the ability to produce 'atomic breath', resulting in speculation that it might be a metaphor for fears inspired by the Nagasaki and Hiroshima atomic bombings (John Vohlidka 56). Similarly, zombies, as David McNally explains, were made popular by Hollywood horror films where they are depicted as "largely mindless consumers" (213), indicative of anxieties surrounding capitalist culture in the West. In different African popular cultures, zombies instead represent "mindless workers" (213) and are inspired by the "experience of enslaved Africans" (210) who are reduced to "a mere source of labour" (213), a condition Karl Marx would label alienated labouring. When discussing the evolution of the use of zombies in dystopian fiction, Andreu Domingo hypothesises that in the third millennium, popular conceptions of zombies "transformed to take into account the division between zombies and survivor[s]" (3). Domingo proposes that survivors in zombie dystopias require resilience to ensure their existence, as is the case in the competitive and technologically advancing societies of the real world where one's redundancy is an ever-looming threat. Thus, survivors strive to stop themselves from becoming the zombies who, according to Domingo, could be interpreted not as mindless workers but as the redundant members of society, a group which includes "individuals who are incapable of joining the job market" (6).

Deadlands features zombies who resemble those produced in Hollywood. According to McNally, American zombies are "creatures of consumption" (210) that can be found "mobbing stores and malls" (210). George A. Romero's *Dawn of the Dead*, mentioned by McNally, is perhaps the most iconic example of this. The 1978 horror film features a group of zombie epidemic survivors who seek refuge in a shopping mall. A 21st century example can be found in *The Last of Us* (2013), a video game by Naughty Dog which tells the story of Joel

and Ellie as they travel in a dystopian USA destroyed by hordes of zombies. *The Last of Us: Left Behind* (2014), the DLC to the game, is set almost entirely in a zombie ridden abandoned mall and switches between scenes of Ellie seeking supplies in the mall for Joel who is severely wounded, and flashbacks to her exploring the mall with a friend and getting attacked by zombies. Noting similarities between *Dawn of the Dead* and *The Last of Us*, Joseph Gonzales writes that "both the film and the game also take place in a mall with the protagonists of both texts leisurely taking advantage of the resources, until the Infected begin attacking" (75). In either case, scenes of braindead zombies marauding malls evokes imagery of mindless consumerism. Similarly, Herne's zombies have dulled senses and lurk around an abandoned mall in a fashion that resembles the zombies from American media. Finding Americanised zombies in South African texts is not anomalous because, as McNally points out, many zombie stories in South Africa are "not derived from traditional South African folklore, but are rather taken full-blown from American horror films" (210). Despite the heavy Western pop culture influence, Herne's zombies do feature certain elements that capture South African anxieties produced by the country's past. This is made apparent when the ways that the Guardians use the zombies as biopolitical resources are investigated.

Barendse explains that "unlike the uncontrollable zombie masses of contemporary fiction, and like the traditional Haitian zombie, Herne's zombies are controlled by evil masters – in this case, the Guardians" (2015; 83). The close relationship between the Guardians and zombies is not accidental. In addition to their ability to control the Rotters, the Guardians can also produce them. Ginger, one of the Mall Rats the protagonist, Lele de la Fontein, comes across explains that Guardians take the newly dead to the bone pile where they become zombies. She also explains that new zombies, called "hatchlings" (203), are created from people that are relocated. Lele sees a Guardian-steered wagon of people being relocated and her father tells her that it is usually "criminals. People guilty of petty theft, violence, insurgency" (84) who are chosen. Later, she discovers that Guardians prefer using teenagers to make zombies because "teenagers are the only humans that can survive the change without it destroying their system" (298). The zombies prove to be a useful resource because they instil fear and keep the populations in the enclave obedient to the Guardians, who present themselves as benevolent protectors against the marauding monsters. This is seen with the Resurrectionist cult who worship the Guardians and refer to them as "Saviours" (17). Thus, as Ginger points out, the Guardians have no reason to stop producing zombies while they still have "Resurrectionists sucking up to them like they do" (203). Although the zombie-making process is very clandestine, Lele suspects it could involve "aliens, or some

sort of virus" (42). When she sees a beheaded zombie, she notes that instead of blood they have "thin white curling tendrils" (128) that look like spaghetti. Saint, one of the Mall Rats, claims that the 'spaghetti', as she calls it, "reanimates the bodies" (129). Thus, while the details of the reanimation process remain murky, it results in a constant supply of zombies for the Guardians to use to control the remaining survivors in the enclave. The comparison between zombies and workers is made by Paul, a Guardian, when he states that "in the enclave, you have workers – people who pull you along the streets like horses, others who pick up the rubbish. That is what the dead are to us" (299).

The exploitation of Rotters could be considered another example of biopower because biologically based strategies are being used to control the life of the population. Providing a brief history of this kind of power, Foucault claims that in the past, sovereigns had the power to administer death in order to punish those who transgress laws or by demanding their subjects defend the state against enemies. Hence, they had the power to either kill or refrain from killing. However, following the 18th century, Western societies "took on board the fundamental biological fact that human beings are a species" (Foucault 2009; 1) and "the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power" (Foucault 2009; 1). The power to bring death became the counterpart to the power to control and foster life through "endeavours to administer, optimize, and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations" (Foucault 1978; 137). Bethlehem, summarising Foucault's outlining of biopower in *History of Sexuality*, writes that biopower therefore consists of "the right to sustain life and to administer death – at the level of populations" (530). In *Deadlands*, death is administered by the Guardians through the relocation of people who, as Lele's father reveals, do not survive for long once they are outside the enclave (85). However, they also control the right to life by reanimating the dead to create a class of mindless slave labour to be used "as a means to maintain control of the enclave by creating fear" (Davis 26). By keeping the people in fear, they remain reliant on the Guardians for protection despite the fact that it is the Guardians who are creating the monsters in the first place. Hence, although they are monsters, the Rotters, as Barendse writes, are "are not the real enemy. They are pawns in a power struggle" (2015; 81).

The biopolitics of *Moxyland* and *Deadlands* have many parallels with South African biopolitics under Apartheid. Both the Apartheid government and the Guardians wish to control the population for similar reasons – to create an obedient, cheap labour class. This can be illustrated by analysing the economics of Apartheid. While Apartheid is often, rightfully,

discussed in terms of racism, it is important to recognise that the regime was also economically motivated. Pam Christie *et al*, using Marxist methodology, posit that it is possible to argue that the ruling minority did not oppress "blacks merely because they are racists (which they may well be) but because they need them as non-competitive cheap labour" (61). For evidence, Christie *et al* point to the education system during pre-democratic South Africa. Initially, there was hesitation concerning state-supplied schools because of the belief that it would, according to the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Education in 1936, make blacks "'cheeky' and less docile" (Christie *et al* 64). When schooling was provided to blacks, it was in the inferior form of Bantu Education created with the intention of teaching blacks "how to prepare themselves for a realistic place in a white-dominated society" (Christie *et al* 60). This was achieved by "stressing cultural differences between white and blacks" in order to "prepare Blacks to accept differences as part of the unchallenged order" (69). It was also achieved by focusing on skills which allowed for "the reproduction of the sort of workers demanded by the capitalist system" (63). Bantu Education did this by teaching English and Afrikaans which were "the languages of the employers" (63) and promoting values such as "cleanliness, punctuality, honesty, respect, courtesy, etc" (64) to produce obedient and reliable low-skilled labour. The zombies of *Deadlands*, in many ways, mimic what the ideal output of the Bantu Education system was intended to be: cheap workers who accepted their subordination, could be easily controlled and worked dutifully. Both the Guardians and the National Party desired to turn the oppressed population into masses of alienated labourers who work, not for their own fulfilment, but for the ends of those who subjugate them. Despite being depicted mostly in the fashion of Western zombies, the Rotters of *Deadlands* share similarities with African zombies through this metaphorical depiction of alienated labour. Thus, just as Godzilla is often interpreted as a representation of Japan's nuclear war history, the Guardian-controlled zombies of Herne's novel can be read as an embodiment of South Africa's use of legislation and education to enact state control of certain segments of the population with intentions of creating exploitable labour.

The creation of the black labour class was a carefully balanced, racially based attempt to control the population. Blacks could not be too educated because politicians feared, as they were quoted saying during the Eiselen Commission Report of 1951, that they would be "burdened with a number of academically trained Europeans and non-Europeans, and who is going to do the manual labour in the country?" (Christie *et al* 70). However, blacks also had to be educated enough to serve as cheap labour because with the low numbers of white South Africans in the country, the need for labour, especially the low-skilled variety, simply could

not be satisfied solely by white workers. Harold Wolpe summarises the situation succinctly: "Apartheid is the attempt of the capitalist to meet the expanding demand for cheap African labour in the era of industrial manufacturing capital; at the same time it is the realisation of the demand of white workers for protection against the resulting increased competition from black workers" (427). The Guardians of *Deadlands* must perform similar balancing acts by keeping a sizeable zombie population, achieved by simply increasing the number of teenagers taken in the Lottery as needed. However, the human population also cannot be too small, so active steps are taken to ensure that reproduction occurs rapidly enough (such as by withholding birth control). Despite the division between the zombies and the humans, they are, much like blacks and whites during Apartheid, ineluctably dependent on each other.

The creation of homelands or Bantustans was another means of producing a black labour class to be exploited. Through legislation and relocation, blacks were stripped of their ability to own one of the most important means of production - land. This was done, as Wolpe explains, through the Native Land Act of 1913 which prevented blacks from owning land outside of reserves or repurchasing land acquired by conquest. Dispossessed and receiving little state assistance for agricultural development, many blacks were forced to sell their labour at a "portion of the value of the product" (Wolpe 431) produced. When Apartheid came into effect in 1948, the system was improved. Continued use of Native Land Acts and pass laws meant that blacks could never be permanent residents in urban areas. Blacks had to travel as migrant labourers to find work in cities and mines. This produced a mobile work force that "could be directed and redirected to where it was required" (Wolpe 447). Compounds for migrant labourers to live in were created "in order for thousands of workers to be mobilised for work at short notice" (Andries Bezuidenhout *et al* 244). The ability of the state to keep labour cheap was strengthened by crushing black worker unions (Bezuidenhout *et al* 245) and evoking the Natives Act of 1953 which made it illegal for blacks to "strike for higher wages" (Wolpe 446). Such strategies, used together, were successful enough for Bezuidenhout *et al* to propose that Apartheid was "probably one of the most extreme examples of spatial engineering in human history" (238). With this in mind, it should be noted that the system was extremely problematic, as while it did aid the mining sector and agricultural sector where "white farmers had been complaining of both seasonal and permanent labour shortages since that the late 1920s" (Deborah Posel 30), it was ultimately unsustainable. Firstly, people did not tolerate unfair treatment for long and their resistance eventually ended Apartheid. Secondly, while employment rose, poverty was still high due to low wages which had even employed Africans struggling to survive (Posel 32). Thus, while I

would not go so far as to agree with Christie *et al*'s claim that the National Party implemented segregation laws and Bantu Education "in the interests of their socio-economic needs and not because they were racialists" (74), I would argue that a disregard for the humanity of natives justified the use of the black population as a class to be exploited for labour.

This biopolitical strategy used to control the population and create an exploitable black working-class functions analogously to the biopolitical strategies seen in *Deadlands*. In both instances, space is a very important aspect of population control. Bantustans, homelands and migrant compounds in South Africa kept blacks in one space, a feat achieved through the previously discussed "terminating of land ownership by blacks except in reserved areas, the illegalisation of black residence on white farms (except as servants in the employ of whites), the control of urban influx, and later, the denial of citizenship to Africans" (Mbembé *et al* 26). In *Deadlands*, the deadlands can be seen as the 'homelands' for the zombies while the urban enclave of Cape Town is kept zombie-free for the survivors in much the same way cities were reserved for white minorities during Apartheid. Furthermore, just as relocations occur in *Deadlands*, so too were people relocated to achieve the separation between the black labour class and the ruling minority class in Apartheid South Africa. This is also noted by Barendse who argues that in *Deadlands*, "the use of the word 'relocate' conjures up Apartheid forced removals" (2015; 84). Barendse, writing that "the exploitation of black workers by white employers continues unabated" (2015; 83) in South Africa, also makes possible the argument that the comparisons between the black labour class and Herne's zombies do not have to be restricted to the past. The reimplementation of Apartheid biopolitics demonstrates to readers that such power strategies can morph to exist outside of the National Party's racist system, perhaps even in readers' own world. Consequently, readers are cautioned against allowing these power strategies to root themselves in the present.

Other resources controlled by the Guardians, although not used in any way directly related to Apartheid power strategies, include 'supernatural resources' and knowledge resources. "Supernatural resources" (Bierstedt 737) are an unorthodox kind of resource which, as Bierstedt argues, can be found among religious associations which purport to "apply supernatural sanctions as instruments of control" (737). Such an example can be found in the Roman Catholic Church which, using its divine papal authority, promised to rid devotees of guilt by selling indulgences (although far less commonly in modern times) (Robert Swanson 1). In *Deadlands*, the religious worship of the Guardians deifies them and

grants them ‘supernatural’ power over their Resurrectionist worshippers. The deep devotion to the Guardians is illustrated when the Resurrectionists drop “to their knees, muttering prayers” (5) as the Guardians pass by in a horse-drawn wagon - behaviour typically reserved for gods, goddesses and figures with supernatural authority. Their association with the divine is further emphasised by the fact that they wear “robes like priests” (51). The Guardians have been so divinised that it has allowed them ‘supernatural control’ over all resources and thus are able to control the masses. Evidence for this can be found with characters such as Lele’s teacher, Comrade Pelosi, who insists that everyone should “give thanks to the Guardians for the air we breathe, the food that we eat and the safe environment in which we flourish” (21). This closely resembles the kind of supernatural omnipotence usually attributed to deities. When people believe that such deities require devotion and obedience to appease them, as is often the case both in *Deadlands* and the real world, it becomes clear how supernatural resources can be used as powerful tools of social control.

As is the case in *Moxyland*, knowledge is an important resource for the power strategies used in *Deadlands*. When Lele begins attending Malema High School, she learns that the students receive government textbooks that are essentially propaganda. The tragedies of South Africa’s past are exaggerated to make the present day seem more pleasant in comparison. In a textbook Lele is made to read in front of the class, the iconic picture of Hector Pieterson’s slain body taken during the 1976 Soweto uprisings is shown. The caption below claims that “sights such as this were a daily occurrence in the ‘bad old days’, when violence, destruction, injustice and cruelty ravaged the land” (39). Reluctantly, Lele continues reading the textbook which states that “before the War, South Africa was a mess of violence, extreme poverty, HIV infection, incest, child abuse, terrorism and murder” (40) and thus there is not “another country in the world with such a shameful History as South Africa” (40). While such issues undoubtedly did and still do occur in South Africa, it may be inaccurate to characterise the everyday lives of people through these tragedies. Dlamini, in *Native Nostalgia*, explains this when he points out that there is a tendency to tell South Africa’s history as a narrative neatly dividing “a miserable Apartheid South Africa and a marvellous new South Africa” (12). While it is true that the atrocities of Apartheid cannot be understated, reducing it to simply a time of gloom has the potential to mask a “richness, a complexity of life among black South Africans, that not even colonialism and Apartheid at their worst could destroy” (19). As Dlamini writes, “this is not to say that there was no poverty, crime or moral degradation. There was. But none of this determined the shape of black life in its totality” (19). In the personal lives of many under the regime there were still

family bonds, fond memories and small pleasures that made up people's daily experiences. Thus, the gloomy construction of South Africa's past in the textbook Lele reads may not be attempting to give an accurate depiction of the country's history as much as it is propagating dystopian views of the past to magnify the positives of the present. This becomes apparent when the descriptions of the past are compared to the description of the times after the arrival of the Guardians. The textbook claims that the arrival of the Guardians ushered in a "glorious new beginning" (40), and the Guardians are described as benevolent beings who have allowed the survivors of the War to "flourish under the watchful eyes of our Fathers and Mothers" (40). Although this is presented as a "True History" (40), it does not align with Lele's hazy memories of the War and the time immediately succeeding it, causing her to declare it a "rewriting of history" (41). The manipulation of information grants the Guardians power, as it allows them to control the citizens who are brainwashed by their propaganda. Believing that the Guardians are their only line of defence from apocalyptic anarchy, citizens are much more likely to acquiesce to their demands.

In addition to strategically controlling as many resources as possible, material or not, the Guardians also attempt to withhold resources from the citizens. Lele discovers this when she finds herself in the deadlands outside the enclave and meets the Mall Rats, a group of outlaws who are neither Resurrectionists nor members of the ANZ. They often raid a mall that was not destroyed during the War and sell some of the spoils to the people living in the enclave. However, the Guardians forbid them from looting medical supplies and anything "that could be used as a weapon" (153). Without these resources, the people of the enclave are unable to achieve independence from the Guardians as they remain reliant on them for protection from the Rotters. This common power strategy is discussed by Robert Greene. In *The 48 Laws of Power* (1998), he writes that the ultimate power is the ability to make people do as you please "without having to force people or hurt them" (85), and argues that "the best way to achieve this position is to create a relationship of dependence" (85). The Guardians, who have gained this position by disarming people, are able to control the masses by creating a situation where overthrowing the Guardians will leave them exposed to the zombies.

The Guardians are able to control people by disseminating propaganda in school textbooks, and they are also able to reduce the knowledge resources of their subjects by withholding information from them. They conceal information about themselves by shrouding themselves in secrecy. They are described as robed figures so mysterious that "not even the bigwig embassy officials knew what the Guardians looked like under their robes" (6). This is effective as, firstly, it prevents the subordinated from knowing what and who they

are being oppressed by. Without this knowledge, it becomes harder to arm oneself against one's oppressor. Secondly, it leaves the subordinated to imagine their oppressors, and the result is often far more powerful than the real thing. Those using power strategies often employ secrecy to exploit the "workings of the imagination to entrench and enforce their dominion" (Felicity Wood 49). This allows them to "gain a psychological advantage over the rest of the population" by creating "the impression that they possess esoteric knowledge and spiritual powers beyond the reach of others" (Elechi Amadi 8). The use of secrecy has been observed among Southern African traditional healers and 'witchdoctors' such as Khotso Sethunsa who, according to Wood, "deliberately cultivated a sense of mystery and secrecy around himself" (47) and Sekuru who "preferred to create a sense of mystery about his work" (48). Wood explains that "by weaving an aura of secrecy of this kind, these and other workers of magic seek to create the impression that they have access to extraordinary powers that ordinary mortals would not be able to comprehend or control" (48). Thus, we find, as Cris Shore *et al* postulate, that "power operates most effectively when it is largely invisible to those whom it dominates" (559).

Although the Guardians control the bulk of resources, they are not the only formal organisation which has access to resources used to gain power. The Guardians do not go entirely unopposed: a resistance group, known as the Anti-Zombian League, or ANZ, makes constant attempts to disrupt the Guardians' control of the Cape Town enclave. The group spoke out when "the Resurrectionists stopped being some weird cult and started gaining power" (64), but they eventually went underground. There are obvious comparisons to be made between the ANZ and ANC, which was banned from 1960 to 1990 and was also an outlawed resistance group. After passive protest had failed, in mid-1961 the armed wing of the ANC, uMkhonto we Sizwe, was formed (Ellis 442). Nelson Mandela, a co-founder of MK, was arrested along with other political leaders in 1963 and, during his trial he presented his iconic 'I am Prepared to Die' speech in which he testified that "it was only when all else had failed, when all channels of peaceful protest had been barred to us, that the decision was made to embark on violent forms of political struggle, and to form Umkhonto we Sizwe" (247-8). The TRC report reveals that the group was involved in several cases of bombings, including the infamous Church Street bombing of 1983, and claims that "more civilians than security force personnel were killed in such explosions" (35). Similarly, the ANZ "regularly bombs civilian targets" (Brown 34) with weapons such as "teargas and a couple of grenades" (Herne 191) which they use during protests. This brings about a moral dilemma for Lele to consider as, while she acknowledges that "at least the ANZ is doing something" (83), she

also realises that "people could have been hurt" (189) by the ANZ's use of violence. Regardless, these resources, in the form of weapons, are insufficient to thwart the Guardians; hence, "unlike the ANC, the ANZ is not eventually successful in their struggle" (Jessica Murray 84). The similarities between the ANC and the ANZ "suggests a satirical link to South Africa's political history" (Davis 24). However, the failure of the ANZ places the onus on the protagonist, and by extension identifying readers, to combat oppressive power strategies in their society.

The second source of power is social organisation. An analysis of this power source reveals strategies that bear striking resemble to those used during Apartheid. Social organisation was upheld in Apartheid through a robust legal system. Similarly, in *Deadlands*, "Guardians control the citizens with strict laws, routines, rituals and propaganda" (Barendse 2015; 82). Much of the Guardians' power, however, lies not only with their own social organisation but with their ability to prevent organisation in the masses they oppress. This strategy draws from Apartheid elements featuring segregation as a means of quelling social organisation. One of the ways this occurs is through the separation of the rural Agriculturals, where there are "acres of farmland and veld" (9), from the urban enclave, where the moaning of Rotters is "an almost constant background noise" (9). This represents another instance of the divide-and-conquer technique where the masses are separated in order to deprive them of the power they would yield as a collective. Rather than band together against the main oppressive power (the Guardians), the segregated masses focus on the differences between themselves. Such occurrences are found when Lele, who is from the Agriculturals, interacts with the urban children of Malema High School who tease her by saying that her short hair is "so… *rural*" (32) and sarcastically claim that her clothing is "Farm Girl chic" (32).

The third source of power outlined by Bierstedt is numbers. Because it is never explicitly stated whether the Guardians outnumber the citizens or not, it is difficult to determine whether the Guardians make use of this power source or not. However, thanks to their near-complete control of resources and their utilisation of social organisation, the Guardians are able to achieve domination regardless of whether they have greater numbers or not.

One should not assume that all power strategies can be neatly connected to a single source. The biopolitical strategies used to control the population in Herne's Cape Town reveal this. As has been previously discussed, biopower is concerned with both the life and death of a population: "biopower does not just foster life; it also routinely does away with it" (Jonathan Inda 99). The control of reproduction is one of the ways this can be done, as has

been seen in a few dystopian novels. In Atwood's aforementioned novel *The Handmaid's Tale*, for instance, women are issued to men for whom they are to bear children, lest they become Unwomen. Similar strategies to control reproduction are found in *Deadlands*. A large population of humans is required by the Guardians to allow for a constant flow of relocates to turn to Rotters. Homosexuality is an impediment to this, and so it is frowned upon. Lele discovers this when she makes a homophobic joke about Zyed and is reprimanded by Thabo who informs her that Resurrectionists are against same-sex relationships because they need people to breed to "keep the Guardians happy" (61). Women also have the limited options of either going to school or getting married and becoming one of the "breeders" (33), as Lele calls the women she sees "carrying babies and pulling toddlers around by the hand" (11). Lastly, reproduction is also encouraged by withholding birth control. Through these strategies, people are not "able to be together without being forced to have children" (240). This can be read as a form of biopower which draws its power from social organisation, resources and numbers, a feat made possible by utilizing "expressions of gender and sexuality that are deemed to be acceptable by the heteronormative social majority" (Murray 10). From this, it is evident that the sources of power do not work in isolation or exist in neat, mutually exclusive categories. Instead, they merge in messy ways and operate in tandem to produce power.

The Guardians' meticulous control of resources allows them to subjugate the survivors of the enclave. Their use of human resources to maintain that power mimics the biopolitics of Apartheid which utilised both education policies and worker migrant strategies to ensure a cheap supply of constant labour for mines, farms and other industries. As I have demonstrated, although reimagined in a zombie apocalypse context, the power strategies of Apartheid make an appearance in *Deadlands* and affect the lives of the characters. These reimaginings of Apartheid power strategies warn the South African reader that they are not free from oppression merely because Apartheid is over. The caution is a timely one because, as Miller's previously mentioned photographs reveal, the kinds of oppression witnessed in pre-1994 South Africa can reappear in varied political climates, including a contemporary South African one. Miller's photos expose continuing racial segregation fuelled by economic disparity and demonstrate that *Deadlands'*s warning of re-emerging Apartheid-esque dystopian elements in South Africa is a pertinent one.

Passionate Attachments

Through analysis of *Moxyland* and D*eadlands*, ways in which old power strategies may rear their ugly heads again – by taking advantage of economic inequality, fostering forced dependency and by exploiting technological growth, for example – are revealed. It is also important to consider how subjects come to allow themselves to be subordinated and internalise their identity as a subject. To further explore this, I will look to Judith Butler's theories to explain what psychic processes lead to subjection, before considering how South Africa might be dangerously fertile ground for the widespread occurrence of such processes. This will be followed by a discussion regarding how (if possible) people might free themselves from the kinds of power strategies outlined in the selected South African novels.

In *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997), Butler presents a strange observation that power can result in both a subject's subordination and formation. She elaborates by claiming that although power subordinates by making a subject accept its terms, upon accepting and internalizing those terms, the subject becomes "fundamentally dependent on those terms" (1997b; 2) for existence. Hence, Butler defines subjection as "the process of becoming subordinated by power as well as the process of becoming a subject" (1997b; 2). Within this process of subordination and formation, power can also produce passionate attachments in its subjects. Butler claims that "attachment to subjection is produced through the workings of power" (1997b; 6). Involved in these workings is dependency resulting from subordination which, according to Butler, "implies being in a mandatory submission" (1997b; 7). The innate desire to survive can be exploited by powerholders to control their dependent subjects, as a subordinated existence is preferable to no existence at all. From this basis, Butler hypothesises that "a subject is not only formed in subordination, but that this subordination provides the subject's continuing condition of possibility" (1997b; 8). To illustrate, she gives the example of a child who is dependent on a guardian for safety and nourishment and consequently loves and forms an attachment to the guardian. In this situation, Butler claims that the child must attach to their guardian because "there is no possibility for not loving, where love is bound up with the requirements for life" (1997b; 8). Hence "the child must attach in order to persist in and as itself" (1997b; 8). If Butler's claims are accepted, it is possible to propose, as Slavoj Žižek does, that passionate attachments are "the most fundamental level of subjection" (2).

That Butler discusses the passionate attachments of children is serendipitous, as it sheds light on Kendra's own possible passionate attachments. Like the child dependent on a guardian, Kendra sees herself as dependent on men such as Andile and Jonathan for her

survival and the continuation of her photography career. As a condition of her subordination by the men in her life, Kendra is often infantilised. Schmidt notes this too and highlights Andile's "consistent use of baby talk with Kendra" (117), as well as the fact that he is "patronizing and always refers to her as 'babes'" (113) as evidence. Although she "recognises that she is infantilised by the network of men in her life" (Schmidt 113), she is certain she needs them. She states that she does not believe there is anything she could "accomplish on [her] own" (Beukes 2014; 184) and holds her tongue out of fear of offending Jonathan because she believes that without him, she is "a nonentity. Girl in limbo. Ghost girl" (2014; 186). These scenes of her assuming her own helplessness suggest that Kendra has begun to infantilise herself; she has internalised her subordination, making her infantilisation part of her identity. Hence, as Butler says, "power that at first appears as external, pressed upon the subject, pressing the subject into subordination, assumes a psychic form that constitutes the subject's self-identity" (1997b; 3). From this, it is apparent that while patriarchal power has subordinated Kendra, it has also moulded and formed her. Another case of simultaneous subordination and formation can be located within the relationship between Kendra and the corporation Inatec Biologica. Her dependence on them is based on survival, as she believes the injection she receives from them will give her immunity to cancer (2014; 60), a disease which afflicted her father. The nanobot injection she receives also forms an artificial dependence by triggering an addiction to Ghost drinks. After she is injected, she gets a 'high' every time she consumes the beverage. The experience is said to be like drowning "in all the opiate happiness the body can generate" (2014; 24). However, the addiction makes her eternally dependent on corporations for her 'fix' of Ghost, resulting in her drinking "nine to twelve" (2014; 163) a day. Hence, just as in Butler's example where "dependency renders the child vulnerable to subordination and exploitation" (1997b; 7), Kendra's needs allow her to be controlled by corporations and made into a lifelong customer. While she is subordinated by corporations, they also form her identity as a subject. She refers to herself as a "Ghost girl" (2014; 186), displaying an internalisation of the role imposed on her. This illustrates that when subjects are "under the threat of non-existence, they are, as it were, emotionally blackmailed into identifying with the imposed symbolic identity" (Žižek 02). Thus, once again, her subordination has also led to her formation, displaying power's ability to both control and produce subjects.

Although Kendra is oppressed by both the corporations and the men in her life, she displays some degree of attachment to her subjugators. When Kendra does eventually break up with Jonathan and winds up disconnected, she does not revel in her freedom, but instead

experiences trepidation. She asks herself whether it is "perverse to feel liberated" (2014; 252) and finds a slight beauty in it before she is plagued by a squeeze in her stomach which reminds her of how "impractical" (2014; 252) her disconnection from society is. Despite her liberation, the desire to live induces anxiety concerning the uncertainty of her survival outside of the control of her subjugators. Hence, she wishes in part to remain under their control. Kendra is not the only character in *Moxyland* that a theory of passionate attachments can be applied to. Mr Muller, for instance, embraces the oppression of corporations, the police and their Aitos, believing that he is dependent on them for his survival. As he says during a rant, "compared to living in fear, terrorised by criminals, the hijackings and shootings and the tik junkies ready to kill you, stab you, for a watch or a camera, I'll take those modified dogs and the whaddayacallit, the cellphone electrocutions, any day" (2014; 254). Like Kendra, he internalises his position as a dependent, powerless subordinate, leading to him claiming that "we're weak. Were fallible. We need to be told what to do, to be kept in line" (2014; 254).

Similar patterns of attachment to subjugators occurs in *Deadlands*. The Guardians rule over the enclave in an oppressive manner, yet their subjects exhibit a great degree of attachment towards them. Pamphlets which invite Lele to join "in celebrating our Saviours Who Have Set Us Free" (17) display how the attachments to power have evolved into outright worship. Resurrectionists are the most apparent example of this. Lele's father, who is a Resurrectionist, perceives himself, and the rest of society, to be dependent on the Guardians for survival. When Lele asks him why he is a Resurrectionist, he tells her that "there's nothing we can do to stop the Rotters" (83) and that it is the Guardians who protect them from the Rotters, displaying his survival-motivated attachment to them. This attachment persists despite the Guardians continuing to subjugate them through relocations and Lotteries which see teenagers being taken away from their families forever.

This process of power moulding the identity of subjects is not disrupted by merely positioning oneself in opposition to one's oppressors. On the contrary, this might represent another kind of passionate attachment where subjects grow attached to their subordinated positions. Moya Lloyd explains this phenomenon by analysing Wendy Brown's *States of Injury* (1995) where Brown observes that feminist movements tend to "become invested in the very identity that has secured their marginalisation" (Lloyd 98) when they "hold onto the identity of women even though it is as women – as that identity – that they have been harmed" (Lloyd 98). In such situations, "the very expression of identity becomes 'invested in its own subjection'" (McLaughlin 12). Noting that this is characteristic of many late modern politicised identities, Brown references Friedrich Nietzsche in her elucidations. Nietzsche

argues that among oppressors and subordinated subjects, there exists a 'master morality' and a 'slave morality'. While masters begin by judging themselves to be good before judging anyone different to be bad, slaves instead begin by judging the oppressive master to be evil and use that as the basis for judging themselves to be good. In doing so, a subordinated subject's formation as 'morally good' becomes contingent on their identities being defined in opposition to their oppressor(s). Hence, as Brown argues, the "slave morality produces identity in relation to power" (70). This results in subjects becoming attached to their oppressed identities because the slave morality has defined their subordinated position as good, hence establishing "suffering as the measure of social virtue" (Brown 70). This self-inflicted resubjugation is an instance of a "wounded attachment" (Lloyd 98) whereby, while resisting its own subordination, a politicised identity grows attached to its own exclusion precisely "because it is premised on this exclusion for its very existence" (Brown 73). Wounded attachments can be considered a subcategory of passionate attachments which apply "not just to oppositional movements but to subject formation per se" (98).

In *Deadlands*, we see this in the case of the ANZ whose name defines them as an opposition to the Resurrectionists. Lele's friend, Thabo, reveals this when he explains that the ANZ's name came in light of the "Resurrectionists being the Zombians – zombie lovers" (64). Despite having to go underground for this very opposition, the ANZ continue to cling to the name. A similar situation occurs in *Moxyland*. During his activist work, Tendeka faces police and resists their power by declaring that "we defy your attempts to regulate society. We're voluntarily disconnected! Voluntarily disenfranchised! You cannot control us!" (203). Here, he shows that he has attached himself to the identities of the 'disconnected' and the 'disenfranchised', even though it is through these identities that he has been oppressed. Thus, while power subordinates Tendeka, it also forms him as a subject even when he attempts to oppose it. This places him in a position Butler describes whereby, despite opposing power, his "very formation as a subject, is in some sense dependent upon that very power" (1997b; 2).

Both novels reveal how dangerous such passionate attachments can be as they oftentimes result in people's compliance with their own oppression. When such attachments occur on the level of the population, it becomes clearer how dystopian elements can arise and flourish in a society if the people are dependent on and compliant with the very forces subjecting them. The Mall Rat Saint points this out when he tells Lele that "the people chose to be ruled over by the Resurrectionists, Zombie Bait. They voted them into power" (238). The appearance of these instances of passionate attachments in the texts could be read as

social commentary which is timely in a socio-political landscape such as South Africa's which could be quite conducive to passionate attachments. As previously mentioned, a lack of confidence in the new government has resulted in the native nostalgia described by Dlamini. For example, one of the people he interviews, Mrs Nkabinde, believes that many of the problems she faces are due to "the influx of people and shacks" (4). This was not a problem during Apartheid due to influx control and pass laws which ensured that "outsiders could not move into or stay in a township without a government permit" (4). However, these same laws oppressed black people by restricting their movement. Others he interviews, like Mrs Ngcobo who complains of municipal corruption and claims "the old government was better" (5), lend credence to Dlamini's assertion that "there are millions of people who think like Mrs Nkabinde" (6). I would agree with Dlamini that "it does not mean that they supported Apartheid" (6) and would offer passionate attachments as a possible explanation. Struggles for stability in the newly democratic South Africa and distrust in the government has reduced many people's certainty of their survival. As a result, present-day anxieties induce longing for the protection of previous powers, even if it means continued subordination. The theory of passionate attachments predicts this in its claim that "out of a 'desire to survive', subjects are perpetually willing to submit to their own subordination" (Lloyd 99). By illustrating the role passionate attachments play in creating dystopian worlds, both *Moxyland* and *Deadlands* present cautionary tales that warn readers of the potential perils of passionate attachments.

My discussion of South Africa's history identified a problem – the misuse of power can result in a dystopian society. The selected South African novels identify the potential for those problems to crop up again. They achieve this by presenting counterfactual scenarios where dystopias are created after power strategies used during Apartheid reappear. The unpleasantness of the subsequent dystopias caution readers against allowing the same to occur in their reality. Furthermore, within these dystopian worlds, subjects form attachments to the figures oppressing them. The final aspect of power that must be investigated is how subjects escape from the long tentacles of power. One of the main ways power is enacted in the texts is through subordinating speech which creates the social categories which subjects exist in, and labels which encourage subjects to internalise their subordinated positions. Hence, this aspect of power will be analysed.

The labels used to describe people and the labels people use to describe themselves play an important role in subject formation. As Jesse Cohn writes, "labelling representations, whether hostile, friendly, or ostensibly neutral, exercise power over subjects, not only in

organizing how the subject is treated, but in encouraging it to conceive itself through the other's discourse" (41). When those employing power strategies use labels correctly, "the labelled object may even respond by internalising and enacting its label" (Cohn 41). *Moxyland* demonstrates this through Kendra who is labelled a 'Ghost girl'. The label creates the category of subordination she inhabits and her internalisation of it enables her complicity and leads to her learned helplessness. According to Catherine MacKinnon, social inequality, and in turn power balances in society, are "substantially created and enforced – that is, *done* – through words and images" (qtd in Lloyd 109). The example Lloyd gives of 'Whites Only' signs, which could be found in the windows of South African businesses during Apartheid and American businesses during the era of Jim Crow laws, use language to reify a "culture in which nonwhites are excluded from full citizenship" (109). The solution to such subordinating language is not easy to find. Lele, motivated by a desire to articulate her own identity, seems to react by refusing the labels which people attempt to attach to her. When Zyed calls her a "Farm Girl" (57), she is quick to insult him back and call his group of friend "sheep" (57). Later in the novel, when she's referred to as 'this chick', she does not hesitate to reply by saying "my name's Lele, not 'this chick'" (123). This is a sharp contrast from *Moxyland*'s Kendra who ends up adopting the disparaging labels used against her. While it does appear that Lele's assertiveness offers another avenue for hope by displaying how identifying readers can express their own identity and reject unwanted labels, it could be argued that this is an incomplete disentanglement from the power of labels. Injurious speech is enabled by its historicity, meaning that it gains its force from its previous usages, or citationality. Thus, although Lele's rejection of subordinating labels is an act of assertiveness, she leaves the citationality of those labels intact. Because of this, the labels still maintain their power and can be used against her again in the future.

Alternatively, some have attempted to instead ban language which re-instils social inequality. MacKinnon, a lawyer, is such an example and has argued for the banning of pornography as a kind of hate speech. In the same way that racist speech racialises subjects and constructs injurious identities, MacKinnon argues that pornography pornifies society and thus brings about misogyny and the subordination of women by "establishing what women are said to exist as, are seen as, are treated as, constructing the social reality of what a woman is and can be in terms of what can be done to her" (qtd in Lloyd 109). Thus, speech can become a force used to subordinate subjects when it "reinvokes and reinscribes a structural relation of dominance" (Butler 1997a; 18) and "enjoins the subject to reoccupy a subordinate social position" (Butler 1997a; 18). Such an argument suggests that banning words such as

'chick' and 'Farm girl' from Herne's Cape Town and 'Ghost girl' from Beukes's Cape Town would disempower their users. However, arguments by Butler do not support banning as a solution to wounding labels and speech. According to Lloyd, censorship advocates such as "Dworkin, MacKinnon and Helms are, for Butler, actively and somewhat ironically engaged in rearticulating and reinvigorating the very discourses they seek to repudiate" (114-5). As Butler writes in *Excitable Speech* (1997), "keeping such terms unsaid and unsayable can also work to lock them in place, preserving their power to injure" (1997a; 38).

A third option is to attack citationality and recontextualise words which subordinate people. An example of this is the word 'queer' which, mostly in the West, has undergone a resignification and had its malicious potential disarmed. This demonstrates that injurious speech and the subordinated identities they produce can be recontextualised to "make it work for other purposes" (Žižek 8). Because of this, Butler argues that "the revaluation of terms such as 'queer' suggest that speech can be 'returned' to its speaker in a different form, that it can be cited against its originary purposes and perform a reversal of effects" (Butler 1997a; 14). In South Africa, an example of such a reversal can be found with the word 'black' which was rife with negative connotations because racist discourse and state power had constructed the racial category as an inferior, subordinate one. The rise of a black consciousness movement, often associated with activists such as Steve Biko, attempted to recontextualise the word 'black' by adopting slogans such as "black is beautiful" (Madipoane Masenya *et al* 8) which disrupts the citationality by associating black with more positive attributes. Consequently, a label previously used to wound becomes resignified to empower. A similar resignification occurs in *Moxyland* when Tendeka reverses the labels 'disconnected' and 'disenfranchised' and rearticulates them as points of pride. While I would argue Tendeka's resignification is superior to Lele's rejection because it addresses the citationality which grants wounding speech power and allows subjects the agency to rearticulate their own identity, there are, nevertheless, issues that must be considered. As Lloyd points out, there is risk in attempting to resignify injurious words as there "is no guarantee of its success" (122). Furthermore, some words may have such a deep history of subordinating others that it may be difficult to unhinge them from their previous significations. Even the word 'queer' which Butler uses as an example is not entirely divested of its stigmatised past. Moreover, recontextualisation might represent a passionate attachment to the very labels used to subordinate, as Tendeka displays.

In summation, both South African novels offer dystopian imaginings of Cape Town where power strategies used in the past have resurfaced in morphed ways. By depicting the

negative effects of these power strategies, and how they may reproduce themselves in different contexts, readers are cautioned against allowing such dystopian elements to flourish in reality. They also warn against the dangers of passionate attachment by illustrating how they can lead to subjects becoming complicit in their own oppression. Cautioning against the potential dangers of passionate attachments is important in a country such as South Africa where contemporary anxieties may encourage passionate attachments to old oppressive powers, leading to wilful subordination for the sake of survival. The novels avoid the pitfall cautionary tales sometimes fall victim to, which is being too didactic and moralistic, by relying on metaphor and subtext. For instance, segregation between zombies and survivors in *Deadlands*, and segregation between the connected and the disconnected in *Moxyland*, could be seen as metaphors for the societal segregation South Africa experienced during Apartheid and is still slowly recovering from twenty-five years after democracy. While the characters of the novels attempt varied ways of disentangling themselves from the power structures and passionate attachments of their dystopian worlds, each solution comes with its own set of problems which appear to not fully rescue a subject from their subordination. This poses a problem if the texts are to be read as cautionary tales. The warnings provided are mere fuel for pessimism if they do not present possibilities for avoiding the depicted dystopias. Thus, hope is required. To investigate this further I, in Chapter Four, discuss literary techniques that might allow these novels to supply hope despite seeming hopeless.

Chapter Three: Nightmarish Nigeria

Bandele-Thomas is a Nigerian-born writer with credits as a playwright, filmmaker and novelist. His first two novels, *The Sympathetic Undertaker and Other Dreams* and *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*, have been chosen for analysis as they depict a Nigeria where anxieties concerning society occur on both the micro (familial) and macro (governmental) level. They also feature two aspects of Bandele-Thomas's writing style which has allowed him to offer socio-political critique of Nigeria in ways which are both entertaining and impactful. The first aspect is a grittiness that grab's readers' attention. This grittiness is achieved through "an insistence on foul language and an obsession with obscenity" (Ayo Kehinde 2003; 28). Such a writing style is effective in the two selected novels because they both feature several instances of corruption occurring within a culture of impunity noted by Ogbeidi. State officials misuse wealth, resulting in unintended negative effects on the population. Consequently, the obscene and gritty nature of Bandele-Thomas's writing draws in readers through shock value and reflects the obscenity and grittiness of the societies he depicts. The second aspect is crude humour, which adds entertainment value to the novels while making harsh socio-political commentary more digestible.

Booker claims that "virtually any literary work that contains an element of social or political criticism" (3) can be read as a dystopia. Hence, Bandele-Thomas's selected novels, which feature a Nigeria where a scourge of corruption degrades society, are dystopian texts. Other critics have also categorised Bandele-Thomas as a dystopian writer. When discussing the dystopian elements of Bandele-Thomas's writing, Negash claims that "*The Sympathetic Undertaker* stinks of corruption and oppression" (196), adding that the text is also a satirical political commentary on political leaders which is made possible through the use of art. Afolayan *et al* also analyse the dystopian elements of the text and, like Negash, conclude that it makes use of satire to explicate "the wide divide between the poor and the rich" (345) caused by tyranny and misrule.

As has been discussed, the function of dystopian literature varies according to geographic and temporal conditions. The selected South African dystopian texts, if my arguments hold true, function as cautionary tales that warn of the potential for power strategies used during Apartheid to re-emerge. The selected Nigerian dystopian texts can also be read as cautionary tales. However, their function slightly differs. Rather than warn of potential dangers, the texts highlight existing dystopian elements in Nigerian society that need urgent attention. The texts achieve this in two ways.

Firstly, while most dystopian literature features societies which are worse than the

writer's own, Bandele-Thomas diverges from this tradition by presenting a Nigeria that, although often surreal, does not exaggerate existing dystopian elements as drastically as Herne and Beukes do when depicting South Africa. However, this need not be a reason to exclude Bandele-Thomas's texts from the dystopian genre. Gottlieb argues that dystopias do not need to present a system worse than our own, and points to Eastern and Central European politically critical works that are "clearly expressive of the dystopian impulse, although they deal with the writer's own society 'as is'" (2001; 5) as evidence. By focusing on the problems and issues of contemporary Nigeria, the texts are able to shed light on dystopian elements that, due to their ubiquity, may evade the attention of readers.

The second way the texts are able to bring attention to contemporary dystopian elements in society is through the use of a variation of magic realism. Magic realism, according to Wendy Faris, is a literary style which involves combining "realism and the fantastic so that the marvellous seems to grow organically within the ordinary" (1). Texts produced by several African authors which feature influence from oral storytelling traditions and indigenous worldviews could be categorised as magic realist. The texts do far more than merely entertain readers with their fantastical elements and ornate descriptions; they also manipulate the reality familiar to readers in order to draw their attention to certain issues and make both social and political commentary. This is made clear if one considers the literary history of Nigerian magic realism. A text that has garnered both praise and criticism for its eccentric writing style, Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* (1952) could be considered a seminal example of Nigerian magic realism. Tutuola tells the story of a man who describes his constant consumption of palm-wine as 'work' and must go on a journey to bring his tapster (winemaker) back from Dead's Town. During his adventure, the protagonist comes across many supernatural figures and makes use of juju magic to aid him. The narrative, although seemingly entirely detached from any meaningful reality, manages to use its magical elements to illuminate certain political concerns. Jennifer Wenzel, paying attention to the fact that the tapster "falls to his death while on the job" (449), and that the narrator's 'work' consists of consuming the tapster's produce, suggests that within Tutuola's tale "is an economic analysis of resource extraction and labour relations" (449). The trend of magic realism being used to address socio-political concerns is not lost among contemporary authors, as seen with Tomi Adeyemi's Young Adult novel *Children of Blood and Bone* (2018) which is set in Lagos. Zélie, the protagonist, belongs to a class of magic practitioners called maji who are oppressed by the kosidán ruling class. The political engagement of this text is not limited to the Nigerian context and makes commentary on issues with global

relevance. As Adeyemi states in her Author's Note, the trauma suffered by Zélie and other maji is inspired by the pain felt by black communities who have been victims of police brutality (526-7).

Describing Bandele-Thomas's use of magic realism, Negash writes that his style is "more real than magical" (1999; 81) and mixes "desolate conditions of urban Nigeria with the bizarre and the phantasmic" (1999; 81). The realist aspects of both *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* and *The Sympathetic Undertaker* are created through Bandele-Thomas's depiction of a recognisable Nigeria. There are mentions of locations such as Oshodi, universities such as University of Ife and characters such as Baba Titi who speak in pidgin. In *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, Lagos is described as a bustling metropolis where the "very air reeks of violence" (1993; 194) and there are "twenty-four-hour traffic jams" (1993; 103). The protagonist's brother claims that the environment is so competitive that "if you can survive in Lagos, you can survive anywhere in the world" (1993; 103). To illustrate, he tells the story of his neighbour in his apartment building who works two jobs to afford a precarious existence for his family. Similar claustrophobic and gritty descriptions of Lagos are common in literature by other Nigerian writers. Novels such as Chris Abani's *Graceland* (2004), Sefi Atta's *Everything Good Will Come* (2005), Helon Habila's *Waiting for an Angel* (2002), and Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain* (2000) construct a metropolitan Lagos that, in Nnodim's words, "astounds the senses, a vibrant city of many cultures and languages, but also a dystopian space of deprivation, despair and dislocation" (321). Yet another example of Lagos imagined as a dystopia can also be found in science fiction writer Nnedi Okorafor's *Lagoon* (2014). This novel tells the story of Ayodele, an alien who lands in Lagos, which is described as a "zoo" (2014; 38) where "everyone is contained by lots of walls and lots of gates" (2014; 38-9). Furthermore, descriptions of locations such as the bar beaches which attract "drug dealers, squatters, various accents and languages, seagulls, garbage, biting flies, tourists, all kinds of religious zealots, hawkers, prostitutes, johns, water-loving children and their careless parents" (2014; 12) capture the populousness of Lagos as well as the prevalent problems of poverty and crime. These descriptions are not unexpected because, while the city generates one of the highest GDPs in Africa, it still scores "poorly on education and health care" (Conor Gaffey para 6), making it a city that epitomises many of the post-independence struggles common on the continent.

Within Bandele-Thomas's selected texts, magical elements are introduced to a realist Nigeria not through depictions of literal magic, but by "experimenting with magical and pseudo-realism" (Mary Aiyetoro *et al* 228). This is achieved, in the case of *The Sympathetic*

Undertaker, by a dream motif which "encourages the occurrence of most surrealistic scenes in the novel" (Kehinde 2003; 19). One of the greatest benefits of magic realism is that it allows for contemporary issues in society to be represented in supernatural ways. This can be used to draw attention to these problems in creative ways. For instance, as I shall discuss, in *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, dream sequences which combine instances of corruption with imagery of dirt and decay are effective in both drawing attention to corruption and metaphorically communicating the detrimental effects it has on society.

The social criticism contained within the selected Nigerian texts are focused on corruption in Nigerian society. This is typical of politically committed Nigerian literature due to the notorious levels of political misbehaviour that have bedevilled the country during both colonial and post-independence times. Corruption and power are closely related because corruption often involves the misuse of power. Corruption also interlinks with dystopian studies because "it is generally presupposed that corruption will lead to the destruction of trust and stability of society and that corruptions destroys the possibility of a healthy and good society" (Jacob Rendtorff 12). Nigerian literature frequently addresses the political and administrative corruption which occurs in an often-normalised fashion. In Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus* (2007), for example, Nigeria's political corruption is highlighted by the protagonist's father's newspaper which publishes stories "about the cabinet ministers who stashed money in foreign bank accounts, money meant for paying teachers' salaries and building roads" (24), while the administrative corruption is made evident by the police who accept ten-naira notes as bribes.

The analysis of *The Sympathetic Undertaker* and *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* will investigate how these texts function as cautionary tales which warn of the dangers of corruption present in contemporary Nigeria. This will be done by examining the various forms of corruption depicted and analysing how the novels critique these misuses of power. Peter Ekeh's Theory of Two Publics will assist in this analysis. I shall also focus on the ways the novels are able to function as cautionary tales while avoiding patronising didacticism. To do this, I shall pay careful attention to the ways Bandele-Thomas makes use of both satire and imagery. Satire can roughly be defined as "a form of humour or mockery with ethical or moral intent" (Carole Enahoro 185). It should be noted that some, like Charles Knight, deviate from that definition and instead claim that satire "is independent of moral purpose" (5). In either case, unlike comedy, which seeks laughter for the sake of laughter, satire is used as a weapon against subjects outside of the text (Abrams 276). Through literary devices such as irony and exaggeration, satirical works are able to "challenge or disrupt

dominant discourse" (Enahoro 191) under the guise of humour. A second common literary element in Bandele-Thomas's work is imagery. Through imagery, artists can associate certain things with either negative or positive characteristics. In doing so, messages are conveyed indirectly in a manner which, rather than simply state a didactic moralism, relies on readers to reach conclusions on their own.

The Sympathetic Undertaker

The Sympathetic Undertaker is narrated by Kayo who contrasts greatly with his brother, Rayo, who is delinquent at school and plays the class clown. Unlike the narrator, Rayo is quite troublesome during his years of education and, after getting himself involved in protests against the government, is detained by police. Exceedingly rebellious against authority, Rayo constantly finds himself in conflict with those in power. Throughout the novel, readers are supplied with chapters containing Rayo's notes. These notes chronicle a fictional African country named Zowabia which is led by a president with aspirations of being a dictator. Readers are also introduced to the character Sosoman who is running away from the murderous military. As the story progresses, Rayo grows increasingly mad, attempts suicide by overdosing on medication and has a psychotic episode at the market. A close friend of Rayo's is Tere, a girl who is loathed by the narrator's mother. Nevertheless, the narrator defends Tere vehemently whenever his mother speaks of her in unkind terms. In the novel's conclusion, the narrator is returned to his mother as he is going through a psychotic episode. The narrator claims that it is Rayo and not he who is insane, but his mother insists she has only one son and that the narrator "constantly seems to believe he has this brother called Rayo" (1993; 196). She also reveals that Tere is a girl who fell out of a mango tree and died when the narrator was seven. The revelation implies that Rayo and the narrator are the same person, that the madness experienced by his 'brother' is the narrator's own madness and that Tere is a hallucination.

Rayo and Tere are symptoms of the narrator's madness and embody the theme of insanity in the text. Insanity is used to estrange the dystopian elements of Nigeria and fictionalise them. This is done through a reversal of properties. Throughout the novel, elements of corruption, chaos and social degradation appear but are treated as normal parts of a sane society. On the other hand, Rayo, who is considered insane, is mostly embarking on aims of restoring order to society. For example, he plays a prank on his headmaster, but this is only to bring to attention the 'night-soil man' (responsible for emptying toilet containers) who should be on pension. He also instigates protests against the government, but this too is

in response to the objectionable deeds of politicians and the military. This juxtaposition between the insanity of Rayo which strives for order, and the alleged sanity of a society which is careering towards chaos, is poignantly exemplified when, after his suicide attempt, Rayo exclaims: "I'm all right, OK Mother? It's your whole world out there, your whole stinking society that's gone off at a tangent" (1993; 112).

The Sympathetic Undertaker is not the first text to use characters with split personalities to address thematic concerns, and draws from a long trend in art and storytelling. A survey of the history of the motif of the split subject makes it apparent that it serves two main functions. Firstly, it allows for the representation of the fragmented parts of the self that can sometimes appear contradictory and hence can be better understood if separated. The earliest examples of this can be found within religion. Polytheism, from a Jungian perspective, can be thought of as a representation of a fragmented psyche (James Hillman 39). Instead of a singular monotheistic figure, different domains of the mind are symbolised by different deities. Similarly, the Kayo/Rayo split in the protagonist of *The Sympathetic Undertaker* represents both the impulse to obey and the desire to dismantle oppressive power structures. Because of the seemingly contradictory nature of these characteristics, splitting them into two personalities allows for both parts to be better comprehended despite existing within a single individual. The second function of the split subject motif is to draw attention to traumatic elements in society that result in individuals developing a fragmented psyche. Perhaps the most popular example of this in literature can be found in Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) where the protagonist is split between his civil public self and his immoral private self who indulges in brutal acts. As Irving Saposnik argues, the story could be read as a "fable of Victorian anxieties" (715) where the expectation of public respectability leads to the concealment of one's darker side, a "necessary component of human psychology which most would prefer to leave unrealized" (728). A more contemporary example is found in Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* (1996) which features a protagonist who suffers from insomnia and develops a chaos-loving alter ego named Tyler Durden. Like Kayo in *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, the protagonist of *Fight Club* develops a split self in response to environmental factors. In Kayo's case, the catalyst is a fragmented society while in *Fight Club*, the split is caused by the protagonist wanting a "way out of [his] tiny life" (Palahniuk 173).

In *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, the split subject motif also serves a third function, which is to extend the theme of fragmentation. Throughout the novel, various forms of fragmentation make themselves apparent and reveal a segregated society which produces

citizens with split psyches. Societal fragmentation can be found along class lines. Stories of the president sending one of his children to study in Switzerland can be juxtaposed with stories of people like Baba Ayafa who has to resort to "cleaning up other people's mess[es]" (1993; 62) to make a meagre living and support his children. Cultural fragmentation makes itself visible through the fact that the culture the characters are immersed in is one which has "both global and local origin" (Negash 1999; 87). The indigenous culture of Nigeria is permeated with Western colonial influences such as Christianity, local health problems are addressed by international NGOs such as "the WHO family-planning service" (1993; 81) and there's mention of Western films and literature such as "The Godfather" (1993; 37) and "Waiting for Godot" (1993; 189). It could be argued that Bandele-Thomas "personalises the fragmentation and disorder of marginalised society in the characters of his novels" (Negash 2004; 191) such as the narrator of *The Sympathetic Undertaker* whose personality is just as fragmented as his society. In this way, his split psyche becomes a microcosm of a fragmented country.

Much of the discord in the dystopia depicted by Bandele-Thomas can be attributed to the misuse of power in the form of corruption. Several times, the novel illustrates ways that corruption at different levels of power result in negative societal effects. The corruption described in the novel is not unlike the corruption found in Nigeria. Hence, *The Sympathetic Undertaker* could be read as a dystopian cautionary tale which warns against existing dangers in society by presenting imagined scenarios that demonstrate how corruption corrodes Nigeria. To explore the prevalence of corruption in both Nigeria and the novel, I shall make use of the Theory of Two Publics proposed by Ekeh which considers how colonial rule in Africa has resulted in a split in public identities of Africans, allowing for an amoral realm to form where corruption can be practised without guilt.

As discussed in Chapter One, corruption can be categorised as either administrative or political. Administrative corruption frequently takes the form of police corruption, as law enforcement officers are civil servants with access to great power which is often available for abuse. Police corruption is a common problem in the law enforcement systems of many countries. For example, in the West there are often cases of "widespread arrests without warrants and thefts from prisoners" (Daniel Agbiboa 253) that go unreported. Similar problems arise in Nigeria. According to Agbiboa, "the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) - Africa's largest - has a long and unenviable history of selectively preying on the people it was established to protect" (245) and has consequently become "a symbol of unbridled corruption" (245). Several reasons have been proposed to explain police corruption both

globally and in Nigeria. A common explanation is that it is the product of a few 'bad apples' who spoil the rest through their influence (e.g. by older recruits inducting newer ones into corrupt practices). Agbiboa is reluctant to accept this explanation because "studies have shown that corruption is a pervasive and systemic phenomenon" (250), suggesting that corruption is more institutional than it is individual.

Agbiboa also looks to the history of military rule as one of the possible causes of police corruption in Nigeria. During these military dictatorships, Agbiboa argues that certain regimes had high degrees of tolerance for corruption. He names the rule of General Ibrahim Babangida as a regime with lenient treatment of corrupt officials. For example, he claims Babangida "released most of the corrupt politicians incarcerated by Buhari-Idiagbon regime and restored to them their lost military ranks" (256) and also "formally rehabilitated all the military officers who had been probed, found guilty of corruption, and dismissed" (256) by Murtala Mohammed's regime in 1976. Agbiboa argues that because of actions such as these, "the wrong signal was sent to public officials in Nigeria that corruption in the public sector was a pardonable offence" (256). Agbiboa adds that the problem was worsened by successive military governments that "deliberately installed few effective checks on abuses of police authority, leaving misconduct and corruption to flourish" (258). The military in *The Sympathetic Undertaker* shows a similar disregard for the responsible use of power and is depicted as an ill-disciplined institution prone to corruption and violence. A soldier who kills a university student is, like many other soldiers, let "off lightly, or in fact, unpunished" (1993; 171).

Another explanation, put forth by Ekeh, is the Theory of Two Publics. According to Ilufoye Ogundiya, this theory claims that colonialism in Nigeria caused the emergence of a primordial and a civic public realm. The civic public is considered an amoral one due to its associations with "illegitimate and exploitative colonial rule" (283); hence it is viewed as acceptable to cheat the system. However, the primordial public is viewed as moral hence an individual existing in both 'publics' will use the state apparatus of the civic public "to fatten the nest of the primordial public" (283). The Theory of Two Publics is also suggested by Agbiboa who, summarising Ekeh's work, writes that the primordial public "is ruled by indigenous shared norms and customs" (250) while the civic public "suffers from weak moral commitment" (250). The compartmentalisation of the different realms of one's life allows for usually moral people to be complicit with the various forms of corruption in Nigeria which, according to Ekeh, arise "directly from the amorality of the civic public" (110). Hence, although acts such as bribery and embezzlement of funds are viewed as permissible in the

realm of the civic public, “these forms of corruption are completely absent in the primordial public” (110).

As demonstrated by Kayo/Rayo and Tere, this theory is well metaphorized by the split self symptomatic of certain kinds of personality disorders where, in response to the ‘bad’ stimuli of reality, a person will develop a false self to interact with the world while an authentic inner self remains safe and hidden (R.D. Laing 94). Similarly, the Theory of Two Publics suggests that individuals, in response to pressures of colonial society, attempt to split themselves so that they are able to compartmentalise their lives into moral roles and amoral ones. This split continues even in post-colonial contexts. The stories of Tere and the protagonist could be read as cautionary tales because, for each of them, the split lives they attempt to lead inevitably cause trouble. This can be illustrated by analysing Tere and Rayo. Tere, as previously discussed, earns money by servicing sugar daddies who take her on international trips and fund her schooling. Because of this, the narrator’s mother looks upon Tere disparagingly and claims that she has “soiled the very name of her family” (1993; 112). This side of Tere differs greatly from her public life where she is a university law student in her final year. The juxtaposition between the two sides of her character are emphasised again when the law student undergoes an illegal abortion to rid herself of a pregnancy caused by one of her sugar daddies. The narrator serves as another split character. Kayo could be said to embody the order of the primordial public while Rayo, who is characterised as the insane brother, embodies the chaos of the civic public.

Through these characters, the ability to separate the two publics is brought into question. Tere’s illegal abortion leads to her death which halts both her scholarly life and her secret life. Ultimately, the actions within one world affect the other. Likewise, Rayo and Kayo struggle to keep their affairs separate and end up both sleeping with Tere. The narrator and his brother ultimately reunite following an exorcism. However, even during this exorcism, the narrator tries to resist the fusion and insists that “it’s not I who am mad, it’s Rayo” (1993; 197). The split characters demonstrate the impossibility of maintaining the separation between the primordial and the civic. Though the characters attempt to split two parts of their lives, the actions in one sphere inevitably affect the other.

Instances of corruption depicted in the novel bear resemblance to the kinds of corruption that have been observed in Nigeria both historically and in contemporary times. However, merely depicting such corruption in a fictionalised setting is insufficient for the sake of social commentary. Furthermore, such a depiction might be seen as tactless and excessively didactic, a problem that cautionary tales sometimes fall into. *The Sympathetic*

Undertaker's use of satire might be a means for the novel to avoid this. Satire is typically used by subordinated groups and often serves as a tool of resistance which critiques those in power by bringing to light their flaws and wrongdoings in entertaining ways that resonate with the masses. Consequently, it finds common use within African popular culture. According to Enahoro, supported by James Ngugi in his analysis of Achebe, Soyinka and T.M. Aluko, "satire prevails as a form of cultural expression in Nigeria" (184). Satire is also popular among ordinary civilians who use it to "challenge the credibility of governing authorities and communicate frustration" (Enahoro 185).

Zowabia, the fictional African country in Rayo's notes, is used to make satirical commentary on corruption in Nigeria. The country is described as a place where people would struggle to stay afloat in a river of unhappiness, so they swim to the riverbank to buy boats and remain out of the water. However, trouble arrives when a wily few decide to build an electric fence which blocks access to the riverbank, restricting the boats to themselves. Zowabia's history has obvious parallels with Nigeria and many other African states where corruption results in resources meant for the masses falling into the hands of the elite few. The use of fictional locations to critique an author's home country has precedence within satirical literature. In Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, for example, the eponymous protagonist visits the fictional Balnibarbi where he comes across the Grand Academy of Lagado. There, he finds scientists who partake in ludicrous experiments that yield no benefits, including extracting sunbeams from cucumbers and turning calcine ice into gunpowder. This may be interpreted as a satirical take on scientists in eighteenth century England because, as Samuel Monk argues, "some of the mad experiments of the scientists of Balnibarbi are grotesque distortions of ideas actually advanced by members of the Royal Society" (61). To demonstrate the ways Bandele-Thomas's Zowabia satirises Nigeria, I shall discuss the depictions of police corruption in Zowabia as an example of administrative corruption before analysing the leaders of Zowabia as examples of political corruption.

Commonly, police corruption involves deeds which result in personal enrichment through acts such as bribery. Such actions impede proper legal processes and allow wrongdoing to go unpunished. Police bribery is one of the most prominent forms of administrative corruption which appear in *The Sympathetic Undertaker* and is best illustrated during a court hearing in Zowabia. The defendant pleads not guilty because he had dutifully "'seen' the policeman" (1993; 148) who should have "'seen' Your Honour" (1993; 148), the implication being that he had participated in bribery. The defendant mentions he had paid ten thousand American dollars and, rather than punish the admission of bribery, the judge is more

concerned with the fact that they had been short-changed because the policeman had claimed he only received ten thousand Zowabian. The scene demonstrates the amorality of the civic public where bribes between defendants and policemen are seen as permissible. This is juxtaposed with the morality of the primordial public, demonstrated by the private relationship between the judge and the policeman, where an expectation of candour is present. Consequently, the judge is able to consider the policeman "a scoundrel, a cheat" (1993; 149) while calling the defendant a "responsible citizen and a law-abiding member of the community" (1993; 149). It should be noted that corruption cannot be entirely blamed on police forces as it requires the cooperation of both parties involved. For this reason, corrupt acts such as bribery represent "the breakdown of the state" (Rendtorff 127), as they require moral failure from both the police force who accept bribes and the civilians who pay them. However, as depicted by the Theory of Two Publics, only misdeeds within the primordial realm are considered immoral. Hence, the judge only sees wrongdoing on the part of the policeman who lies about his bribery spoils and not the defendant who is responsible for paying the bribe.

Administrative corruption in the form of bribes in the legal system may be, in part, motivated by Nigeria's cultural history. Amadi explains this by referring to the fact that, in precolonial Nigeria, disputes were settled by traditional kings or elders. During the proceedings, "it was possible for an elder to receive money or drinks in order to further the case of a particular litigant" (Amadi 83). Furthermore, there were four expected payments from litigants, one of them involving paying a special "local barrister" (Amadi 83) known as a 'nde oka okwu' who would plead their case. Amadi argues that "however one may choose to look at it, there was a hint of bribery in this practice, because the hired defender was also usually a member of the jury that gave the final verdict" (83). This may have influenced the proliferation of a culture of 'awuf' which, in Nigerian pidgin English, refers to "bribery, corruption or any gain obtained through trickery, dishonesty or sharp practice" (Amadi 82). Hence, the depictions of bribery seen in Zowabia could be said to be satirising Nigeria's culture of awuf which is moulded by Nigeria's precolonial past.

Political corruption has been prevalent throughout Nigerian history and receives significant attention in *The Sympathetic Undertaker*. Unlike administrative corruption, political corruption often involves the mismanaging of amounts of cash large enough to directly affect the country's economy and stagnate progress. Nigeria has had one of the longest military rules of any African nation; hence, if political corruption has occurred historically, is it not unexpected that a great deal of it can be traced back to the military.

Although many generals enacted military coups with expressed intentions of combating corruption, many regimes fell victim to the same temptations they sought to thwart. A famous example of this occurred after General Muhammadu Buhari's military coup of 1983. General Buhari claimed the coup was spurred by "the corrupt, inept and insensitive leadership in the last four years" (qtd in Graf 22). As part of his war on corruption, approximately 500 politicians, businessmen and officials were arrested during his rule (Ismail Bello *et al* 44). However, some of these arrests involved abuses of power. For example, Umaru Dikko, who was suspected of embezzlement and had fled to Europe, was kidnapped and drugged by Buhari's military government (Alex Last para 5). The intention was to transport him back to Nigeria where he would stand trial, but the plan was foiled by British airport officers who discovered the scheme (Adeoye Akinsanya 602).

In *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, Nigerian leaders who engage in political corruption are satirised by Babagee, the president of Zowabia who abuses power to the detriment of the nation. The president and the First Lady operate under a self-serving rationale, and hence show no reservation when resorting to corruption to enrich themselves. This is best displayed when Babagee and his wife discuss politics. Babagee claims that "the name of the game is power. And power is no game. It's a war in which all rules are thrown overboard. If you can't win fair, why not win foul?" (1993; 137). According to Afolayan *et al*, Babagee and Mamagee serve as "replicas of Ibrahim Babangida and his wife" (346) during Babangida's military rule of Nigeria which lasted from 1985 to 1993. Negash makes similar claims and argues that Zowabia and its leader bear "an unmistakable semblance to Nigeria, and its former head-of-state Ibrahim Babangida" (1999; 85). I would instead argue that Babagee and his wife represent a more general satirical commentary on the dictatorial use of political power throughout Nigeria's history of military rule. For example, Babagee claims he is inspired by Nigeria when he suggests bringing back one of his enemies in London by kidnapping him and transporting him via cargo plane, a plan which closely resembles the aforementioned kidnapping of Dikko during Buhari's regime. Other general satirical depictions of corrupt leaders include the head prefect Toshiba who extorts students and is so large he "sometimes commandeered a junior boy to follow him about with a small stool" (36) to rest, the vice-principal who cannot speak without spraying spittle, and the Nigerian traditional chief in Rayo's notes who possesses a luxury car equipped with "a bath, a mini-swimming pool, satellite television, a bed installed with a phone and fax machine" (1993; 103).

Outside of Zowabia, there are several cases of abuses of power which do not neatly fall into the common definition of corruption (which involves powerholders using their positions for personal gain), but nevertheless contribute to the dystopian decline of society. An example of this is 'noble-cause corruption' whereby police will misuse power to achieve ends they deem ultimately good. Such acts, although they may not be undertaken for personal gain, still undermine the law, creating a society where mistrust is rife. Examples of noble-cause corruption occur in *The Sympathetic Undertaker* when police violence is used to coerce confessions. During his time at the University of Ife, Rayo riles up students through an impassioned speech where he bemoans the state of Nigeria. He complains about the continuing deterioration of society which occurs while government officials acquire private jets and expensive homes. After claiming that the ordinary man is ruled by soldiers empowered by both guns and the economy, he proposes they protest by rendering the country ungovernable. The subsequent protest singing from the students leads to a university shutdown and the arrest of Rayo. In Rayo's notes which appear in the next chapter, Rayo exhibits signs of insanity again when he believes he is dead while being detained by police. During the ordeal he is interrogated while being "punched and kicked and slapped" (1993; 99). The police brutality displayed could be considered a form of noble-cause corruption as the intended ends may be perceived as good (eliminating civil unrest); however, the means being implemented involve a misuse of power.

The recurring military violence on citizens is another example of power abuses that go unpunished in Bandele-Thomas's Nigeria. Ordinary citizens are very afraid of the soldiers because they are known for inflicting violence on "the civilian population, soldiers like themselves sometimes, and the police" (1993; 175). Sosoman faces violence from young soldiers and runs into a church to get away from them, but they eventually find him and attack the congregation too. Such scenes of lawlessness illustrate a panicked society where one can expect little order or sanity from the civic public. The military violence in *The Sympathetic Undertaker* represents a recurring theme in the discussed dystopian texts – power being used against the body. In the South African texts, this occurs in *Moxyland* through the defusers that shock citizens who break the law while in *Deadlands* criminals are sent to the deadlands where they are reanimated as rotters. Pain and punishment are commonly used by powerholders to enact their wrath on disobedient subjects. In both instances, punishment is an "exercise of 'terror'" (Foucault 2012; 49) which affirms power, uses pain to discipline bodies and inspires "fear of those who determine and execute the punishment" (Nietzsche 1913; 94). The body is a particularly good target for punishment

because, while what is considered punishment may vary from person to person, bodily injury is "almost universally experienced as punishing" (Jordan Peterson 37). As Foucault explains, the body as a site for the enactment of power strategies has many historical precedents. Princes would use public executions as a form of terror and discipline to "make everyone aware, through the body of the criminal, of the unrestrained presence of the sovereign" (2012; 49).

In summation, *The Sympathetic Undertaker* uses split characters to represent social ills in Nigeria. The split characters struggle to keep either half of themselves selves separate, and in doing so the possibility of maintaining a moral primordial public and amoral civic public is critiqued. Furthermore, by depicting forms of corruption common in Nigeria, cautions readers against similar dystopian elements in their society. Satire, through its use of humour, assists in adding entertainment value to the text and prevents the cautionary tale from becoming too didactic. For instance, the president of the fictional country of Zowabia bears enough resemblance to past African dictators for direct comparisons to be made. However, rather than simply give an overly moralistic condemnation of such characters, the use of satire allows for their flaws to be highlighted in a humorous manner.

The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond

Bandele-Thomas's debut novel tells the story of a schoolboy named Lakemf who is invited to the home of his teacher, Maude. Maude reads him a story he wrote about Bozo Macika, a boy who, finding his society and family destroyed, loses his mind and goes on a murderous rampage. As is the case with *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* introduces its dystopian themes through the depiction of insanity. Once again, this is done through a reversal of properties. Bozo sees "beggars and the unemployed on every street and in every marketplace" (1992; 98). This is made worse by the fact that there are "skyscrapers and private jets in the midst of ghettoes and abject poverty" (1992; 98). This unfair distribution of wealth is treated as normal in a society with supposed law and order. Bozo, however, opposes this supposed law and order which he deems a "euphemism for the oppression of the masses by the venomous tentacles of the system" (1992; 112). Discontented with the world he finds himself in, Bozo wants all systems of class to be abolished, for the youth to have jobs and for every person to have "an equal share of the land" (1992; 98). Despite this, it is Bozo who is described as "sick in the head" (1992; 99) by Lakemf. Hence, while it may initially seem as though Bozo is an insane man who is defiant of the law and order of society, a closer inspection reveals that his moments of insanity are

often cases of attempting to restore order to a disordered society. An example of this can be found when Bozo is juxtaposed with the religious institutions of Nigeria. Christianity, with its hierarchical chain of being and lists of commandments and divine laws, is often associated with law and order. However, in Bozo's view, religion is "the parapet behind which the oppressive system hid itself and wreaked havoc on the poor, naïve masses" (1992; 112). Mohammadu Marwa is an example Bozo gives of religion being used by powerholders to exploit the poor. Nicknamed Maitatsine, Mohammadu Marwa is a real preacher who accrued many devotees in Nigeria. According to Bozo, Marwa simply takes advantage of poor Muslim boys and tell them that all their problems are caused by "religious teachers from other sects" (1992; 105) and that the solution to their suffering is to join the Marwa-led jihad. Bozo persuades the boys to focus their energies on the government instead, the real reason why the boys remain poor and oppressed. For this attempt to restore order to society, Bozo is deemed "deranged" (1992; 107) by Maria. Thus, although religion is considered a symbol of order and Bozo is considered insane, religion is repeatedly used to bring about chaos and violence while Bozo is often seeking ends which restore order to society.

Bozo is far from being the only mad character. Many other Nigerians show signs of insanity too. Bozo's mother is such a person. She stabs her daughter and husband to death, following her discovery of the incestuous relationship between them which has resulted in her daughter's pregnancy. The act is so heinous that a policeman suggests to Bozo that his mother must have been "mentally unstable when she committed the murders" (1992; 62). After determining that the attack had been "consequent on a fit of insanity" (1992; 79), a judge sentences Bozo's mother to a mental asylum. Bozo comes across more insane people in hospital. Although many patients there had been sane "professors in universities, heads of international companies, artists at the height of their careers" (1992; 95), when they are brought into hospital, they have often been rescued "from the streets, naked, unwashed and wandering in the refuse dumps" (1992; 95). A recurring theme among these characters is that their insanity is caused by the chaos and dysfunction of their society. Bozo's mother, for instance, is driven to madness when discovering the perversions within her own family. Likewise, some of the hospital patients Bozo comes across are driven mad when, to escape "harsh realities" (1992; 95), they resort to drug use. The lives of the characters come to reflect the chaos they are surrounded by and neither the public nor the private sphere is safe. Even within their own heads, the characters cannot escape the chaos, making the dystopia presented a totalising one.

The novel, like *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, shines a spotlight on dystopian elements in the society and, in doing so, brings readers' attention to ongoing problems. Furthermore, by illustrating the negative effects produced by those dystopian elements, the novel cautions readers against allowing them to continue. The cautionary aspects are enhanced by the use of imagery. A recurring motif of decay and waste is found throughout the novel, including a description of a rubbish heap that is so putrid that whenever people pass, they "either held their breath or covered their noses" (1992; 29). The use of grotesque imagery assists the text to avoid the pitfall of being patronisingly didactic by communicating much of the lessons through subtext provided by the imagery used. For example, the novel features a description of an overpopulated graveyard where dogs unearth the corpses of the anonymous poor and drag them away, leaving broken-off limbs in their wake. When commenting on this scene, Negash argues that "population pressure on graveyards is an indicator of scarcity of resources that has been worsened by an economy determined by an oil boom and bust, the immediate consequences of shortages of food and medical supply, malnutrition and hunger" (1999; 87). Hence, rather than merely depict societal ills and condemn them, the novel puts forth social critiques through grotesque imagery that brings attention to the worsening socioeconomic conditions in Nigeria. A second example can be found with the recurring imagery of waste and disease. This appears in the form of the nauseating flies that buzz everywhere Bozo goes. He does not find the "swarm[s] of stinking flies" (1992; 111) out of place, however, because "naturally, they had to be here, in this scum, this degenerate 'trashbin' where he had been born" (1992; 111). Such descriptions associate Bozo's environment with rot and detritus which creates a grim atmosphere and emphasises the pervasive social ills.

The misuses of power presented can be better understood by making use of the Theory of Two Publics. The same colonialism-inspired split in public identity seen in *The Sympathetic Undertaker* emerges in T*he Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*. Characters in the novel show an amoral stance towards the civic public. Far from being an act limited to the elites, Bozo looks around and sees nothing but "corruption in high and low places, from the minister demanding ten per cent to the botched-up fifty-kobo note in the sleight-of-hand trick of the demanding police constable at the roadblock" (1992; 98). While a lack of moral commitment should, rightfully, be brought up as an explanation of corruption, it is important to note that it is seldom the only factor. Oftentimes economic pressures can also encourage corruption. The relationship between poverty and corruption works in both directions, and economic anxiety can often be the factor that leads to a loosening of moral standards. Firstly, if one feels that society has not served its obligations towards oneself, one

is likely to hold less weight to any moral obligations one has towards it. Secondly, in societies rampant with corruption, social security and honest avenues for income are scarce, leaving immoral means to dominate the available options. This link between poverty and corruption is seen in *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* when Maria's family wishes to give her dad a decent burial. The gravedigger, trying to survive in a corrupt society, asks for a bribe before he will direct them to the person in charge of burial-space allocations (who he happens to be too, he reveals after he has received his bribe). He justifies this by saying that "his basic monthly salary was so meagre that his wife and children would starve if he depended solely on it" (1992; 82). The gravedigger behaves immorally but is only motivated (if he is to be believed) by his own poverty. Far from excusing the gravedigger's corruption with a simple mention of his poverty, the novel seems to condemn his actions. When Maria's brothers realise they cannot afford a burial plot, they resort to sneaking their father to a hospital mortuary where he would be buried by the government, but they are killed by a gang of youths on their way there. That the scene features mortuaries, corpses and death drenches it in morbidity and associates corruption with decay, both literal and moral. This is another example of the motif of decay being used to introduce the cautionary aspects of the novel through subtext. The repulsive imagery that surrounds scenes of corruption alerts readers that the ongoing events are negative and should be avoided.

As with *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, the corruption presented can be categorised as either administrative or political. Administrative corruption is, once again, mostly perpetuated by the police. Bribery is seen as a normal part of everyday life and characters are able to escape the consequences of breaking the law by paying the police. Particularly vivid instances of police bribery and corruption in the novel can be found in relation to the drug trade. Bozo describes a widespread drug trade network that distributes marijuana to the lower class and heroin to the upper class who can afford it. The negative effects of the illicit drug industry are seen when Bozo notes that many patients in hospital lose their sanity when they consume drugs that eat "at their minds until nothing [is] left" (1992; 95). Despite this, the police's involvement in the industry and acceptance of bribes ensures that it continues to prosper. For instance, the sacks of marijuana collected by Bozo and Mitchell are transported to Lagos in Ministry of Agriculture vans, which suggests that corrupt officials are allowing the drug trade to continue and are likely profiting from it. Mitchell avoids arrest despite possessing and selling marijuana because of a "protection fee" (1992; 108) which, if paid, makes the police pretend they are "oblivious to Mitchell's 'business transactions'" (1992; 66). It is only when he fails to pay the fee that he is raided. The police's complicity in the

drug trade for the sake of personal enrichment is an instance of administrative corruption where its deleterious effects on society can be clearly traced. The trade's "tentacles destroy, its fangs are deadly and its kiss can kill" (1992; 64), yet drugs still remain available for "millions of frustrated youths and disillusioned elderlies" (1992; 64). The links between police bribery and harmful drug proliferation can be read as a condemnation of corruption and an illustration of its wide-reaching negative impact.

Political corruption is also depicted as rampant in the novel. It seems to be, in part, facilitated by a feeling of indifference towards the plight of the poor. As the narrator reveals, "the government regarded the rich, the 'haves', as a necessary evil but the poor and the paupers, it regarded as expendable eyesores" (1992; 81). Consequently, one of the primary forms of political corruption comes in the form of the misuse of taxes taken from the poor. The government, in the novel, is unrelenting in its efforts to acquire as much in taxes as it can from its citizens. Some of Maria's family, for instance, are "chastised with the whip, or incarcerated for a period because of late payments" (1992; 81) because "every grown-up member of the starved family was compelled by law to pay tax" (1992; 81). These taxes, instead of helping the poor, inconvenience them. Despite the taxing, the poor witness very few improvements to their society. Education is a "special preserve of a few of the elite" (1992; 81) and, rather than alleviate their poverty, the funds find themselves used by "those who are in a position to loot public treasury" (1992; 64). Much like Bozo's mother, the insanity ends up driving Maria's family crazy. Her brothers get "mad with the government tax-collectors" (1992; 81) and beat them before committing suicide by drowning.

Using insanity and imagery of garbage and decay, Bandele-Thomas constructs a Nigeria where law and order only produces chaos and characters have been driven mad by the corruption and ills of society. The consequence is a society where essential public services are subpar, the poor are exploited through tax, politicians and elites loot the spoils and ordinary citizens are driven to crime and violence out of frustration. By demonstrating how corruption affects everyday citizens who have very little power, *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* progresses from being mere a depiction of corruption and becomes a scathing critique of how those in power do a disservice to their country. More importantly, Bandele-Thomas skilfully demonstrates how poverty is not just a case of being economically disadvantaged. It is also a form of psychological violence, as seen by how the poverty-stricken society pushes its members to insanity. Research has shown that "living with persistent poverty is toxic for one's psychological health" (Catherine Santiago *et al* 218) and can result in "a wide range of psychological problems including anxiety, depression,

aggression, relationship problems, physical problems, and trouble with the law" (Santiago *et al* 218), as is demonstrated by the discord in the mental health and lives of the characters that inhabit the chaotic society of *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*'s Nigeria.

Problems with Power

While power strategies are typically enacted to benefit powerholders, their use can result in problems both foreseen and unforeseen. Bandele-Thomas's novels reveal two problems that arise with the use of power. The first is that due to the complex and unpredictable ways that power strategies influence the actions of subjects, the consequences cannot be controlled by even the subjugator. As Foucault argues: "people know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don't know is what what they do does" (qtd in Hubert Dreyfus *et al* 187). Thus, political power, although effective when used correctly, is volatile and can have a chain reaction of consequences that extend far into the future and affect unintended individuals. The effects of political corruption in Nigeria illustrate this phenomenon. Nigeria's economy is considered underdeveloped by Adewale Bakare because, despite generating over $360 billion from the oil industry since the 90s, it is still considered an "underdeveloped poor country of the Third World" (59). Bakare points to corruption as one of the contributing variables and claims that because of corruption, "resources that should be used for developmental purposes are being diverted from the society to private or personal use" (60). Osita Agbo has discussed links between corruption in Nigeria and human trafficking. Agbo argues that Nigerian police who expose rescued human trafficking victims "to persecution and extortion" (8) further aggravate the problem as "agents in whom women should place their trust do not make things any easier" (7). There are also strong correlations between corruption and poverty. The misuse of funds divert money away from poverty alleviation programs, further stretching the gap between the rich and the poor. Furthermore, the general culture of corruption has driven away professionals and caused a "brain drain" (Sofo Ali-Akpajiak *et al* 09) of expertise which contributes to the "decline of the health-care sector in Nigeria" (Ali-Akpajiak *et al* 9).

The Sympathetic Undertaker and *The Man Who Came In From The Back of Beyond* demonstrate how unintended consequences of power strategies can inadvertently harm the powerholders using them. Political corruption, when discovered, causes citizens to lose faith in their leaders and develop negative perceptions of the political arena and its ability to improve society. In Nigeria, for instance, election fraud has reduced faith in the voting system. Consequently, "the majority of Nigerians do not believe that elections are credible in

the country" (Hakeem Onapajo 576). Pessimistic views of the government are common among the characters of *The Sympathetic Undertaker* who are aware that "the army is above the law" (1993; 129). Such pessimistic views of the state are communicated by Rayo who mocks crony politicians, a pastime which greatly entertains his classmates. During these comedic sessions, Rayo imitates politicians who promise bridges to villages without rivers and tells a joke about a Nigerian president who counts ten votes from three voters. The fact that his jokes land well with his peers suggests that his negative views of politicians are not unique to him. *In The Man Who Came From The Back Of Beyond*, a similar degree of scepticism and distrust of the police force is found among characters such as Maude who says the police force is "slow as a what's-its-name. And corrupt too" (1992; 103) and describes a case of police misconduct as "typical of our police's unprofessionalism" (1992; 103).

The second problem with power revealed by Bandele-Thomas is that changing power strategies can be a slow process because, when they have been successful for a long time, they become habits of behaviour that are hard to deviate from even when they are no longer beneficial. As previously discussed, in Africa, the civic public is "historically associated with the colonial administration" (Ekeh 92). During liberation movements, power strategies used by the colonised often involved sabotaging the colonial administration. For this reason, "the African who evaded his tax was a hero" (Ekeh 102). However, as Ekeh points out, although such strategies might have been necessary for liberation in pre-independence states, "there is clearly a transfer effect from colonialism to postcolonial politics" (103). Hence, the same strategies that were used to benefit the primordial public during colonial rule, e.g. exploiting the civic public, find continued use in a postcolonial context. Consequently, even in postcolonial Nigeria, it is difficult for society to break old habits, "be faithful to public service, pay taxes, and oblige the state with other duties" (Eghosa Osaghae 237). This slowness in change may be aggravated by the fact that while the benefits of corruption are typically immediately obvious, and thus serve as strong operant conditioners, the connections between one's corrupt actions and negative outcomes on oneself and society are less obvious, thus providing weaker deterrence.

The unintended consequences of reusing old power strategies in new contexts are seen during instances of administrative corruption in Nigeria. For example, the proliferation of courtroom corruption may be explained by misapplied power strategies. As Amadi explains, "when the British took on the administration of Nigeria, the native judicial system was replaced by native courts" (87). However, those who "served the colonial administration saw the white man as a foolish intruder who should be outwitted at every possible opportunity"

(87). Consequently, the native courts became "notorious centres of awuf, in which everyone was out for what [they] could get" (87). While they may have been sabotaging an oppressive colonial system, the unintended consequence was that the court system became infected with a culture of corruption that continues after colonial rule, as is parodied by Zowabia. Hence, as Amadi summarises, "the natives thought they were sabotaging the white man, but they were, in fact, destroying the moral fabric of their own society" (87).

In summation, the Nigerian texts, as I have attempted to argue, highlight existing dystopian elements in Nigerian society and warn readers of these dangers by illustrating the negative effects they produce. There are two prominent ways this is done. The first is by demonstrating how corruption, societal fragmentation and a chaotic community can produce split subjects who experience little moral commitment to the civic side of society. This is predicted by Ekeh's Theory of Two Publics which posits that colonialism has resulted in a split within the psyches of those affected by colonialism. The one half of the split acknowledges a moral obligation towards the primordial public while the other half behaves amorally within the realm of the civic public where corruption often occurs. The novels critique this by demonstrating how impractical it is to attempt to keep these moral and amoral roles separate. The second way readers are warned of dystopian elements in Nigerian society is through satire and symbolic imagery. As I have discussed, satire in the form of the fictional country of Zowabia allows for *The Sympathetic Undertaker* to depict corruption in ways that employ humour rather than moralising tones. Similarly, a motif of filth imagery recurs in *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*. In both these cases there is a reliance on subtext and metaphor which encourages readers to independently interpret and draw their own conclusions, as opposed to direct didacticism which may not be as well received. As is the case with the South African texts, power in both Nigeria and the selected Nigerian novels functions in complex ways that are difficult to undo. The passionate attachments found in the South African texts and the Theory of Two Publics found in the Nigerian texts illustrate how the workings of power often involves the internalisation of harmful paradigms, which adds an additional layer of complexity to both escaping power strategies and ceasing old power strategies. The hypothesis that old power strategies, entwined as they are in culture, tradition and historical factors, may be hard to abolish and amend even when they no longer serve those using them is one which offers very little optimism. Thus, an avenue of hope necessary if readers are to believe that the depicted dystopian elements of Nigeria can be overcome. Possibilities for hope within the dystopian worlds of Beukes, Herne and Bandele-Thomas will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Hope Within Dystopias

The selected texts suggest that the misuse of power is a primary force in the formation of a dystopia. As all four texts reveal, when power is mismanaged or malevolently used, it produces oppression and inequality. Consequently, in the hellish societies presented by the novels, suffering is omnipresent, unfair and overwhelming. The problems faced by the characters are large, complex ones which reveal that when effective power strategies are set in place, they can be difficult to extinguish, and subjects are faced with the seemingly impossible task of untangling themselves from their subjugators on whom they are often dependent for their very survival. While illustrating the dystopian potential of misused power might be effective at alerting readers of current elements in society that pose a danger, this mode of social commentary does run the risk of inspiring defeatism.

As I hypothesized in the introductory chapter, hope may be a way that the cautions contained within dystopian literature avoid encouraging pessimism within readers. To investigate how the selected dystopian texts inspire hope, I will investigate three literary techniques, namely identification with the protagonist, defamiliarisation, and cognitive estrangement. I propose that these elements, when working in tandem, are able to insert a spot of hope within the grim events of the dystopian narratives. Upon initial analysis it may seem that identification (which is contingent on absorption) is incompatible with cognitive estrangement and defamiliarisation. However, it is possible for them to work synergistically to produce art that both entertains and educates. Firstly, these elements work upon different aspects of the text. Cognitive estrangement and defamiliarisation are typically used with reference to setting, while identification is typically achieved with characters. There are, of course, rare exceptions to this. Satire, as will be discussed, can be used to defamiliarise characters and settings, such as Hogwarts in JK Rowling's 'Harry Potter' series, can sometimes gain a personality and become identifiable characters. Secondly, rather than working antagonistically to cognitive estrangement and defamiliarisation, identification is one of the means which readers are encouraged to care about the other aspects of the novel. Thus, I would argue that one of the ways a well-constructed dystopian novel may utilise these literary techniques together is by using cognitive estrangement and/or defamiliarisation to focus attention on potentially dystopian elements in society. Identification will then allow readers to, through the eyes of the protagonist, view the fictional world as though it is their own and develop an emotional investment in the estranged setting. Hence, when the literary elements are balanced, they enhance each other's impact rather than dampen it.

Identification with the Protagonist(s)

The problem of building the bridge from hell to heaven has been tackled by several religions, and many solve it in similar ways. In Greek mythology, Hercules is tasked by Eurystheus to complete twelve labours. The last one involves capturing Cerberus, the three-headed dog of the Underworld. Following his katabasis, Hercules meets Hades who allows Hercules to take Cerberus so long as the hero can subdue the dog without weapons. Upon completing the task, Hercules must then bear the burden of carrying Cerberus back to ground, freeing him from both the Underworld and his twelve labours (Alireza Nabilou 877). Hence, Hercules's liberation from his suffering is enabled by his willingness to take on the burdens required to overcome the obstacles before him. This theme repeats itself in more widely known religious stories such as the Christian one, where Jesus must bear the burden of his own cross as he is taken to his crucifixion which will lead to his ascent to heaven. In both these stories, the pathway to heaven is one which requires bearing responsibility instead of being deterred by its associated burdens. I would argue that within the selected novels, a similar pathway to heaven can be found. The central thread of hope within the novels is the promise that individuals have the power to ameliorate suffering and oppose tyranny, should they be willing to bear the associated burdens.

In an imagined world, readers' identification with protagonists can be exploited to lead them through the process of taking on the burdens necessary to escape hell. If done effectively, the lessons learnt within the fictional dystopia can be carried into reality and give hope to readers that similar problems in their own society can be combated. Identification with protagonists is not a binary process and instead occurs along a spectrum. Different techniques can be used to achieve varying levels of success with inducing identification, and different art mediums have stronger and weaker tendencies to induce identification. Novel reading, which is typically done alone and requires undivided attention, may "allow for an intense reading experience" (Cohen 257) which induces absorption and, consequently, identification. This effect can be further strengthened through detailed writing which immerses readers in the protagonist's world. Video games, I would argue, might possess an even greater capacity to induce identification. This is due to the fact that the player is, in most cases, not simply watching a story unfold, but instead takes control of the protagonist and makes decisions that determine the fate of the character, hence creating an emotional investment. The medium also allows for artistic techniques that create a kind of immersion that would be difficult for other artforms to emulate. Subtle elements such as the controller vibrating when the protagonist is struck blend the character's experiences with that of the

player, bringing them further into the protagonist's world. More overtly immersive techniques that induce potent identification occur in games such as *Hellblade: Senua's Sacrifice* (2017) where the protagonist, Senua, suffers from mental illness. In addition to narrative elements that encourage players to empathise with her, throughout the game there is also a stream of voices that induce a sense of sinking into madness as well as visual distortions that mimic psychosis-induced hallucinatory experiences. These techniques, blended, encourage players to identify with Senua by allowing them to see the world from her perspective. While books may not have the multimedia advantages of video games, their track record of influencing readers enough to change the course of history demonstrates that they are still highly effective at inducing identification. To investigate this further, I shall examine the ways the selected novels inspire identification within readers. This will be done by focusing on how narrative perspective, gender and similarities between readers and protagonists facilitate identification. I argue that the selected Nigerian dystopian texts focus on taking on the burdens which alleviate the suffering within one's society (the external hell), while the South African texts instead focus on the burdens of overcoming subjugation and passionate attachments within one's personal life (the internal hell).

Keith Oatley proposes that the perspective of the narrator can affect identification. First-person narration, he argues, is conducive to identification as it "allows the reader into the very most intimate moment-by-moment sequences of a character's thoughts" (445). Both South African novels utilise a first-person point of view. Readers explore Herne's Cape Town through the eyes of Lele while *Moxyland* offers first-person points of view through four Capetonians. First-person narration can also be found in Bandele-Thomas's writing. *The Sympathetic Undertaker* is told from the perspective of Kayo who watches from afar as his brother slowly goes insane. Readers are also afforded a first-person view of Rayo's internal world through his notes. *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* also features first-person narration from the perspective of Lakemf. However, the bulk of the novel is situated within Maude's story which is told from a third-person perspective centred on Bozo. Although *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* features minimal use of first-person narration, the text is not necessarily less likely to induce as much identification as the three other selected texts, for there are other ways that it can be achieved.

Gender is an aspect of a protagonist's identity that is effective at inducing empathy and thus might also be useful for identification. As Anneke de Graaf writes when discussing identification, a study by Paul Jose *et al* reveals that "boys identified more with male characters, and girls identified more with female characters" (76). Both *The Man Who Came*

in from the Back of Beyond and *Deadlands* do not benefit much from this because the gendered aspects of the protagonists are seldom highlighted or emphasised. In *Moxyland* and *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, however, the gender of the protagonists is given prominence, making them much more likely to encourage identification within some readers based on gender similarity. This can be demonstrated by analysing Kendra and Kayo/Rayo.

Of the four protagonists of *Moxyland*, the two males provide little opportunity for identification based on gender. Very few of Tendeka's personality traits are associated with traditional masculinity and his gender is not a prominent part of his character. Although Toby's character is one whose gender is emphasised, he displays a negative variety of masculinity which is portrayed unfavourably in the text and thus is unlikely to induce identification in readers, who would likely not want to see the same traits in themselves. The women of *Moxyland* are much better at encouraging gendered identification. Kendra's gender is an important part of her character; being an attractive female allows her to become a Sponsorbabe. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter Two, her subordination is also based on her gender. She plays the "hyperfeminine role of a dependent woman" (Byrne *et al* 79), which results in her developing passionate attachments to the patriarchal men in her life. Lerato's gender is also constantly brought to the forefront through the ways she subverts traditional femininity. She embodies "traditionally masculine qualities" (Wilkinson *et al* 70) by being work-oriented, emotionally aloof and "distanced from stereotypical conceptions of femininity that are associated with being nurturing, emotional and relational" (Wilkinson *et al* 71), and can therefore be viewed as a foil to Kendra's passive femininity. This aspect of her is epitomised during her interactions with Mpho, her suitor, who she treats callously, at one point saying: "But you, what we had? I don't give a shit" (2014; 179). Hence, it could be argued, as Wilkinson *et al* do, that "Lerato represents a highly empowered version of femininity" (71). The multiple perspectives of *Moxyland* allow for greater gendered identification by offering varied forms of femininity for readers to relate to.

The masculine aspects of *The Sympathetic Undertaker*'s protagonist cannot be ignored because they form a central part of the character. He undergoes specifically male coming-of-age rituals of his culture, such as circumcision which is described as "the true test of manhood" (1993; 7). Rayo also expresses many masculine anxieties which he copes with in a traditionally masculine fashion. Although he is very short (and sometimes because of it), he is confrontational and gets "into at least one fight every other week" (1993; 55) during his school days. Height anxiety is common among males because greater height is often associated with masculinity (Anthony Bogaert *et al* 549; Valentina Cartei *et al* 570). That

Rayo settles his disagreements with violence is also another trait associated with masculinity. Additional traditionally masculine anxieties surface during his hallucinations which cause him to believe that his genitals are missing. In a panic, he rushes to Tere's house, only to have her tell him that not one part of his body is missing. Castration anxiety, in Freudian terms, is caused by a child's father preventing them from enacting their Oedipal desires for their mother (Irving Sarnoff *et al* 375). Consequently, castration anxiety is associated with fears of a metaphorical emasculation. Rayo's displays of masculine anxieties have a greater chance of resonating with readers of the same gender because his experiences are largely associated with masculinity. Furthermore, while some aspects of Rayo's masculinity may be questionable, his gender identity is not presented as pathologized and he is imbued with many positive characteristics. He is smart enough to skip a grade in secondary school and kindness is shown when he helps the night-soil man during his evening rounds, much to the annoyance of Kayo who must endure Rayo's smell when he returns. Consequently, Rayo, unlike Toby of *Moxyland*, is not likely to deter readers from identifying with him.

Similarities between readers and protagonists also induce identification. De Graaf notes that "when a protagonist in a story is similar to a reader, that reader can more easily connect the experiences of the protagonist to him or herself" (75), hence "the more similar a character is, the more readers will identify with that character" (76). As evidence, de Graaf points to a study by Osei Appiah which reveals that "African American adolescents identified more with African American characters in ads" (76). Similarity between readers and protagonists can enhance the cognitive empathy readers have for protagonists because, for example, a child is more likely to empathise with the perspectives of a child character rather than an adult character. Similarity can also allow for self-referencing if readers relate the protagonist's experiences to events in their own lives. Identification through similarities can be achieved through a protagonist with broadly relatable traits or by presenting a diverse cast of protagonists that provide multiple opportunities for identification even among a varied readership. Alternatively, this can be done by ensuring that the characteristics of a protagonist align with those of a niche demographic the text is geared towards.

The two selected Nigerian novels present broadly relatable protagonists with common traits, making them capable of inspiring identification within a wide range of readers. Such a character, termed an everyman, is seldom extraordinary and is easily relatable. Bozo, of *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*, can be described as an everyman. Maude claims that "there are many Bozos on our streets today" (1992; 97), highlighting how Bozo is meant to be an average individual representative of the ordinary Nigerian, and tells Lakemf that

Bozo stands "as a representative of the mood of his generation" (1992; 98). In *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, Kayo serves as the everyman protagonist. Kayo seldom gets into trouble or questions authority but instead is an ordinary Nigerian who is trying to make his life liveable. His open-ended and unremarkable description leaves much leeway for a wide range of readers to self-insert, making him a good character for readers to identify with. There is a second kind of broadly relatable character known as the underdog. In a world where most people do not have significant amounts of social power, the underdog is an attractive character to identify with: "because of our own experiences of being an underdog and frequent exposure to cultural narratives of underdogs, we easily recognise, identify, and sympathise with the struggles of an underdog" (JongHan Kim *et al* 2552). *The Sympathetic Undertaker*'s Bozo is such a protagonist. He is described as the "smallest kid in class" (1993; 55), emphasising his powerlessness. Despite this, he attempts to change things in his dystopian society and goes up against figures and systems far more powerful than he.

Moxyland encourages identification through relatability by splitting its narrative between four protagonists. Each of the protagonists, by inhabiting different racial, sexual and socioeconomic identities, provide multiple opportunities for a wide range of readers to identify. Diversity of race can be seen with characters such as Kendra whose whiteness, as has been discussed, is an important part of her character, and black characters such as Lerato and Tendeka. Sexual diversity is depicted through the homosexual relationship between Tendeka and Ashraf which sits alongside the heterosexual relationships Kendra, Toby and Lerato engage in.

Lastly, as *Deadlands* demonstrates, novels may also encourage identification if the protagonist rejects broader appeal in favour of sharing similar traits with a niche audience. According to Murray, "'Mall Rats' texts are marketed as Young Adult fiction" (3) and Barendse has recognised that Herne's series is "written for young adults" (2015; 89). Thus, while the text may draw a wide and varied readership, it is reasonable to conclude that its main target market is composed of young adults. One of the most notable aspects of adolescence and teenagerhood is the discovery of one's own identity and body. During this time of tumultuous change, young adults often untangle aspects of their sexuality, world view and emotions. Young Adult texts often take advantage of fantasy and science fiction elements to metaphorise this time of self-discovery and change. In *Deadlands*, this is seen with Lele, a teenager who undergoes a coming-of-age passage that involves her learning that under her skin is the same spaghetti stuff the zombies consist of. From this, she discovers that she is "not entirely human, not entirely Guardian, but something in between" (319). Her process of

discovering more about herself and her body may be relatable to young adults undergoing their own experiences of self-discovery and thus may inspire readers of that demographic to identify with her.

As demonstrated above, a calculated use of narrative perspective and imbuing characters with relatable traits can encourage readers to identify with protagonists. Once this identification has been established, protagonists can share their hope with readers and/or serve as models for how to overcome the dangers that have turned the imagined world into a dystopian one. A return to Cohen's research might reveal how identification could facilitate this. As previously stated, Cohen offers four factors necessary for identification to occur. Tchernev reveals that some researchers have "dropped the absorption dimension of identification" (4) as it is very similar to the concept of 'transportation'. This leaves three remaining factors, namely cognitive empathy, which is "the ability to adopt another's perspective" (Çiğdem Topcu *et al* 551); affective empathy which is "the ability to experience and share the emotions of others" (Rebecca Ang 388); and sharing the character's goal. By analysing the third factor, the previous two are also elucidated as, according to Tchernev, "thinking about the character's goals implies cognitive empathy, and desiring the goal implies an emotional component (i.e., affective empathy)" (4).

As I have argued, the stories of many religions build the bridge from dystopian hell to utopian heaven through a protagonist who dares to take the responsibility of bearing the burdens necessary to overcome oppressive forces. This pattern is continued in the selected African dystopian texts where protagonists, despite the suffering they find themselves surrounded by, voluntarily make the choices required to better themselves and society, regardless of the associated difficulties. They, like most readers, have the aim of minimising suffering and moving themselves and society towards a more utopian existence. This shared goal between protagonists and readers strengthens identification and, when protagonists are depicted pursuing this goal, give hope to readers that the perils of the depicted dystopia can be opposed. If a protagonist that readers identify with is willing to take difficult steps necessary to face the problems of their society, it may inspire readers to do the same because, according to Tchernev, identification encourages readers to adopt the viewpoints of the protagonist (5-6). By investigating the goals shared between readers and protagonists, and how the protagonists pursue these goals, I intend to determine how identification fosters hope within dystopian settings.

A protagonist's goals can be divided into external and internal ones. External goals are typically the goals which drive the plot of a story and may include objectives such as

"defeating a villain, obtaining a precious object, or finding the perfect romantic partner" (Tchernev 34). Conversely, internal goals are usually emotionally motivated and "the moral or personal motivation that is driving the hero to complete his or her mission" (Tchernev 35). The goals of the protagonists of the Nigerian novels are mostly external, hence the burdens they bear are ones necessary to better society. Among the selected South African novels, the most relatable goals of the protagonists are internal ones, hence the hope they offer is concerned with alleviating individuals from their personal dystopian existences.

In *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*, Bozo's goals are mostly external ones. He primarily hopes to combat oppressive systems of society. As the narrator claims, "Bozo and his friends stood against everything that the system represented" (1992; 112). His goals are made even more sympathetic by the squalor of his environment compared to the riches of those in power, making readers of good conscience likely to relate to such a goal. Despite significant risk to himself and the sacrifice, Bozo commits himself to this goal. This occurs in smaller ways, such as when he speaks against religious indoctrination. During his school days he challenges Myra Buck, a teacher he deems a religious "fanatic" (1992; 40). He tells her that Christianity is a "tool of the colonialists" (1992; 41) and that the story of Jesus Christ is a myth inspired by Mithras and Zarathustra. The burden Bozo bears as a consequence for his defiance is his expulsion from school. His commitment to his goal also occurs in bigger ways, such as when, to realise his dream "of bringing about a classless society where all will be equal, in the true socialist sense of the word, he withdraws from the society into a secluded 'back of the beyond' for a period of two and a half years to cultivate several acres of land with hemp" (Agho 202), before using the acquired resources to start a rebel army. Bozo's story culminates with him enacting a massacre at a police station. Police are one of the most visible participants in administrative corruption in the novel, thus an attack against them comes to symbolise an attack on the entire corrupt system. This point is emphasised when, after the killings, Bozo says "I've conquered the system" (1992; 131). The powerful imagery of the everyman taking on the system provides hope that the average individual is capable of taking a meaningful stand against oppressive forces. This is further emphasised by Bozo's Christian name, David, which alludes to the Biblical story of the shepherd boy who took on and defeated the giant Goliath.

While this scene could be interpreted as hopeful, there is an argument to be made that it is poisoned with pessimism that attenuates any hope. Rather than a scene of victory, Bozo's massacre could be seen as an act of terrorism which demonstrates that the corruption of Bozo's society has finally infected him too and corroded even his moral fibre. Furthermore,

the massacre carries with it a layer of futility because, firstly, the killing of innocent individuals who are merely symbolic of a larger problem complicates the question of whether Bozo has made any significant change or meaningfully achieved his goal. Secondly, his subsequent suicide adds a degree of meaningless to his prior actions. However, this pessimism is counterbalanced by Lakemf. After hearing Bozo's narrative, Lakemf decides to give up stealing school property with the following justification: "the system is rotten as it is. I don't want to be part of those who are making it rot" (1992; 138). The fact that Lakemf derives value from Bozo's story and decides to make positive moral changes has the potential to balance out the pessimism that comes with Bozo's death, and ensure that readers are still hopeful. Lakemf's internal goal, which is to counteract the creep of dystopia by refusing to partake in the corrupt acts that further rot society, is yet another example of a protagonist choosing to take on the burdens required to lessen the decay of his country. In this case, the burden is the willingness to behave morally instead of self-servingly. Although Lakemf's edification resulting from Bozo's story could be critiqued, as Derek Wright does, as being an "old-fashioned moral cliché about the cleansing power of fiction" (322), I would argue that it is a reasonably effective way of inspiring hope in readers by outlining a clear pathway from hell to heaven – taking personal responsibility for making the right changes within oneself and one's environment. Because both Lakemf and readers experience Bozo's despairing narrative together, readers can learn, from Lakemf, that they need not leave with a nihilistic outlook. Instead, they can take solace in the fact that the story was mere fiction and work towards ensuring that they do not contribute to their own society falling victim to the same ills.

The Sympathetic Undertaker has a bleak tone and glum atmosphere that appears unconducive to hope. This gloominess is further emphasised by the story of President Babagee and his wife which offers no hope that Zowabia will escape dictatorship. Despite this, the novel is able to maintain a running thread of hope through Rayo who refuses to accept the sorry state of his society. His main goal, an external one, is to correct the injustices and corruptions he sees around him. He is considerably successful with this during his younger years, giving hope to readers that an underdog is capable of making appreciable changes in the world. His prank on Toshiba, for instance, results in the corrupt prefect being transferred to another school. He also succeeds in getting Baba Ayafa the night-soil man his pension. These attempts at bettering society do not come without their tribulations, however. Just as Hercules and Jesus bear their burdens, so too must Rayo. In getting Baba Ayafa his pension, Rayo is expelled in the process. Furthermore, his efforts to rile up students against

the government land him in prison where he becomes a victim of police brutality. While it may initially seem that by the end of the novel nothing has changed and there are no reasons to be optimistic about the future of the narrator's society, Rayo continues to offer hope to readers. The narrator is healed from his condition by an exorcism which unites the split parts of his personality. If, as I argue in Chapter Three, Kayo/Rayo is read as a microcosm of a split society, the union of the two parts of his personality brings with it the hope that the nation too can be healed from its various forms of fragmentation.

In *Deadlands*, Lele's external goal is to "save up and build a better life for Jobe" (251), her twin brother. She plans to achieve this by joining the Mall Rats. It is with Lele's internal goals that the possibility of identification arises. Lele's internal goals involve a strong desire to escape the oppression she faces both from society and in her personal life, and asserting her identity. She confesses her desire for liberation right at the beginning of the novel when she makes the following confession: "I promised myself, I'd make a plan to get away from the city enclave. Away from Dad. Away from the Resurrectionists. And *especially* away from the Mantis" (8). This is a goal that many young adults can relate to, as teenagers often wish to "separate themselves from their parents, seeking a new kind of independence" (Johanna Risku 32). She also has an internal goal to find a place of belonging, likely fuelled by the fact that she is a misfit at Malema High School. Her hair is shorter than the other girls', she dresses differently, and she does not glorify the Guardians as they do. Once again, this internal goal proves to be a relatable one for young adults who are in a life stage which involves learning how to negotiate a blossoming identity in relation to peers is an important aspect of being a teenager; hence, "the formation and development of one's own identity can be regarded as one of the central themes of YA fiction" (Risku 33), as it allows for young readers going through similar situations to relate to and identify with the protagonist.

Parents and guardians are often the first dependency-based relationships in a child's life which lead to the passionate attachments described by Butler. While passionate attachments might be vital in the process of subject formation, the subordination produced results in a subject who is not fully autonomous. Hence, "even though primary passionate attachments are necessary to the survival of the child, they must eventually be denied – or disavowed – if the subject is to emerge fully" (Lloyd 99). Part of the solution to such attachment might lie in the ability of subjected individuals to learn to form their own identities not in relation to power, but rather in relation to their own authentic values. This requires one to embrace a master morality rather than a slave morality, something which is possible because, as Nietzsche writes in *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), both moralities can

exist “even in the same person” (1998; 153). The slave, Nietzsche argues, “attributed to himself no other value than what his masters attributed to him” (1998; 157). Within the master morality, however, the noble person “feels himself as determining value – he does not need approval” (1998; 154). This self-determination which lies at the core of the master morality is exhibited by Lele when she, however difficult it is, strives to assert her own identity outside of the control of her father and the Mantis. In doing so, Lele demonstrates that passionate attachments can be disrupted and, consequently, gives hope to identifying readers that they might do the same.

While the external goals of the four protagonists of *Moxyland* are varied, they do share some internal goals. At their core, the four protagonists desire survival. Kendra turns to Inatec Biologica to avoid cancer and to Jonathan when she believes she needs him to have a career. Lerato climbs the corporate ladder to ensure the poverty she experienced as a child does not reappear in her life. Toby ends up sleeping with Kendra to gain immunity to the M7N1 virus and Tendeka, even when he believes his death will be for a good cause, struggles to let go of his life drive and thus, at the panicked moment of his demise, he confesses: “I’ve changed my mind” (2014; 278). The desire to survive is a near universal goal of all humans, and its absence is largely regarded as a form of illness. Freud terms this drive Eros and Herbert Marcuse, commenting on Freud’s concept, describes it as a “life-instinct” (22). Its ubiquity makes it a suitable goal for readers to identify with. Despite the totalitarian control the corporate state has, and how bleak the situation seems, the characters never stop battling for their survival.

The goal of survival shared between readers and the protagonists may trigger identification, and the resilience the characters display in the pursuit of their goal may encourage hope within readers that they may do the same. However, while this resilience may offer some hope, there is still an overwhelming pessimism with regards to how their stories end. For the most positively portrayed protagonists, Kendra and Tendeka, their desire to survive is thwarted. While Tendeka dies from the M7N1 virus, Kendra “is killed by the corporation who injected her with the nano because the exposure to the virus compromises her as a trial specimen” (Barendse 2012; 6). These deaths highlight “the injustice of their society” (Wilkinson *et al* 68) and encourage “the reader to see the textual world negatively” (Wilkinson *et al* 68). Toby, one of the two protagonists who survives, is able to make to the end of the novel through his “complicity with patriarchal ideals” (Wilkinson *et al* 68), offering the reader yet another pessimistic look at *Moxyland*’s Cape Town. Lerato, like *Deadlands*’s Lele, exhibits the ability to self-determine. Despite living in the same society as

Kendra, she does not define herself according to traditional conceptions of femininity and instead exhibits many stereotypically masculine traits. Her cunning and ruthlessness allow her to survive the corporate world and lift herself from the lower strata of society she is born into. However, she too is eventually blackmailed "not only into compliance with her corporation but also, as a highly intelligent and skilled operator, she is coerced into becoming a manipulative agent provocateur" (Stobie 373-4). For this reason, I would argue that *Moxyland* is the least hopeful of the four selected texts and would agree with Barendse that "hope only exists outside the pages of *Moxyland* in that it can be read as a warning that a growing worldwide consumer culture can become just as controlling as the worst oppressive governments have been in the past" (2012; 6).

In short, when a reader identifies with a protagonist, it reduces "selective avoidance of persuasive messages, and can also reduce counterarguing" (Tchernev 6). Furthermore, Tchernev notes that absorption, a factor involved in identification, "can lead to changes in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours" (5). That identification is a potent influencer of media consumers is a documented fact, as demonstrated by a study by Sona Dal Cin *et al* which reveals that, for example, "greater identification with the smoking protagonist predicted stronger implicit associations between the self and smoking (for both smokers and non-smokers) and increased intention to smoke (among the smokers)" (559). Thus, I would argue that identification may be the most valuable bridge between the pages of a novel and society, and would agree with Tchernev's claim that "identification is the single most important process underlying the influence of narratives" (6). As demonstrated, elements such as first-person narrative, gender, similarities between readers and protagonists, and shared goals between readers and protagonists can be used in various combinations to increase the likelihood of readers identifying with literary protagonists. If readers identify with these protagonists, they may share in the hope of the literary characters. This sharing of hope is what makes identification a vital component of turning dystopian stories from pessimistic narratives to ones that can inspire positive change.

Defamiliarisation

Defamiliarisation and cognitive estrangement are closely related but separate literary elements which could also allow for hope to be maintained within dystopian texts. To investigate how defamiliarisation in Bandele-Thomas's texts foster hope, satire and surrealism will be discussed with regards to *The Sympathetic Undertaker* and metafictionality will be discussed with regards to *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*.

As previously noted, defamiliarisation encourages a break from the automatic acceptance of the everyday and inspires readers to see that which is taken for granted as though it were new. In doing so, the problems of one's society can be perceived in novel ways and the dangerous dystopian potential of things deemed ordinary can be realised, allowing for defamiliarisation to be used as a cautionary tool. It is often the case that defamiliarisation is a precursor to recognising potentially problematic aspects of everyday life because people are "*habituated to* what is familiar and known – by definition – and are therefore often unable to apprehend its structure (often even unable to perceive that it is there)" (Peterson 99). The experience of seeing the ordinary anew is perhaps best captured by Antoine Roquentin of Jean-Paul Sartre's *Nausea* who has a habit of being suddenly shocked by the existence of everyday things as if they were alien objects. He comes upon a seat in a tram and, instead of allowing the sight of the ordinary object to automatically enter the unconscious, he realises that the seat was made "on purpose for people to sit on, they took some leather, some springs, some cloth, they set to work with the idea of making a seat, and when they had finished, *this* was what they had made" (180). Similar experiences occur with his own body when he focuses on a function as banal as salivation and notices that he has "a permanent little pool of whitish water" (143) in his mouth that constantly touches his tongue. Literature, especially of the dystopian variety, often achieves this effect through temporal defamiliarisation. This is true of *E.X.O. – The Legend of Wale Williams*, a Nigerian graphic novel set in Lagos during 2025. The protagonist, Wale, is left a high-tech superhero suit by his deceased father. He uses the suit to oppose Oniku, a villain who seeks to control the city which has been weakened by corruption. By setting the story in the future, ills of Nigeria such as corruption can be reimagined in a way that forces readers to see it in novel forms. The underlying message, that corruption leads to the development of dystopian elements, is illustrated through a reimagined Nigeria with futuristic robots, giving readers a suitable degree of temporal distance from the depicted dystopia. This space allows for the growth of the hope that the dystopia can be avoided. Hence, rather than simply show a dystopian world, the story is able to act as a cautionary tale of a possible future to avoid. Although Bandele-Thomas does not use temporal distancing, I would argue that his texts still achieve defamiliarisation through other techniques. Bandele-Thomas's comments on his own writing are similar to how one might describe defamiliarisation. He claims the "the job of an artist is to re-imagine things, to re-invent, to take reality and fashion it into something new, into another vision, basically to propose an alternative, a different way of seeing things" (qtd in Negash 192).

The common and expected representations of Nigeria are defamiliarised, in *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, through the theme of insanity which sharpens certain dystopian aspects of society. When Rayo has psychotic episodes, familiar settings suddenly become strange, and conventional logic is broken. During these surreal instances, Rayo's reality is described in unorthodox ways. Surrealist works often feature dreamy (and sometimes nightmarish) imagery and reflect the unconscious inner-world of the artist. However, surrealism does not aim to simply abandon reality and depict the imaginary. Instead, the ideal of surrealists is to achieve "the total union of the ideal and the imaginary" (Ferdinand Alquié 123) and, in doing so, "resolve the previous contradictory conditions of dream and reality into an absolute reality" (André Breton, qtd in Ian Chilvers 611). Thus, while surrealist works may feature abstract, irrational and fantastical elements from estranged worlds, they still express truths about reality and human experience. Kehinde has claimed that Bandele-Thomas's "texts are full of surreal horrors" (2008; 339) and "expressionistic and even surrealistic" (2003; 20) descriptions, while Negash argues that Bandele-Thomas joins phantasmic worlds with the ordinary Nigerian landscape to produce "an absolute reality or a surreality" (1999; 82). This is particularly true with Kayo/Rayo whose split personality could, as both I and Negash argue, be read as an example of Bandele-Thomas using "madness in surrealistic terms to convey the co-existence of two worlds" (Negash 1999; 89). Surrealism utilises the free associations of ideas in its representations. Imagery associated with corruption often involves death and decomposition as it is believed to cause the decay of a society. The association of corruption with the "destruction, death and degradation of a community" (Rendtorff 127) is represented surreally in *The Sympathetic Undertaker* during Rayo's moments of insanity. During these psychotic episodes, grotesque imagery of death and decay is often used. A poignant example of this occurs when Rayo and his friends, during their school days, spike the drink of Toshiba the corrupt prefect and take his unconscious body out to the cemetery as a prank. While there, Rayo sees a woman rise from the grave. The woman is nude, brown and described in surrealist terms. For example, her feet are said to have toenails that "stretched up like the slender, spiral shoot of a wild bean" (1993; 45) and curve around her as they "unwind into more tendrils, in the effortless, almost imperceptible, way that a snake glides across the grass" (1993; 45). Although his friends are afraid that the undead woman will drag Rayo back to the grave, he approaches her as his head inflates until it is bigger than the school, at which point the undead woman jumps into his mouth and slides down his throat. The theme of death during Rayo's moments of insanity reappear at the end of the novel where the narrator, now revealed to be synonymous with Rayo, hallucinates

himself walking with no flesh or skin as vultures circle. The imagery of the vultures is especially fitting as it evokes ideas of scavenging, which Nigeria's resources face from predatory forces such as corruption and neo-colonialism. Mirroring the decay of the society around him, Rayo's moments of surreal insanity also feature him seeing his own body in various forms of deterioration. In one of the chapters containing Rayo's notes, he recalls looking in the mirror and noticing that one of his eyes is missing and panics, only to look back at the mirror and (paradoxically) see that he has lost his other eye too. These surreal instances of decay, death and deterioration during moments of insanity mimic the corruption which surrounds Rayo and erodes his society. Thus, I would argue, as Negash does, that through Rayo and his insanity "the dystopian fears for the people, the nation or for humanity are introverted into the personal psyche" (1999; 89). The surreal inner-world of Rayo becomes a reflection of the corruption of the outer-world.

Satire is another way familiarity is balanced with a degree of defamiliarisation that forces readers to look at history and the everyday in new ways. As Knight explains, satire "reflects its culture, but it seeks to establish a distance from it" (50). This distance allows satire to "identify and analyse problems and to warn of their dangerous consequences" (Knight 51) in a fictional realm which emphasises important facts and avoids the complexities of reality that might obscure the true nature of things. For example, the corrupting influence of power is satirised by President Babagee when he and his wife fantasise about the petty forms of control they would enact upon citizens if they were dictators. Their ambitions for absolute power are emphasised when President Babagee sings about how much he wishes he were Idi Amin, the president of Uganda during the 1970s whose reign was characterised by brutality and corruption (Richard Ullman para 2; Kristin Leefers 72). His self-centredness is cartoonishly magnified when he expresses no qualms with using humans for target practice, declares that the public "is at liberty to go swallow arsenic if it so wishes" (168), and expects the whole nation to mourn after his wife suffers a stillbirth. Babagee and Mamagee, as fictional characters, can act as transparently cynical as Bandele-Thomas wishes. However, their follies are familiar enough for the author's mockery of them to be applied to historical military leaders of Nigeria, as Afolayan *et al* and Negash have. Hence, Bandele-Thomas, as Swift does with *Gulliver's Travels*, projects the vices of his own society onto a fictional land so as to create an outsider's perspective of his own nation and hopefully permit his reader to see the ordinary in critical and new ways. The Nigeria of *The Sympathetic Undertaker* is a despairing one whose dystopian elements are magnified through satire. While satire is good at directing attention to flaws, it seldom offers

any solutions. Despite this, satire can provide hope through humour. Laughter and comedy promote a positive mood which, in turn, can promote a more optimistic outlook. When one laughs at a problem, it tends to seem less daunting than before. For instance, while reading about President Babagee's dream of being a dictator is a reminder of the numerous dictatorial leaders Africa has suffered, the scene is made comedic by him singing about it to the tune of 'When The Saints Go Marching In'. This shifts his character from a power-hungry monster to a self-centred buffoon. Hence, in *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, "humour and irony lighten the horror and provide hope at the same time as they satirise systems of oppressive power" (Negash 1999; 77).

In *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*, defamiliarisation is achieved through the novel-within-a-novel format of Bozo's story. This is a form of postmodernist writing known as metafiction whereby a text draws attention to its fictional status. While the depicted world and real world might share many similarities, the constant reminders of the fact that the text is a text defamiliarises the depicted world by emphasising the fictional quality of it. This method of defamiliarisation would, at first, seem to interfere with the aspects of the text that draw a reader in and allow identification to take place. However, I would argue that this method can find effective usage in texts with particularly bleak or perverse narratives by acting as a buffer between readers and the harshness of the depicted world. This occurs, for example, in Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita*, a novel about a man who develops an inappropriate infatuation with an underage girl. The text is littered with the narrator's descriptions of Lolita which eroticise her prepubescent body. While this, to most readers, would be repulsive and vulgar, the fictional quality of the story is brought to the foreground with frequent breaches of the fourth wall where the narrator addresses readers directly. For example, an erotic scene involving twelve-year-old Lolita extending her legs over the narrator's lap might, on its own, be too coarse to be palatable. However, the scene is preceded by the narrator setting it up as though it were a play, writing "Main character: Humbert the Hummer. Time: Sunday morning in June. Place: sunlit living room. Props: old, candy-striped davenport, magazines, phonograph, Mexican knick-knacks" (55). The stressing of the fact that the story is a story distances readers from the perverseness of the scene. This disrupts the automatic response to the narrator's 'pederosis', disgust, allowing readers, from a safe emotional distance, to see the paedophilic relationship anew and realise how the narrator has projected onto Lolita the false images of his lewd fantasies. Thus, the use of metafiction allows the erotic scene to become a condemnation of the narrator that goes beyond merely pointing out his perversions but also provides a psychoanalytical window into how the

narrator transforms a child into a sexual object. Similarly, the dystopian descriptions of *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* are made digestible by the constant reminders that the story is fictional. While this may potentially disrupt the absorption process, it is still useful as it creates a suitable distance between readers and the depicted Nigeria. An example of this occurs when Bozo kills himself after his massacre at the police station. The death of the protagonist brings with it a sense of hopelessness. However, it is quickly followed by the words "The End" (1992; 131), which remind readers that everything which occurred is merely a story being told by Maude. The fictional aspects of the story are made even more obvious by Maude's revelation that the entire story had "no iota of truth, no soupcon of reality in it all" (1992; 135) and is actually based on his brother's writings. This reminder of the fictionality of Bozo's story makes the gloominess of his end more palatable and informs readers that this is not a description of reality, but rather a description of a possible reality with dystopian elements which should be avoided.

As seen in both Bandele-Thomas's texts, defamiliarisation is an effective means of interrupting the habitual ways of perceiving the world that can blind one from elements that may potentially be dystopian. Paradoxically, with distortion comes greater clarity. Through satire and surrealism, *The Sympathetic Undertaker* turns Nigeria into a strange world where the most dystopian elements are magnified until they can no longer be ignored. Through satire, corrupt leaders are lampooned by embodying their worst traits within President Babagee and Mamagee. The humour involved in satire promotes optimism rather than despondency and, consequently, may kindle hope. The surrealist scenes during Rayo's episodes of insanity turn Nigeria into a world of decay and death, imagery often associated with corruption. That these moments are hallucinations, and not Rayo's real society, does provide relief for readers. Arguably, however, the defamiliarisation techniques of *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* are more effective at inspiring hope. The metafictional aspects of the novel allow for the insertion of Lakemf who acts as a model of how readers should react to Bozo's dystopian story. Rather than adopt pessimism after Bozo's suicide, Lakemf decides to stop contributing to the corruption around him. This implies that there is hope that his society can still be steered towards a utopian future.

Cognitive Estrangement

Cognitive estrangement is considered a key trait of the science fiction genre. Estrangement functions as a dialectic between naturalisation and alienation. Hence, while it often makes the ordinary new, it is also invested in making the novel ordinary. Jack Finney's *Invasion of the*

Body Snatchers (1955) is a dystopian science fiction novel in which both these forces are clearly visible and identifiable, and thus serves as a good text for illustrating how these forces work. The novel begins with the protagonist, Miles Bennell, being told by Becky that her friend, Wilma, believes her uncle has been replaced with an imposter. As Miles slowly unravels the mystery, he discovers that several people have been replaced by duplicate copies grown by alien pods. These duplicates behave identically to their originals, except they lack genuine emotion and passion. The aliens survive by using up all available hosts before moving on to the next planet. In this story, naturalisation occurs through the existence of the alien pods that invade Earth. The aliens, and their ability to duplicate hosts, are explained in biological terms. Naturalisation is counterbalanced with alienation whereby "familiar images are made strange in various ways" (Philippe Mather 188). Human behaviour, in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, is made alien by having it mirrored by the extra-terrestrial invaders. As Budlong, one of the duplicates, states: "what have you people done – with the forests that covered the continent? And the farm lands you've turned into dust? You, too, have used them up, and then… moved on" (Finney 184). The product of the estrangement produced by alienation and naturalisation is that the imaged worlds within science fiction provide readers with "a new, distanced perspective on the consensual world" (Mather 187). In the case of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, the familiar (human behaviour) is made alien by having it projected onto the unfamiliar (body snatchers) which has been naturalised. By having the aliens behave in parasitical ways, readers are alerted to the ways such behaviour is objectionable. However, the aliens take on human forms, which subtly reminds readers that the critique of the aliens is applicable to humans too.

This "dialectical principle of estrangement" (Mather 189), whereby "the alien is naturalized by a familiar object, and the familiar object is made strange in an unfamiliar context" (189), characterises both selected South African texts. One of the ways science fiction achieves naturalisation is through characters that behave as though "alien sights and sounds are normal, everyday occurrences" (189). In *Moxyland*, for example, futuristic nanotechnology and omnipresent surveillance are treated as features of everyday life. Similarly, *Deadlands* normalises a world filled with zombie infections and Guardian overlords. The South African novels achieve alienation by taking the societal segregation which characterises the country and reapplying it in unfamiliar conditions such as in a post-apocalyptic enclave or a cyberpunk city. When balance is struck between the forces of alienation and naturalisation, science fiction produces reimaginings of the real world that are strange enough to create suitable emotional distance yet familiar enough to demand the re-

examination of things typically taken for granted. To demonstrate this, I shall analyse both naturalisation and alienation in the selected South African texts. The analysis will pay attention to how the subsequent estrangement produces hope within readers.

In *Deadlands*, an example of well-applied estrangement can be found when juxtaposing the survivors in the enclave with the zombies of the deadlands. Zombies, which are alien to the reality of readers, are naturalised in the world of *Deadlands*. The segregation between the fearful survivors in the enclave and the Rotters on the outside alienate the recurring patterns of racial and economic segregation that have existence in South Africa's past and present. While obvious analogies can be drawn between the segregation in *Deadlands* and the segregation South Africa experienced during Apartheid, one need not look to the past, as the present provides plenty of similar cases of societal segregation. Firstly, due to high rates of disparity, South African upmarket suburbs often border sprawling townships where poverty is rife. The suburbs are usually guarded by high walls and heavy security just as the enclave of *Deadlands* is. However, as Miller's drone photography reveals, the borders which create these divisions are arbitrary ones drawn during a racist regime and, while that system has been dismantled, its architecture still shapes and divides society. Secondly, the country's history with Apartheid may have resulted in patterns of dehumanisation that continue into democracy, this time directed towards the poor and those deemed 'outsiders', such as foreigners. Othering of foreigners manifests as xenophobia in cases such as the October 2015 xenophobic attacks in Makhanda (then known as Grahamstown) which left hundreds displaced (Camalita Naicker 56), while Othering of the poor occurs through the 'invisibility of poverty' which allows the wealthy in South Africa to live as though the "rich and poor inhabit a different country" (Charles Villet 707), despite the existence of starkly economically disparate communities located adjacent to each other. Thus, as Brown has suggested, the Rotters could be read as "nightmarish analogues for the threatening, poverty-stricken crowds that wealthy South Africans of all races determinedly continue to Other and marginalise" (33).

Throughout *Deadlands*, the divisions used to conquer people are crossed. This is seen with the Mall Rats, who come to represent a varied group of people, most of who would normally be ostracised from society. For example, Lele is a 'rural girl', "Saint is a lesbian from Botswana, whose lover, Ripley, has been taken by the Guardians, and Ginger is a red-headed British boy who was visiting South Africa for the Football World Cup when the plague struck" (Brown 33). Despite their differences, they come to form a loose family, demonstrating that the 'Others' one is taught to ostracise can be empathised with, and that

lines of segregation based on bigotry can be crossed. Thus, the Mall Rats become a symbol of hope by revealing the possibility of unity even within a fragmented society.

Lines of division being crossed also occur between Lele and the Rotters. Lele initially looks upon the zombies with disgust and refers to them as 'it' which suggests that she does not consider them to be humans. The Rotters hence appear to maintain a literary tradition whereby "monsters essentially personify difference" (Davis 32). However, she eventually discovers that she is composed of the same sinewy materiel as the Rotters. By revealing a layer of sameness which is beyond skin-deep, *Deadlands* problematises the focus on difference by highlighting inescapable similarities between Lele and the Rotters. This demonstrates that commonly accepted lines of division – such as the one between 'monster' and 'human' – might not be as deep as originally imagined. As previously discussed in Chapter Two, parallels can be drawn between the segregation of humans and zombies in *Deadlands*, and racial segregation during the Apartheid period of South Africa's history. By highlighting similarities between segregated groups, the process of Othering – i.e. "the human tendency to mark difference as more significant than similarity" (Johanna Shapiro 3) – is reversed and, in doing so, hope that lines of separation may be crossed is provided.

In *Moxyland*, the Cape Town imagined is one which contains many elements that make it resemble the real Cape Town. For instance, there are mentions of recognisable street names such as Long Street, Adderley Street and the Grand Parade. Furthermore, the feel of the city, as a cosmopolitan space in constant motion, fuelled by a rampant capitalist system that moulds every facet of life, is one which is closely mirrors modern South African cities such as Cape Town. The characters of *Moxyland* inhabit a city where they are constantly exposed to "advertising in order to provoke appetites for expensive commodities" (Stobie 371), as is the case in most contemporary cities. Within this familiar Cape Town, unfamiliar elements are introduced and naturalised, the most notable being the futuristic technology. By illustrating how such technology has the potential to control lives in negative ways, the novel cautions against the dystopian potential of such tools. Beukes's reimaginings of technology as dystopian devices demonstrates that although technology can bring about progress and make life easier, in the wrong hands it can "easily create a whole new wave of social and economic problems" (Snyman 102). An example of naturalisation which demonstrates what occurs when dystopian elements become normal can be found with Pluslife, a popular virtual reality game which has the potential to lull players into inactivity by offering a tempting escape from the real world. Tendeka, for instance, realises that although he might be powerless in the face of the corporations that control society daily, in Pluslife everyone can

"actually have an influence on the world" (Beukes 2014; 41). Due to this, the game is able to engage players "to such an extent that they become unaware of what is going on around them in reality" (Snyman 99). While Tendeka's virtual reality second life grants him "an escape from his sense of not belonging in post-Apartheid Cape Town" (Byrne *et al* 83), it also dangerously undermines his missions in the real world by making him dependant on yet another corporation.

The novel mainly alienates by taking currently existing aspects of society and stretching them to dystopian extremes, as made evident by the patterns of segregation in the real Cape Town and Beukes's imagined Cape Town. In *Moxyland*, rural areas where poverty and disease flourish are separated from the city where the main hubs of economic activity and employment are located. Thus, those with access to capital inhabit the city, secluded from the abject poor. This division is both geographical and social, a fact made evident by the language the characters use. As Snyman argues, "the proper nouns Rural (area) and Rurals (people) delineate the areas outside of cities as other than urban, and lump together in a specific group all people from rural areas, othering them by the defining trait of their rural origin" (95). By depicting these patterns of segregation in a cyberpunk Cape Town where futuristic technology has been naturalised, readers are suitably distanced from the critiques of these patterns of segregation. However, the Cape Town presented contains enough familiar elements for the critiques made in the imagined world of *Moxyland* to be applied to the real world of readers. While alienation is important for creating a safe emotional remove, it is necessary for the alienated aspects of the depicted dystopia to be related back to the real world for meaningful social criticism to be made. Hence, alienation must be counterbalanced with familiarising aspects that remind readers, in the case of *Moxyland*, that in both the text and real life, those outside the city are Othered "because city dwellers want to protect themselves against outside forces that might take away their space and their livelihood" (Snyman 96).

The cautions against an overdependence on technology and the dangers of passionate attachments that facilitate tyranny fail to be effective, however, without the promise that the depicted dystopia can be avoided. Stobie argues that both *Moxyland* and *Zoo City* "offer hope through their representations of humanity and self-sacrifice" (379). I am inclined to disagree with such a reading of *Moxyland* due to the fact that those sacrifices are arguably in vain. Toby, who is Tendeka's antithesis by being completely self-serving, survives to have perhaps the only relatively happy ending, suggesting that dystopian elements ultimately prevail. Instead, I find scintillas of hope in the ways that the enforced boundaries that divide people

are regularly crossed and negotiated. Although, upon first analysis, the cityscape appears to be composed of "concrete boundaries and unyielding divisions" (Roos 52), these divisions are regularly defied. Small hints of this border-crossing appear when Tendeka notices graffiti drawn by street-kids who are able to leave their mark on the city which "usually filters them out like spam" (Beukes 32). Additionally, characters who cross the borders segregating the different strata of society prove that the lines of division are malleable and can be undermined. Tendeka is such a character. As Snyman summarises, "Tendeka is a wealthy Zimbabwean-born black man, who has given up his claim to wealth and lives in an informal settlement" (93). While he could have enjoyed life in Houghton, he chooses to work together with street kids to change society. He defies boundaries again by marrying a foreigner named Emie to grant her citizenship, thus undermining divisions of nationality. Similarly, Lerato, an orphaned AIDS baby, is born in the lowest class of society. Through hard work and manipulation, she ascends the corporate ladder and garners herself a better life, demonstrating that class divisions can be defied and, with that, comes the hope that they can also be dismantled.

As I have argued, the main function of cognitive estrangement, in both texts, is to bring to attention the various forms of segregation that have existed and, in mutated forms, continue to exist in South Africa. Undead zombies and cyberpunk technology are naturalised within Cape Town. These naturalised elements are used to disrupt familiar aspects of real life through alienation. In *Deadlands*, the masses of zombies outside the Guardian-protected enclave can be seen as an alienation of the rural/urban divides that characterise both contemporary and pre-democratic South Africa. Similarly, the socioeconomic fragmentation fuelled by the futuristic technology of *Moxyland* alienates the patterns of socioeconomic fragmentation already found in Cape Town. In both texts, cognitive estrangement is effective at putting forward social criticism because they encourage readers to adopt different ways of observing the world. Consequently, potentially dystopian aspects in reality that have become familiarised are seen with renewed attention. Hope is maintained in these estranged settings through characters who defy the boundaries that divide society. Hence, the societal divisions depicted are not presented as immutable but are, instead, demonstrated to be underminable provided one possesses the courage to do so.

Conclusion

The ubiquity of storytelling in disparate communities and cultures around the world suggests that stories are one of the primary ways that humans make sense of reality. Historically, storytelling has been used, among many other methods, as a teaching tool. This is made possible through imagination which allows one to illustrate the consequences of certain actions. The most common examples of this can be found in religion where parables are used to morally edify devotees. Dystopian fiction, as I have argued, continues this trend of using storytelling to teach. However, dystopian fiction is somewhat unique in that it is invested in imagining the worst possibilities. They are explorations of the shadow of humanity and descents into the hell that awaits failed societies.

The selected four texts are examples of African dystopian fiction that make social commentary on the potentially negative effects misused power strategies can have on society. In all four texts, the depicted dystopias draw from the socio-political pasts of the countries they were produced in and consider elements in present society that have the potential to bring about a dystopian future. From South Africa, *Moxyland* and *Deadlands* demonstrate that the power strategies used during Apartheid have not been permanently vanquished with the 1994 democratic election. Instead, these power strategies can be adapted segregate citizens and concentrate power in only the highest strata of society. In *Moxyland*, this is done through a reimagining of the Apartheid police force which enhances their power strategies using technology. The largest powerholders in *Moxyland*'s Cape Town are the corporations that provide the technology necessary for navigating society. The extent of the power of corporations is summed up by skyward* who states that they are guilty of "corrupting govts with their own agendas, politicians on their payroll, exacerbating the economic gaps. building social controls and access passes and electroshock pacifiers into the very technology we need to function day to day, so you've no choice but to accept the defuser in your phone or being barred from certain parts of the city because you don't have clearance" (119). In *Deadlands*, Capetonians are oppressed by Guardians who terrorize them with zombies who dwell outside the enclave. The segregation between zombies and humans mimics the kinds of societal segregation found during Apartheid. Furthermore, the zombies are subjects of biopolitical strategies that bear resemblance to power strategies used during Apartheid. The danger of oppressive power strategies is perhaps best illustrated in the selected South African texts through the passionate attachments depicted. Numerous times, characters in the novels internalise their subordinated positions and believe that they are unable to survive if they are not being subjugated by their oppressors. This demonstrates the way power is able to

infiltrate all aspects of a subject's life in complex ways and even take part in subject formation. The more one analyses these passionate attachments, the less possible it seems that they can be overcome.

The selected Nigerian texts, both by Bandele-Thomas, focus on corruption and its effects on both the micro and macro scale. In both *The Sympathetic Undertaker* and *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*, political and administrative corruption is often the product of power strategies gone awry. Satire is the primary means social commentary on corruption in Nigerian society is done in *The Sympathetic Undertaker*. This is achieved through the depiction of a fictional nation known as Zowabia where the leader is an amalgamation of common traits found in many African dictators. In *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond*, social commentary is conveyed through imagery which associates corruption with decay and detritus. As discussed, the deep-rooted power strategies used by the Nigerians of the novel may have their origins in historical factors such as culture and colonialism. This makes changing these power strategies difficult, even when they produce negative effects on society.

The magnitude of the oppressive forces found in the selected dystopian texts and the complexity of the power strategies they use can be intimidating and disheartening. While similarities between the depicted worlds and reality facilitates social commentary, it also allows for those dystopias to be read as descriptions of an inevitable fate. This has the potential to inspire defeatism in readers. Many dystopian novels deal with this issue by setting stories in the future which reminds readers that the depicted dystopias have yet to manifest and, therefore, can be avoided. However, the selected dystopian novels have the common element of not featuring temporal distancing. For this reason, other ways dystopian novels can foster hope must be explored.

As I proposed in the introductory chapter, the antidote for pessimism in dystopian fiction is identical to the antidote for despair in reality – hope. In stories from varied mediums, the driving force for hope in a narrative is often the protagonist. This is no different in the dystopian genre where characters such as Winston Smith of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and the unnamed focal character of *The Road* all manage to retain hope of a better future. Within the selected African dystopian texts, this trend continues. Whether characters are striving to take down oppressive forces, defying the boundaries of a fragmented society or relentlessly fighting for survival, the previously discussed protagonists do not succumb to defeatism in the face of power. Through first-person narration and the insertion of relatable traits, readers are encouraged to identify with the protagonists and, in doing so, share in their hope.

However, identification is not the only means by which these dystopian texts might generate hope. Defamiliarisation, a technique by which the ordinary is made to seem novel, also has the capability to steer readers away from pessimism, as is demonstrated by the selected Nigerian novels. In both Nigerian novels, familiarity must be balanced with novelty to allow for valid social commentary to be drawn while still providing suitable emotional distance. *The Sympathetic Undertaker*, through its surrealist scenes that occur during Rayo's moments of insanity, create an appropriate emotional distance between readers and the decaying society depicted. Within this emotional space, the opportunity for hope is present. Hope comes in the form of humour provided by the satiric elements of the novel. This has the effect of diminishing the oppressive powerholders in the minds of readers and encouraging positive emotions that could, in turn, produce a positive outlook. *The Man Who Came in from the Back of Beyond* relies on metatextuality to create emotional distance between readers and the uncovetable dystopian world. By positioning Bozo's story in a novel within a novel being read by Lakemf, readers are both reminded that the dystopian world depicted is a fictional one and are given the opportunity to the story through the eyes of Lakemf who uses it as a motivating force to better himself and cease participating in ill deeds that worsen society. If readers identify with Lakemf, the possibility of sharing in his hope exists.

Cognitive estrangement, a literary technique commonly associated with the science fiction genre, is used in both *Deadlands* and *Moxyland*. As is the case with defamiliarisation, cognitive estrangement must balance novelty and familiarity. Cognitive estrangement achieves through measured doses of naturalisation and estrangement. Familiar problems that have prevailed in South Africa both in the past and present are represented in ways so strange they force readers to take notice of them. The most prominent problem presented is that of social stratification. Through cognitive estrangement, segregation which took the form of racial separation during Apartheid and continues to occur both economically and, consequently, racially, is presented in estranged ways such as through divisions between humans and zombies in a post-apocalyptic Cape Town or divisions between the connected and the disconnected in a cyberpunk Cape Town. These estranged depictions of a dystopian problem that plagues the real South Africa manage to foster hope through the ways characters navigate and traverse these borders, illustrating to readers that segregationist systems can be undermined. So long as this possibility is present, hope can persevere.

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