

The ambiguous space: Representations of forgiveness in *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006), *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009)

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for

the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

In the subject

ENGLISH STUDIES

at the

University of South Africa

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May 2016

DECLARATION

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I declare that **'THE AMBIGUOUS SPACE': REPRESENTATIONS OF FORGIVENESS IN**
Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007), Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the
Rwandan Holocaust (2006) and God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (2009)
is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and
acknowledged by means of complete references.



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Signature

30 May 2016

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Date

SUMMARY

This study aims to interrogate the representations of forgiveness in post genocide Rwandan fiction. The novels analysed are *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007), *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006) and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009). *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* represents romantic love as the possible beginning of reconciliation between the Tutsi and the Hutus after and the devastations of the genocide. *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* reveals that the individualistic portrayal of forgiveness is important to create communication between antagonistic ethnic groups. *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* demonstrates that forgiveness and reconciliation have the possibilities of being attainable on a national level through political reforms. The narratives succeed in portraying the representations of forgiveness but due to the subjectivities of the authors, the historicity of the genocide is undermined thereby compromising the foundations for forgiveness. This study suggests that future research on post genocide Rwandan could analyse creative works on forgiveness but focussing on the issue of restorative justice.

KEY TERMS

1. **DRC** - Democratic Republic of Congo
2. **Ethnicity** - A socially constructed identity in which people are divided into groups on the basis of language, physical appearance and place of origin.
3. **Genocide** - The term refers to a coordinated plan aimed at destroying an ethnic group in whole or in part.
4. **inyenzi** - “cockroach”: pejorative term used by extremist Hutus referring to Tutsis during the genocide in 1994
5. **Kinyarwanda** - Rwandan language
6. **RPA** - Rwandan Patriotic Army
7. **RPF** - Rwanda Patriotic Front is a Tutsi liberating force that stopped the genocide. It was trained in Uganda and led by Paul Kagame—now president of Rwanda.
8. **Rwanda** - A tiny country in central Africa that experienced genocide in 1994 in which nearly one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed by Hutu extremists.
9. **TRC** - South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing a Master's dissertation can be a very humbling experience. While reading through countless articles and books I realised how much of this world I am yet to discover.

I am greatly indebted to the following:

- My supervisor, Professor M.T. Vambe who moulded my critical approach to the analysis of the representations of forgiveness in creative works on post genocide Rwanda. This study would not have become a reality if it were not for the untiring and constructive criticism I got from my supervisor.
- UNISA library and its work force for creating a conducive atmosphere for my studies.
- UNISA Financial Aid Bureau (FAB) for generously making available the partial bursary that enabled me to embark on my studies.
- A huge thanks you go to my sister Vavariro Gabi and my brother Tichakunda Gabi. I am grateful for your encouragement and wise advice.
- My mother, Ruth Gabi, I am so thankful for the support and guidance you have given me over the past years. This dissertation has only been possible because of you. Thank you for all your hard work and invaluable comments.

Thank you. May God bless you all!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Background to the study

In 1994 Rwanda was engulfed by a devastating genocidal war. Nearly one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus perished (Mamdani 2001). Most critical works on the Rwandan genocide have largely focused on the causes of the tragedy and reveal the gory aspects of the genocide (Newbury 1998). No critic has considered the role of creative art in fictionalising the aftermath of the genocide in which the theme of forgiveness is apparent. Some of the works written from the perspective of conventional history emphasise the role of ethnicity (Uvin 1997). Most of these works do not theorize how the politics of ethnicity play out in the context of the post 1994 discourse on forgiveness, national healing and reconciliation among the Hutus and Tutsis where they were both victims and perpetrators.

The aim of this study is to critically explore the representation of the concept of forgiveness in three creative works on the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath. The theme of forgiveness is depicted in a novel, memoir and autobiography by authors writing in the post 1994 Rwandan genocide context. However, forgiveness is not easy to pin down as is it abstract. Forgiveness is also material in the sense that different forms or models of it have been tried in Rwanda. Because of the conceptual indeterminacy of forgiveness as a concept, it is only proper that the socio-historical context that led to the 1994 Rwandan genocide be sketched in order to situate the recurrence of the theme of forgiveness in the narratives.

Post 1994 genocide novels, memoirs and autobiographies by both Rwandans and non-Rwandans tend to emphasise the necessity of forgiveness as a precondition for national reconciliation. This assumption raises the question as to what comes first, forgiveness or reconciliation. This study chose to privilege forgiveness because it is a popular theme in the creative works that are to be analysed. The study also mainstreamed forgiveness as deserving to be the pivot because without forgiveness from those who harmed others, reconciliation may remain elusive.

Works of art that represent the theme of forgiveness suggest a growing creativity and perhaps, ideological confidence in the authors who feel that they can have narrative leeway

to suggest through image, metaphor and characterisation, the models of forgiveness that may or not may complement official efforts in Rwanda. Furthermore, the works of art to be analysed in my study affirm as well as dispute each other's depiction of what constitutes forgiveness and how it should be manifested in art as in real life.

A critical analysis of why creative perspectives differ in their representation of forgiveness is a worthy area of study. When creative artists handle such important themes as forgiveness, the assumption is that fiction does not grow in stature when it imitates official history. Fiction can authorize its own narratives that produce different models of forgiveness. The study therefore seeks to critically analyse the different dimensions of forgiveness represented in one novel, one memoir and one autobiography. The creative works to be analysed are *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*, *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (2009)*. The critique of a novel, a memoir and an autobiography in my study suggests something that approximates an 'ambiguous space' where literary form and ideological content encourage authors to produce narratives of forgiveness that complement as well as complicate each other's claim to a 'true' model of forgiveness.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

After 1994 the Rwandan government invited creative artists to write about the genocide and its aftermath. Writers used the genres of the novel, memoir and autobiography to give narrative form to the genocide. Some critics have hailed this encouragement as necessary in the creation of artistic works that would bear witness to genocide as well as represent the theme of forgiveness (Rwafa 2010). Most artists patronised by the new state tended to use the novel. This creative development was welcomed by the Rwandan authors, many of whom did not believe that fiction grows in stature when the facts of its fictive narratives approximate facts in conventional history (White 1987). Therefore, the first ambiguous space alluded to in my topic relates to the use of the genre of the novel to represent the genocide and its aftermath. The genre of the novel's formal composition also complicated writing about the genocide because the novel as a creative form depends entirely on creative imagination and this tends to open its representation of genocide and its aftermath to manipulation of metaphors since images can be used to embellish the ugly facts of the genocide (Young 1988).

The second problem of the study is captured in the sense in which I use the term, 'ambiguous space' to frame the contradictory representation of forgiveness linked to the fact that in Rwanda, after 1994, a state-sponsored project in the arts resulted in the creation of some novels that reflected a partisan stance favouring the new Rwandan government. Art was seen as openly co-opted to the new politics of the Rwandan government. In order to sidestep the creative problem produced by narrating and interpreting forgiveness through the form of the novel, some authors opted to render the experience of the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath using the genres of memoir and autobiography. Use of memoir and autobiography as self-writing suggested that narrative could be considered as a site of an alternative history viewed as subversive to the state-sponsored narratives.

However, despite the expanded fictional and creative possibilities of meaning-making that both memoir and autobiography can give and add to the accumulation of creative narratives on the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath, these genres are also an ambiguous narrative space. I use Javangwe's insight which is that the memoir and autobiography are narrative forms 'rocked by the selective process of memory, mediations of ideology and culture and demands of the present circumstances' (Javangwe 2013:8). The problem of mediation in creative works is also debated by Agamben in his book, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and Archive* (1999). Writing about the Jewish Holocaust experience and about life in the concentration camps, the critic states that the voice of the victim as witness is useful because the voice provides intimate details on how people were executed, and how some escaped to be able later to narrate their own stories.

In addition, I also bring in the discussion of my chosen texts, Agamben's (1999) uncertainty or ambiguous thinking on the actual nature of narratives by victims of atrocities as true and uncontested sources of information. For Agamben (1990), as narrative form, 'testimony contained at its core an essential *lacuna* in other words, the survivors bore witness to something it is impossible to bear witness to' (Agamben 1999: 13). I will apply this insight to my study based on a novel, a memoir and an autobiography on the Rwandan genocide and its aftermath. I will argue that the ability by authors to imagine diverse models of forgiveness also depends on their ideological frameworks and varied linguistic competences to 'fabricate' (Javangwe 2013: 11).

The above view complicates autobiography and memoir in that the selective ordering of identities of selves tends to suppress other potential narratives that might have surfaced had they been included. As such, whether it is in a novel, memoir or autobiography that is used to depict the theme of forgiveness in Rwanda, the ambivalences of truth telling are suggested in that the imagined models of forgiveness and reconciliation encourage the multiplicity of ideas for the new Rwandan nation that is contested over in narratives. To summarise the problem of my study brought about by my choice of three different creative genres, it is important to consider the novel, memoir and autobiography so as to anticipate different versions or models of forgiveness that the texts are fictionalising.

The third problem that this study deals with is that the thematic categories of forgiveness and their relation to national healing and reconciliation mean different things to different groups of people. Previous approaches have emphasised ethnicity, class, and gender as useful theoretical frames with which to understand the genocide and its aftermath (Sebarenzi 2009). It is my submission that themes of forgiveness, healing and reconciliation border on and traverse the spiritual realms, the psychological and material existence of victims and perpetrators in the Rwandan genocide. Therefore, my study will make use of trauma theories in order to explain embedded facets of the traumatic experience felt not only in the actual historical time of the genocide, but more importantly after 1994 when the new Rwandan government of national unity was emphasising forgiveness as the possible basis of national healing and reconciliation.

Trauma theorists emphasise accountability, the role of remembering or amnesia and individual and collective amnesty as equal in importance to the recollection of the physical and spiritual spaces where forgiveness is enacted in the process of reconciliation (Beitler 2012). At the same time, trauma theorists differ in what they consider as important aspects of forgiveness in different contexts. This point will be elaborated below in the section on theoretical framework of my study. What is important about trauma theorists in clarifying the scope and depth of my study is controversially captured by Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, who commended the work of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. He wrote, "One of the unique features of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been its open and transparent nature. Similar Commissions elsewhere in the world have met behind closed doors. Ours has operated in the full glare of publicity." (Tutu 1999: 1)

The creative texts I discuss in this study deal with private forgiveness enacted between individuals and also amongst collective groups of people where the theme of forgiveness, national healing and reconciliation are performed in the open court of the *gacaca*. Tutu's (1999) above remarks suggest that public spectacles of pronouncements of forgiveness may or are more authentic than others that can be enacted in less visible physical contexts. This view is affirmed as well as questioned in the ways the novel, the memoir and the autobiography depict forgiveness. Furthermore, Kistner (2010), writing on the Rwandan critical context suggests that public performance of forgiveness and reconciliation did not necessarily produce counter-memories. For Kistner, public performances of forgiveness in Rwanda's political life have been 'overtaken by the obsession with commemoration' (Kistner 2010:619). My study considers the implication of possible manipulation and distortion of private and public spectacles of forgiveness in the novel, the memoir and the autobiography. My study will also critically interrogate how hatred and forgiveness are constructed and projected as normal or abnormal.

1.2 Research Aims

The aim of this study is to examine how Brown in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007), Ilibagiza in *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006) and Sebarenzi in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009) represent the theme of forgiveness in their works. This study also critically explores how forgiveness can be the basis for national healing and reconciliation.

1.3 Objectives

By the end of this study it is hoped that

- The concept of forgiveness is analysed in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*.
- The link between forgiveness and reconciliation is discovered and debated critically.

- The manifestations of the theme of forgiveness in each work of art are interrogated so as to form the basis of evaluating the difference and similarities in representations of forgiveness in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*.

1.4 Research Questions

The questions that this study raises are

- How is forgiveness represented in the creative works in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide?
- In what ways does the theme of forgiveness differ or is similar in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*?
- Which creative work of art best captures the expansive / complicated nature of the theme of forgiveness and why?

1.5 Justification

In my Honours degree my research area of study was titled *Reconciliation beyond ethnicity in the film 'Hotel Rwanda' (Gabi: 2011)*. Then, my study revealed that film could represent genocide using different forms of genres such as the verbal, the visual and the aural dimensions, all which assisted the audience to form critical judgments on the scope, meaning and implications of the genocide to Rwandan lives. As a way of building on my previous study, this present study focuses on a novel, a memoir and an autobiography that represent the theme of forgiveness after the genocide.

Firstly this study hopes to discuss the theme of forgiveness that was only possible to analyse in those novels that made the post 1994 Rwandan genocide period their fictional background. The forms of the novel, memoir and autobiography provide more space to elaborate on the following concepts of forgiveness, healing and reconciliation. Therefore, my

present study seeks to manifest and critically analyse the models of forgiveness portrayed in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*.

Secondly, critics like Vambe (2010) have analysed the novel *Inyenzi: a story of love and genocide* (2007) and foregrounded the positive contribution of individuals that attempted to build bridges of peace and reconciliation between the Hutus and Tutsis during and after the genocide. In *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009) Sebaranzi projects reconciliation as a complex process that includes several components such as empathy, forgiveness and restorative justice (Sebaranzi 2009: 214). My own study seeks to explore whether or not the creative works link forgiveness and justice.

Thirdly, the focus of this study is the analysis of the common theme of forgiveness and how it is interpreted in the three narratives - *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* - that were written after the 1994 Rwandan genocide. I argue in this study that characterisation, imagery and metaphors in narratives can make the concept of forgiveness appear more personal in some works and collective in others.

Fourthly, most theorists have explained the causes and the course of the 1994 Rwandan genocide – Mamdani (2001) Newbury (1998) and Mirzeoff (2005) – from the historical and social economic perspectives. My study argues that there is need to evaluate representations of forgiveness in creative works of art and what they reveal about forgiveness and reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda.

Dwyer (1999) points out that apology and forgiveness have a paradoxical nature because, while reconciliation is morally significant, facts about human psychology undermine any general claim to the effect that reconciliation is morally obligatory for individuals. Dwyer's approach to reconciliation is concerned with the process of how one gets to forgive and the role of narrative and memory. My study will make use of this approach to assess how and why a novel, memoir and autobiography differ in representing forgiveness and reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda.

King (2011) suggests that forgiveness and the healing of psychosocial trauma cannot start and finish with truth commissions or other imposed models. According to King (2011), the actions of remembering through narrative and testimony can sensitise people to stop the cycle of violence when the truth commission focuses on the needs of the people and is not hijacked as a national project that imposes reconciliation. This point suggests that creative works of art can introduce counter-narratives of models of reconciliation.

Verdeja (2004) in his article titled '*Derrida and the Impossibility of Forgiveness*' critiques Derrida's theories on forgiveness. Derrida (2001) believes in the obliteration of the memory of the transgression as a necessity for forgiveness to take place. However, Verdeja (2004) feels this is a high price to pay for forgiveness. He further states that critics should not make the mistake of equating forgiveness with reconciliation as they are not synonymous. The mentioned theorists on peace studies – Dwyer (1999), King (2011), Verdeja (2004) – will be used selectively to explain the concept of forgiveness as represented in the three narratives being analysed.

Rosenfeld (1980), Langer (1975) and Young's (1988) critical works offer insights on the spiritual and material dimensions on the theme of forgiveness. These critics warn of the danger of overgeneralization on the capacity of images and metaphors to carry the weighty and emotional subject of genocide and forgiveness. Rosenfeld's (1980) *A Double Dying: Reflections on Holocaust Literature*, revives the debate on the difficulties of representing a serious theme such as genocide in creative works of art. This debate was prefigured in Langer's (1975) works, *The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination* and Young's (1988) *Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust: Narratives and the Consequences of Interpretation*, which critique the fanciful aspects of literary metaphor. Javangwe's (2013) work further theorizes the intersections between novel, memoir and autobiography revealing that although we often look at these genres as different from each other, the creative boundaries of these forms cannot be policed absolutely whip in hand.

1.6 Literature Review of the study

The word Rwanda and genocide seem to be synonymous especially judging by the flood of literature that has been produced to explain the origins of the genocide. The view that ethnicity was responsible for the genocide has been put forward by a number of scholars. Taylor (1999) and Semujanga (2003) emphasise the problem of ethnicity in the Rwandan society as the main cause of the 1994 genocide. However, each of these scholars erroneously suggests that ethnicity was responsible for the Rwandan genocide. My study argues that the mere fact of ethnic groups living in the same geographical space is not a precondition for genocide. This study will take into account the historicity of the genocide, the racialization of the ethnicities and the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator in the history of Rwanda and how this creates ambiguities in the conceptualisation of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Given the background of Rwanda's cyclical violence, it is important to interrogate the theme of forgiveness and justice in Rwanda. Harrell (2003) discusses the need for restorative justice in order for Rwanda to reconcile. He explains that, 'justice in states recovering from 'crimes of states' is seen as a moral duty arising from a liberal conception of human rights and of utilitarian benefit to both the transitional regime and the larger international community' (Harrell 2003:43). Paul Kagame supports Harrell's opinion on justice being directly related to reconciliation when he states 'I don't understand what reconciliation would mean unless some of those responsible were brought to justice' (Harrell 2003:37). My study advances the view that justice alone is not adequate because it is dispassionate. Forgiveness brings the humane dimension to post trauma experiences. Mamdani (2001) complicates the issue of memory and justice further linking reconciliation to the national project but he questions the durability of survivor's justice and victor's justice as this justice is closely tied up to what each group of people – Hutu and Tutsi – chose to remember. My study borrows from Mamdani (2001) and further complicates the idea of memory in order to reveal how the effects of the medium of narration can fictionalise forgiveness, justice, and finally reconciliation.

Lemarchand (2008) discusses the role of memory in forgiveness as well as the relationship between the politics of memory and the prospects of national reconciliation. Buckley-Zistel (2008) further reveals the complexity of memory as there is conflict on how the genocide should be remembered and by which ethnic group in Rwanda. This then complicates the suggested simplicity of forgiveness as presented by some of the characters in *Inyenzi: A*

story of Love and Genocide, Left to Tell: discovering God amidst the Rwandan holocaust and God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation.

Buckley-Zistel (2008) discusses how many Hutu perished after the genocide in refugee camps in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in overcrowded prisons or at the hands of the post-genocide Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). Having lost spouses, parents, siblings or other relatives, Buckley-Zistel (2008) explains how these affected Hutu did not understand why they were not allowed to mourn their dead publicly and why they were not included in the national commemoration ceremonies. This is an important point because the standard writing on the Rwandan genocide assumes that forgiveness should be asked only by the Hutus. My study will explore whether or not the creative writers have also represented the theme of forgiveness from the Tutsi soldiers who killed Hutus in revenge murders.

My study does not use Diop's book, *Murambi, the book of bones* (2006) because his writings are more concerned with the spectacle and the trauma of the genocide and not the representations of the theme of forgiveness after the genocide (Samuel 2010). Tadjó's book, *The Shadow of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda* (2002) records short personal encounters that Tadjó had with genocide survivors. Though these fragmented accounts are moving, the theme of forgiveness is barely touched on due to lack of continuity in the stories.

According to Vambe, the novel *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) lends itself to becoming a national allegory for the illusive peace that post 1994 Rwandan society yearns for (Vambe 2010:356). Brown's (2007) protagonist's pursuit of peace is a noble embodiment of the theme of forgiveness.

This concern with forgiveness will be compared to Epple's (2010) comments on the positive attributes of Ilibagiza's (2006) religious perspective on forgiveness. Epple quotes Ilibagiza, "She wept and said "I forgive you. . . . Forgiveness is all I have to offer." Immaculee states: "We both needed the healing power of God's forgiveness to move forward if our country was to survive and rise from the bitterness, blood, and suffering of the holocaust" (Epple 2010:5). Ilibagiza understood the therapeutic nature of forgiveness and its importance in post genocide Rwanda.

Buit's (2011) writing covers the popular perception that forgiveness is one of the major goals of the Gacaca system. According to Buit, many Rwandans felt that the survivors had to forgive the perpetrators because this was a Christian obligation. Sebarenzi (2009) in his book *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* expands on the theme of

forgiveness as starting from the individual and moving onto a national level. Sebarenzi contradicts Buit's (2011) views of forgiveness as being a 'Christian obligation' by stating that it was a necessity in his personal journey of transformation.

1.7 Theoretical Approaches of the study

Many studies on the Rwandan Genocide have tended to emphasise the actual number of people that perished during the genocide. While these approaches assist one in appreciating the depth of the evil that was the genocide, these approaches give the impression that life stopped in 1994 in Rwanda (Uvin 1997). The reality is that the survivors of the genocide, both Hutus and Tutsis, have been attempting to forge models of forgiveness that could possibly lead to enduring forms of personal and collective healing and national reconciliation. Little critical work has been done to analyse the concept of forgiveness and how it is represented and manifested in the creative writings of post-Rwandan Genocide.

My study largely uses trauma theories to shed light on the difficulties of forgiveness even where that forgiveness is tendered. According to Marder, the word 'trauma' comes from the ancient Greek meaning 'wound' and has an inherently political, historical, and ethical dimension (Marder 2006:1). In essence trauma can be understood as the absence of something that failed to become located. Memory and recollection of the trauma are vital in order to build up the events that shape the present lives of the survivors. Marder's (2006) discussion points out that the voices of the dead continue to speak through the voices of the surviving witnesses after a traumatic event. Further, Marder states that cognisance of these voices from the past that live in the present is important so that a future might escape being overly ensnared by its 'unknown' traumatic past. Marder concludes that witnesses of trauma bear witness to wounds that cannot close, but even those open wounds can sometimes become a powerful and vital source of truth by providing an opening onto new ways of looking at the world.

The truism of Marder's (2006) views shall be tested in the analysis of *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*. The authors of these creative works are in a way also venturing into the 'unknown' by baring the trauma for all to see in order to have a

more humane world. My study argues that the novel, the memoir and the autobiographical form are mediated through metaphor of self and group identities and as such, these forms gesture more towards fictive imagination. While the memoir and autobiography inscribe the 'self' as truth, the novel uses metaphors to complement and question the veracity of the factual accounts provided in life writing.

My study subscribes to Laub's (1992) view that it is through listening that one comes to understand not only the subjective truth, but the very historicity of the event in an entirely new dimension as the victim is not testifying simply to empirical historical facts, but to the very secret of survival and of resistance to extermination. The role of the listener is of great importance to this study as the works being analysed are dealing with the preservation of life and humanity, narrated to be heard, in the context of the experience of forgiveness that can only be 'complete' when the forgiver and the forgiven are face to face as depicted in the three narratives. In the case of this study, the reader needs to be sensitive to the emotions conveyed in the narrative techniques by Brown (2007), Ilibagiza (2006) and Sebarenzi (2009) as everything can lie in the power of the written word in revisiting the trauma.

One of Laub's (1992) popular themes in his writings is loneliness as the victim feels that there is 'no longer anyone on whom to count'. According to Laub for survivors to use 'I' feelingly is to acknowledge the profoundness of their sense of abandonment and lonesomeness as it can lead to despair and surrender (Laub 1992:389). The strong 'presence of the departed' (Laub 1992) family members in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* serves to affirm the protagonist's sense of 'being' and being significant in life. In conclusion Laub (1992) states that, the very act of constructing testimony is itself a triumph of the human spirit that can document levels of resistance that may not be acknowledged by critics who tend to view trauma as overwhelming in all contexts.

Radstone (2007) critiques some versions of trauma theory that she sees as excluding certain subterranean experiences by which people can continue to re-organise their existence even in the most depraved of conditions. The thrust of Radstone's argument is that the boundaries of trauma criticism's reach should be expanded because the questions remain concerning the inclusions and exclusions of the 'other' where trauma theory is

concerned. Radstone questions why is it, for instance, that there has been so little attention, within trauma theory, to the recent sufferings of those in Rwanda, in comparison to the attention that has been focused on events in the US on 9/11?

My study does not focus on the 9/11 events but the study nonetheless agrees with Radstone's viewpoint which is that trauma encountered by the 'other' is sometimes minimised and sometimes not even described as trauma but just as another historical event. This point is significant because Butler (2010) correctly reminds readers that the frames through which life experiences are used to describe these experiences as 'trauma' are ideologically determined by who is doing so and for what purpose.

Trauma theories are useful to this study because they aid in understanding the nature of forgiveness, one of which is that one shows mercy and no longer has the wish to punish. However, the concept of forgiveness may be complicated if the victim chooses to forgive the perpetrator and shows pardon and mercy. Questions may be asked whether the legal implications of the crime committed should be overlooked. On the other hand is justice futile if forgiveness does not take place between the victim and the perpetrator?

In order to acquire an understanding of what forgiveness can mean from a Christian perspective, Bauman (2008) firstly examines some of the things that it is not 'First and foremost, forgiveness is *not* a 'duty' but we do it because we want to. Second, forgiveness is *not* simply 'making nice' nor a matter of smoothing things over. The third thing is that forgiveness is *not* 'denial.' Denial creates a deception that stands as an obstacle to sincere forgiveness. The fourth thing is that forgiveness is *not* simply a feeling. There is more to forgiveness than feeling forgiven or acting like one feels forgiven. The fifth thing is that forgiveness is *not* is a 'commodity' to be bought, earned, or won. For example, human beings may not feel that they earn forgiveness by acting ashamed of themselves or acting blameless' (Bauman 2008: 78).

The above five definitions of what forgiveness is not, are important as they enable me to be able to assess the sincerity of the forms of forgiveness that are presented in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide, Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust and God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*.

Bauman elaborates on what forgiveness is by asserting that 'without anger, most forgiveness is superficial' (Bauman 2008:78). In addition (Enright 2001) states forgiveness involves choice and the process proceeds when one makes the decision to forgive. Enright further expands on forgiveness by bringing in its spiritual dimension, when he projects it as a gift from God, as is our ability to have compassion towards the offender. The representations of the emotions of anger and resentment culminating in forgiveness described by the above theorists will be interrogated in the analysis of the characters in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*.

Some secular philosophers believe that the Christian concept of forgiveness is moralist and simplistic. For example, according to Derrida (2001) forgiveness must announce itself as impossibility itself and can only occur in the realm beyond that of human affairs. Derrida's view on forgiveness implies that memory should be erased in order to forgive completely. Verdeja (2004) critiques Derrida's rejection of forgiveness as 'impossibility itself' and the obliteration of the memory of the transgression as a high price to pay for forgiveness.

In the case of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide the obliteration of memory would indeed be a high price to pay and an injustice to the Rwandan people, its history and to posterity. Lemarchand (2008) argues that enforced ethnic amnesia can be traumatizing and be an obstacle to reconciliation when it rules out the process of reckoning by each community which must confront its past, and come to terms with its share of responsibility for the horrors of 1994 Rwandan genocide. My study analyses the concept of forgiveness as 'impossibility itself' against the background of the argument being made which is that, fictional works can create narratives of forgiveness that are not dependent on the 'obliteration of memory' in order to be considered positive.

On the other hand, Mamdani (2001) is more concerned with national peace and reconciliation than forgiveness on the individual level. Mamdani discusses the need to rethink different forms of justice – victors' justice and survivors' – justice in the context of democracy (Mamdani 2001:18). In his discussion of democracy, Mamdani overlooks the vital role that forgiveness plays in uprooting emotions of anger, resentment and revenge that need to be addressed on an individual level. The insights that the above theorists – Derrida (2001), Verdeja (2004), Lemarchand (2008) and Mamdani (2001) – suggest will be used to discuss critically how the theme of forgiveness is narrated in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and*

Genocide, Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*.

1.8 The Theory of Autobiography and its relevance to my study

According to Brockmeier, the genre of autobiographical narrative is the central place where personal experiences and their evaluations come to be interwoven with the threads of a life history (Brockmeier 2002:53). Brockmeier criticizes psychologists' for their failure to understand that culture and history are not just something created by people but that they are, to a certain extent, that which creates *persons* (Brockmeier 2002:6). Therefore, to a greater extent, autobiography is the product of the 'self' trying to make sense of the world. It thus becomes imperative to explore the meaning of that 'self' in relation to itself, its surroundings and also its constructions in autobiographical narrative (Javangwe 2011:14).

Rasmussen (2002) shows how a given narrative is effective not because it reveals all, but rather because listeners and/or readers recognize common social devices and rhetoric in portrayals of people, places and events. Thus, culture filters what is remembered, and how new information is unlikely to challenge people's ingrained preconceptions since it will only be retained in a form that accords with these preconceptions. Selective memory therefore plays a pivotal role in autobiographical works since literature is a reflection of the socio-economic and history of that particular narrative. I will argue in this study that if memoir and autobiography allow the victim to manifest evidence of atrocities witnessed first-hand, there are grounds to concede that these literary forms can contain elements of experiential truth which only the sufferer can narrate.

However, this ideological acceptance of memoir and autobiography as closer to reality than the invented reality in the novel does not necessarily mean that the novel's embedded narratives are of lesser value. This study intends to investigate the imaginative strengths and limitations of the novel *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, the memoir *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and the autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* in their representations of the theme of forgiveness after the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

1.9 Methodology of the study

This study analyses primary texts, and makes extensive and critical use of secondary sources from the library. It therefore goes without saying that the study is based on a qualitative approach. The advantage of this method is that it allows for subjective judgments of works of art and enables readers to emerge with multiple meanings from an interpretation to a creative work of art.

10.0 Chapter Organisation

Chapter one as the background study, describes the problem, provides the research problems, justifies the study, analyses the literature review, engages theories of forgiveness, states the research method and indicates chapter organisation.

Chapter two is an extended literature review that critically analyses works that deal with the theme of forgiveness. This chapter explores what critics say on the theme of forgiveness, revealing what it may be or may not be. To conclude the literature review I will use journal articles and discuss the representations of the theme of forgiveness in the three narratives, *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, the memoir *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and the autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*. This will assist me to bring out the different versions or models of forgiveness as depicted in the narratives.

Chapter three analyses the novel *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* and explores the strengths as well as difficulties of projecting a romantic narrative between a Hutu Priest and a Tutsi woman as an allegory for forgiveness and reconciliation. The chapter argues that retributive justice creates limitations for forgiveness and reconciliation in an ethnically divided society.

Chapter four discusses the complexities of individualistic forgiveness as portrayed in the memoir *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*. The chapter explores the process of forgiveness through the deep soul searching of an individual – Immaculee Ilibagiza – and the various stages that led to forgiveness. This chapter argues that forgiveness on an individual level is commendable but due to the magnitude of the devastations of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and the rigid nature of retributive justice, individual acts of forgiveness do not achieve the desired impact.

Chapter five analyses *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* and the autobiography complicates the concept of ‘individual acts’ of forgiveness by arguing that justice is the basis of true forgiveness. Sebarenzi (2009) further stresses the fragility of individual acts of forgiveness and proposes it being institutionalised and made part of the government policy and that progressive steps be taken to make it part of the democratic project in post genocide Rwanda.

Chapter six, the conclusion of this study, will evaluate the ambiguous representations of forgiveness in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*. The chapter will also debate which narrative best captures the expansive / complicated nature of the theme of forgiveness and make recommendations for creative artists covering the theme of forgiveness in the context of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The dynamics of forgiveness in the shadow of genocide in Europe, South America and Africa

“From this point of view, the term ‘survivor’ does not refer to surviving victims – which, as I have pointed out, is how it is used in contemporary Rwanda – but to all those who continue to be blessed with life in the aftermath of the civil war” (Mamdani 2001: 272).

2.0 Introduction

This chapter critically reviews some scholarly works on the Rwandan genocide and also countries in Europe, South America and Africa that have suffered war and genocide. This literature review begins by interrogating the historicity of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. This approach has been chosen because it allows the literature review to critically analyse the background to the genocide and also the ‘three silences’ (Mamdani 2001) around the genocide.

The literature review then goes on to discuss the theme of forgiveness among people that have suffered ‘crimes of state’ (Harrell 2003), the benefits of restorative justice and forgiveness as opposed to retributive justice. The Gacaca, one of the most important judicial systems in post genocide Rwanda, will be approached separately as it encompassed most of the positive attributes of restorative justice. A discussion on South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is included in the review to problematize the TRC’s primary focus on ‘truth’ and its consequences.

The final aim of this review is to seek the significance of history in a people’s pursuit of identity and collective memory, as well as discuss the relevance of forgiveness and reconciliation. This chapter ends with a critical analysis of selected literary works and

interrogates their suitability as a vehicle for transmitting the complex emotions that people go through in the formulation of forgiveness.

2.1 The historicity of the 1994 Rwandan genocide

The word Rwanda and genocide seem to be synonymous especially judging by the flood of literature that has been produced to explain its origins. Genocides are described by Prunier (1995) as a modern phenomenon in the history of mankind and they are likely to become more frequent in the future as they require organization. Prunier concludes that the 1994 Rwandan genocide therefore cannot be superficially explained as a primitive occurrence.

The view that ethnicity was responsible for the genocide has been put forward as well as discussed by different scholars. Newbury (1998) sums up the following features - ethnicity, material elements, ecology, and gender – as being all important elements to the murderous social currents in Rwanda in the 1990s. According to Newbury over the last 70 years, from the mid-1920s, ethnicity came to be the feature most often used to channel or deny material resources, educational placement, and job opportunity for the people of Rwanda. The historical fact is that colonial order brought about fundamental changes in the nature of power in the region and institutionalised ethnic divisions in Rwanda.

Rwafa in his (2010) critical analysis of the film *Hotel Rwanda (2004)* highlights the film's neglect of the historical, political and economic factors and also the culture of impunity and complicity which all played a fundamental role leading to the genocide. Instead the film focused on the Hutu/Tutsi ethnic division to explain the occurrence of the genocide. Rwafa emphasises the important role played by the cycle of conflict and massacres which occurred in the Great Lakes Region in Rwanda (1959) and Burundi (1972) as being contributory factors in the Rwandan 1994 genocide. Ethnicity has been erroneously projected in print and

visual media as being the major and at times, the only factor that caused the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

My study argues that the mere fact of ethnic groups living in the same geographical space is not a precondition for genocide. Vambe & Zegeye (2010) are of the view that major factors such as the impact of colonialism and the historicity of the Rwandan genocide must be interrogated in order to establish the causes of the genocide. An understanding of the historicity of the genocide is important in order to interrogate the ambiguity of forgiveness and the complexities of the interchanging roles of victim and perpetrator due to the cycle of violence in the Great Lakes region in Rwanda (1959), Burundi (1972), Rwanda (1990 & 1994) and Zaire (1996-7).

Research by Mamdani (2001) discusses the 'three silences' which prove that the Hutu/Tutsi animosity was socially constructed by the colonialist before the genocide as opposed to the simplistic view of ethnicity being the major cause of the genocide. The first silence explains the historicity of the genocide. Mamdani states the second silence as when political analysis presents the genocide as exclusively a state project and ignores its subaltern and 'popular' character. The third silence concerns the geography of the genocide. A focus confined to the Rwandan state boundaries inevitably translates into a silence about regional processes that fed the dynamics leading to the genocide.

Mamdani's first silence elaborates on the fact that some works on Rwanda have been written and portrayed in a way that give the impression of the Rwandan genocide as having started and ended in 1994. The film *Hotel Rwanda* (2004) written and produced by Terry George in 2004 uses mostly black characters and a few white characters in order to depict the Rwandan genocide in which nearly one million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed by Hutu extremists between April and July of 1994. *Hotel Rwanda* (2004) does not take into account the Great Lakes regional massacres in Rwanda (1959), Burundi (1972), Rwanda (1990 & 1994) and Zaire (1996-7). The film's projection of ethnicity as being the major cause of the genocide is misleading and a distortion of the historicity of the genocide.

The colonial and historical background of Rwanda is crucial in understanding the causes of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Prior to the arrival of the German colonialists in 1894 the social groups in Rwanda who came to be identified as Hutu, Tutsi and Twa shared the same language *Kinyarwanda*, believed in the same God - *Imana* and lived side by side in

harmony. According to Mamdani (2001) there are few known cases in the world of different ethnic groups sharing so many characteristics like the ones in Rwanda where the Hutus and Tutsis lived in a single cultural and economic community. Adhikari (2007) states the distinction between Hutu and Tutsi was not defined by birth but was in essence a socio-economic and political distinction more prominently of region and class than ethnicity.

Mamdani's first silence therefore supports my argument that the mere fact of ethnic groups living in the same geographical space is not a precondition for genocide. Pre-colonial studies done by Mamdani have shown how Rwandans lived in harmony, colonization however, brought sharp divisions into the nation of Rwanda and the racialization of the ethnicities was one of the major causes of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

The Belgians took over colonial power from Germany after World War I. As Mamdani (2001) says, the colonialists were preoccupied with origins of peoples and used it in their policy of divide and rule in their colonies. Race and ethnicity were legally enforced and institutionally reproduced as political identities by the Belgian colonialists. The Belgians constructed Hutu as indigenous Bantu, and Tutsi as alien Hamites from the mid 1920's to mid 1930's. The racialization of the Hutu and Tutsi was not simply an intellectual construct, on which later more and enlightened generations of intellectuals could deconstruct and discard at will. Racial ideology was imbedded in institutions, which in turn undergirded racial privilege and reproduced racial ideology.

The Belgian colonialists then gave power, education and wealth to the Tutsi as a result this caused tension between the two ethnicities. The Belgians created further divisions between the Hutu and the Tutsi by issuing identity cards for the first time ever. Hutu resentment began to boil in the 1950's and the Hutu issued a manifesto calling for a change in the power structure and formed political parties based on ethnicity which caused further ethnic divisions in Rwanda.

In 1959 violence erupted and the Hutus massacred the Tutsis forcing thousands of Tutsis into exile in Uganda where the Tutsis later formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Rwanda became independent in 1962 with a Hutu president which caused more Tutsis to flee Rwanda. The Tutsi-led RPF entered Rwanda in 1963 and 20 000 Tutsis were killed in the start of a string of anti-Tutsi violence. There was more ethnic violence against the Tutsi in 1973 when Juvenal Habyarimana took over as president of Rwanda in a coup. In 1990, the RPF invaded Rwanda from Uganda, which led to a civil war and the displacement of the

population along the Rwanda Uganda border from an estimated 80 000 in late 1990 to 350 000 in 1992 (Mamdani 2001:187).

According to Uvin (1997) the history of cyclical violence in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region became a traumatic part of the culture of prejudice for both Hutu and Tutsi. In interrogating the theme of the ambiguity of forgiveness, it is evident that in the case of Rwanda that the history of cyclical violence and most importantly the racialization of the people that took place prior to the 1994 genocide have to be taken into consideration.

The historical framework of violence was reinforced in 1993-4 through hatred-filled speech by the Hutu-led government and sporadic violence against Tutsi. The military took over the government and extremist Hutu militias – Interahamwe – took to the radios, calling for Hutus to start killing the Tutsi ‘cockroaches’. This negative hate filled speech had been done before in 1959 and 1973 it still worked because so little had changed in Rwanda and the racialization by the Belgians was still firmly in place.

Tadjo aptly states

‘As long as this attempt is not made (that is reconciliation), fear will remain. It is there. It has not gone away. All crimes that go unpunished will engender other crimes. The Hutus are afraid of the Tutsis because they are in power. The Tutsis are afraid of the Hutus because they can cease that power. Fear has remained in these hills’ (Tadjo 2002:27).

Tadjo highlights the fact that prior to the cycles of violence – 1959, 1973, 1990, 1994 – no reconciliation had taken place and what was paramount was fear, with its historical burden of ethnic construction by the colonialist. Ethnic animosity in Rwanda in 1994 according to Uvin, had reached the level where the Tutsi, much like Jews in Nazi Germany, were ‘socially dead’ people, whose murder was as acceptable as it became common (Uvin 1997:113).

Other actors in the genocide were the Hutu Burundi refugees who had fled Burundi after the murder of Mechior Ndadaye in October 1993 and the inter-communal massacres following that event. Prunier (1995) points out that the two Hutu radical political parties - the national Republican Movement for Democracy (MRND) and the Coalition for Defense of the Republic (CRD) - aggressively recruited unemployed young men as well as the Hutu refugees who had returned to Rwanda to fill the ranks of their militias. Prunier (1995) further states that the MRND had started recruiting the refugees into the Interahamwe soon after their arrival in Rwanda and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) felt obliged to complain (without effect) to the Rwandese authorities.

The genocide erupted on April 6 1994, when a surface-to-air missile attack struck down a Dassault Falcon jet carrying two Central African Hutu heads of state, Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira. While it is still unclear who shot down Habyarimana's plane, Hutu extremists accused the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and began an extermination campaign against Rwanda's Tutsi population as well as any Hutus who refused to join in the killing. Human rights groups, UN peacekeepers, political leaders, and other observers from around the world demanded an intervention from the world's superpowers, but these calls for action were greeted only with legal debates (particularly in the US and the UN) over the applicability of the term genocide to the violence engulfing Rwanda.

One hundred days later, the campaign to eradicate the Tutsi of Rwanda was brought to a halt only after the RPF, had secured the capital city of Kigali. Glover (2011) estimates the genocide body count ranged from 500 000 to over one million, and fifteen years later Rwanda still suffers from a lack of significant justice for the dead or reconciliation between the living.

It is important when looking at the theme of forgiveness in the context of Rwanda to note that ethnicity was not the reason for the genocide but as Mamdani (2001) states it was more the socio-economic, political, historical construction of the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as separate identities yet they had lived side by side in harmony before colonisation. An appreciation of the fact that before colonisation the ethnic groups lived harmoniously is useful in analysing the representations of forgiveness in post genocide Rwanda.

2.2 Forgiveness and mercy

According to Enright, forgiveness is the letting go of feelings of resentment and is a gift from God, as is our ability to have compassion towards the offender (Enright, 2001:25). This definition of forgiveness proffers a humane dimension to post trauma experiences, especially when the perpetrators quest for forgiveness come from them and are not forced by authoritative figures.

Should the guilty be punished, and if so how severely? Can the tyrants and their victims be reconciled? These are questions raised by Philpott (2012) in his paper *Peace after the Genocide*. Following the victory of the French resistance over the Nazi collaborationist

Vichy regime in 1944, Albert Camus and the Catholic novelist François Mauriac debated how society should deal with the collaborators. At first, Camus favoured execution for 'men of treason and injustice' who had held high positions in the Vichy government (Philpott 2012:41). Only capital punishment for traitors could root out the injustice of this period and help France to establish a just regime Camus stated. Mauriac replied that instead the times called for charity, forgiveness, and reconciliation—for forgoing trials in favour of reintegrating former enemies. Two years later, Camus came to agree with Mauriac.

Camus the atheist did not accept much of Mauriac's reasoning. He was not a Christian and did not agree with Mauriac's views of divine justice and forgiveness. Camus came to reason that given the consequences of pursuing retributive justice during times when vengeance reigned and judicial structures were shaky, it was better to forego punishment in the interests of a stable peace in which the French could begin to return to normalcy.

According to Philpott (2012), retributive justice alone does not raise the possibility of the transformation of hearts and minds, the fostering of virtues among the citizenry and ignores the religious leaders. Forgiveness is viewed more as a religious act while on the other hand the International Criminal Court (ICC) gives prominence to judicial punishment and is criticized for the money it spends on very few cases. Retributive justice alone after post traumatic experiences is not adequate because it is dispassionate. This transformation of hearts and minds - which translates to forgiveness - of citizenry lays a foundation for the possibility of reconciliation to take place in the society.

Pope John Paul II forcefully articulated this logic in his great but often overlooked encyclical of 1980, *Dives in Misericordia*, where he affirms the importance of justice—meaning rights and deserts—but goes on to argue that justice alone, detached from love and untempered by mercy, is prone to collapse into spite, hatred, and even cruelty. Pope John Paul II stresses mercy does not cancel deserved punishment but that its aim is to rehabilitate by drawing evil existing in the world and in man. Philpott (2012) concludes that mercy is thus the animating virtue of reconciliation. In short, forgiveness and mercy is that change of heart in both the victim and the perpetrator.

2.3 The dynamics of restorative justice

Harrell (2003) discusses in depth the need for restorative justice in order for Rwanda to reconcile. Restorative Justice is a process whereby parties with a stake in a specific offence collectively resolve how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the

future. Firstly, according to Marshall (1999) the primary objectives of restorative justice are to attend fully to victims' material, financial, emotional and social needs (including those personally close to the victim who may be similarly affected). The second objective of restorative justice is to prevent a repetition of the offence by reintegrating offenders into the community and enabling offenders to assume active responsibility for their actions. Lastly to recreate a working community that supports the rehabilitation of offenders and victims which is active in preventing crime and providing a means of avoiding escalation of legal justice and the associated costs and delays (Marshall 1999:3-4.)

Harrell (2003) further explains that justice in states recovering from '*crimes of states*', such as Rwanda, is seen as a moral duty arising from a liberal conception of human rights, and of utilitarian benefit to both the transitional regime and the larger international community. There is need for forgiveness to be inclusive in the process of restorative justice where 'crimes of state' have been committed.

After 'crimes of state' it is important to include all stakeholders in the conflict resolution process. Philpott (2012) gives the example of Guatemala in the mid-1990s, after a civil war that had lasted three decades Catholic bishop Juan Gerardi mobilized the Catholic Church to conduct its own unofficial truth commission that uncovered over 14,000 human rights violations through a unique mode of investigation that supported victims pastorally. In 1998 he presented the commission's report at the cathedral in Guatemala City, urging Guatemalans to embrace the truth about the past, to repent, and to forgive. 'Christ's mission is one of reconciliation,' he announced. Two days later, officers of Guatemala's army bludgeoned him to death in his garage (Philpott 2012:44).

In the case of Guatemala the religious leaders pushed the agenda of forgiveness without the active participation of one of the major stakeholders which is the state. This resulted in fatal consequences, which is contrary to what restorative justice is, as parties with a stake in a specific offence collectively resolve how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future.

In contrast to this, in Germany the state negotiated financial compensation and yet the victims wanted a public acknowledgement of the atrocities committed. In Germany during the 1990s, victims of forced and slave labour during the Holocaust negotiating a compensation agreement with the German government objected that financial reparations alone would amount to blood money, an appeasement through payoff. Only when the government agreed to offer a public apology and to tell the victims' story through school

textbooks did they agree. This practice of public acknowledgment displayed by the German government had restorative attributes.

Speaking to the *New Yorker*, Mzykisi Mdidimba, who had been tortured by the apartheid regime in South Africa, said that her testimony at South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission

“has taken it off my heart When I have told stories of my life before, afterward, I am crying, crying, crying, and felt that it was not finished. This time, I know that what they've done to me will be among these people and all over the country. I still have some sort of crying, but also joy inside” (Philpott 2012:45).

Here, as in the example of Mdidimba and the victims of forced labour during the Holocaust, the moral restoration that takes place is richer and more complex than rights and punishment alone can describe. The admission and recording in historical texts by the perpetrator of their wrongdoing, has far reaching positive attributes as it takes on a historical perspective and serves as a landmark in restorative justice paving the way for reconciliation to take place.

2.4 The 'enemy other' and the process of mourning

Discussing the 'enemy other' Zemblyas states mourning and forgiveness constitute valuable points of departure for reconciliation pedagogies, if common pain is acknowledged as an important aspect of re-humanizing the 'enemy-other.' The question is how to deal with the 'enemy other' – the realisation that 'the others' from the other side have also suffered in a more complex way (Zemblyas 2011:262). Due to the history of the cyclical massacres and wars, the Hutu and Tutsi have each become the 'enemy other' as they are both victim and perpetrator.

Having lost husbands, parents or siblings many Hutus do not understand why they are not allowed to mourn their dead publicly and why they are not included in the national commemoration ceremonies, as expressed in the following comment:

“To remember is good, but it should be inclusive. For instance, my parents have been killed during the genocide. But when they [the public] remember they remember only Tutsi, so I am frustrated because they don't remember my family.” (Young rural woman, Nyamata) (Buckley-Zistel 2008:18).

With reference to the above quote from Buckley-Zistel (2008), the Hutu who lost loved ones during the 1994 genocide, feel excluded in the national commemorations that seem to focus only on the Tutsis as the victims. The commemorations deliberately do not take into account the cyclical historical massacres in the Great Lakes region which engulfed the Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda (1959), Burundi (1972), Rwanda (1990 & 1994) and Zaire (1996-7). The exclusion of the Hutu from the commemorations further complicates the concept of the 'enemy other' and labels the Hutus as the perpetrators and yet they too are victims who also need to remember and to mourn their dead.

Zembylas (2011) cites the divisive role of the state in commemorations. He explains how since 2007, the remains of both Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot missing persons are being recovered from mass graves, wells, and other places after identification, these remains are buried in strongly emotional public ceremonies. On one hand, these ceremonies are constant reminders (especially through the mass media) of the ongoing suffering experienced by members of both communities yet what is rarely recognized is how this suffering has always been manipulated by the nation-state and its mechanisms for perpetuating feelings of animosity towards the 'enemy side' (Zembylas 2011:260).

Zembylas (2011) further expands on the nationalization of mourning by the nation-state which constructs forgiveness as an almost impossible or an even dangerous precedence. It has been made clear so far that mourning and politics intersect and personal stories blend with collective ones with important political and pedagogical implications. Another complexity Zembylas adds, is that forgiveness can be used to manipulate the vulnerable (i.e. the victims) and thereby perpetuate oppression and injustice.

Forgiveness may be complicated by the obstructions of the socio-political machinations of the government in power for their own ends. The socio-political dynamics of a nation recovering from 'crimes of state' further complicates any progression towards forgiveness. Grey emphasises that being told to 'forget about it' and get on with life leaves victims imprisoned in the traumatic experience as 'pain that is not transformed is pain transferred' (Grey 2009:344).

Verdeja (2004) says that forgiveness remains transcendental as it seeks to reconcile the perpetrator and victim and eschew the corrosiveness of the past on the future. Epple concludes by saying that, "One thing is certain, you can only forgive a wrong that has been done to yourself" (Epple 2010:2). In the case of Rwanda, the reconciliation of the 'self' is a

starting point for forgivingness to take place, since in some cases the victim and perpetrator are one and the same.

2.5 The ‘truth’ of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

Archbishop Desmond Tutu was the chairman of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC was created by Nelson Mandela’s Government of National Unity in 1995 to help South Africans deal with the injustices of apartheid. The TRC was formed to provide support and reparation to victims and their families, and to compile a full and objective record of the effects of apartheid on South African society (theforgivenessproject.com). Archbishop Desmond Tutu stands as the most famous embodiment of the concept stating, “There is no future without forgiveness”. Though Tutu’s concept is noble, critiques viewed it as both theological and political agent of a utopian community within the context of warring factions.

The stumbling block in South Africa’s TRC is that ‘truth’ is the only condition or justification for reconciliation. A central argument is that, all sides have their own version of the truth of what really happened. In reflecting, especially on the South African Commission, the TRC exposed the ‘truth’ which is in its own way debatable on the ownership of the truth – the perpetrators or the victims. Ultimately with no justice delivered, the question may be posed as to what purpose does truth serve where no justice is delivered.

The absence of justice is, in the South African TRC’s own words, the most common charge made against it. Others chastise the commission for its excessive moral, not to say religious, high-mindedness. However, most of the contributors agree that the South African TRC is the most far-reaching and imaginative of its kind (Rotberg & Thompson 2000:52). The TRC being described as ‘far-reaching and imaginative’ does not translate to restorative justice that the victims of apartheid or any victims seek after a traumatic event. One of the critics of the TRC Muvangua comments by quoting Soyinka who states, “the victims who are majority Africans, are in dire need of rehabilitation while their violators, the minority whites pursue a privileged existence secure in the spoils of a sordid history of apartheid” (Muvangua 2009:1). Rotberg, Robert and Thompson (2000) in *Truth v. Justice: The Morality of Truth Commissions*, further ask whether the truth commission, as a method of seeking justice after conflict, is fair, moral, and effective in bringing about reconciliation.

The primary objective of Restorative Justice is to attend fully to victims’ needs – material, financial, emotional and social (including those personally close to the victim who may be

similarly affected,) which was not the case for the victims of apartheid in South Africa as the status quo remained. Philpott (2012) concurs when he states that the wounds of war and dictatorship extend far more widely as the victims who have been forgotten and ignored frequently demand recognition of their suffering. In short, Philpott is of the view that victims urgently need stable governance and economic development.

One of the points that Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the chairman of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission made was that, there is no reconciliation unless the overall living standards of blacks improved. But Tutu went on to primarily focus on forgiveness and what he termed "true reconciliation that exposes the awfulness, the abuse, the pain, the degradation, the truth" (Tutu 1999:278). Yet the former concern on reparations should have been the major driving point for the TRC according to Muvangua (2009) who states that for the victims, the African majority, forgiveness for them meant reparations from the perpetrators to change their current way of life.

In his book, Tutu (1999) embarks on a sermon (set in Rwanda, Israel, and South Africa) in which he urged the victims to forgive those who betrayed their humanity for decades and hoped that the victims would be moved to respond to an apology by forgiving the culprits. Muvangua critiques Tutu's sermon for missing two things: firstly, is the realization that forgiveness without atonement is empty and secondly the discussion of the role of the perpetrators (in exchange for the forgiveness) is complex as such forgiveness renders the question rhetorical: if they found themselves in the same situation, would they repeat the offence? (Muvangua 2009:1).

The achievements of the TRC are commendable but the question remains as to their practicability and also how far can they be used to address the injustices of apartheid. It is important for tangible evidence of reparations to be visible in order for reconciliation to take place. From the example of the South African TRC, the victims seek justice and atonement.

2.6 Forgiveness, restorative justice and *Gacaca*

After taking power in 1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)-led government put in place a judicial initiative known as *gacaca* which began in 2002 and ended in 2012. In an attempt to guarantee accountability for the genocide, to promote rule of law, and to speed up the prosecution of those accused of genocide crimes, Longman (2004) states, the government developed a novel court system – the *gacaca* –, based loosely on a traditional Rwandan dispute resolution mechanism. Longman points out the advantages of the *gacaca*, that

having previously been part of the traditional judicial system, it encouraged people to be more receptive to the idea of reconciliation.

Harrell (2003) points out the advantages of *gacaca* in that it included most of the elements of communitarian restorative model of justice and had greater potential to promote reconciliation than Rwanda's existing genocide courts. The aspect of reconciliation which was inclusive in the *gacaca* court system, promoted critical aspects of restorative justice such as efforts to prevent re-offending by reintegrating offenders into the community and enabling offenders to assume active responsibility for their actions.

Longman (2004) compared the *gacaca* with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) which was set up in November 1994 by the United Nations Security Council to try leaders of the Rwandan genocide. Sharing a chief prosecutor with the recently formed tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague, the ICTR was based in Arusha, Tanzania. Longman discussed how initially the ICTR was beset by limited funding and poor organization and how after more than a decade of prosecutions the ICTR had only successfully prosecuted fewer than 100 of the leaders of the 1994 genocide, including the prime minister and a number of other ministers, military officers, and leaders in business, religion, culture and media.

In contrast to the ICTR, the Rwandan government had already prosecuted tens of thousands of individuals on genocide charges and continued to hold trials. In the immediate aftermath of the genocide, the new government began to arrest large numbers of people on genocide charges. The legal system, however, was devastated by the 1994 genocide, with the large majority of judges, lawyers, and other judicial officials killed in the violence or gone into exile. As a result, even as the new regime detained tens of thousands of people accused of participation in the genocide, the courts were not able to keep pace. Thousands were imprisoned on the basis of hearsay or unsubstantiated accusations and most prisoners were detained without case files or formal charges.

Longman (2004) comments on how the introduction of the *gacaca* courts in Rwanda alleviated the backlog in the justice delivery system which had a severely depleted manpower. He further adds that when trials finally began in Rwandan courts in December 1996, they not only raised numerous human rights concerns but also advanced at a very slow pace. The government itself estimated that at the pace trials were proceeding during the first five years, it would take more than a century to try all of the detainees (Longman 2004).

The *gacaca* elected panels of lay judges in each local community in the country who began to hold public hearings to determine what crimes were committed in the community. Trials for the most serious genocide crimes such as organizing the genocide, killing with particular brutality or enthusiasm, and participating in rape were referred to the classical court system. Less serious crimes, ranging from participating in killing under the command of others to property crimes, were adjudicated in the *gacaca* courts.

Some genocide survivors gained comfort from the information they gathered about how family members had died, and in a number of cases, people were able to disinter bodies of family members and give them proper burials, something symbolically very important within Rwandan society. Even heated exchanges were sometimes quite positive, because they allowed hidden grievances and resentments to come to the surface, where the community could deal with them. The *gacaca* at the beginning meted out justice and indirectly began the healing process which is crucial in forgiveness.

Longman (2004) points out one of the major shortcomings of the *gacaca* which was that from the outset the government determined that *gacaca* courts—like the genocide courts within the classical judicial system— could not treat abuses by the RPF and its supporters. Hence, to many Hutus, *gacaca* appeared to be a form of victors' justice, serving more to exercise the power of the state than to promote accountability and the rule of law.

The relationship of *gacaca* to ethnic identity has also been highly problematic. During the *gacaca* general assemblies, communities listing those killed in the genocide were required to make a distinction between those killed as part of the genocide and those killed by the RPF and its supporters. Ultimately, the one means of determining whether a crime was part of the genocide or not was the ethnic identity of the victim and the attacker. Attacks committed by Hutus against Tutsis would be considered genocide crimes, while attacks by Tutsis against Hutus would not get the same consideration.

In the *gacaca* courts, even the most minor offenses by Hutus against Tutsis, such as pillaging, were being adjudicated and could result in imprisonment, while Rwanda's legal system pursued almost no cases of Tutsi attacks on Hutus, even cases of major massacres. As a result, *gacaca* reinforced ethnic divisions in Rwanda, even as the government made open discussions of ethnicity taboo. The state regulating *gacaca* ruling based on ethnicity created resentment as the grievances of the 'others' were not addressed in the situation of

Rwanda where, both ethnic groups, were at one time in the country's cycle of violence victims and perpetrators.

Longman (2004) predicted that if 1.5 million people were ultimately tried in *gacaca*. As expected, that number would represent over half of Hutu adults at the time of the genocide. *Gacaca*, he states, has effectively created an impression of collective guilt among Hutu, implying that nearly all Hutu, particularly men, who were the vast majority of those accused in *gacaca*, were guilty of participation in the genocide. *Gacaca* has thus served effectively to place much of the Hutu population in a socially subservient and vulnerable position, and to preserve the hold on political, social, and economic power by the RPF and its supporters and above all former Tutsi refugees who returned to Rwanda after 1994 from Uganda, Congo, and Burundi.

By placing the Hutu population in a socially subservient and vulnerable position, a dangerous precedence was put in place by the state to the detriment of reconciliation as it served to perpetuate fear and insecurity in the population. The aim of this study is to interrogate the ambiguous representations of forgiveness in the following literary works *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*, *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (2009)* with the hope of contributing to the ongoing debate and process of forgiveness and reconciliation between the government in power and the populace.

2.7 'Identity' and collective memory of a people

The genocide memorials have the potential to further divide an already traumatised society. The concept of a national 'identity' is debatable as it is embedded in the historical memory. Proust (1913) wrote that reality takes shape only in memory. He further stated that it was not whether a society wanted to face its history, but what was important was the way it did so. In the process of institutionalising the memory of the genocide, the Rwandan authorities are faced with burning issues as Mamdani (2001) questions how the memory of the genocide can be commemorated without alienating the majority of the population, that is to say the Hutus. Mamdani further questions ways of creating a non-threatening environment that can contribute to unity and reconciliation.

The dictionary definition of memory is the faculty by which the mind stores and remembers information. Identity is defined as the qualities and benefits that make a particular person or group different from others. For Rwandans whose identity will for a long time to come

continue to be associated with the history of the genocide, building a credible collective memory is an ongoing responsibility.

Remembering the genocide has to take into account its fragmented pattern and the flow of new information in its reconstruction. As a result the landscape memory of Rwanda is still under construction years after the genocide at private and public levels. In such situations memory becomes more subjective as the recollections of those who experienced the genocide tie up with the memories of the returnees exiled in the neighbouring countries. This is where decision makers attempt to build a collective national memory in order to forestall the diminishing recollection of the genocide.

Mamdani (2001) stresses the importance of national memory being inclusive and to recognize the right of all current ideologies as a precondition to gaining entry to the reform process. He emphasises that 'the key lesson is that one cannot put an end to the civil war by excluding one party to it especially the party most entrenched in its party's ideology' (Mamdani 2001:278-9). Mamdani questions the durability of survivor's justice and victor's justice as this justice is closely tied up to what each group of people – Hutus and Tutsis – chose to remember. My study further complicates the idea of memory in order to reveal how the effects of the medium of narration can fictionalise forgiveness, justice, and finally reconciliation.

Lemarchand (2008) discusses the role of memory in forgiveness as well as the relationship between the politics of memory and the prospects of national reconciliation. Lemarchand supports his view by what he calls 'recognition', that is, a 'reckoning with the past', where 'recognition' of what actually happened – of the victims' experience and the perpetrators responsibility, and ultimately the broader structures of cause and effect are taken into account (Lemarchand 2008:73). My study interrogates the levels of the role of memory in forgiveness on an individual and national level as depicted in the narratives.

Buckley-Zistel (2008) further reveals the complexity of memory as there is conflict on how the genocide should be remembered and by which ethnic group in Rwanda. This then complicates the suggested simplicity of forgiveness as presented by some of the characters in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst The Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (2009.)* Buckley-Zistel (2008) discusses how many Hutus perished after the genocide in

refugee camps in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in overcrowded prisons in Rwanda at the hands of the post-genocide Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). This is an important point because the standard writing on the Rwandan genocide assumes that forgiveness should be asked only by the Hutus. My study will explore how far the three narratives have represented the theme of forgiveness from the Tutsi soldiers who killed Hutus in revenge murders. The inclusive or non-inclusive representation of memory by writers is one of the factors that have an impact in shaping the identity and collective memory of the people of Rwanda.

2.8 Literature and the representation of the theme of forgiveness

My study does not use Diop's book, *Murambi, the book of bones* (2006) because according to Samuel (2010) the novel *Murambi, the book of bones* is more concerned with the spectacle and trauma of the genocide. Spectacle shocks the emotions and comprehension of the gravity of the massacres is sometimes compromised. As a result attention is diverted to the gory details of the trauma of the genocide as opposed to interrogating the causes of the cyclical massacres with the hope of reconciling the populace.

The use of spectacle in literary works can be biased especially when it categorises the populace as victim and perpetrator. Njoya (2006) stated that history should suggest to us that the categories of victim, perpetrator and witness are never wholly discrete. Laub (2009) concurs when he quotes Primo Levi who described so poignantly his account of life in a Nazi death camp where Primo Levi pointed out that their ordinary categories of moral judgment were emptied, distorted and inverted in the midst of mass extermination. In the case of Rwanda the categories of moral judgment are blurred as the role of victim and perpetrator are intertwined. Spectacle does not do justice in representing the Rwandan genocide nor to the cyclical violence that took place prior to 1994 and post genocide. Njoya (2006) concluded that *Murambi, the book of bones* (2006) preoccupation with spectacle invites the readers to be mere spectators without engaging them with the historicity of the genocide.

Tadjo's book, *The Shadow of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda* (2002) records short personal encounters that the writer has with genocide survivors. In the extract below from *The Shadow of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda* (2002), Tadjo takes the time to give a personal life narrative of one of the people that died during the genocide.

“NYAMATA CHURCH

Site of genocide.

Plus or minus 35,000 dead.

A woman bound hand and foot.

Mukandori. Aged twenty-five. Exhumed in 1997.

Home: the town of Nyamata.

Married.

Any children?

[...] A mummified victim of genocide. Remnants of hair are still attached to her skull.”

(Tadjo 2002:11)

This brief, compassionate account gives dignity and ‘life’ to Mukandori, and she ceases to be just another statistic among the plus or minus 35 000 people that were killed at Nyamata Church. By asking the question whether Mukandori had any children or not Tadjo shows sensitivity, to the victim and her filial relationships. In effect Tadjo is communicating that Mukandori was once a human being like all of us and had not always been just bones. She once lived. My study does not use Tadjo’s book, *The Shadow of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda (2002)* because its major shortcoming is that the fragmented interviews with the genocide survivors in the book lack continuity though they are moving and go beyond the spectacle of the genocide. As a result, the theme of forgiveness is barely explored in *The Shadow of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda (2002)*.

For this study ‘The ambiguous space’: representations of forgiveness in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*, *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* and *Sebareenzi God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (2009)* I chose to use the above listed books because they interrogate the theme of forgiveness in its complex and transcendental nature.

According to Vambe (2010) the religious narrative of romantic humanism and the sexual romance outlined in the novel *Inyenzi: a story of love and genocide (2007)* find profound meaning when they are re-read as confirming the novel as a national allegory for ultimate peace and reconciliation between different ethnic groups. This concern with forgiveness will be compared to Epple’s (2010) comments on the positive attributes of the religious perspectives on forgiveness portrayed in the memoir *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)*. Ilibagiza’s (2006) comprehension of the therapeutic nature of forgiveness and its importance in post genocide Rwanda will be explored and interrogated.

Buit (2008) is of the view that many Rwandans felt that survivors of the genocide had to forgive the perpetrators because this was a 'Christian obligation'. Sebarenzi (2009) in his autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* expands on the theme of forgiveness as beginning with the individual and moving onto the national level. Sebarenzi contradicts Buit's belief of forgiveness as being a 'Christian obligation' by outlining it as a necessity in one's personal journey of transformation and proceeding onto the higher level of national reconciliation.

2.9 Conclusion

Chapter two reviewed some scholarly works on the Rwandan genocide and also countries in Europe, South America and Africa that have suffered war and genocide. The literature review firstly focused on interrogating the historicity of the 1994 Rwandan genocide which is critical as the genocide did not just suddenly erupt. It was noted that the genocide had a background that dated back to pre-colonial days long before Rwanda gained its independence. The chapter dealt with the racialization of the Hutu and the Tutsi by the colonialist and showed that this served to ignite the cycle of violence in the Great Lakes region.

Using Mamdani's (2001) notion of the 'three silences', the literature review showed that the people of Rwanda lived in harmony before colonialism. Race and ethnicity were legally enforced and institutionally reproduced as political identities by the Belgian colonialists. The literature review presented that the cyclical massacres in the Great Lakes region contributed to the build up of the 1994 Rwandan genocide which lasted 100 days and claimed 500 000 to over 1 million lives.

Chapter two also critically reviewed literatures on 'crimes of state' in Europe, South America and Africa and what was decisive was the importance of restorative justice in the reconciliation process. The chapter stated the need for forgiveness to be inclusive in the process of restorative justice where 'crimes of state' have been committed. However the quest for forgiveness to be inclusive was shown to be problematic and reference was made to the case of Guatemala where the Catholic Church acted alone in conducting its own unofficial truth commission without government involvement resulting in fatal consequences. In contrast Philpott (2012) gave the example of France where the consequences of pursuing

retributive justice for the Nazi collaborationist Vincy Regime in 1944 were forgone in favour of restorative justice resulting in normalcy returning to France.

The literature review discussed how retributive justice alone after post traumatic experiences did not adequately address reconciliation as it is dispassionate. The conclusion reached was that, the transformation of hearts and minds (which translates to forgiveness) of citizenry lays a foundation for the possibility of reconciliation to take place in society. It is within this historical framework of cyclical violence that the complexities of the theme of forgiveness in post genocide Rwanda have been portrayed as problematic.

Chapter two further discussed how the absence of justice in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was the most common charge against it and how the various 'truths' were problematic. The chapter criticized the TRC's focus on 'truth' at the expense of reparations for the victims of apartheid.

This literature review treated the *gacaca* separately because of the success it had in delivering restorative justice in areas where offenders had to assume active responsibility for their actions as well as reintegrating them into the community. This chapter argued that restorative justice as meted out by the *gacaca* laid the foundation for forgiveness and reconciliation in contrast with the Rwandan judicial courts that raised numerous human rights concerns and also advanced at a very slow pace.

Chapter two compared the *gacaca* to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) which after more than a decade had only prosecuted less than 100 high profile leaders of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. This literature review pointed out that one of the *gacaca*'s major shortcomings was the interference by the state which ruled judicial immunity to Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) offenders, and hence the *gacaca* dealt mainly with Hutu offenders thereby deepening ethnic divisions.

Chapter two discussed the concept of the 'enemy other' in the context of the cyclical massacres in Rwanda. Due to the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator and racialization of the ethnicities by the colonialist, the Hutu and the Tutsi both became 'victim' and 'perpetrator'. This literature review therefore paid attention to the problematic labelling of the 'enemy other' and its impact on the ambiguous representations of forgiveness in post genocide Rwanda.

The literature review discussed the concept of national identity which is embedded in historical memory. In the case of Rwanda, this was viewed as problematic due to the exclusion of one major ethnic group from the collective memory which further complicated the theme of forgiveness. Chapter two ended with a justification of using fiction as a vehicle for transmitting the complex emotions that people go through in the formulation of forgiveness.

The next chapter focuses on the first selected literary work that represents the ambiguity of the theme of forgiveness. Chapter three will critique and interrogate how far *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (Brown 2007) expounds the theme of forgiveness in this fictional novel given the fact that different ethnic groups are represented in this religious narrative of romantic humanism and sexual romance.

CHAPTER 3

Re-humanising ethnicity through sexual romance and “the ambiguous space” of forgiveness in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007)

“We are not able to avoid the past, but we can choose to make only short trips to the past, to learn from it, and then return to the present.” (Sebaranzi 2009:242)

3.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to critique and interrogate how far Brown in his fictional novel *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) depicts the theme of forgiveness. Chapter three analyses the ambiguity of forgiveness in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007), a literary work written after the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. This chapter will explore one of the strengths of the novel in its representation of the voices of the moderate Hutus who were not in support of the genocide. This is to Brown’s credit as a number of literary works, film and media have portrayed all Hutus as perpetrators.

The central argument is that *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) inadequately deals with representations of forgiveness as its main focus is the love story. The sexual romance between Melchior, a moderate Hutu priest and Selena, a Tutsi woman, in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) overshadows the tragedy of the genocide. The genocide is portrayed as having suddenly erupted with no historical background. This is a great error as forgiveness is rooted in historicity.

The exclusion of the historicity of the 1994 Rwandan genocide in the narrative leads to the erroneous conclusion that retributive justice has the power to right the wrongs of the genocide. The need for a link between justice and forgiveness will be interrogated. The chapter also demonstrates that Brown in his attempt to re-humanise the Tutsi, stereotypes both ethnic groups – the Tutsi are portrayed as victims who are close to perfection and flawless and the Hutu extremists are de-humanised and portrayed as barbaric, blood thirsty and lustful.

3.1 Genocide and the Novel genre

Firstly, in novels, the trials and tribulations of life and the crisis of human existence find expression in artistic articulation. Fiction is an expression of an author's imagination and therefore subjective. The thematic struggles portrayed in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* are those age old truths of the eternal struggles of good against evil channelled through the artistic imagination of the novelist.

Secondly, the power of the novel lies in its factual reflection of the real world so that it is ultimately for the betterment of humanity. '...Life negates itself in literature only so that it may survive better' (Derrida 1978:95). In essence Derrida argues that, life rejects its present form through its portrayal in literature by the novelists and hence has the potential to influence the reader through the use of imagery and symbols to evoke emotional responses that cause progressive changes.

Brown's novel is fiction but its power lies in that it is based on a historical tragic event, the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The factual element in the narrative is achieved through the combination of reality and fiction. The use of fictionalised press releases, newspaper articles and the trial cases at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) with dates interspersing the narrative gives the novel a further semblance of authenticity. Fiction is subjective and a writer's socio-economic setting may influence his or her works. In the case of Brown his preoccupation with justice being served to *genocidaires* stems from his practise as an advocate in Cape Town, and as a reservist sergeant in the South African Police Service.

3.2 The plot of the story in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*

The novel *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* is written by Brown, a white South African. The central character is Melchior, a moderate Hutu priest who falls in love with a beautiful Tutsi woman, Selena during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The major preoccupation of the novel is the sexual romance between Melchior and Selena that defy rigid church traditions and divisive ethnicity. The story begins with rumours of massacres in the cities circulating in the countryside till the reality of the genocide strikes with the influx of refugees into Bukumara, Melchior's pastoral area. The climax of the novel is when Melchior's childhood friend, Victor Muyigenzi, a Hutu extremist and head of the communal police in Rweru, massacred the refugees that Melchior was protecting at St Jean Church

compound whilst he was away in Rweru negotiating their safety with Colonel Batho, the *bourgmestre* of Rweru.

The story of the genocide is dealt with as a subplot by Brown through flash forwards of the trial proceedings taking place at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha Tanzania, with the aim of showing that justice was served after the genocide. The novel ends with a narration of the execution of Melchior juxtaposed with an optimistic vision of Rwanda four years after the genocide as Selena walks in the countryside which has returned to normalcy with her young son fathered by Melchior.

3.3 Understanding Spectacle, Romance and Audience in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007)

In analyzing the novel, language theories help bring out the ambiguities in the depiction of the genocide and representations of forgiveness. Vambe credits *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) for not spectacularly depicting the relentless murders and massacres of the Tutsi and moderate Hutus as portrayed in films such as *Sometimes in April* (2005) and *Shooting Dogs* (2006) (Vambe 2007). Rwafa states that spectacle prevents audiences from seeing different dimensions of the genocide (Rwafa 2010). It is to Brown's credit that he does not dwell on the spectacle but the omission of the historicity of the genocide in his narrative projects ethnicity as its main cause.

Paris (1997) describes rhetoric as a device an author employs to influence a reader's moral and intellectual responses to a character. The dominant theme of love in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) can be equated to forgiveness during and after the genocide in Rwanda. The rhetoric of love in the narrative is infused with the imagery of flowers and bright colours giving the impression of the serenity that love brings and the envisioned bright future for Rwanda.

Selena's dress is described as '...a long yellow dress, decorated with red flowers.'
(Brown 2007:33),

Melchior buys some bright yellow material bordered with emerald green (Brown 2007:42),

'...the light fabric curtains hung in the priests small room now, the red and yellow print catching the sun and glowing.' (Brown 2007:46),

'...the fields are green and brown, filled with bees and humming insects attracted by the flowering crops.' (Brown 2007:205)

Selena's hair held with butterfly clips, 'She walked slowly, enjoying the sun on her face and taking in the smells of the flowers...' (Brown 2007:205).

The description of the sun 'glowing' and Selena 'enjoying the sun on her face' symbolise the beginning of the envisioned era. The fusion of colours, red, yellow and green, in the description above conveys beauty, love and romance. There is a suggestion of peace and tranquillity as the bees are humming and there is time to smell the flowers. Through the language of romance and colour, the horror of the genocide recedes into the background.

The narrative does not give a physical description of Melchior raising the question as to whether Melchior is truly 'African' or an extension of the Eurocentric stereotype of love stories. His emotional reactions are very European as he 'blushed' (Brown 2007:43) and 'reddened' (Brown 2007:50). The consummation of Melchior and Selena's union in her parents' home breaks the African patriarchal rules as it would be considered taboo before marriage (Brown 2007:63). In a Eurocentric 'love story' such a union would most likely not have any repercussions.

Ebert (1988), in her discussion on *The Romance of Patriarchy*, states that gender distinctions are produced most powerfully in romance narratives which are crucial sites for the operation of patriarchal ideology. This is evident in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* as the romantic narrative's major focus is the sexual romance. Melchior embodies the patriarchal ideology right up to the procreation of his son thereby leaving a male heir for posterity.

Brown can be credited for giving a voice to the Moderate Hutus who are represented by Melchior in the narrative. Many moderate Hutus opposed the genocide and risked their lives to save their Tutsi neighbours. Melchior housed the Tutsi refugees in his church compound, had numerous discussions with Victor Musingenzi concerning their safety and finally made

the journey to Rweru to get assurance from Colonel Batho that the refugees would not be attacked.

The next section is an exposition of how forgiveness, a crucial component in reconciliation, in post genocide Rwanda, is depicted and in the process relegated to the fringes at the expense of the love story in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007).

3.4 Contesting the absence of forgiveness in the romantic sexual love in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007)

In a video interview (Brown 2007:Youtube) Brown stated that his thematic focus in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) was to show that, within depravity there are always representations of compassion, courage, morality and love. Melchior and Selena's love story is set within the context of the 1994 Rwandan genocide where the Tutsi were dehumanised and labelled *inyenzi* a cockroach or a pest deserving to be treated as non-human (Vambe 2010:353). Brown attempts to re-humanise the Tutsi through the romantic sexual love between Melchior, a moderate Hutu priest and Selena a beautiful Tutsi woman. The intention of the narrative is to reverse the negative perception of the Tutsi as "*inyenzi*", as Selena embodies the humane qualities of love and compassion. The perception that the sexual relationship 'is immoral from the point of view of the Hutu extremist and the church is undermined through Brown's authorial voice where Melchior and Selena defy both authorities to terminate their love affair' (Vambe 2010:353). By focusing on the romantic sexual love which is an 'arbitrary act' of defiance against the church and Hutu power, Brown (2007), highlights positivity amidst depravity.

Melchior and Selena's relationship complicate the conceptualisation of forgiveness in an ethnically divided society with a history of animosity as it intensifies the antagonism instead of reconciling the two ethnic groups. From the beginning, the relationship between Melchior and Selena is vehemently opposed by the church. Bertin, a priest from Melchior's seminary warns Melchior not to consort with that '*Tutsi whore*' (Brown 2007:55). Zephir, an embodiment of Hutu power, mocks Melchior before he kills him, about the '*the priest's Tutsi whore*' (Brown 2007:195). The denigration of Selena by Bertin and Zephir exposes the deep rooted ethnic divisions in Rwanda dating back to the 1930's when the Hutu and Tutsi were racialized by the Belgians as separate identities (Mamdani 2001:101). Brown through *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) attempts to reconcile the two ethnic groups through love. Melchior goes against the denigration of the Tutsi by loving Selena. Love on

an individual level has the hope of transcending to a national level thereby aiding in the creation of the envisioned unified society.

Melchior a moderate Hutu priest indulges in a sexual romance with a Selena a Tutsi woman resulting in the birth of a son. In the narrative, Melchior and Selena's son is representative of an enlightened new generation. Brown ends the novel with Selena's description of the boy's clear eyes (Brown 2007:206) which stand for clarity of a new vision from depravity. Brown portrays the romantic sexual love between Melchior and Selena as ideal and original, implying that it's a positive outcome from the genocide as it resulted in the procreation of a son who cannot be torn apart by ethnic divisions. The birth of a new generation, represented by the son is a positive development as it brings about unification on an individual level.

Research by Mamdani (2001) proves otherwise. For the critic, there is no "Hutsi." Intermarriage and cohabitation between the Hutu and Tutsi have always existed for centuries. Mamdani questions the theory of cultural hybrids and suggests that a person is either Hutu or Tutsi due to the patriarchal nature of the Rwandan society (Mamdani 2001:53). The ethnicity of the mother is insignificant leading to the conclusion that the social identity of the son is Hutu, as descent is defined through the father. The envisioned unification of the two ethnicities as represented by the son is complicated by patriarchy as the son is unequivocally Hutu.

The ethnic cyclical violence that plagued Rwanda from colonisation has interchanged the role of victim/perpetrator over the decades. The paradox is that the son who is supposed to represent freedom from ethnicity is defined Hutu due to patriarchy and post genocide Rwanda further complicates his identity and categorises him as victim/ perpetrator. Buckley-Zistel (2008) discusses how many Hutu perished after the 1994 genocide in refugee camps in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in overcrowded prisons or at the hands of the post genocide Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA). This is an important point because the standard writing as portrayed in the narrative, *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*, assumes that forgiveness should be asked only by the Hutu. In post genocide Rwanda, the Hutu became the victims. The narrative lacks an appreciation and holistic understanding of the ambiguity of forgiveness in the aftermath of the genocide.

Brown's romantic narrative in the epilogue leans towards the idealistic with a picturesque portrayal of the countryside without acknowledging the reality of the devastations of the genocide. Selena reflects briefly on the people she is passing and their role in the genocide, but the main focus is the tranquillity that has returned to the countryside (Brown 2007:205). Brown through his romantic narrative negates the role of memory in forgiveness by obliterating the historicity of the genocide. The romanticised idyllic and tranquil countryside serve to erase the landscape memory of the genocide.

Lemarchand(2008) discusses the role of memory in forgiveness as well as the relationship between the politics of memory and the prospects of national reconciliation and its importance with reckoning with the past. In the epilogue Selena sees a man and reflects on his role in the genocide 'Had he slaughtered and maimed, this man standing quietly on the side of the road?' (Brown 2007:205).

Memory is an integral part in the process of forgiveness. Sebaranzi emphasises the crucial role of memory when he states that 'We are not able to avoid the past, but we can choose to make only short trips to the past, to learn from it, and then return to the present' (Sebaranzi 2009:242). It is in the memory of the genocide that the questions Selena asks are rooted for forgiveness to take place. Brown does not focus on the very pertinent issue of the role of memory in forgiveness in rebuilding the country instead he proffers love as an option.

The sexual romance is used to forge unity between the two ethnic groups. The narrative serves as a diversion from the reality of the complexities of how the historicity of the genocide should be remembered and by which ethnic group. The love story, though devoid of the historicity of the genocide, is visionary as it portrays the possibilities of a new society with the foundation of love and hopes of forgiveness between the ethnic groups.

Melchor and Selena's sexual romance serves as a major diversion from the reality of the devastations of the genocide. Brown uses sensual language that appeals to the emotions and in the process overshadow the gravity of the genocide as the reader is carried away by the language of romance and euphoria. The titillating sensuous language carries the love story '*Melchior's chest pounded and his hands were sweaty and hot*' (Brown 2007:35) '*Her hazel skin was unblemished, and black lashes defined her eyes with startling outline*' (Brown 2007:43). The detailed description of emotional feelings and the object of love are typical of a love story in a fictive narrative. In the aftermath of the Rwandan 1994 genocide the prescriptive remedy of love partially solving the problem of ethnic hatred is noble as it unifies individuals pointing towards the possibility of ethnic reconciliation.

The romantic language in the narrative is the rhetoric of purity, heralding new beginnings hence the diversion from the spectacle of the Rwandan 1994 genocide. 'The language of love can also impose coherency to fragmented society going through acute cultural disintegration... and gesture towards the ideal and the possible' (Vambe 2010:358). In the case of *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* the flowery language overshadows the depravity of the genocide. The love story 'gestures towards the ideal' suggesting that romantic love transcended the genocide and ethnic boundaries and can be a possible foundation to address pertinent issues of forgiveness and reconciliation.

The next section discusses how *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* challenges the perceived expectations of religion by society as a unifier in a crisis and how the presence of religion projects the assumption of forgiveness.

3.5 Religion at a crossroad in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*

Religion, the belief in the existence of a supernatural ruling power, is regarded as an embodiment of all that is good and virtuous and plays a crucial role in setting moral guidance standards. It is with this understanding that the societal expectations of religion portrayed in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* deviate and deliberately sets new standards thereby complicating the comprehension of forgiveness in post genocide Rwanda.

Roman Catholic priests take celibacy vows as part of their commitment to their faith and service to God. Melchior willingly breaks his celibacy vow by indulging in a sexual romantic love with Selena and consummating their union (Brown 2007:63). The love story of Selena and Melchior is used by Brown in the narrative to portray the projected unification of Hutu and Tutsi as it ultimately leads to the procreation of the son who is a representation of the envisioned ethnic unity. Melchior as a representation of the church creates a moral crisis in the mind of the reader. The unification of the two ethnicities through the forbidden means of the sexual romance of a priest goes against societal expectations of the church and puts religion at a crossroad.

Religion is yet again at a crossroad in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* through the depiction of ethnic divisions, sexual immorality, bribery and corruption at the seminary. Melchior's sexual romance did not happen in isolation but had the full blessing from his

mentor Gratian, a senior priest, whom Selena bribed with food to facilitate the love affair. The author juxtaposes Melchior's love affair with that of another priest Bertin, who impregnated one of the pre-theology students and Bertin was forced to leave the seminary in disgrace. The authorial voice legitimises Melchior's (a moderate Hutu) love affair and condemns Bertin's (a Hutu extremist) sexual affair. Melchior's love affair is portrayed as more acceptable than Bertin's as it posed as an embodiment of ethnic unity.

The ethnic divisions that existed within the seminary went against the teachings of unity in the institution of the church. Bertin labelled Selena, 'a Tutsi whore' and Melchior, '...was incensed by the short man's invocation of Selena's ethnicity... That a man of the church would stoop to such tactics enraged Melchior all the more.' (Brown 2007:55). The narrative is guilty of stereotyping the two ethnicities through the description of their physiology. Bertin, a Hutu is said to be 'a short stocky man' (Brown 2007:31) in comparison to Selena, a Tutsi, who is 'tall, slim and elegant' thereby reinforcing the colonialists stereotyping of the ethnicities. The animosity within the seminary reveals the difficulties of the representations of forgiveness as the seminary community is polarised along ethnic lines further complicating the perceptions of religion as a unifier.

The church as an institution with all its physical structures is viewed by society as a place of refuge and safety, and that perception was carried into the genocide as portrayed in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007). When refugees began to trickle into Bukumara, Melchior's pastoral area, to escape killings in Pukuma near Kigali, one of the refugees, Rutayisire said, 'The people on the road say that the only safe place is a church' (Brown 2007:108), stressing the physical structure of the church. Melchior reiterates Rutayisire's statement but he goes beyond the physical structure of the church by emphasising the spiritual aspect of the church as he says, 'If we aren't safe in the sight of God then we cannot be safe at all' (Brown 2007:108). Melchior, a representation of the institution of the church, surrenders their fate to God.

On the other hand, Rutayisire later succinctly differentiates the division between the physical structure of the church and the foreign nature of the spirituality of the religion. Rutayisire stresses that the refugees have their hope in the church structure providing them sanctuary as she states 'here in Africa, Father, we strive only for a life at all' (Brown 2007:113),

meaning the refugees were not aiming for a life of spiritual purity and happiness as espoused where the church originated , but just to be able to live.

These different perceptions of the church in crisis projected by Brown in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* bring religion to a crossroad as the misconception of the spiritual and physical aspects of the church lends itself to scrutiny. The institution of church is further complicated by its metamorphosis during the genocide as the refugees at the St Jean Church compound placed their faith in the physical structure for their survival as opposed to the beliefs in the spirituality of religion. Religion is at a major crossroad when the refugees taking sanctuary in the church were massacred. Atrocities were committed in the very institutions that preach forgiveness which complicates the conceptualisation of forgiveness in post genocide Rwanda.

Joseph a young Tutsi man was beaten to death at the start of the genocide, by four uniformed Bukumara communal policemen after being accused of being a member of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and recruiting for the RPF. This created a moral crisis in Melchior as he questions humanity and the futility of life. The authorial voice is very prominent in the protagonist's internal struggle as he agonises on the impending tragedy. Melchior felt that the murder symbolised 'a tear that had been rent in the fabric that allowed even more people to enter a world where life could be dismissed' (Brown 2007:101-2).

Melchior was at an internal religious crossroad as he feared the impact of the atrocities and also felt unable to communicate his fears to anyone as the institution of the church bound him to 'maintain serenity in the face of weakness, to display an unwavering loyalty to destiny and thereby to instil calm and faith in the members of his church community' (Brown 2007:102).

Melchior's internal struggle leads the reader to question the authenticity in the practicalities of the religion Melchior preaches. His religion led him to a crossroad and indecision. Ironically Melchior's name means 'one of the Wise Men' (Brown 2007:31), and he transmits his indecision to Michel who is faced with a moral crisis concerning the 'work' the Interahamwe wanted him to undertake.

Michel, a moderate Hutu, is an important figure in Bukumara because the community assembled at his eating house to socialise and listen to the radio broadcast RTLM – Radio Television Libres des Mille Collines – and keep up to date with current affairs. Brown positively portrays the role of moderate Hutus like Michel who opposed the genocide from the beginning. Michel voiced his concern to Melchior over the hate speech being broadcast on national radio against the Tutsi and wondered why the hate speech was being allowed (Brown 2007:105). Michel also sympathised with the Tutsi refugees at St Jean Church compound and on his last visit to see Melchior took them a bag of maize flour (Brown 2007:151).

As the genocide gained momentum and ethnic confrontations escalated, the Hutus had to decide whether they were for or against the genocide. Michel had been recruited by the Interahamwe and given a ‘tool’ – a stick with long shafts of a dozen steel nails and pins – to go and ‘work’ at the barricade the following day (Brown 2007:108). Afflicted by his conscience at the nature of ‘work’ he was supposed to undertake, Michel went to Melchior for advice and moral guidance. Melchior’s conflicting advice to Michel was a reflection of his own personal religious crossroad. Michel was later killed by the Interahamwe for refusing to participate in the genocide. The moderate Hutus in the narrative serve to project that some Hutus were against the massacre of the Tutsi in the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

The crisis of the genocide put religion at a crossroad raising questions as to religion’s role as unifier and protector. The next section interrogates the paradox of re-humanising ethnicity through martyrdom and the assumption that forgiveness was inclusive in the love story between Melchior and Selena in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007).

3.6 The paradox of re-humanising ethnicity through martyrdom and the assumption of forgiveness in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007)

In an effort to re-humanise the Tutsi through the love story, the narrative *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) paradoxically de-humanises the Hutu extremists. The description of the hideous insect ‘*inyenzi*’ – cockroach - in the introduction of the book is in sharp contrast to the portrayal of Selena, a picture of beauty and wisdom, who is labelled ‘*inyenzi*’ due to her ethnicity. The cockroach that is crushed by an unnamed man in the introduction of *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) evokes images of a hated pest which is what

the Tutsi became to the Hutu. The insect is described as an intruder with long antennae, light and dark brown patterns jagged across its smooth hard shell which moved with a rapid burst of legs, scuttling across between the man and the television set before the man angrily crushed it with a shoe (Brown 2007:3-4).

The killing of the cockroach symbolises the intensity of ethnic hatred between the Hutu and Tutsi culminating in the genocide. The Tutsi being labelled '*inyenzi*' by the Hutu, were equally categorised as being no longer people worthy of life but merely a nuisance, a parasite, '*inyenzi*', stripped of human form (Brown 2007:98-9). The term '*Inyenzi*' which means cockroach is demeaning and degrading for the Tutsi but ironically during the genocide, the Hutu extremists are also degraded by their inhumane violent acts.

In the narrative, the cockroach is referred to as an 'intruder' whilst Melchior refers to Selena as a 'welcome intrusion' (Brown 2007:34). Melchior's acknowledgement of Selena's physical beauty is the author's first effort in re-humanising her. To re-humanise the Tutsi the narrative goes to great lengths to describe Selena's physical grace and beauty to the point where she is portrayed as an ethereal and angelic figure who enters Melchior's 'unknown world' (Brown 2007:33). When Melchior first sees Selena, 'she is wearing a long yellow dress decorated with red flowers, she walked in front of him, her tall body and thin neck, elegant and smiling, glancing at him as she strode past' (Brown 2007:33). The re-humanising of the Tutsi through the positive physical attributes of Selena leads to another extreme stereotyping of the Tutsi to being portrayed as almost perfect challenging the reader to rethink that such beauty cannot be equated to a cockroach.

The denigration of the Tutsi as *inyenzi* went beyond the physical and also took on a socio-psychological dimension. The portrayal of Selena as beautiful in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) had no impact on Victor Musingenzi, Bertin and Zephir – Hutu extremists – who still viewed her as a 'Tutsi whore.' This denigration of the Tutsi has its origin in Rwanda's racialization of the two ethnicities which began with the colonisation of Rwanda when the Belgians socially constructed the Hutu as Bantu and Tutsi as alien Hamites from the mid 1920's to the mid 1930's. The Belgians favoured the Tutsi in power, education and wealth culminating in the issuing of identity cards further creating divisions and animosity between the ethnicities (Mamdani 2001). The history of cyclical violence in Rwanda and the

Great Lakes region became a traumatic part of the culture of prejudice for both Hutu and Tutsi (Uvin1997).

The Hutu extremists' subjective historicity of the genocide is illustrated through Colonel Batho, a *bourgemestre* for Rweru during the genocide. Colonel Batho narrated a gruesome tale to Melchior of the Tutsi queen mother Kanjogera, who had Hutu children impaled with long swords to assist her in getting up from her imperial throne pressing the blades even deeper into the children's backs as she stood up (Brown 2007:183-4). Colonel Batho's tale reinforced the stereotype of the Hutu extremists as irrational, prejudiced and engaging in a 'senseless primitive tribal war' (Prunier 1995:237-8).The 1994 Rwandan genocide was portrayed as a tribal war in some Western media.

The intention of the love story was to unite the two ethnicities but instead, the narrative paradoxically polarises the two ethnic groups by reversing the stereotype – by the extreme de-humanising the Hutu and the extreme re-humanising the Tutsi.

Melchior choosing to die for Selena can be viewed as the ultimate sacrifice in the aim of the narrative to re-humanise the Tutsi as he died for the despised *inyenzi*, thereby affirming her humanity. Vambe (2010) puts forward the view that 'the religious narrative of romantic humanism and the sexual romance in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* can be viewed as a national allegory for peace and reconciliation between Hutu and Tutsi'. The idea of love bridging the gap between the ethnicities is noble as there is a possibility that some forgiveness may take place in order for the two ethnic groups to reconcile.

Melchior's martyrdom complicates the conceptualising of forgiveness because it projects the assumption that since Melchior, a Hutu, died for Selena, a Tutsi therefore Selena, a representation of the Tutsi in the narrative has forgiven the Hutu for the genocide. The language in the epilogue of *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* leads to the assumption that peace, forgiveness and reconciliation have taken place four years after the genocide. The narrative paints a picture of an idyllic and tranquil countryside where animosity no longer exists as people in the flourishing fields 'work alongside each other' (Brown 2007:205).

However Selena's reflections as she is walking through the countryside are contradictory to the assumption that forgiveness took place. Selena is suspicious and judgemental of an older man who is standing beside the road leaning on a hoe 'Where had he been when the killing took place? Had he been one of them? Had he slaughtered and maimed, this man

standing quietly on the side of the road?’ (Brown 2007:205). Selena’s reflections four years after the genocide portray the ambiguous nature of forgiveness in the narrative as forgiveness remained an assumption. The next section interrogates retributive justice in dealing with crimes of genocide and the place of forgiveness in the justice delivery system.

3.7 Interrogating retributive justice and forgiveness in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007)

Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007) is a novel that it is based on a historical tragic event, the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The use of fictionalised press releases, newspaper articles and the trial cases at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) with dates interspacing the narrative gives the novel a semblance of authenticity. The first fictionalised Press Release on 5 August 1997 covers the trial of Mr Victor Musingenzi, the former head of the communal police for Rweru, Rwanda who was arrested in a hotel in Kenya on 27 July 1997. Victor Musingenzi was being tried on suspicion of crimes of genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide and crimes against humanity. The trial was taking place in the Office of Trial Prosecutors, International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, in Arusha Tanzania (Brown 2007:20-3).

Listed below are the rest of the fictionalised press releases, newspaper articles and the trial cases at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that are recorded in the novel concerning the prosecution of Victor Musingenzi: –

- 1) International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) 5 August 1997 Press Release: To Accredited press corps ICTR Building (Brown 2007:20).
- 2) 13 February 1998 Nairobi Daily: Rwandan Musingenzi Trial Set to Start Amid Controversy – Legal correspondent: David Nsilese (Brown 2007:44).
- 3) International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) Summary of Indictment (Brown 2007:64).
- 4) International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) Explanation of plea tendered in respect of detailed charge (Brown 2007:91).
- 5) “Exhibit M24” Order from Prefect (Rweru) to “cut the brush” on 6 May 1994 (Brown 2007:118).
- 6) International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) Interlocutory Judgement status of witness DDD and DDE. Judgement delivered 29 July 1998 (Brown 2007:130).

- 7) International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) Transcript of court proceedings 10 Aug 1998 (Brown 2007:154).
- 8) "Exhibit ZY5" partial list of displaced persons seeking refuge at St Jean Church, Bukumara (Brown 2007:174).
- 9) Arusha 18 October 1998 Draft Article for the Nairobi Daily (Brown 2007:187).

These flash forwards, by running parallel with events unfolding in the genocide, serve the purpose of re-assuring the reader that the atrocities committed did not go unpunished. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) meted out retributive justice to *genocidaires*. The aim of retributive justice is to inflict a penalty – which in most cases is incarceration – for wrong doing. Restorative justice on the other hand is better equipped to pave the way for reconciliation as it 'attends fully to victims needs and offenders assume active responsibility for their actions' (Harrell 2003:43).

In November 1994, the United Nations Security Council voted to create the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) to try leaders of the Rwandan genocide. After more than a decade of prosecutions, the ICTR successfully prosecuted a number of the leaders of the 1994 genocide, including the prime minister and a number of other ministers, military officers, and leaders in business, religion, culture, and media. Although the ICTR prosecuted the most important leaders of the genocide, the total number of individuals tried in Arusha, Tanzania number fewer than one hundred (Longman 2004).

All in all, the 9 fictionalised press releases, newspaper articles and the trial cases at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that is in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* are a depiction of one of the justice delivery systems in post genocide Rwanda. Brown captures the slow pace of the ICTR in the prosecution of Victor Musingenzi which began on 5 August 1997 and continued till 10 August 1998, taking over a year.

The narrative chose to focus only on justice being meted to the *genocidaires* through retributive justice outside of Rwanda, thereby giving the impression that they acted alone during the genocide when in fact there was popular participation: 'Civilian groups composed of majority Hutu, committed widespread acts of ethnic violence against Tutsi. These rampaging crowds were incited and led by local administrators and militia...' (Mamdani 2001:201). *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* does not portray other forms of justice delivery systems which dealt with atrocities committed by the populace during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The Rwandan local courts were overwhelmed by the tens of thousands of perpetrators who had to be tried. The new regime continued to detain people

accused of participation in the genocide and the courts were not able to keep pace with the influx of more cases.

Brown in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* misrepresents the justice delivery system in post genocide Rwanda by deliberately focusing on the trials that took place at the ICTR in Arusha Tanzania, which in a decade managed to try less than one hundred people. On the other hand the reality was that the new Rwandan government had tens of thousands of individuals to try on genocide charges and continued to hold trials. The numerous interspaced fictionalised press releases, newspaper articles and the trial cases at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in the narrative give the reader the impression that justice was served overall for the crimes of the genocide.

Schane (2006) describes legal language as being verbose giving the impression that a lot is achieved through court hearings which is not usually the case. The use of legal language in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* tends to conjure in the mind of the layperson, 'legalese' – that often incomprehensible verbiage found in legal documents as well as an arcane jargon used among attorneys (Schane 2006). This is very true of the 'legalese' which Brown uses in the narrative as it is complicated and difficult to decipher as illustrated

“The personal liability of the accused for the a foregoing acts is further asserted by the prosecution in terms of article 6 of the Statute of the Tribunal on the basis that the accused planned, instigated, ordered, committed or otherwise aided and abetted in the planning, preparation or execution of the crimes referred to herein.” (Brown 2007:67).

Presented with such 'legalese' the assumption is that, since it was legally documented and publicized then the justice delivery system was effective when actually the number of *genocidaires* prosecuted at the ICTR was minimal.

Harrell (2006) explains that justice in states recovering from '*crimes of states*,' such as Rwanda, is seen as a moral duty arising from a liberal conception of human rights, and of utilitarian benefit to both the transitional regime and the larger international community. Justice in Rwanda was a necessary component of the reconciliation process in the aftermath of the genocide to deal with the '*crimes of state*' in the rebuilding of the country. As stated above the narrative chose to focus on retributive justice, which is punitive in nature and in the case of Rwanda being interpreted as '*victor's justice*' (Mamdani 2001).

Mamdani questions '*victor's justice*' – '*...if victor's justice requires victor's power, then is not victor's justice simply revenge masquerading as justice?*' (Mamdani 2001:227-3). The role of

victim/perpetrator in Rwanda was intertwined and 'victor's justice' does not extend compassion towards the perpetrator. By focusing on retributive justice, Brown is guilty of further dividing the two ethnic groups leading to fear and suspicion. At the end of the narrative and the conclusion of the prosecution of Victor Musingenzi, Selena who is an embodiment of 'victor's justice' is said to have seen the fear in his (Victor's) eyes (Brown 2007:206).

Brown's focus on retributive justice being meted out through the ICTR does not auger well for reconciliation and forgiveness as it ultimately defeats the purpose of the narrative to unify the two ethnic groups, Hutu and Tutsi. Victor Musingenzi, a representation of the Hutu extremists is from the beginning of the novel condemned for the crime of genocide, without taking into consideration the complex historicity of cyclical violence in Rwanda and how the role of victim/perpetrator interchanged over the years. Harrell states 'forgiveness brings the humane dimension to post trauma experiences...' (Harrell 2003:37). Retributive justice portrayed in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* excludes representations of forgiveness and reconciliation which are better served through restorative justice.

The numerous fictionalised press releases, newspaper articles and the trial cases at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* are a major propeller of the story as flash forwards, and as representations of justice being served in post genocide Rwanda. Through the portrayal of retributive justice the novel is guilty of ignoring the need for forgiveness to be included in the justice delivery system more so in post genocide Rwanda where reconciliation rests on the spirit of forgiveness.

3.8 A Critique of *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*

One shortcoming of the novel *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* is its didactic message of love, where the imagined vision of a new Rwanda dominates the plot. The genocide is a major historical tragedy in the history of cyclical violence in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region and became a traumatic part of the culture of prejudice for both Hutu and Tutsi (Uvin 1997:105). The very fact that there was a genocide means forgiveness becomes a necessary component in the rebuilding of the country, Brown is guilty of trivialising the genocide by ignoring its historicity thereby undermining the foundation for forgiveness.

The elements that make up a novel include its socio-economic cultural site and the depiction of characterisation through the narrative. In *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* Brown is the third person narrator who is 'all knowing' and describes the events and the lives of the characters. Characterisation suffers in the narrative due to the prescriptive nature of

the novel, as the characters are portrayed as either 'very good' or 'very bad.' Identification with flat characters with no complexities is difficult for the reader to comprehend to the extent that some become surreal, creating further ambiguity in the representations of forgiveness in the narrative.

A simplistic view of the genocide is projected in the novel and research by Mamdani discusses the 'three silences' that prove that 'Hutu' and 'Tutsi' as social identities were socially constructed and racialized by the colonialists resulting in ethnic hatred and animosity long before the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Mamdani 2001:48).

Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007) was written for a European audience, leading to the exclusion of the spectacle of the genocide which was too unpleasant to portray hence the focus on the love story which is more appealing. The sexual romance between Melchior and Selena amidst the depravity hooks the European reader as it conveys the message that 'love' solves all in an 'African' problem. The climax of the love story is when Melchior chose to give his life to protect Selena, the woman he loved which may be considered an honourable deed in a Eurocentric setting of a 'love story'.

White authored books written for European readers expounding African problems on behalf of the African people of Rwanda (Rwafa 2010:51) lend themselves to suspicion and this is evident in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*, where the genocide is trivialised and history is distorted. *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* does injustice to the role of memory in forgiveness by obliterating the historicity of the genocide and erroneously projecting ethnicity as the main cause of the genocide.

3.9 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to critique and interrogate how far Brown in his fictional novel *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* expounds on the theme of forgiveness and in the process attempts re-humanise the Tutsi during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The significance of *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* is the positive portrayal of the moderate Hutus who opposed the genocide. Brown also acknowledges the role of the churches that tried to save lives as opposed to other churches that took an active role in the massacres during the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Brown 2007:185). The narrative provides the

necessary counter argument that suggests that during and after the genocide the church as an institution was under scrutiny.

In *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* Brown deliberately focused on life affirming values and love of mankind as opposed to the atrocities of the genocide in order to portray his vision of a new Rwanda devoid of ethnic animosity. This chapter argued that the narrative attempted to unite the two ethnic groups through the romantic love story of Melchior, a moderate Hutu priest and Selena, a Tutsi woman. *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)* puts forward the proposition that love can be viewed as the beginning of a wider reconciliation between the two ethnic groups. The love story paradoxically de-humanised the Hutu and re-humanised the Tutsi in its portrayal of the negative and positive attributes of the characters.

Brown can be criticized for focusing on retributive justice that was meted out through the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) as its punitive nature further antagonises the two ethnicities. Restorative justice is what is most needed after 'crimes of state' have been committed. The love story of Melchior and Selena and the consequences that ensue are more aligned to restorative justice which has representations of forgiveness and reconciliation

In chapter four I am going to explore the representations of forgiveness and its ambiguity in *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* by Immaculee Ilibagiza. This chapter will interrogate Ilibagiza's comprehension of the therapeutic nature of forgiveness and its importance during the genocide and in post genocide Rwanda.

Chapter 4

Ambiguities of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006)

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter interrogated the concept of re-humanising ethnicity through the sexual romance and ‘the ambiguous space’ of forgiveness in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007). Chapter three argued that the narrative attempted to bridge the animosity between the two ethnic groups through the love story of Melchior, a moderate Hutu priest and Selena, a Tutsi woman. The chapter acknowledged the proposition put forward in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) that love can be viewed as the beginning of a wider reconciliation between the two ethnic groups.

The significance of the novel was the positive portrayal of the moderate Hutus who opposed the genocide. Chapter three also noted the positive role of the churches that tried to save lives as opposed to other churches that were actively involved in the massacres during the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Brown 2007:185). This contradictory role of the church in the narrative provided the necessary counter argument that suggested that during and after the genocide the church as an institution was under scrutiny.

The novel was critiqued for the extreme characterisation in its portrayal of the negative and positive attributes of the characters. The result was the stereotyping of the two ethnicities as the Hutu were de-humanised and the Tutsi re-humanised. Chapter three also criticized *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) for focusing on retributive justice that was meted out to the Hutu *genocidaires* through the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) as its punitive nature further antagonised the two ethnicities.

The aim of Chapter four is to explore the representations of forgiveness and its ambiguities in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006). This chapter will interrogate Ilibagiza’s comprehension of forgiveness and its importance during the genocide and in post genocide Rwanda. The core argument of this chapter is that *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006) centres on the power of religion, positive thinking and compassion as being the major step towards forgiveness on an individual level. The above will be interrogated for its limitations concerning justice after the committing of ‘crimes of state’ as Orentlicher (1991) states ‘it is a lie to think that people can forget a crime against humanity. Justice is required so that memory does not fester’

(Orentlicher 1991:44). Forgiveness is necessary in the healing process of the victim but justice is a crucial component of national reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda.

Chapter 4 will make use of theories of autobiographical narrative. According to Brockmeier it is imperative to explore the meaning of the “self” in relation to itself, its surroundings and also its constructions in autobiographical narrative (Brockmeier 2002:53). Therefore, to a greater extent, autobiography is the product of the ‘self’ trying to make sense of the world and in the case of the memoir, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)*, it becomes even more imperative as Ilibagiza is a survivor of the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

In order to interrogate the ambiguities of forgiveness it is important to have an understanding of the historicity of the genocide and the complexities of the interchanging roles of victim/perpetrator and ‘the enemy other’ due to the history of cyclic violence in Rwanda. This chapter credits Ilibagiza for her inclusion of the historicity of the ethnic animosity and her memoir acknowledges the fact that the Rwandan 1994 genocide did not just suddenly erupt. The inclusion of the historicity of the 1994 Rwandan genocide is positive but the memoir will be critiqued for its persistent portrayal of the Tutsi as victims and the Hutu as perpetrators and for not acknowledging that the Tutsi, though a minority, were a ‘historically privileged’ (Mamdani 2001) group before the 1959 revolution.

Brockmeier states that the autobiographical process does not follow chronological time but creates its own time, narrative time (Brockmeier 2002:67). The complexities of selective memory that play a pivotal role in autobiographical works will be analysed since literature is a reflection of the socio-economic historicity of that particular narrative and in this case Ilibagiza’s portrayal of the self as victim and survivor. According to Laub for survivors to use “I” feelingly is to acknowledge the profoundness of their sense of abandonment and lonesomeness as it can lead to despair and surrender (Laub1992:389). Chapter four will interrogate the fundamental role of religion in instances of despair and surrender that the writer is faced with in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)*.

Some secular philosophers believe that the Christian concept of forgiveness is moralist and simplistic. For example, according to Derrida forgiveness must announce itself as impossibility itself and can only occur in the realm beyond that of human affairs (Verdeja (2004). The spiritual dimension of forgiveness will be interrogated through the images and metaphors used to convey the weighty and emotional subject of genocide considering the belatedness of traumatic events. This chapter will explore the impact of memory and recollection of the trauma and how it shaped the present lives of the survivors. The paradox with trauma is that to survive, the trauma victim requires the ability to be able to bear witness to 'wounds that cannot close' (Nora 1993).

According to Marder (2006) the voices of the dead continue to speak through the surviving witnesses after a traumatic event. This chapter will interrogate how far the 'presence' of the departed impacts the survivor's representations of forgiveness. The memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006), is dedicated to the memory of the departed but the onus is on the state to deliver justice after 'crimes of state' (Harrell: 2003). This chapter critiques the justice delivery system portrayed in the memoir and its implications on reconciliation. Chapter four argues that forgiveness is only the first step towards restoring the humanity of the victim/perpetrator followed by restorative justice.

4.1 Summary of the plot of the memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006)

Immaculee Ilibagiza was born in the Western Rwandan province of Kibuye in the village of Mataba. She had a blissful childhood in a very loving family and praying was always a part of her life as her parents were ardent Catholics. Both her parents were teachers and respected community leaders. At ten years old Ilibagiza was for the first time made aware in class during an ethnic roll call that she was Tutsi and therefore, a second class citizen. In the memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006) Ilibagiza gave the historicity of the ethnic divisions and cyclical massacres that had taken place in Rwanda before the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The narrative recounts how Hutu neighbours and friends turned killers on their Tutsi neighbours. Moderate Hutus, like Pastor Murinzi who hid Ilibagiza and seven other women in a closet sized bathroom in his bedroom, risked their lives to save Tutsis.

The memoir narrates how the Hutu extremist government institutionalised ethnic divisions in schools. Ilibagiza, despite getting a first class pass could not get a bursary to attend a government secondary school due to her ethnicity as places were reserved for Hutu students. Her father, determined to educate her, sold two cows to send Ilibagiza to a private school where she excelled and later got a scholarship to *Lycee de Notre Dame d'Afrique*, one of the best schools in Rwanda. The memoir is not oblivious to the unrest that was taking place in Rwanda. Ilibagiza narrated how her high school education was affected in her third year due to the 1990 war when the Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front soldiers invaded Rwanda from Uganda. This was followed by a wave of arrests of suspected Tutsi RPF supporters and Ilibagiza's father was among the thousands arrested. In 1991 she was awarded a scholarship to the National University in Butare, Rwanda and she was in her third year of university when the genocide began.

It is evident in the memoir that Ilibagiza's spiritual growth reached a higher level as her faith and positivity sustained her during the ninety one days that she hid in Pastor Murinzi's closet sized bathroom with seven other women during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Hiding in the bathroom, Ilibagiza took refuge in prayer, meditation and positivity. The memoir reveals a double saving of Ilibagiza – first a physical saving from the massacre and secondly a spiritual saving which enabled her to embark on the difficult path to forgive the killers of her family (Ilibagiza 2006:204).

Towards the end of the genocide the French, under Operation Turquoise, intervened in Rwanda and Pastor Murinzi took Ilibagiza and the seven other women out of the tiny bathroom and escorted them to the French camp. In August 1994, as the RPF advanced into Kibuye, the French soldiers shut down the camp and Ilibagiza with other Tutsi refugees had to make their own way to the RPF camp on a road strewn with rocks and bodies in the face of the Hutu Interahamwe fleeing from the RPF soldiers.

After the genocide Ilibagiza went to Kigali with friends she had made in the RPF camp and later got a job with the United Nations in Kigali. It was at this point that she made two trips back to Kibuye, first to mourn her family and see their graves and later to make peace with the departed. Ilibagiza also went to see Felicien in jail, her parent's killer and her level of

spirituality surprised the burgomaster as he expected her to demand revenge but instead she forgave Felicien.

With all its tension and trauma, the memoir has a happy ending. Ilibagiza had prayed for a husband and a job at the United Nations in New York, which all came true, reinforcing the writer's faith in God, positivity, compassion and the power of forgiveness.

4.2 The Memoir and the 'self'

A memoir is a written account of a short life history by someone with first-hand knowledge of an experience of a life-defining moment. Ilibagiza is at the centre of the memoir as the 'self' as she narrates the horrors of the 1994 Rwandan genocide in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)*. Javangwe discusses the 'self' in the genre of autobiography and argues that this self does not exist on its own and it is necessary to explore the meaning of the 'self' in relation to its surroundings and its constructions in autobiographical narratives (Javangwe 2011).

The construction of the 'self' in the memoir is foregrounded in chapter one, where it is clearly portrayed that the 'self' represented by Ilibagiza, does not exist on its own but is an integral part of the family unit, community and social institutions which give the 'self' identity. The memoir is important in that, the narrative enables the writer to relive the traumatic experience of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. In the process Ilibagiza rediscovers her identity and 'establishes an integrated sense of the 'self' (Javangwe 2011:14). Ilibagiza through the memoir portrays her continuous establishment of the 'self' through her unwavering faith in God.

The memoir, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* documents Ilibagiza's survival of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and foremost, the elevation of her spirituality and belief in God which sustained her during and after the genocide. Brockmeier (2000) discusses the memoir as a mediation that the writer uses to evaluate the 'self', and in this case in the context of the departed. Ilibagiza's personal experience of the genocide enabled her to rediscover the depth of her spiritual 'self' that was capable of forgiving the 'unforgivable' (Agamben 1990).

The memoir as self-writing, lays claim to the fact that what is being narrated is authentic narrative by the introduction of the element of the 'I'. The author narrator in this memoir poses both as the evidence and witness to the horrors and physical harm meted on the Tutsi and some moderate Hutu during the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Mamdani 2001). The voice of the victim as witness is useful because the voice provides intimate details on how people were executed, and how some escaped to be able later, to narrative their own stories (Agamben 1990). *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* is one of the voices of the many victims narrating the 1994 Rwandan genocide who poses both as 'the evidence and the witness' (Agamben 1990) thereby complicating the subjectivity of the memoir as nostalgia and trauma of the departed may lead to a distortion of historicity.

Olney declares that 'every cosmology begins in self-knowledge' (Olney 1972:4). In this memoir the trauma of the genocide calls for the beginning of self-knowledge for Ilibagiza where the 'self' has to 'consciously and reflexively explore and define itself and how it wants and can relate to its cosmos' (Javangwe 2011:36). In her quest for self-knowledge, during and after the genocide, Ilibagiza chose the spiritual path and belief in God to comprehend and make sense of her world. Ilibagiza's narrative subscribes to Brockmeier's view in the sense that 'the 'self' evaluates itself in the light of moral assumptions and ethical convictions' (Brockmeier 2000:59).

Representations of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* are very direct and channelled through Ilibagiza's spiritual beliefs. The 'self's' moral assumption and ethical convictions projected through Ilibagiza in the memoir are a reflection of her 'social construction' (Javangwe 2011) in the family unit as she was taught to treat neighbours with kindness and respect (Ilibagiza 2006:7). So strong were her moral and ethical convictions that she even pitied and prayed for the perpetrators when she could hear them hunting to kill her as she hid in Pastor Murinzi's closet sized bathroom 'I pitied the killers. I asked God to forgive their sins and turn their souls towards his beautiful light' (Ilibagiza 2006:94).

Autobiographical memory plays a crucial part in reconnecting to the past, as the process of identity construction and the process of remembering links the past in the light of present events and future expectations (Brockmeier 2000:55). The departed are in effect the

memory that moulds the identity of the present 'self' and in this memoir, Ilibagiza makes a conscious spiritual choice to illuminate the positivity in believing in God in order to get closure from a traumatic past through forgiveness and find a vision to an expectant future.

According to Javangwe (2011), the reliance on memory introduces a clear problematic in the study of the memoir as it implies recreating the past events, experiences, history and perspectives from it. What stands out in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006), is that in the process of reconstructing her family life, Ilibagiza inevitably portrays a blissful childhood in an ideal loving family proving Javangwe's (2011) claims that, sources in autobiography writing are only useful to the extent to which they coincide with the act of the writer's remembering, or preferred memories. The writer's 'preferred' memories are illustrated in the very first sentence of chapter one in the memoir 'I was born in paradise' (Ilibagiza 2006:3). Brockmeier's (2000) views are in agreement with Javangwe (2011) on preferred memories, when he discusses a static view of a certain period of a life, that is usually found in autobiographical stories that revolve around one central, usually catastrophic event (Brockmeier 2000:67). Ilibagiza's preferred memories of the historicity of Rwanda's cyclical violence prior to the 1994 Rwandan genocide are problematic as the memoir is biased towards portraying Tutsi as blameless victims and in the process disregards an objective historicity of the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator between Hutu and Tutsi.

This memoir serves to authenticate the horrors of the genocide and how a given narrative is effective not because it reveals all, but rather because listeners and/or readers recognize common social devices and rhetoric in portrayals of people, places and events (Rasmussen 2002:119). In *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006) Ilibagiza portrays social institutions that the reader can identify with like the family unit, communal interrelationships, school and religion. 'These social institutions are not just something created by people but that they are, to a certain extent, that which creates *persons*' (Brockmeier 2002: 6-7). Therefore, this memoir, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006), is a representation of the above social institutions that created the *person* of the writer. This memoir serves as a site where an 'authentic perspective' of the historicity of the genocide is comprehended from the subjective 'self's' point of view. The individualistic portrayal of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006) further complicates the 'ambiguous space' of forgiveness after 'crimes of state' (Harrell 2003) have been committed. It raises the challenge of linking forgiveness on

an individual level with the national project for reconciliation to take place (Mamdani 2001:282).

The next section will critique the ambiguities of forgiveness within the complex interchanging role of victim/perpetrator and 'the enemy other' as well as the perpetuation of the stereotypical projection of the Tutsi as victims and the Hutu as perpetrators.

4.3 The 'enemy other' (Zemblyas 2011) and forgiveness

Due to the historicity of the cyclical massacres and wars, the Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda each became the 'enemy other' as they were both victim/perpetrator. Zemblyas points out the complexities of dealing with the 'enemy other' which is the realisation that, 'the others' from the other side have also suffered in a more complex way' (Zemblyas 2011:262). There is need to acknowledge common pain as an important aspect in re-humanizing the 'enemy-other' as mourning and forgiveness constitute valuable sites for reconciliation.

The suffering of the 'enemy other', in this case the Hutu, is not acknowledged in the memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (Ilibagiza2006)* as the Tutsi are consistently portrayed as 'blameless' victims. What is not projected in this memoir is that before the 1959 revolution in Rwanda, the Tutsi were a 'historically privileged minority' (Mamdani 2001:138). The Belgian colonialists in the 1960's racialized the ethnic groups along ethnic lines and Hutu was constructed as a subject identity alongside Tutsi as an identity of power - meaning Tutsi symbolised power and Hutu subject (Mamdani 2001:102). Mamdani further discusses the educational disparity in Rwanda in the middle and late 1960's where nearly 90% of the university enrolment was Tutsi (Mamdani 2001:136).

Ilibagiza projects her parent's positive contribution in education and in the community but fails to acknowledge that this was resultant of the privileges of wealth and education which the Tutsi as a minority enjoyed. The privileged position of the minority Tutsi fuelled resentment in the 'enemy other' – the subjugated underprivileged majority Hutu – who endured forced labour until it was abolished in the 1959 revolution (Mamdani 2001:134).

In consistently portraying herself as victim Ilibagiza describes the weekly ethnic roll calls in schools as "serving a sinister purpose to segregate Tutsi children as part of a master plan of discrimination known as the 'ethnic balance'... ensuring Tutsi status as second class

citizens” (Ilibagiza 2006:18). Though Ilibagiza in *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza2006) acknowledges the reality of Rwanda’s ethnic population which was roughly 85% Hutu, 14% Tutsi and 1% Twa, she can be criticized for distorting Rwanda’s historicity by stating that most jobs and school placements went to Hutu (Ilibagiza 2006:18). Mamdani (2001) explains the historical background of the “master plan” which was in effect meant to right the wrongs of the past, as earlier quoted 90% of the university enrolment was the minority Tutsi in the 1960’s.

After the 1959 revolution the 1966 law provided an instrument for Hutu-izing control over a Tutsi dominated educational system and later, the 1985 law on education stipulated that selection into schools would take into account the ‘ethnic’ affiliation of the child, - the Hutu would receive 85% of the places, the Tutsi between 10 and 15% and the Twa 1% (Mamdani 2001:136&9). The exclusion of the historical background to the ethnic roll call in schools and the labelling of it as ‘sinister’ by Ilibagiza further perpetuated and reinforced the stereotyping of the Hutu as perpetrators and the Tutsi as ‘blameless’ victims and on the other hand, the ‘Hutu-izing’ of the educational system also fuelled ethnic animosity as it was directed at ‘the enemy other’ – the ‘privileged’ Tutsi.

The ambiguities of selective memory play a pivotal role in the memoir since literature is a reflection of the socio-economic historicity of that particular narrative (Brockmeier 2002:67). Selective memory in the memoir projects the negativity of the ‘enemy other’ and a crisis arises when the ‘enemy other’ – the Hutu government – acts positively by awarding Ilibagiza a scholarship to one of the best high schools in Rwanda, *Lycee de Notre Dame d’Afrique* and then another scholarship to the National University in Butare, Rwanda. This ‘crisis’ is due to socialisation as Zembylas states growing up to expect that anger and resentment against “our” perpetrators was not only legitimate but also the “normal” and “appropriate” response... (Zembylas 2011:258).

Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (Ilibagiza2006) can be credited for narrating the horrors of the 1994 Rwandan genocide and portraying the perceptions of the ‘enemy other’ – in this case the Hutu - , as viewed by the Tutsi. The memoir portrays the suffering of the Tutsi but Zembylas (2011) enhances the comprehension of the ‘enemy other’ by stating that suffering is experienced by all communities. *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) aids in the deconstruction of the anger and resentment against “our” perpetrators thereby enabling what Zembylas describes as ‘small openings’ (Zembylas 2011:258) which create conditions for solidarity and the conceptualisation of forgiveness.

Due to the historicity of the cyclical massacres and wars, the Hutu and Tutsi have each become the 'enemy other' as they are both victim/perpetrator. The memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) portrays the complex interchanging role of the 'enemy other' as Ilibagiza narrates how in August 1994, as the RPF advanced into Kibuye and the Hutu Interahamwe immediately became the victims - the 'other' – as they fled from the RPF soldiers, who now became the perpetrators – the 'enemy other' (Ilibagiza 2006:172).

Buckley (2006) further discusses the ambiguities of the 'enemy other' and how the Tutsi soldiers killed Hutu in revenge murders after the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Buckley 2006:147). The Hutu who lost family members during the 1994 Rwandan genocide felt excluded from the national commemorations and mourning (Lemarchand 2008:73) as expressed in the following comment:

“To remember is good, but it should be inclusive. For instance, my parents have been killed during the genocide. But when they [the public] remember they remember only Tutsi, so I am frustrated because they don't remember my family.” (Young rural woman, Nyamata) (Buckley 2006:147)

The exclusion of the Hutu from the commemorations further complicates the concept of the 'enemy other' and labels the Hutu as the perpetrators and yet they too were victims who also needed to remember and to mourn their dead. According to interviews conducted by Buckley (2006) the prejudices and antagonisms, have not changed and, given the experience of the past decade, the cleavages are even deeper than they were prior to the genocide.

The concept of 'social amnesia' (Buckley 2006:132) and the 'enemy other' adds another dimension to the politicization of national commemorations. As argued by Nora, 'remembrance has a coercive force, for it creates identity and a sense of belonging' (Nora 1993:11). However collective identity is not merely produced through remembering but also through forgetting '...social amnesia' where whole societies may choose to forget uncomfortable knowledge from its discreditable past records, 'open secrets' which are known by all, and knowingly not known' (Buckley 2006:132).

Ilibagiza can be credited for portraying her father's 'social amnesia' towards the ethnic cyclical violence in Rwanda. Her father, Leonard, in the memoir exhibited 'social amnesia'

when he was arrested and jailed during the 1990 war. He dismissed the arrest as a political misunderstanding and when his sons suggested they leave Rwanda till the war ended, he defended his Hutu jailer Kabayi, the district burgomaster saying “It was a mix up. Kabayi was just acting on orders it wasn’t anything personal. These things are very political, and it’s best you kids don’t get mixed up in them. Let’s forget about the whole thing” (Ilibagiza 2006:28). The father downplayed the seriousness of the 1990 war choosing to forget that previously he had been targeted in similar anti-Tutsi violence in 1959 (Ilibagiza 2006:16). Just before the genocide began in 1994 Ilibagiza stated that her father remained in denial, hoping that the RPF would come to their rescue in a matter of days (Ilibagiza 2006:46). The height of Ilibagiza’s father’s ‘social amnesia’ was during the genocide when refugees flocked to their homestead and her father went to ask for protection from Kabayi, the same Hutu burgomaster who jailed him during the 1990 war (Ilibagiza 2006:61).

‘Social amnesia’ complicates the concept of the ‘enemy other’ as the origins of the animosity has not been addressed and remain an “open secret’, which is known by all and knowingly not known’ (Buckley 2006:132). In dealing with the ‘enemy other’, remembering to forget for Ilibagiza’s father was thus essential for local coexistence and to avoid antagonisms (Buckley 2006:134). The potential danger in the ‘being nice’ attitude towards the ‘enemy other’ for the sake of coexistence is that closure does not take place as emotions of anger, resentment and fear remain bottled up in people’s hearts (Buckley 2006:145).

Ilibagiza concludes her memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) with a simplistic view of forgiveness when she states “I know that Rwanda can heal herself if each heart learns the lesson of forgiveness” (Ilibagiza 2006:210). Ilibagiza’s individual act of forgiving her family’s killer Felicien is noble (Ilibagiza 2006:204) but on a national scale forgiveness requires the deconstruction of the ‘enemy other’. This implies dismantling ‘social amnesia’ and acknowledging common pain.

The next section explores the impact of the ‘presence’ of the departed on the ‘self’s’ representations of forgiveness and the fundamental role of religion in instances of despair and surrender that the writer faced in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (2006).

4.4 The 'presence of the departed' (Laub 1992) and memory

"But still, after more than a decade, we never talked about our family in the past tense. I suppose it's our way of keeping their memory alive." (Ilibagiza 2006:206)

Ilibagiza was brought up in a closely knit family which revered values of love, compassion, forgiveness and spirituality. These inter-human relationships give the individual significance as a member of civilized society (Winkler 1962). The 'self's' significance as a member of a 'civilized society' became even more imperative in the aftermath of the genocide for Ilibagiza who faced the trauma of losing family members. The preservation of the identity of the ones 'left' after a devastation is embedded in the memory of the departed. Culture filters what is remembered, and new information is unlikely to challenge survivors' ingrained preconceptions since it will only be retained in a form that accords with these preconceptions (Rasmussen 2002). Therefore it can be argued that despite the devastations of the genocide the positive family values which in effect is the 'culture filtered', were retained in Ilibagiza's preconceptions and portrayed in her representations of forgiveness as she later made the difficult choice of forgiving her family's killers.

Nora discusses the dynamics of memory by stating that memory only accommodates those facts that suit it (Nora 1989:8). Human beings are interdependent and more so in the family unit which is the crux of an individual's identity. In a state of 'loneliness and abandonment' (Laub 1992:389), the memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006), paints a nostalgic picture of family members who were caring, loving and were victims of the 1994 Rwandan genocide justifying that memory accommodates those facts that suit it. A memoir in narrative form is "rocked by the selective process of memory, mediations of ideology and culture and demands of the 'present circumstances'" (Javangwe 2011:8).

"We mentioned everyone by name, but spoke about them as if they were still alive – it was the only way we could cope. We carried on like this for the next two years" (Ilibagiza 2006:206).

This decision by Ilibagiza and her remaining brother Aimable to talk of the departed in the present tense is a reflection of the selective process of memory and also portrays the vulnerability of those 'left to tell.' The 'self' is rooted in the 'presence of the departed', in that

sense the departed serve the crucial purpose of providing a premise for the 'self' to venture into the future.

One of Laub's (1992) popular themes in his writings is loneliness when the victim feels that there is no longer anyone on whom to count. In addition Laub states 'for survivors to use 'I' feelingly is to acknowledge the profoundness of their sense of abandonment and lonesomeness as it can lead to despair and surrender' (Laub 1992:389). What runs through this memoir is the strong 'presence' of the departed family members which serve to affirm Ilibagiza's sense of 'being' and being significant in life thereby dispensing with 'despair and surrender' as she fixates herself in the memory of the 'presence of the departed.'

The psychologization of memory has thus given every individual the sense that his or her salvation ultimately depends on the repayment of an impossible debt (Nora 1989:16). If the 'impossible debt' is understood to be what the 'self' owes to the departed, then to narrate their story and their legacy of love, forgiveness and spirituality through the memoir, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006), is part repayment of this 'impossible debt.' The narrative process is therapeutic as it benefits the 'self's' sense of being and significance lessening the sense of 'abandonment and lonesomeness' for the survivor 'left to tell' (Ilibagiza 2006:161).

Ilibagiza's parents were ardent Catholics and the last gift her father gave her before he was killed was his black and red rosary (Ilibagiza 2006:52). Throughout the ninety one days that she hid in Pastor Murinzi's closet sized bathroom with seven other Tutsi women Ilibagiza said, she clutched her father's rosary as though it was her lifeline to God (Ilibagiza 2006:78). The rosary was symbolic as it embodied family spiritual values and a physical attachment to the departed. The trauma of the genocide did not challenge the 'self's' ingrained preconceptions (Rasmussen 2002) and in fact contributed to Ilibagiza's spiritual growth. Therefore her promise to her father to always keep the rosary can also be perceived as her commitment to carry on her parent's legacy to treat their neighbours with kindness and respect (Ilibagiza 2006:7/52).

Selective memory is evident in Ilibagiza's description of her older brother Damascene, whom she described as 'the light of her life' (Ilibagiza 2006:11). According to Ilibagiza, he was the ideal big brother - loving, protective, an all rounder in sporting activities and intelligent as later, he became the youngest person in their entire region to earn a Master's Degree (Ilibagiza 2006:11). The tribute Ilibagiza pays to Damascene is reminiscent of a lament for a life cut short in its prime and is an indirect criticism of the devastations of the genocide. Damascene wrote a heartbreaking letter the night before he was killed and gave it to their aunt Esperance who had been hiding in the forest for weeks during the genocide. 'The letter' like 'the rosary' is a tangible attachment that served to keep the memory of the 'presence' of the departed alive. Damascene, like Ilibagiza portrayed the family values of spirituality and forgiveness as his last words before he was killed were, 'I pray that you see the evil that you are doing and ask for God's forgiveness before it's too late'(ilibagiza 2006:154).

The values of the departed serve to 'unite' Ilibagiza with the departed as their legacy of forgiveness lives on through her. Some secular philosophers believe that the Christian concept of forgiveness is moralistic and simplistic. According to Derrida, forgiveness must announce itself as impossibility itself and can only occur in the realm beyond that of human affairs (Verdeja 2004:27). Derrida's (2001) view that Christian forgiveness is simplistic is interrogated through the representations of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006). Ilibagiza's father endured hunger and suffering in the two weeks he was jailed by the Hutu burgomaster Kabayi during the 1990 war. Damascene forgave his killers during the 1994 genocide before dying a gruesome death. Derrida's (2001) pronouncement that the Christian concept of forgiveness is moralistic and simplistic is open to discussion because the decisions to forgive made by Ilibagiza's father and Damascene, though guided by Christian morals were far from simplistic as lives were lost. The representations of forgiveness in the departed play a pivotal role in forming Ilibagiza's identity as she too made the choice, though difficult, of forgiving Felicien, one of her family's killers in the aftermath of 1994 Rwandan genocide.

The 'presence of the departed' is further reinforced in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) as the memoir's centre pages has family photographs which survived the genocide. These are valuable visual links for the 'self' with the departed as they are a preservation of the memory and 'her only mementos of their life together' (Ilibagiza 2006:186). Nora (1993) argues remembrance has a coercive force for it creates identity and a sense of belonging (Nora 1993:11). Socialisation takes place in the

family unit where family values create an individual's identity giving a sense of belonging. In the face of the devastation of the genocide the mementos that Ilibagiza held on to – the rosary, the letter from Damascene and the family photographs – heightened the significance of 'the presence of the departed' (Laub 1992).

The next section explores the impact of trauma and the victim's ability to bear witness to wounds that cannot close and how Ilibagiza used the, 'unforgivable' wounds of the genocide as a powerful and vital source of truth to provide an opening onto new ways of looking at the world.

4.5 Trauma and forgiveness

According to Marder the word "trauma" comes from the ancient Greek meaning 'wound' and has an inherently political, historical, and ethical dimension (Marder 2006:1). Marder quotes Caruth who points out that because the traumatic event was not assimilated as it occurred it only comes into being 'belatedly' (Marder 2006:2). The 1994 Rwandan genocide was traumatic as between eight hundred thousand and one million people perished in three months. The memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (Ilibagiza 2006)* narrates the massacre of Ilibagiza's family members and her trauma when she hid for ninety one days in Pastor Murinzi's closet sized bathroom with seven other Tutsi women while machete wielding killers hunted for them.

The emergence of the narrative and the 'belated' nature of trauma are therefore the process and the place wherein the cognizance, the 'knowing' of the event is given birth to (Laub 1992). The language of the belated nature of trauma conveys the emotions of fear, confusion, despair and hopelessness symbolising the 'wound' which the 'self' tries to comprehend through usage of direct verbs and adjectives – staccato style. During the ethnic roll call at school, Ilibagiza described the teacher's smile at her dilemma concerning her ignorance of her ethnicity as 'hard and mean' (Ilibagiza 2006:14). And later hiding in the closet, shocked and traumatised, she visualised the devil whispering in her ear saying, 'they are close, almost here...they are going to find you, rape you, cut you, kill you!' (Ilibagiza 2006:78).

Trauma comes into 'being' through the memoir which is akin to a 'double dying' (Rosenfeld 1980) as there are difficulties of representing a heavy theme such as genocide in creative works of art. There is a distinct haunting lamentation – 'the very incomprehensibility of trauma' (Caruth 1995:153) – portrayed when Ilibagiza recalled the last thing her father ever said to her, "Remember, Immaculee, I will come and get you myself!" (Ilibagiza 2006:54). There is a sense of premonition and foreboding in Ilibagiza's description of her farewell with Damascene as she metaphorically described her holding of his hand as that of a disappearing soul (Ilibagiza 2006). To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event (Marder 2006). In reference to the heartbreaking letter that Damascene wrote to Ilibagiza before he was killed, she said that she knew she would never be able to read the letter without crying (Ilibagiza 2006:152). The above references capture the depth and timelessness of the trauma.

Marder terms trauma as an absence that failed to become located in time or place, but as it may appear, this 'absence' does not necessarily produce purely negative consequences (Marder 2006:2). Ilibagiza lost most of her family members in the 1994 Rwandan genocide but the paradox is that it is in this state of extreme trauma that she '*discovered God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*' through deep prayer and meditation as she says, 'in the midst of the genocide, I found my salvation. I knew that my bond with God would transcend the bathroom, the war, and the holocaust... it was a bond I now knew would transcend life itself' (Ilibagiza 2006:107). It is ironical that amidst the depravity of the genocide Ilibagiza gained a new insight into her spirituality and forgiveness.

The journey to forgiveness is fraught with conflicting emotions of anger, bitterness, mourning, acceptance and empathy as the 'self' battles to comprehend the magnitude of the trauma. After the genocide Ilibagiza made two trips back to Kibuye. On her first trip Ilibagiza dissolved into morbid sadness, wept, became inconsolable and fainted on seeing Damascene's skull (Ilibagiza 2006). Though painful, this was an important step she had to take towards the path to forgiveness as she had to mourn the dead and accept the loss of her family members. She had to face and accept the reality of the devastation of the ruins of their family home and the burnt out wreckage of her father's car both which are pictured in the memoir.

As Caruth (1995) states, trauma opens up a breach in experience and understanding because only after confronting the 'wounds' of trauma is Ilibagiza comforted with a vision in the form of a healing dream of her family members happy in heaven and she woke up singing, "thank you God for your love that is beyond our understanding" (Ilibagiza 2006:201-

2). In contrast, the second trip to Kibuye was crucial in shaping her representations of forgiveness because she went to jail and confronted one of her family's killers, Felicien. She empathised with him and wept at the sight of his suffering then said quietly to the sobbing Felicien, "I forgive you" (Ilibagiza 2006:204).

The representation of forgiveness on an individual level in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006), is commendable and is of great importance because it provides what (Zembylas 2011) terms 'small openings' which create conditions for communication, empathy and insight into the 'enemy other' with the possibility of fostering and nurturing the conceptualisation of forgiveness being envisioned within the national project (Mamdani 2001:282). The concept of 'small openings' is further extended in Ilibagiza's positive portrayal of Semahe, one of Damascene's former schoolmate and Interahamwe who killed him. It is to Ilibagiza's credit that she acknowledges Semahe's remorse and his admission of guilt when she quotes him to having said that, "it was a sin to kill such a boy (Damascene)" (Ilibagiza 2006:155). Ilibagiza said that Semahe's words would burn in her heart forever implying that there was an assumption and a possibility for forgiveness. Forgiveness on an individual level as portrayed in the memoir creates 'small openings' which are vital components for reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda.

The next section argues that forgiveness is only the first step towards restoring the humanity of the victim/perpetrator and emphasises the need for restorative justice after 'crimes of state' (Harrell 2003) have been committed.

4.6 Representations of [in]justice within the context of forgiveness in *Left to tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* by Immaculee Ilibagiza (2006)

Forgiveness can be perceived as a beneficial component in the justice delivery system as it assists in restoring the humanity of the victim/perpetrator where 'crimes of state' have been committed as was the case in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. According to Enright forgiveness of the offender is a decision to change a relationship and, henceforth, not be controlled by resentment or anger toward the offender (Enright, 2001:25). One of the major strengths of the memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) is its focus on the therapeutic benefits of forgiveness. In the memoir Ilibagiza stresses forgiveness but does not address justice. In contrast her Aunt Jeanne who represents victims of the previous cyclical massacres and the 1994 Rwandan genocide requires justice so that 'memory does not fester.' In anticipation of another cycle of violence,

Ilibagiza's Aunt Jeanne assured her that she was getting a gun and learning how to shoot so that *next time* she would be ready to defend herself (Ilibagiza 2006:202). This state of existence in post genocide Rwanda is aptly summarised by Tadjó (2002) who states "all crimes that go unpunished will engender other crimes." (Tadjó 2002:27).

The absence of justice heightens fear and mistrust among the populace. Forgiveness is an individual choice and benefits both the victim and the perpetrator (Enright 2001). When Ilibagiza forgave Felicien she says her 'heart eased immediately' and she saw the 'tension release in Felicien's shoulders' (Ilibagiza 2006:204) - signifying the immediate therapeutic impact of forgiveness. Unfortunately the above interaction was within the context of retributive justice which is punitive in nature. Restorative justice would have complemented Ilibagiza's act of forgiveness and would have had the possibilities of a more positive impact due to the historicity of the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator in Rwanda.

Retributive justice as portrayed in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) placed the one ethnic group, either Hutu or Tutsi, in a socially subservient and vulnerable position and as a result perpetuated fear and insecurity in the population. During the 1990 war Ilibagiza's father was jailed for two weeks by the Hutu burgomaster Kabayi. The guards were ordered not to feed him and not give him water for several days together with half a dozen of his Tutsi friends (Ilibagiza 2006). The above illustration portrays retributive justice by the Hutu government during the 1990 war and after the genocide retributive justice was replicated by the new Tutsi government. Ilibagiza described the humiliation and deplorable state of Felicien in prison in 1994 at the hands of Semana the new Tutsi burgomaster. The victim/perpetrator stereotyping is very pronounced when Semana commands Felicien saying, 'Stand up, killer!' to a once powerful Hutu man who was now emaciated and broken (Ilibagiza 2006:203-4). It is in these circumstances of retributive justice that the effectiveness of forgiveness is debatable. Forgiveness complements restorative justice as it has the possibilities of reconciling survivors in post genocide Rwanda.

4.7 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explore the ambiguous representations of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) during and in post genocide Rwanda. The chapter analysed the power of religion, positivity and empathy as major steps towards forgiveness on an individual level. Chapter four interrogated various forms of forgiveness. Ilibagiza forgave her family's killers from the 1994 Rwandan genocide,

in order for her to move forward with her life. Damascene, her brother, forgave his killers before he died. His forgiveness was perceived from a moral Christian point of view of forgiving those who trespass against you. Ilibagiza's father forgave his jailer during the 1990 war for the sake of peaceful coexistence and this chapter concluded that this was a form denial/ 'social amnesia' to the reality of the ethnic animosity existing in Rwanda at the time.

This chapter relied on trauma theories to analyse the identity of 'self' that is embedded in the 'presence of the departed' after traumatic events. The chapter showed that selective memory positively shaped Ilibagiza's life after the genocide enabling her to open the 'unforgiveable' wounds of the genocide and narrative the memoir which is a triumph of the human spirit in the face of extermination. Chapter four observed that the memoir served as a site where an 'authentic perspective' of the historicity of the genocide was comprehended from the subjective 'self's' point of view.

Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (Ilibagiza 2006) was complicated by the absence of restorative justice. This was a major shortcoming, as the memoir's assumption that forgiveness was the solution to the existing ethnic animosity that caused the 1994 Rwandan genocide to erupt. The memoir was critiqued for its partial distortion of history as it perpetuated the stereotypical projection of the Tutsi as victims and the Hutu as perpetrators without acknowledging the Tutsi's previously privileged position in Rwanda before the 1959 revolution. Mamdani's (2001) historical approach to the complex interchanging role of victim/perpetrator in Rwanda was used to critique the ambiguity of forgiveness within the context of 'the enemy other.'

Left to Tell: Discovering God amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (Ilibagiza 2006) was credited for giving an insight into the 'enemy other' to enhance the understanding of the suffering of the 'other.' The chapter suggested that the individualistic portrayal of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (Ilibagiza 2006)* – was important as it created what Zemblyas (2011) termed 'small openings' for communication between the 'enemy other.' However, chapter four argued that these 'small openings' were further complicated by the rigid nature of retributive justice after 'crimes of state' as portrayed in the memoir. It was proposed that restorative justice benefits from forgiveness as it paves the way for reconciliation. The portrayal of retributive justice in the memoir was problematic as it

left the effectiveness of forgiveness debatable given the deepening cleavages in post genocide Rwanda.

Chapter four concluded that forgiveness on an individual level was commendable but political will on a national scale is required in the deconstruction of the 'enemy other' meaning dismantling 'social amnesia' and acknowledging common pain in order for reconciliation to take place after 'crimes of state' have been committed.

In the following chapter I will closely analyse the theme of forgiveness as a starting point and a necessity for the individual's journey of transformation from *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009). Chapter five will argue that justice is the basis of true forgiveness hence the need for it to be institutionalised and made part of the reconciliation process.

Chapter 5

Interrogating ‘victor’s justice’ and forgiveness in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* by Joseph Sebarenzi (2009)

“Only the victor has the choice of reaching out to the vanquished on terms that have the potential of transcending an earlier opposition between the two by defining both as survivors of the civil war.” (Mamdani 2001:272)

5.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter four I analysed the representations of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006). The chapter argued that the ambiguity of the representations of forgiveness were apparent in several ways. Firstly, forgiveness on an individual level was depicted as important in post genocide Rwanda as it provided ‘small openings’ for communication between the ‘enemy other’ (Zemblyas 2011). The memoir was critiqued for over emphasising the power of individual forgiveness without taking into consideration the historicity of the ‘enemy other.’ Secondly, political will on a national scale and the acknowledgement of common pain is required to dismantle social amnesia in order for reconciliation to take place.

However, the chapter argued that *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) was guilty of perpetuating the stereotypical projection of the Tutsi as victims and the Hutu as perpetrators. This distortion of history sustained a narrative which projected only the suffering of the Tutsi during the 1994 Rwandan genocide and did not acknowledge the suffering of the Hutus. The portrayal of retributive justice in *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* (Ilibagiza 2006) was problematic given the deepening cleavages in post genocide Rwanda as it further compromised the effectiveness of forgiveness in the reconciliation process.

Chapter five sets out to discuss forgiveness and reconciliation as put forward in the autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009) by Joseph Sebarenzi. The chapter will interrogate the narrative of the historicity of the genocide from the point of view of the 'victim' – Tutsi –, as questions of subjectivity inevitably lead to the exclusion of 'other's' – Hutu – perspective of the origins of the genocide and reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda. Chapter five will make use of Mamdani (2001) as a historical authority on the 1994 Rwandan genocide to critique to what extent the 'self' relied on preferred memory in the autobiography.

'Victor's justice' in the context of Rwanda, has meant either the Hutu-izing of power after the 1959 revolution or the Tutsification of power after the 1994 genocide. The core argument of chapter five is that Sebarenzi's portrayal of 'victor's justice' and victim/perpetrator in his autobiography created ambiguities in the representations of forgiveness. Zemblyas discusses the 'enemy other' which deals with the realisation that the 'others' from the other side have also suffered in a more complex way (Zemblyas 2011:262). Chapter five will further discuss the paradox of the 'enemy other' that Sebarenzi encountered as a politician in the new government in post genocide Rwanda.

5.1 Defining 'victor's justice'

The history of 'victor's justice' in Rwanda dates back to the nineteenth century with the Tutsi monarchy. The colonisation of Rwanda and the Tutsification of the chieftainship as an institution in the 1920's led to the Tutsi becoming a privileged group till the 1959 revolution when the Hutu came into power. 'Victor's justice' was prominent in the 1959 Hutu revolution as it ushered the Hutu-izing of state institutions. Rwanda's historicity has been complicated by the definition of the 'enemy other' as it often translated to 'victor's justice' depending on which group was in power – Hutu or Tutsi.

The 1994 Rwandan genocide falls under what Harrell (2003) terms 'crimes of state' due to the magnitude of the atrocities and devastations but also due to the fact that the state actively participated in victimising a minority. According to Mamdani 'victor's justice' in post genocide Rwanda was in effect the Tutsification of the structures of power, civic organisations to media and non-governmental organisations and it also meant that the victors must remain on constant guard lest the spoils of victory be snatched yet again

(Mamdani 2001:271). Guardianship of 'victor's justice' in post genocide Rwanda also meant hijacking the justice delivery system to benefit the victorious government (Peskin2005).

'Victor's justice' was evident in the Rwandan justice delivery system – the Rwandan courts, the *gacaca* and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) – which tried mainly Hutu perpetrators as the RPF had immunity from prosecution in post genocide Rwanda. 'Victor's justice' meant the Tutsi were viewed internationally as victims while the Hutu were prosecuted on the world stage and the war crimes of the RPF went unexamined and unpunished (Peskin 2005).

The new Tutsi government, like the previous Hutu government, was also guilty of human rights abuse but used the genocide card and 'victor's justice' to evade scrutiny. There was significant evidence that RPF soldiers carried out systematic murders of more than 30,000 Hutu civilians both during and after the 1994 Rwandan genocide (Peskin 2005). 'Victor's justice' continued unabated in post genocide Rwanda and the RPF-led regime made very little effort to account for these killings of the Hutu which President Kagame termed "*revenge killings' by a small number of rogue soldiers*" but ironically there were no prosecutions of 1994 RPF crimes from late 1998 until mid-2008 (Waldorf 2011:1226-7).

Buckley-Zistel (2008) complicates 'victor's justice' and representations of forgiveness when she explains how the Hutu do not understand why they are not allowed to mourn their dead publicly and why they are not included in the national commemoration ceremonies. This contradiction is important to note because the standard writing on the Rwandan genocide assumes that forgiveness should be asked only by the Hutu. This disparity leads Mamdani to question the justification of 'victor's justice' requiring victor's power and whether 'victor's justice' was not simply revenge masquerading as justice? (Mamdani 2001:272). These same sentiments of 'victor's justice' masquerading as justice are critiqued by Sebarenzi in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (2009)* where he charts a way forward for forgiveness and reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda.

5.2 Summary of the plot of the autobiography - *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of transformation (2009)*

The autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) written by Joseph Sebarenzi tells the story of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Between eight hundred thousand and one million people were massacred over the course of ninety one days including Sebarenzi's parents, several siblings and countless other family members. Sebarenzi grew up in Kibuye province near Lake Kivu, Rwanda. He recalls a happy childhood and religion was a central part of his life as they were Seventh Day Adventists. His father, a former teacher had three wives, sixteen children, owned thirty cows and land.

The autobiography gives an in depth background to the cyclical ethnic massacres that had become a part of Rwanda's history prior to the 1994 genocide. Sebarenzi recalls the trauma of the violence and how he narrowly escaped twice with his life during the episodes of killings. As he grew older Sebarenzi became aware of the ethnic animosity and '*muyaga*' – recurring massacres. His father decided to send him to school in the Congo telling him, "if we are killed you will survive" (Sebarenzi 2009:28). Sebarenzi's father felt that there was no future for Sebarenzi as a Tutsi in Rwanda.

Sebarenzi excelled in school, married and returned to Rwanda. During the 1990 war he was arrested for treason by the then Hutu government. Upon his release he fled to Burundi with his family and later left them to go into exile in the United States of America. When the genocide started in April 1994, Sebarenzi was waiting to go to Canada. In 1995 Sebarenzi returned home to start a new life with his family and worked for USAID before he became a Member of Parliament and then Speaker of Parliament in Rwanda. As Speaker of Parliament Sebarenzi had differences of opinion on government policy with the Prime Minister, Paul Kagame and as a result had to flee to Uganda and then into exile in the United States of America.

The autobiography ends with Sebarenzi's detailed guidelines for moving towards forgiveness and reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda. Sebarenzi's journey of transformation addresses how reconciliation has the possibilities of bringing enemies together to confront the painful and ugly past and collectively devise a bright future. The narrative complicates reconciliation by stating that due to retributive justice very little has taken place in the form of apology as most killers do not acknowledge their deeds and denial persists which amounts

to another victimisation. Sebarenzi emphasises the importance of restorative justice in the rebuilding of the social fabric of society which was torn by mass violence.

5.3 Story of the 'Other' in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of transformation (2009)*

By projecting the 'story' of the 'enemy other' (the Tutsi), *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (Sebarenzi 2009)* serves as a platform for the comprehension of empathy, forgiveness and the possibilities of reconciliation in a divided society. An understanding of the historicity of the genocide is important in order to interrogate the ambiguity of forgiveness. Mamdani (2001) states that ethnicity was not the reason for the genocide but it was more the socio-economic, political, historical construction of the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa as separate identities, yet they had lived side by side in harmony before colonisation.

Writing on pre-colonial Rwanda Sebarenzi tentatively acknowledged the cleavages that existed, '...the Tutsi enjoyed more power, social status and influence than Hutu' (Sebarenzi 2009:11). However historical authorities portray the deepening cleavages due to the fact that the Hutu were subjugated to the Tutsi, and notables around the Tutsi King wrote that the Tutsi had conquered the Hutu and the latter would always be their slaves (Uvin 1997). However Sebarenzi attempts to cover up the cleavages by quoting an ancient *Kinyarwanda* saying, "*Turi bene mugabo umwe – we are sons and daughters of the same father,*" (Sebarenzi 2006:11) as they spoke one language *Kinyarwanda* and worshiped one God.

Sebarenzi over emphasised the harmony that existed in Rwanda before the 1959 revolution which raises questions of objectivity in autobiography writing due to the subjective nature of 'self' writing (Rasmussen 2002). Memory is life borne by living societies and history is a representation of the past (Nora 1989). It can rightly be concluded that Sebarenzi's portrayal of the historicity of the genocide would be affected by preferred memory which accommodates those facts that suit it and is blind to all but the group it binds (Nora 1989). This in effect means the autobiography is bound to be subjective to a certain extent as the narrative of the historicity of Rwanda in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (Sebarenzi 2009)* is from the perspective of one ethnic group (the Tutsi).

The rift between the two ethnic groups was deepened by colonialism. The political structures of the Tutsi monarchy were institutionalised and Tutsi culture came to be associated with upper class power and Hutu culture with lower class labour (Newbury 1998). Sebarenzi glosses over the racialization of the ethnicities by the Belgians in the 1930's and is quick to

point out the harmonious existence when he states, ‘...despite this imposed ethnic division, Hutu and Tutsi continued to live an integrated existence...’ (Sebarenzi 2009:13). The ‘integrated existence’ of the two ethnicities is contradicted by Uvin (1997) who states that under *Bazungu* (Belgian colonialists) control, the exclusive beneficiaries of the new sources of power were people of Tutsi descent. Uvin further elaborates on how the Tutsi monarchy became a conduit for the rule of the colonizer, imposing taxes and implementing the infamous forced labour (Hutu labour) (Uvin 1997:95)

The ‘historicity’ of the genocide in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) is subjective as Sebarenzi skims over the fact that the Tutsi were a historically privileged group – in wealth and education. Sebarenzi’s justification of his father’s wealth is oblivious to the privileges the Tutsi historically enjoyed as he describes him as a ‘self made man’ (a former teacher who had three wives, sixteen children, owned land and thirty cows) who had inherited a ‘small’ piece of land and purchased more through hard work in a country where land was like gold (Sebarenzi 2009:9). Sebarenzi’s attempt *not* to acknowledge the historical privileges and wealth of the Tutsi is contradictory as he ambiguously states, “we were considered a wealthy family in our village of Butimbo in the Kibuye province” (Sebarenzi 2009:9). The narrative lacks an acknowledgement of the subjugation of the Hutu thereby compromising its authenticity.

Subjectivity and preferred memory influenced Sebarenzi’s criticism of the Hutu leaders’ methods in the 1959 revolution as ‘unjust’ and in the process ignored the history of this ‘unjustness’ (Sebarenzi 2009:13). Sebarenzi’s labelling of the Hutu leaders’ methods as ‘unjust’ is expounded on by historical evidence as the 1966 and 1985 law provided instruments for Hutu-izing control over a Tutsi dominated educational system (Mamdani 2001:136-9). These historical facts are sidelined in the narrative due to the subjective nature of autobiography leading to the exclusion of the ‘other’s’ perspective of the origins of the ethnic animosity.

The autobiography gives a subjective opinion of the educational system before the Rwandan genocide– ‘history lessons were biased’ ‘lessons fuelled the ‘us’ against ‘them’ mentality’ ‘Tutsi were dehumanised and the Hutu deified, making all Tutsi into aggressors and Hutu into victims’ ‘the government made certain that virtually all 10% of the places available for the entire Rwandan population in high schools went to Hutu’ (Sebarenzi 2009:15). The education system criticized by Sebaranzi in effect portrayed the widening rift between the

two ethnicities as it had negative consequences on the conceptualisation of the 'enemy other'.

Revisiting the historicity of the 1994 Rwandan genocide serves as a backdrop to the discussion of 'victor's justice' and forgiveness in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009). In conclusion the historicity of the Rwandan genocide in the autobiography portrays the Tutsi as victims and the Hutu as perpetrators thereby perpetuating the ethnic stereotypes.

The next section will examine the paradox of the interchanging role of the 'enemy other' and victim with particular reference to Sebarenzi. Theories of trauma and forgiveness will be used to analyse Sebarenzi's *journey of transformation* that led him to forgive the massacre of his family members during the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

5.4 Rethinking the paradox of the 'enemy other' in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009)

Zemblyas (2011) discussing *Mourning and Forgiveness as Sites of Reconciliation Pedagogies* gave his personal account as a Greek Cypriot of growing up in a society that had constantly lived with the "open wound" of the missing persons as the epitome of "our" national trauma and suffering caused by the 'enemy other' (Zemblyas 2011:258). Zemblyas' description of his 'society' is very much akin to Sebarenzi's experiences as the autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) narrates Rwanda's 'open wound' and the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator due to the cyclical violence and the 1994 genocide.

The cleavages between the Hutu and Tutsi – the 'enemy other' – and the 'open wound' have a long historicity. In 1945 Abbe` Alexis Kagame, then Rwanda's foremost historian, warned against the spreading of egalitarian ideas among the new Hutu elite whom he referred to as 'child-like grown-ups without proper intellectual formation...' (Mamdani 2001:113-4). This in effect translated to guarding the monopoly of the privileges the Tutsi enjoyed during the colonial period and keeping the Hutu in a position of subjugation. On the other hand Rwanda's Hutu President Kayibanda (1962- 1973) aptly stated the problem of – the 'enemy

other' – as basically that of the monopoly of one race, the Tutsi...which condemned the desperate Hutu to be forever subaltern workers (Uvin 1997:103). The above illustrations of the 'enemy other' show the magnitude of the polarisation between the two ethnic groups. The paradox of the 'enemy other' in Rwanda seems to inevitably translate to 'victor's justice' depending on which group is in power.

'Victor's justice' was displayed by the Hutu government in the 1990 war against the 'enemy other' – the RPF rebels. Sebarenzi as a Tutsi was a victim and the 'enemy other'. He was jailed for treason as a suspected supporter of the RPF. The 1990 war served to intensify feelings of animosity between the Hutu and Tutsi. In his autobiography Sebarenzi blamed Habyarimana, the Hutu president for prohibiting the return of the Tutsi exiles in the 1960's and 1973 who rightly felt entitled to return to their homeland (Seberanzi 2009). In a way the Hutu – the 'enemy other' to the Tutsi – became 'the epitome of their suffering' (Zemblyas 2011:258). The polarisation and the growing antagonism between the two 'enemy other's' culminated in the 1994 genocide.

Throughout the genocide Sebarenzi was in exile in the United States of America but he was equally traumatised as he watched the *nightmare* everyday on television and saw the same images... *piles of bodies, burnt out cars and rivers chocked with corpses* (Sebarenzi 2009:69). Marder (2006) discusses the pathology of trauma as consisting solely in the belated assimilation of an experience meaning the autobiography narratives the atrocities of the 'enemy other' (the Hutu) and the impact of the trauma on the victims (the Tutsi) so vividly making the lapse of time insignificant though *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) published 15 years after the genocide.

In addition, Marder describes trauma as 'absence' (Marder 2006:2) — the absence of something that failed to become located in time or place. There are difficulties in narrating trauma due to conflicting emotions of anger, grief and hopelessness. Sebarenzi returned to Rwanda a year after the genocide and the 'belatedness' of trauma was expressed when he said he walked out of a church feeling a mixture of deep grief for the dead, – *anger at the killers* (the 'enemy other') *and anger that the world stood by and watched it happen* (Sebarenzi 2009:68).

Describing the trauma of the returnees after the 1994 Rwandan genocide Buckley-Zistel states that 'many had lost all family members and relatives and felt lonely and abandoned' (Buckley-Zistel 2006:138). This is reiterated by Sebarenzi when he says that after the genocide he felt abandoned by God and whatever faith he had before was gone (Sebarenzi

2009:88). The ambiguity of the representations of forgiveness in the case with Sebarenzi was that at his lowest point in dealing with the trauma of the loss of his family members, he was moved to forgive the 'enemy other'.

Enright discusses the complex nature of forgiveness of the offender as, 'the decision to change the relationship and, henceforth, not be controlled by resentment or anger towards the offender' (Enright 2001:25). Sebaranzi's decision to forgive was channelled through religion and spirituality. In March 1995 whilst working for USAID, Sebarenzi met the former Hutu mayor of his family's village in Kigali prison. The mayor had given the order to have the Tutsi who lived there slaughtered including Sebarenzi's family.

Instead of anger and hatred Sebarenzi felt compassion for the former mayor and he gave him money for food. Sebarenzi made the choice of 'reaching out to the vanquished on terms that have the potential of transcending an earlier opposition between the two by defining both as survivors of the civil war' (Mamdani 2001:272). Acts of compassion have the possibility of bridging the gap between the 'enemy other' whilst the presence of fear and suspicion reverse representations of forgiveness.

Some secular philosophers believe that the Christian concept of forgiveness is moralist and simplistic (Verdeja 2004). Sebarenzi's motivations to forgive, though guided by Christianity went beyond the Christian moralist concept of forgiveness. Forgiveness transformed his life and freed him from his traumatic past. He benefited emotionally and physically from forgiving the 'enemy other'. Before he forgave he had felt like a caged animal pacing back and forth. After forgiving Sebarenzi felt an inner transformation and his physical ailments disappeared as he set himself free from the poison of resentment and anger (Sebarenzi 2009:235-9). The act of forgiveness on an individual level was therapeutic for Sebaranzi's physical and emotional wellbeing. The healing power of forgiveness gives hope to the possibilities of reconciliation on a national level.

Far from being simplistic Sebarenzi's choice to forgive was a turning point for him as it was an acknowledgement of 'common suffering' (Zemblays 2011). Later Sebarenzi stated I began to look outside my own suffering and see the suffering of others – see Hutu as my neighbours and friends, fellow human beings in need (Sebarenzi 2009:85). Sebarenzi through his compassion for the former mayor made the choice of 'reaching out to the vanquished and this had the potential of transcending an earlier opposition between the two...' (Mamdani 2001:272).

The new Tutsi dominated government in post genocide Rwanda again translated to 'victor's justice', just as had happened in the 1990 war with the Hutu government. The combination of 'victor's justice' and the 'enemy other' in both instances bred fear and insecurity. In the 1990 war Sebarenzi was a victim and jailed as the 'enemy other'. A year after the genocide with the new Tutsi government in place Sebarenzi quoted a Tutsi friend who had been asked by a Hutu whether as a Tutsi he had lived in fear for the last thirty years and his Tutsi friend bluntly answered, "Yes!" (Sebarenzi 2009:82). Sebarenzi later reflected on the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator and how he saw the same fear that had followed him most of his life in the Hutu faces, in post genocide Rwanda.

Tadjo agrees with Sebarenzi on the state of fear and the 'enemy other' in her writing on post genocide Rwanda *the Hutu are afraid of the Tutsi because they are in power, the Tutsi are afraid of the Hutu because they can seize that power* (Tadjo 2002). She further added that as long as attempts at reconciliation were not made, fear would remain. An analysis of the complexities of the 'enemy other' is relevant when interrogating the negative repercussions of 'victor's justice' and fear on representations of forgiveness.

The dynamics of the 'enemy other' and 'victor's justice' in the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator were again at play in post genocide Rwanda as the Tutsi became the perpetrators and the Hutu victims. Sebarenzi at first did not believe the stories of the suffering of the Hutu at the hands of the RPF until the atrocities were reported by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the United Nations (Sebarenzi 2009:91).

The RPF was responsible for killing more than 30,000 Hutu civilians during 1994 and there was significant evidence that RPF soldiers carried out systematic murders both during and after the 1994 genocide (Peskin 2005). Waldorf (2011) gives the example of Fred Ibingira who commanded the troops that massacred an estimate of 2,000 to 4,000 Hutu displaced persons at the Kibeho camp in April 1995. In a 'show' of justice the notorious Ibingira was sentenced to merely eighteen months in prison for 'failing to give assistance to a person in danger.' And after being released, he reassumed his position and President Kagame promoted him to General in 2004 (Waldorf 2011:1228). The impunity displayed in 'victor's justice' meant that the RPF-led regime had made very little effort at accountability for these crimes which it termed 'revenge killings' by a small number of rogue soldiers (Waldorf 2011).

Sebarenzi summarised the paradox of the 'enemy other' and 'victor's justice' by stating 'the human rights of the Hutu were violated, just as the rights of the Tutsi had been violated for decades ...' (Sebarenzi 2009:91). The ethnic cleavages were further entrenched as the post

genocide government –‘victor’s justice’ – made the choice of taking revenge on the ‘enemy other’ thereby perpetuating the cycle of violence and further complicating representations of forgiveness.

The autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) portrays another dimension of the ‘enemy other’ where opposition to ‘victor’s justice’ meant persecution. Sebarenzi as Speaker of Parliament became the ‘enemy other’ to the new Tutsi government when he signed a bill that would create a strong Parliament which had powers to check and hold accountable the executive arm of government. This highly contested bill had remained unsigned despite being adopted by parliament and approved by the Supreme Court (Sebarenzi 2009:113). Writing about democracy in post genocide Rwanda Buckley-Zistel (2008) says the RPF kept a strong grip on state institutions while the Rwandan parliament remained weak restricting political and civil liberties (Buckley-Zistel 2008:33).

Sebarenzi’s vision in signing the bill was ‘for a parliament that would continue to strive – along with other institutions – to lead Rwanda to a future of rule of law, reconciliation among Rwandans, and lasting development...’ (Sebarenzi 2009:119). Signing the bill was a direct challenge of ‘victor’s justice’ as it meant among other things, that under the new law leaders of the (RPF) military would be answerable to parliament for human rights crimes and atrocities committed against the Hutu (Sebarenzi 2009:109).

Sebarenzi can be commended for signing the progressive bill though it almost cost him his life. Mamdani (2001) argues that one of the prime requirements of political reconciliation in the form of political justice is recognising that the key to institutional reform is the reform of institutions of rule. The bill Sebarenzi signed unsettled ‘victor’s justice’ – the Tutsification of state institutions – as it was aimed at bringing about democracy. Both Sebarenzi (2009) and Mamdani (2001) cautioned against ‘victor’s justice’ as it was not an effective guarantee against a repeat of genocidal violence in Rwandan society.

The immediate political repercussion of signing the bill for Sebarenzi was he became the ‘enemy other’ to the Tutsi dominated government as he was ostracised by Kagame, the Vice President, for almost a year. Later he was forced to resign from government and then had to flee for his life to Uganda and into exile in the United States of America. The case of Sebarenzi shows the extent to what Buckley-Zistel described as the RPF’s fear of losing power on one hand, as well as to maintain national security and stability on the other (Buckley-Zistel 2008:34). According to Mamdani (2001) vulnerable minorities tend to fear

rather than welcome democracy as it threatens 'victor's justice' and in the process sidelining forgiveness and reconciliation.

The next section will interrogate Sebarenzi's proposal for moving towards forgiveness and reconciliation in the context of 'victor's justice'.

5.5 'Survivor's justice' - a site for forgiveness and reconciliation in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009)

The genocide is commemorated every year in April at memorial sites amidst re-burials, media broadcasts and conferences. The commemorations which Buckley-Zistel terms '*chosen trauma*' give a sense of collective identity as the trauma constructs the group's identity in opposition to the identity of the opponent who caused the trauma (Buckley-Zistel 2008:16). In that sense the commemorations are politicised to keep the groups divided and perpetuate feelings of ethnic animosity towards the 'enemy other'. One of Buckley-Zistel's interviewees suggested 'survivor's justice' as opposed to the animosity created by the commemorations

'...when we are on the memorial sites, both Hutu and Tutsi, it creates conflicts. Survivors remember what happened and it makes them angry. So we think that they should give pardon to perpetrators and we live again in peace.' (Young, rural woman with husband in prison, Nyamata) (Buckley-Zistel 2006:138)

Sebarenzi in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) also criticised the commemorations of the genocide as counterproductive to fostering forgiveness and reconciliation as the Tutsi are recognised as 'survivors' and the Hutu as 'perpetrators'. He stated, the commemorations deepened rather than healed the nation's wounds for both Hutu and Tutsi as it traumatised the 'survivors' (the Tutsi) into the abyss of the past and the Hutu became even more fearful and ashamed even those who had played no role whatsoever in the genocide (Sebarenzi 2009:226).

By pointing out the negativity of the commemorations Sebarenzi can be credited for attempting to bridge the gap between the 'enemy other' as both Hutu and Tutsi feel used by the government for political ends. The commemorations are an indication of 'victor's justice' and Sebarenzi's criticisms are positive as they may lead to the possibilities of re-examining such events. Seberanzi proffers the option for Remembrance Week being a time for truth,

common bonding and acknowledging survivors of the civil war. In that context, commemorations can be a site for forgiveness by rejecting vengeance and thereby projecting 'survivor's justice' (Zemblyas 2011).

Gacaca was a judicial initiative which began in 2002 and ended in 2012 and was based on a traditional Rwandan dispute resolution mechanism. Gacaca was an attempt to guarantee accountability for the genocide, to promote rule of law, and to speed up the prosecution of those accused of genocide crimes (Longman 2004). Sebaranzi voiced concern at the punitive nature of Gacaca as it fostered shame and encouraged denial, rather than acknowledgement and apology with the goal of healing and reconciliation (Sebarenzi 2009:218).

One major shortcoming of the gacaca was that it tried only Hutu perpetrators as the RPF had immunity from prosecution though they had committed atrocities during and after the genocide against the Hutu (Buckley-Zistel 2008). Gacaca ended up being a platform for 'victor's justice' as testimonies were mainly given by survivors while a 'conspiracy of silence' hung over the Hutu relatives of the accused (Buckley – Zistel 2008:26). By placing the Hutu population in a socially subservient and vulnerable position, a dangerous precedent was put in place by the state to the detriment of reconciliation as it served to perpetuate fear and insecurity in the majority of the population.

The remembering of the horrific past in the testimonies at gacaca tribunals led to renewed deteriorations and divisions between groups where antagonistic identities had slowly improved (Buckley-Zistel 2008:27). The gacaca tribunals were traumatic for the populace. With the release of the prisoners a sense of fear and suspicion again pervaded the community

'Now they are being released from prison because they have confessed, and live again in our neighbourhood. We see each other every day but we never talk. I wish there was a person of integrity in our community who could mediate between us.'
(Survivor, Nyamata) (Buckley-Zistel 2006:147)

The similarities between the commemorations and the gacaca are that both 'returned the genocide to the communities' (Buckley-Zistel 2008). But as stated earlier there is positivity in highlighting the negativity as possible alternatives can be sought. Sebarenzi proposes restorative justice which condemns the offence but cares for the offender. According to Sebarenzi restorative justice impacts positively as it rebuilds the social fabric of society thereby becoming part of the healing process and reconciliation (Sebarenzi 2009:217).

The Rwandan government's national reconciliation discourse prohibits reference to ethnicity (Buckley 2008) and yet national commemorations are ethnic based. The prevalence of 'victor's justice' in Rwanda's history complicate political reforms as the term 'survivor' has been applied only to Tutsi and 'perpetrator' to Hutu (Mamdani 2001). The political reforms are further complicated by the colonial racialization of the Hutu and Tutsi as it created a tension ridden polity and society which was not '*deracialized and deethnicized*' and remained intact in post genocide Rwanda (Mamdani 2001:274).

Mamdani's (2001) common denominator of classifying all those who continue to be blessed with life in the aftermath of the civil war as '*survivors*' is a premise for progressive political reform where forgiveness and reconciliation have the potential to take root. The last section of *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) titled *Moving Toward Forgiveness and Reconciliation* emphasises the importance of democracy and the establishment of institutions that foster equal rights and opportunities, individual freedoms and liberties, separation of powers and effective checks and balances (Sebarenzi 2009:223-4).

In effect both Mamdani and Sebarenzi are in agreement that political reforms in post genocide Rwanda can be a site for forgiveness and reconciliation as they are crucial components in addressing Rwanda's key dilemma which is how to build a democracy that can incorporate a *guilty majority* alongside an aggrieved and *fearful minority* in a single political community (Mamdani 2001:266). Democratic institutions would beneficiate individual freedoms and liberties and align more with 'survivor's justice' thereby making it a possible site for forgiveness.

However Sebarenzi's demands for acknowledgments for the wrongs committed by perpetrators during the 1994 genocide are problematic. Writing as 'an aggrieved and *fearful minority*' Sebarenzi condemns the *genocidaires* by saying 'almost every genocide suspect had denied his horrible deeds, those who encouraged others to kill should be punished with the full force of the law and insincere apologies were rendered in order to receive reduced jail sentences' (Sebarenzi 2009:215). Sebarenzi's denunciation stereotyped the Hutu as it implied that they were the only ones who were guilty of 'horrible deeds' and yet he glossed over the RPF atrocities which he termed, 'the awful human rights violations the RPF committed before, during and after the genocide' (Sebarenzi 2009:216). The ethnic bias is

evident through Sebarenzi's insistence on punishment being meted out to the Hutu *genocidaires* and not to the RPF. This contradicts his proposal *Moving Toward Forgiveness and Reconciliation* as condemnation of one ethnic group for committing atrocities leads to polarisation as the 'other's' grievances are not taken into consideration.

To correct the biases of the historicity of Rwanda, Mamdani proposed the writing of the *truth* of the genocide, the *truth* of the mass killings in a historical context (Mamdani 2001:268). *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) is based on the historicity of the 1994 Rwandan genocide but due to the subjective nature of an autobiography Sebaranzi emphasises the suffering of the Tutsi victim and 'survivor' but Buckley-Zistel's (2011) interviews show that large parts of the Hutu population insist that they too should be called 'survivors' as they were victims of war, in refugee camps or revenge killings in post genocide Rwanda (Buckley-Zistel 2011:137).

An unbiased history is a major step towards bridging the gap between the 'enemy other' enabling the writing of the truth of the history of Rwanda. An objective history would put into perspective the similarities and differences between the two ethnic groups leading to the definition of both as 'survivors of the civil war' and the possibilities of 'survivor's justice' being a site for forgiveness and reconciliation. Buckley-Zistel (2011) puts forward the proposition that a change is required in the way Rwandans relate to each other in order to prevent future ethnicity-related violence.

5.6 A Critique of *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009)

Sebarenzi can be credited for giving the historicity of Rwanda before the 1994 genocide from his point of view. By projecting the 'story' of the 'enemy other' (the Tutsi), *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) serves as a platform for the comprehension of empathy, forgiveness and the possibilities of reconciliation in a divided society.

One of Sebarenzi's major achievements in *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) was the signing a bill to reform parliament in order to bring about democracy. Signing the bill was an act of courage on the part of Sebarenzi as he put his life on the line. The bill though it unsettled 'victor's justice' – Tutsification of state institutions – for the period it was effective, made the government accountable to parliament.

Sebarenzi can also be credited for attempting to bridge the gap between the 'enemy other's' by pointing out the negativity of the commemorations. Both Hutu and Tutsi felt used by the government for political ends. The commemorations are an indication of 'victor's justice' and Sebarenzi's criticism is positive as it raises the possibility of the re-examination of the commemorations and making them a site for acknowledging 'survivor's of the civil war'.

However, Sebarenzi's ethnic bias is evident in his insistence on punishment being meted out to the Hutu *genocidaires* and not to the RPF. This contradicts his proposal *Moving Toward Forgiveness and Reconciliation* as condemnation of one ethnic group for committing atrocities leads to polarisation as the 'other's' grievances are not taken into consideration.

Finally a shortcoming of *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (Sebarenzi 2009) is Sebarenzi's emphasis on the suffering of the Tutsi as 'victim' and 'survivor'. Buckley-Zistel's (2011) interviews show that large parts of the Hutu population insist that they too should be called 'survivors' as they were victims of war, in refugee camps or revenge killings in post genocide Rwanda (Buckley-Zistel 2011:137).

5.7 Conclusion

Chapter five set out to interrogate 'victor's justice' and forgiveness in the autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009) by Joseph Sebarenzi. The significance of *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009) was the signing of a bill by Sebarenzi as Speaker of Parliament. The bill was aimed at bringing about accountability in government and democracy in post genocide Rwanda. The autobiography also exposed another dimension of the 'enemy other'. Through signing the parliamentary bill Sebarenzi became the 'enemy other' as the bill challenged 'victor's justice' – the Tutsification of state institutions.

The core argument of Chapter five was that Sebarenzi's portrayal of 'victor's justice' in his autobiography created ambiguities in the representations of forgiveness in post genocide Rwanda. The chapter revealed the paradox of the 'enemy other' in Rwanda as it translated to 'victor's justice' depending on which group was in power – Hutu or Tutsi. Sebarenzi acknowledged the complexities of the historicity of 'victor's justice' within the context of Rwanda's cyclical massacres. Due to the subjective nature of autobiographical writing, it was evident that the 'others' perspective of the origins of the genocide and reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda was excluded. The autobiography provided the necessary counter

arguments that suggest the importance of documenting what Mandani (2001) termed the *truth* of the cyclical massacres and the genocide in a historical context whereby 'victor's justice' becomes 'survivor's justice' and encompasses all ethnicities.

It was argued that the prevalence of 'victor's justice' in Rwanda's historicity further complicated political reforms as the term 'survivor' has been applied only to Tutsi and 'perpetrator' to Hutu (Mamdani 2001). The chapter revealed that the national commemorations traumatised both ethnic groups and were divisive as only the Tutsi were acknowledged as 'survivors'. Chapter five credited Sebarenzi for the detailed recommendation for unity between the Hutu and Tutsi in his *Afterword: Moving Toward Forgiveness and Reconciliation* but the autobiography was critiqued for projecting only the Tutsi as victims.

The therapeutic power of forgiveness was portrayed in Sebarenzi's journey of transformation through religion and spirituality. Amidst hopelessness and despair after the 1994 Rwandan genocide, religion filled a void in Sebarenzi's life that led him to forgiveness. This is important as representations of forgiveness have the possibilities of reconciliation on national level. The next chapter is the conclusion of the whole study. It summarises the arguments advanced in the chapters that focused on the ambiguous representations of forgiveness in the novel *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide (2007)*, the memoir *Left To Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* and the autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (2009)*. The concluding chapter also suggest recommendations on how representations of forgiveness in narrative writing could be a premise for projecting ideas of 'survivor's justice' making it a possible site for national healing and reconciliation.

Chapter 6

Linking forgiveness and reconciliation in post genocide Rwanda

6.0 Introduction

The aim of this study was to interrogate the ambiguous representations of forgiveness in the following narratives *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*.

This study was motivated by the need to analyse the role of creative art in fictionalising the aftermath of the genocide in which the theme of forgiveness is apparent. This study then sought to explain the theme of forgiveness in the context of the Rwandan genocide and why representations of forgiveness as portrayed in the three narratives are debatable due to subjectivities of the authors. The study was also motivated by the need to respond convincingly to the questions upon which the study is based. The first question being:

- How is forgiveness represented in the creative works in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide?

A writer of fiction is at liberty to be creative through his art. In the case of *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) Brown envisioned a society free from ethnic animosity through the medium of love. The novel described the love story between Melchior, a moderate Hutu priest and Selena a beautiful Tutsi woman during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* (2007) put forward the proposition that love can be viewed as the beginning of a wider reconciliation between the two ethnic groups amidst the depravity and devastations of the genocide. In short the analysis revealed the positive portrayal of the moderate Hutus and of some churches who opposed the genocide thereby laying the foundation for the envisioned reconciliation.

However, it was argued that the love story paradoxically de-humanised the Hutu and re-humanised the Tutsi in its attempt to unite the two ethnic groups. This created ambiguities in the representations of forgiveness as it perpetuated the negative ethnic stereotype – where the Hutus are perceived as perpetrators and the Tutsis as victims. Brown was criticized for focusing on retributive justice that was meted out through the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) which was punitive in nature as it polarised the two ethnicities. In short the narrative trivialised the historicity of the genocide by erroneously projecting ethnicity as

the main cause of the genocide in its quest to bridge the ethnic animosity through the love story.

Chapter four examined the ambiguities of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (2006)* a memoir written by Immaculee Ilibagiza. The memoir narrates the genocide from the victim's (Tutsi) point of view and how Ilibagiza was 'left to tell' and saved by hiding in Pastor Murinzi's (a moderate Hutu) closet sized bathroom with seven other Tutsi women.

The chapter revealed that the individualistic portrayal of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (Ilibagiza 2006)* was important as it created what Zemblyas (2011) termed 'small openings' for communication between the 'enemy other.' The power of religion, positivity and empathy were observed as possible steps towards forgiveness on an individual level. Chapter four highlighted how selective memory positively shaped Ilibagiza's life after the genocide enabling her to forgive the killers of her family.

Chapter four argued that the rigid nature of retributive justice portrayed in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust (Ilibagiza 2006)* rendered representations of forgiveness on an individual level ineffective. In short the memoir was critiqued for perpetuating the stereotypical projection of the Tutsi as victims and the Hutu as perpetrators as the historicity of the genocide was comprehended from the subjective 'self's' point of view.

God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation (2009), an autobiography by Joseph Sebarenzi, was credited for demonstrating that reconciliation on a national level has the possibility of being attainable through political reforms. Chapter five showed that Sebarenzi as Speaker of Parliament signed a bill which democratised the Rwandan government in the period that it was effective.

The core argument of chapter five was that Sebarenzi's portrayal of 'victor's justice' (the Tutsi) in his autobiography excluded the 'enemy other' (the Hutu) thereby creating ambiguities in the representations of forgiveness in post genocide Rwanda. The narrative

went a step further and explained how Sebarenzi, though a Tutsi, ironically became the 'enemy other' to 'victor's justice' (the Tutsi government) as the bill he signed challenged the Tutsification of the state.

Despite the strong points of *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* (2009) it was argued that Sebarenzi's detailed recommendation for unity between the Hutu and Tutsi in his *Afterword: Moving Toward Forgiveness and Reconciliation* lacked the truth of the historicity of the genocide. It projected only the Tutsi as victims, further complicating the dynamics of the representations of forgiveness as the term 'survivor' has been applied only to Tutsi and 'perpetrator' to Hutu.

The second question that this study sought to provide answers to was

- In what ways does the theme of forgiveness differ or is similar in *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide*, *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation*.

The three narratives are similar in that the positive portrayal of the moderate Hutus imbued the concept of forgiveness as a possibility on a national level. All three narratives focused on spirituality and religion as a conduit for forgiveness. The study highlighted the therapeutic nature of forgiveness and its benefits for Ilibagiza and Sebarenzi, both survivors of the 1994 Rwandan genocide. Acts of forgiveness were illustrated on an individual level in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* and *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* as both Ilibagiza and Sebarenzi forgave the killers of their family thereby taking steps towards the conceptualisation of national healing.

This study showed the differences in the analysis of the representations of forgiveness in the three books studied. In *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* forgiveness was illustrated as love through the fictional setting of a romantic love story in the backdrop of religion. In the memoir *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* Ilibagiza went a step further as her central focus was how the power of love and empathy led her to forgive on an individual level with the hope of inspiring other individuals to also forgive their perpetrators. Lastly the autobiography *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* portrayed forgiveness as beginning with love, moving on to a higher level of national healing and finally to reconciliation through political reforms.

The third question that the study posed was

- Which creative work of art best captures the expansive and complicated nature of the theme of forgiveness and why?

The creative work of art that best captures the expansive and complicated nature of the theme of forgiveness is *God Sleeps in Rwanda: A Journey of Transformation* because of its focus on political reforms, though complicated by 'victor's justice.' The Rwandan 1994 genocide constitutes 'crimes of state' and forgiveness is evidently a political issue due to the complexities of the 'enemy other' and the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator in Rwanda's history. In the *Afterword: Moving Toward Forgiveness and Reconciliation*, Sebarenzi put forward expansive steps towards political reforms that capture the need for forgiveness, healing and national reconciliation. However, the individualistic representations of forgiveness in *Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust* have limited impact due to the magnitude of the devastations of the genocide. On the other hand, *Inyenzi: A story of Love and Genocide* lacks guidelines on how love has the possibilities of dismantling ethnic animosity to bring out reconciliation.

6.1 Recommendations of the study

This study proposes several recommendations:

The first recommendation is that, it is hoped that future studies on the Rwandan genocide should focus on representations by female authors. This could go a long way in effecting a gender balance in post genocide narratives.

The second recommendation is for writers to make use of rhetorical devices or crafting of the theme of genocide. It is hoped that such devices will assist readers appreciate and comprehend the heavy theme of genocide.

The third recommendation calls for the comparison of literature on genocide and justice in Rwanda with literature from other countries, for example Chile that had similar experiences. It is important to view the Rwandan genocide from a global perspective and not in isolation.

The fourth recommendation is the need for an empathetic and objective portrayal of the 'enemy other' due to the interchanging role of victim/perpetrator in Rwanda's history of cyclical violence. This could go a long way in perceiving the suffering of the 'enemy other' thereby creating openings for forgiveness and reconciliation.

The fifth recommendation is that critics could write projecting 'survivor's justice' in post genocide narratives. It is hoped that such a slant towards 'survivor's justice' in future narratives would make them possible sites for national healing and reconciliation.

The sixth recommendation is that future researchers need to focus on the portrayal of the positive impact of restorative justice on the dynamics of forgiveness. This allows forgiveness to complement restorative justice as it has the possibilities of reconciling survivors in post genocide Rwanda.

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