

Article

Some Notes on Ways to Read Zimbabwean Literature of the 'Crisis.'

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This paper sets out to suggest some of the most useful theoretical formulations that can be invoked to read the burgeoning corpus of imaginative literature from Zimbabwe, in the context of that country's political and cultural complexities. I argue (with cursory demonstrations) how fruitfully contemporary Zimbabwean literature can be understood, particularly against the backdrop of the evident culture of political intolerance that has made the Zimbabwean public sphere a site of political and cultural conflict between the state and those who oppose it. While not intent on reducing literary works (which are modes of artistic creation) to simple political or propagandistic instruments, I argue that literary works have functioned in the Zimbabwean imaginary as a cultural product and therefore an archive of the present where some of the major forces shaping history can be encountered. The literary domain therefore gives us an opportunity to study the imaginative disposition of the "powerless", the vast majority who are outside political power, where we can infer something of their take on the politics of their lived experiences and time-space.

I propose that Maria Pia Lara's theorisation of literary works as "emancipatory narratives [that] create new forms of power [and] configure new ways to fight back against past and present injustices"¹ and to some extent Mikhail Bakhtin's narrative concepts of speech genre, "polyphony"² and "heteroglossia"³ be some of the most plausible "lens" to use in looking into the cultural domain's contribution towards the search for the "just society". In Lara's philosophy, art products by the "subjects" enter the public sphere as forms of cultural and aesthetical constructs which incorporate "all that was previously left out or conceived as irrational"⁴ to begin an inclusive process of societal renewal through extending the boundaries of the normative in the expressive sphere. The entrance of hitherto "subaltern" voices into the public sphere through an act of culture is viewed not only as enlivening previously drowned voices, but more importantly it influences a reformulation of the conception of the "public". "Emancipatory" therefore entails (among other things) the recovery of inclusiveness and the consequent dismantling of the previous privileging of certain narratives in the shaping of a public sphere. The dawning multiplicity of narratives engenders what Lara (citing Hannah Arendt) calls "'human plurality [...] the basic condition of both action and speech [which] 'has the twofold character of equality and distinction'"⁵.

Lara's theory is largely informed by the writings of Arendt, a Jewish philosopher who uses the Holocaust experiences of German Jews to reflect on violence and the emancipatory effect of the recollection (and re-narrating) of their stories as a critical step towards reclaiming justice in such books as *The*

Human Condition, Rahel Varnhagen: the Life of a Jewish Woman, Men in Dark Times and *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. As Syla Benhabib also asserts, “storytelling is a fundamental human activity”⁶ because language is inherently “witness to the more profound transformations taking place in human life”⁷. Storytelling, for Arendt, then, becomes a deliberate and purposeful remodeling of history, a task (and method) that Lara argues, has been “successfully developed by feminists to influence gender and power relations in the public sphere”⁸. The process of reformulating the notion of justice in the public sphere requires, therefore, a “narrative interventionism” that can chart a social and political transformation with a clear retrospective comprehension of injustice, as Lara illustrates using the example of Rahel:

The retelling of the story of Rahel not only recovers in memory what has happened, but allows Arendt the possibility of a new beginning. She sought this beginning in the domain of politics, hence her conception of story-telling would have to cross into the dimension in which “redemptive” powers exercise collective remembrance and judgment. What had happened could then give rise to the narratively reconstructed possibility of a new beginning.⁹

In this example, the inadequacies of unchallenged and “incomplete” but dominant traditions in the public sphere are viewed as inimical to the people’s search for peace with their unreconciled past and their desire to negotiate the injustices of the present. The “new” narratives are conceived as filling this gap by enabling the reclamation of valuable but hitherto inaccessible details of the past and bringing them to converse with other narratives already in the public sphere. For Lara, telling stories is a performative act of searching for a “new beginning”:

storytelling becomes the articulate social weaving of memories, the recovery of the fragments of the past, the exercise of collective judgment, the duty to go against the grain and promote with this retelling, a performative frame for a ‘new beginning’¹⁰

Narratives are therefore seen as complex modes of communicating difference, alternative subjectivities and distinct identity re(constructions) in the creation of a new public.

I view the Zimbabwean public sphere (incorporating the political sphere) as a negotiated space in which narratives (in their potency to “become the vehicles for the construction of collective and individual narratives”¹¹) participate in the ongoing processes of social metamorphosis towards the just society. As “products of historical embeddedness”¹², narratives assume the intermediary role, reconciling the experiences of the past and the present. Speaking particularly about the modern feminist project, Lara argues in earlier parts of her book *Moral Textures: Feminist Narratives in the Public Sphere* that women have actually moved beyond simply offering resistance “to being owners of their lives”¹³ and their narratives have come to show “how gender plurality allows all individuals

to flourish". Conversely, a multi-voiced Zimbabwean public sphere is essential in the society's search for justice and equality in the backdrop of manifest state repression. The Zimbabwean writer, (and his/her readers living in a political milieu where the curtailment of access to/and production of certain information is legalised), just like Lara's oppressed women, occupies a restricted, censored and surveyed space that disables attention and solidarity in the public sphere can be linked to Martha Nussbaum's theorization on the interplay of narrative and emotions. The solidarity that the oppressed seek (through their narratives) depends on the narrative's potential to affect the readership in a transformative way that changes their perceptions of reality and other taken for granted normative traditions. Thus the more the narrative is able to arouse in its reader, for instance, compassion for certain characters in particular undeserved pain, the more it persuades readers to act and/change their attitudes.

Lara holds the public sphere to be an arena of conflicting narratives and perceptions, of "contested meanings and of exclusion" where the strength of narratives to transform power relations resides in its disclosive capacities¹⁴. While Lara's study does not get to the core of the various forces shutting out women from the public sphere, I can identify here what Terence Ranger has termed "the patriotic narrative" as the major force contending for space "over the public sphere for relocating new meaning"¹⁵. However, while Ranger locates the "patriotic narrative" in non-literary sources (such as "patriotic journalistic narratives"¹⁶, national ceremonial speeches and symbolic state functions) it is imperative to note also that more sites of the "patriotic narrative" are sprouting, for example in literary works and also "patriotic" music and jingles. However, this is not to imply that the "patriotic narrative" as a hegemonic construct is reducible to just another mechanism of political survival that can therefore be necessarily differentiated from "emancipatory narratives" that oppose it. The nature of the "patriotic literary narrative" is far too complex for such a simplistic binary comparison. Instead, I view "patriotic" literary narratives (just like any other literary work) as entering the public domain with their own meanings and perceptions and also aiming to gain "recognition" and "solidarity" in their own ways. The concomitant question is therefore: whose "recognition" and; whose solidarity?", the answer to which should differentiate the "patriotic narrative" from what can be called the emancipatory "social" literary narratives.

A brief illustration of the conflicting temperament of the two narratives introduced above can reveal how their juxtapositioning can be a working methodological approach. A case in point is Mashingaidze Gomo's recent novel *A Fine Madness* which poetically represents negative images of an Africa suffering under western neo-colonial siege years into self-rule in an essentialist way that projects the continent as entirely beleaguered by terrorist groups, rebels and opposition parties sponsored by western powers to destabilize African "democracies that threaten to overwhelm white minority influence".¹⁷ The novel ends with the (re)affirmation of what Achille Mbembe calls "Afro-radicalism" as the narrator draws from his archive of a lived experience of war to declare that: "African people must know that a madness that they believe in is a fine madness".¹⁸ Apparently, Gomo's novel also invokes the aesthetic and expressive

dimensions of narrative to configure African problems as mostly western constructs and by implication spares the postcolonial establishment from blame, as can be inferred from the following:

The root of African corruption and destitution must be traced back to the architects of colonialism and apartheid who created a continent of desperate destitutes and then picked on individual destitutes and offered them a dog's place in their affluent circles in exchange for betraying the whole race. The cause of African corruption must be traced back to European and American capitalists who offer African *Neros* racist fiddles to play while Africa burns back home.¹⁹

The speaker is here invoking the victim trope in Africa's colonial history to establish connections with the narrative of the dystopian postcolonial present. The narrative voice, unchecked throughout the poetic narrative assumes a certain form of authority and agency over what to include and what to exclude in its construction of the African image. In depicting Africa as a perpetual victim of western neo-colonialism, the novel projects a "subaltern" Africa that is also clamouring for "recognition" and the transformation of the international political and economic spheres and powers. A thematic reading of *A Fine Madness* in the context of contemporary Zimbabwean politics would reveal a congruence of the concept of "justice and the good life"²⁰ as engendered by the novel with the radical anti-western nationalist discourse of "The Third Chimurenga" that finds expression, for instance, in radio and television jingles advertising ZANU PF's vision for a "100% total independence" that would "indigenise" all production, commercial and industrial sectors in the country.

There is, therefore, a clear connection here between what can be inferred as the novel's sense of social justice and that of the state. The novel can therefore be viewed as entering the public sphere as a sympathetic force to the state, advancing its rule and consequently subverting anti-government voices. The same can be said with regards to other literary works like Olley Maruma's novel *Coming Home* and Nyaradzo Mtizira's *The Chimurenga Protocol*. One can cull from a novel like *A Fine Madness*, the correlation of narrative and state ideology. But as Lara suggests, "art is a form of rationality, expressive rationality"²¹ and as such the aesthetic and political dimensions of what comes into the public sphere through the narrative medium means that various forms of "rationalities" are manifest and these may be variously interpreted as either supportive of the political establishment (like Gomo's novel) or challenging it, as one finds, for instance in Christopher Mlalazi's short stories "idi" in the short story anthology *Short Writings from Bulawayo III* and "Election Day" in the anthology *Dancing with Life: Tales from the Township*. In "Election Day", for example, Mlalazi vividly depicts the social and personal dangers of a political dictatorship – where in a delusional moment of self-deification, a losing president callously overturns the people's electoral vote against him. A discerning reader would easily perceive the aesthetic correlation of the short story's plot with the 2008 Zimbabwean plebiscite event. Once that happens, the short story's vision and

social or political commentary (though existing in the sphere of fiction) can influence the reader's apprehension of the real events of the 2008 vote. Accordingly, while Gomo's novel can, therefore, be read as a "patriotic literary narrative" on the basis that its perspectival and aesthetic schema follows closely on the aesthetic and ideological trajectory curved out by the non-literary patriotic narrative, Mlalazi's short story, on the other hand, evolves as an 'alternative' narrative whose evocative representations lead us to perceive certain biases, mistruths and misrepresentations of the "patriotic narrative".

In seeking to identify and explain the points of intersection of literary works and the circumstances inhabiting their spatio-temporal context, I follow on Lara's (re)conceptualization of Paul Ricoeur's mimetic narrative theory, to reveal the relationship of imaginative narratives to reality and the patriotic narrative, particularly stressing the potency of such narratives to influence our conception of the world. Lara categorises mimetic representation into three distinct but relative stages that explains how the "illocutionary force" of imaginative narratives informs the reader's perception of his/her own world:

Mimesis 1 is the stage in which life is experienced and conceived linguistically in the everyday world of action; 'Mimesis 2' is the authorial stage of creative narrative configuration; and 'Mimesis 3' is the appropriation of "Mimesis 2" by the world of the readers. Narratives draw on the materials of everyday life, but, as the stories unfold in the public sphere, they return to and reconfigure life itself. In this way, complex webs of narratives emplot action, experience and speech, and stimulate further levels of those same categories in the subsequent readings and self-understanding.²²

Lara further reinforces her belief in the impact of literary narratives in shaping the public sphere when in her commentary of "Jane Austen's narratives as a moral source", she contends that Austen's narratives are actually "agents with a specific view of justice and the good".²³ As Barbara Harlow also states, literary works (at least of the kind she calls "fictions of the future")²⁴ can involve us in a "futurological leap into the future"²⁵ where we momentarily escape the rigours of the dystopia of reality and begin to discover possibilities. This approach to the interconnectedness of imaginative narratives and notions of "the good society" is appropriated in this current study to illuminate the social transformative potency of contemporary Zimbabwean literature. Referring to the novel, Ranka Primorac calls this narrative quality its "socio-analytical functionality".²⁶

The pertinence of Lara's narrative theorisation can be further demonstrated with the example of one of the novels that has addressed one of Zimbabwe's man-made socio-political catastrophe, the 2005 urban slum demolitions code named "Operation Murambatsvina" (remove filth), Valerie Tagwira's *The Uncertainty of Hope*. The novel's "socio-analytical functionality" finds expression not only through its direct and indirect allusion to the historic event, but more importantly through its powerful evocation of the resultant suffering which moves the reader

to feel and perceive injustice. Martha Nussbaum elucidates the means through which novels (generally) affect the reader:

Novels [...] construct and speak to an implicit reader who shares with the characters certain hopes, fears, and general human concerns, and who for that reason is able to form bonds of identification and sympathy with them, but who is also situated elsewhere and needs to be informed about the concrete situation of the characters. In this way, the very structure of the interaction between the text and its imagined reader invites the reader to see how the mutable features of society and circumstance bear on the realization of shared hope and desires.²⁷

The sense of injustice created and diffused into the reader's consciousness in the fiction realm of the novel is easily transposed into the real world of the reader (Mimesis 3), thereby influencing his whole perception of reality. I view this social usefulness of Tagwira's novel as driven mainly by the power that inhabits the vividness of the novel's narration of the tragic consequences of the slum demolitions.

But a more enriching study of *The Uncertainty of Hope*'s representation of the major social effects of Operation Murambatsvina can be achieved when one brings to bear the tensions occupying the novel's and the state narrative's portrayal of this historic event. The state narrative characteristically shows a clear defensive assertiveness that finds expression, for instance, in the government's intransigent official response to the damning United Nations' report that concluded that the operation violated its victims' basic rights. There is on the other hand, what can be termed "the disclosive fictional narrative" which targets "the public domain as a sphere of solidarity"²⁸ with emotive versions of fictional life-worlds that reflect intensively the shattered lives of characters, their unstable psychological states and the distressing setting that reflects inhabitable and ghastly new physical landscapes and environs. This affective potentiality of the narrative moves the reader's understanding of Operation Murambatsvina away from the official (re)presentations and perspectives and in effect questions not only the reductive tendencies of the official version of history, but also the state itself. The novel (as compared to the state's grand narratives) therefore makes possible fictional worlds in which the reader can experience the tragedy of Operation Murambatsvina in ways that steer him/her to certain perceptions of the operation which have not found expression in the state narrative.

In the example of Tagwira's novel above, I view fictional narrative as capable of leading the reader into a "guided attention" where he/she is "tuned" to cognitively respond to certain realities.²⁹ It is this guiding trait of the narrative that makes the reader vulnerable to its perspectival dictates, thus subtle counter narrative, interrogating and expanding the limitations manifest in the archive of the official narrative of time-space. The narrative achieves its cogency through its forceful use of language. To demonstrate the importance of a narrative's guiding quality in its system of representation which moves the reader's

perception of certain real-world phenomena, I invoke Tagwira's novel whose novel's arresting descriptions of the aftermath of the bulldozer's demolitions of shack houses in Mbare, emotionally guide the reader to experience the pain of loss and homelessness that can lead the reader to doubt the positivity of state narratives of the urban slum clearances. In the process, (as Nussbaum argues), the judgment that the other person's distress is bad³⁰ is generated. That "judgment" is felt strongly as the reader encounters the events leading to the destruction of Hondo's house and his subsequent suicidal death. Hondo is a veteran of the liberation war whose house to him symbolically as well as actually represents his reward for his participation in the national liberation struggle. In the wake of the demolition, the sense of the magnitude of this destruction foreshadows his own demise:

When the work [demolition] was completed, the remaining rooms stood in the early morning sun looking crooked, casting an irregular, unhappy shadow over the ground. It was only a figment of Onai's imagination. Shadows had no capacity to feel or show human pain. The demolition team left for the next house in the line without a backward glance.³¹

The irony of the "bad in good" is unmistakable as the deformed remnants of Hondo's house pollute the beauty of the morning sun and in the process stirs the reader to a cognitive transpositioning of his or her response to the fictional experiences onto the real-world of Operation Murambatsvina.

For Lara (citing Habermas), the power of imaginative narrative (against the banality of everyday speech) resides in the narrative's potential to function as a performative "illocutionary act".³² The agonistic character of speech-acts privileges the "ego" to produce a "powerful narrative that provides an account of the lack of justice created by situations of marginalization, oppression or exclusion".³³ The "illocutionary power" of speech-acts is seen as not only disclosing injustice but also fostering a combative effect that propels the hitherto subaltern "ego" to recognition, solidarity and consequently emancipation. Read through this theoretical perspective, a novel like *The Uncertainty of Hope* can therefore be viewed as inhabiting a transformative space where the narrative as a form of speech-act assumes the role of "reorder[ing] values and beliefs"³⁴ in the public sphere. As in the example provided in the preceding paragraph, the projected "re-ordered" world can therefore be interpreted as a site for analysing difference and alternativeness of representations.

Literary narratives can be understood as modes of utterances that are inherently communicative, that is, speech acts, in the sense of Hillis Miller's understanding of "speech-acts" as "speech that acts [...] a performative dimension of a literary work taken as a whole"³⁵ and also Michael Holquist's conceptualisation of literary texts as utterances.³⁶ The "performative dimension" can only be realised when the text is brought to bear with the extra-literary components of context, as Mikhail Bakhtin (commenting particularly on the novel) asserts:

From the very beginning, the novel was structured not in the distanced image of the absolute past but in the zone of direct contact with inconclusive present-day reality. At its core lay personal experience and free creative imagination.³⁷

This interaction of fiction and the real makes novels potential and subtle sites for the archiving of some of the most major temporal realities and events of the period, for instance, issues of governance, race, land, history etc. in the case of Zimbabwe's last decade. But this "special relationship with the extra-literary genres"³⁸ does not imply that novelistic meaning is as readily available as it is in everyday speech classified by Bakhtin in his essay "The problem of Speech Genres" as a form of "primary (simple) speech genre."³⁹ In his distinction of what he calls "secondary (complex)" and "primary (simple)" speech genres, Bakhtin categorises the language of imaginative literature (particularly the novel) as a secondary speech genre which acquires complexity in the process of "absorb[ing] and digest[ing] various primary (simple) genres"⁴⁰ into its own system. The novel as a complex utterance therefore, becomes a critical and convenient site to encounter a wide-range of ideas and perceptions about time-space since it is structurally a product of the compaction of many "primary speech genres" that have a direct relationship with the real world.

Meaning is conceived here as a result of a systematic relatedness of what Bakhtin calls "heterogeneous stylistic unities"⁴¹ and "fundamental compositional unities".⁴² The search for literary meaning can therefore be informed by a holistic, close reading of the following "stylistic unities" that make up the "novelistic whole" as listed by Bakhtin:

- (1) Direct authorial literary-artistic narration (in all its diverse variants);
- (2) Stylisation of the various forms of oral everyday narration (*skaz*);
- (3) Stylisation of the various forms of semi-literary (written) everyday narration [...]
- (4) Various forms of literary but extra-artistic authorial speech (moral, philosophical or scientific statements, oratory, ethnographic descriptions, memoranda and so forth);
- (5) The stylistically individualised speech of characters.⁴³

Invoking, for instance, a novel like Yvonne Vera's *The Stone Virgins*, one realises the conspicuous attention it gives to the extra-literary, particularly historical events and circumstances as background to foreground new perspectives into the renewed discourse on *Gukurahundi*⁴⁴ in a special way that allows it to say what (and what has not) been said, for instance by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace report "Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe: A report on the disturbances in Matebeleland and Midlands, 1980-1988"⁴⁵ or in authorized history books. However, what makes Vera's novel a special "archive" of the disturbances is that it proffers (through evocative language and style) representations that influence or persuade readers to re-think the relation of the nation's agonal past to the contemporary surge of nationalist revivalism. In Zimbabwe's recent past where "master narratives" systematically constructed

myths of national unity epitomised by the symbolic National Unity Day⁴⁶, the affective dimension engendered by *The Stone Virgins* cognitively impresses on the reader to question, for instance, recent attempts to erase Gukurahundi from the national history script and also the recent “expedient” projection of hitherto “tribalist and enemies of the state” such as Joshua Nkomo as national heroes. Vera’s narrative (unlike the other non-literary narratives) of Gukurahundi unfolds in a fictional life-world of two sisters Thenjiwe and Nonceba whose metanarratives of torture, mutilation and murder are poetically depicted, posing in the process, the question of rememory⁴⁷ and its relation to the reductive state narrative. In one of the many descriptions of Nonceba’s strife and attempt to come to terms with her physical and psychological torture at the hands of the soldier, she is depicted as degenerating into a schizophrenic sensitivity to objects that remind her of her painful ordeal, ironically even certain flowers that readers would expect her to like:

She, Nonceba, does not like red flowers. They fill up the entire space in the mind. She does not want a flower to do that, to bloom in her head. She likes white and yellow flowers. When you place them in your hair or hold them in your arms, they look like flowers, not blood.⁴⁸

Here, the reader is led to experience Nonceba’s discomfort and pain via a metaphorical and physiological explanation of her emergent traumatic sensibility to red flowers. Symbolically, her aversion to red flowers and, adjunct to it, her preference of white flowers translates into an antipathy for blood and torture while also signaling a disposition to peace and cessation of the atrocities.

As revealed in the foregoing, Bakhtin’s concept of “the zone of contact with incomplete events of a particular present”⁴⁹ suggests the prominence of time-space in textual reconstructions of reality and consequently, the importance of an intertextual approach to their interpretation. My understanding of intertextuality is informed by Graham Allen’s seminal book *Intertextuality* which projects texts as “lacking in any kind of independent meaning”⁵⁰. Intertextuality assumes that literary works are just a kind of texts that are congeneric to other non-literary texts and therefore their meanings can be adequately inferred when the literary text is analysed in relation to these “other texts”:

Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts. Meaning becomes something which exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates, moving out from the independent into a network of textual relations. The text becomes the intertext.⁵¹

The notion of “other texts” relied upon by the literary text in the production of literary meaning in Allen’s conceptualisation is much akin to Bakhtin’s notion of “the unfinished, still evolving contemporary reality”⁵² and Martha Nussbaum’s idea of “the novel [as] a living form”⁵³, particularly in the way they situate literary meaning in what can be broadly called context. Commenting on Bakhtin’s concept of “dialogism”, Michael Holquist identifies the “other texts” as

socio-historical forces that not only informs the production of literary texts, but their consumption as well:

Literary texts, like other kinds of utterances, depend not only on the activity of the author, but also on the place they hold in the social and historical forces at work when the text is produced and when it is consumed.⁵⁴

It is, then, the innumerability of the “other texts”, social and historical, which make the literary text look and function more as a reordering of “life” in its entire chaotic configuration, encompassing all of the “other texts”. The literary text “orders” life “by reducing the possible catalogue of happenings [which are] potentially endless [into] patterns afforded by words”.⁵⁵ This resultant multiplicity of “texts” in the literary text directly and indirectly influences my interest in Bakhtin’s relevance in studying, particularly literary works published in Zimbabwe’s “crisis” decade (1998-2008). Directly, besides underpinning my premise that “life” as complexly encapsulated in contemporary Zimbabwean literature is productively comprehended from plural vantage points, it also prioritises the “social situatedness”⁵⁶ of literary texts which makes it difficult to analyse them outside their socio-historical context. But perhaps more than confirming the importance of context to our reading of literary texts, “other texts” underlies the Bakhtinian concept of “polyphony” where the literary narrative expresses meaning via a diversity of voices and points of views. Theorizing on the “polyphony” of literary narratives, (particularly the novel), Bakhtin posits that “the social diversity of speech types [and] the differing individual voices permits a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships.”⁵⁷ Like Bakhtin, I view the language of the literary text as first and foremost a social phenomenon whose social texture and temporal currency is appropriated by the writer to signify certain social issues, as Bakhtin says:

The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes “one’s own” only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adopting it to his own semantic and expressive intention.⁵⁸

From this quotation, it can be deduced that in interpreting (literary) utterances in relation to their social and historical embeddedness, or as constituent of what Maria Shevtsova termed “popular speech”⁵⁹, one is able to decipher – not only the social and historical underpinnings around the utterance, but also the coalescing circumstances around the speaking subject. Suffice it to say one can, therefore, interpret utterances as archives of an imaginable (and possible) past and present from where conclusions about some of the most significant events and ideas of the time can be inferred.

Notes

- ¹ Lara, Maria P. *Moral Textures: Feminist Narratives in the Public Sphere*. (Berkeley: University Of California Press, 1998) p. 5.
- ² A term coined by Mikhail Bakhtin in his essay “Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics” to explain the character of a literary work that situates its “meaning”, not only in the authorial voice, but also in the variety of voices like those of characters and also of the reader.
- ³ Another of Bakhtin’s ‘technical’ terms that he develops in his essay “Discourse in the Novel” to refer to what he perceives to be a complex multi-layered nature of social language(s) of a literary text or everyday discourse.
- ⁴ Lara, p. 55.
- ⁵ Lara, p. 41.
- ⁶ Benhabib, Seyla. *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*. (London: Sage Publications, 1996), p. 92
- ⁷ *Ibid*, p. 94
- ⁸ Lara, 1998, p. 39
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 39
- ¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 40
- ¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 36
- ¹² *Ibid* p. 35
- ¹³ *Ibid* p. 8
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*
- ¹⁵ *Ibid*
- ¹⁶ Ranger’s argues in the article, “The rise of patriotic journalism and its possible implications” that the “patriotic journalism” practised by Jonathan Moyo’s Ministry was “narrow” and “destructive” in the way that it forestalled debate on critical national issues.
- ¹⁷ Gomo, Mashingaidze. *A Fine Madness*. (Banbury:Ayebia Clarke, 2010), p. 52
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 169
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 120
- ²⁰ Lara, 1998, p. 18
- ²¹ *Ibid*, p. 53
- ²² *Ibid*, p. 93
- ²³ *Ibid*, p. 94
- ²⁴ Harlow, Barbara. *Resistance Literature*. (New York: Methuen, 1987), p. 176
- ²⁵ Harlow, *Ibid.*, p. 177
- ²⁶ Primorac, Ranka. *The Place of Tears. The Novel and Politics in Modern Zimbabwe*. (London: Tauris, 2006), p. 13
- ²⁷ Nussbaum, Martha C. *Poetic Justice: The literary Imagination and Public Life*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), p. 7
- ²⁸ Lara, 1998, p. 109
- ²⁹ Currie, Gregory. *Narratives and Narrators: A Philosophy of Stories*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 98.
- ³⁰ Nussbaum, Martha. *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 302.
- ³¹ Tagwira, Valerie. *The Uncertainty of Hope*. (Harare: Weaver, 2006), p. 151.
- ³² Lara, 1998. p. 2.
- ³³ *Ibid*, p. 3.
- ³⁴ *Ibid*
- ³⁵ Miller, Hillis J. *Speech Acts in Literature*. (Stanford, Calif: Stanfoed University Press, 2001), p. 1.
- ³⁶ Holquist, Michael. *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World*. (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 69
- ³⁷ Bakhtin, Mikhail. “Discourse in the Novel”. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*. Ed. M. Holquist. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987), p. 33
- ³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 33
- ³⁹ Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Speech Genres and other Late Essays*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), p. 62.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid*

⁴¹ Mikhail Bakhtin. *The Bakhtin Reader*. Morris, Pam (ed.). (London: Arnold, 1994), p. 262.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 114

⁴³ Bakhtin, Mikhail. "Epic and Novel: Toward a Methodology for the study of the Novel." *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*. Ed. Michael McKeon. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000) p. 262.

⁴⁴ *Gukurahundi* refers to the state purging of dissidents in the Midlands and Matebeleland provinces of Zimbabwe from the early to late eighties in which many civilians died while others were maimed.

⁴⁵ Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace. 'Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe: A report on the disturbances in Matebeleland and the Midlands, 1980-1988.' (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997)

⁴⁶ The National Unity Day, celebrated as a national holiday on the 22nd of December was originally conceived to honour the ZANU/ZAPU peace pact that ended the *Gukurahundi* atrocities.

⁴⁷ In the sense of Sethe's (a central character in Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*) used to advise her black progeny of the importance of memory and remembering in their search for an (American) identity. Rememory (etymologically a combination of the verb "remember" and the noun "memory") reinforces the past as the maker of the present.

⁴⁸ Vera, Yvonne. *The Stone Virgins*. (Harare: Weaver, 2002), p. 80

⁴⁹ Bakhtin, 1987, p. 33.

⁵⁰ Allen, Graham. *Intertextuality*. (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 1.

⁵¹ *Ibid*

⁵² Bakhtin, 2000, p. 323.

⁵³ Nussbaum, Martha C. *Poetic Justice: The literary Imagination and Public Life*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), p. 6.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 68.

⁵⁵ Holquist, p. 84.

⁵⁶ Allen, 2000, p. 20.

⁵⁷ Bakhtin, 1987, p. 263.

⁵⁸ Bakhtin, 2000, p. 349.

⁵⁹ Shevtsova, Maria. "Diaologism in the Novel and Bakhtin's Theory of Culture." *New Literary History* 23. 3. (1992), pp. 747-763.