NATION FORMATION, TRAUMA OF WAR AND GENOCIDE IN THE LITERATURE OF RWANDA, BURUNDI AND SOUTH SUDAN

BY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, DEPARTMENT OF LITERATURE, THEATRE AND FILM STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN LITERATURE

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university. No part of this work may be reproduced without prior permission of the author and/or Moi University.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my loving wife Dr. Asenath Maobe who stood by me and greatly encouraged me to stay the course and conclude my studies. This is also to my two sons Levi and Mao who always reminded their mother that I had “saved the best for last.” I also commit this work to the memory of my loving father who passed away on June 13, 2018. Finally, I honor my mother with this work and thank her for nursing the passion for my success.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the representation of nation formation in the background of the trauma of wars and genocide in selected novels from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. The selected novels convey the trauma of the survivors from a first-hand experience of war and genocide and the writers' attempt at the imagination of nation formation in the aftermath of societal fragmentation. Three of the novels studied namely: *The Hyenas Wedding* by Rusimbi, *Weep Not Refugee* by Toyi and *Baho* by Rugero were written by authors from these territories while the other three: *The Mark* by Deal, *The Humanitarian* by Caraway and *Broken Memory by* Combres are by foreign nationals. The objectives of this study are to analyze the writers' imaginative representation of nation formation from the trauma of ethnically instigated war and genocide; to examine the narrative techniques used by writers and, to examine the vision/s of nation formation projected in the selected novels. A qualitative library based research was undertaken. This entailed a close reading of the data contained in the selected texts and involved a critical evaluation of the material therein to examine how the writers grapple with the representation of nation formation amidst the traumas that have fragmented the social bonds and critically curtailed the capacities of these societies to function harmoniously. For the reason that traumatic events are extreme and they resist fictionalization, they present challenges to the writers in terms of the strategies of representation. The study adopted an eclectic approach to theory that includes aspects of postcolonial theories, trauma theory, semiotics and Benedict Anderson's ideas of nationalism and imagination of the nation. Because the selected texts in this study deal with postcolonial traumatic experiences, their readings and analysis were guided by trauma theory. Semiotics guided the reading of the meanings created by signs and images used as vehicles of expression in the representation of traumatic experiences that resist representation through language. The study used Anderson's proposals to analyze the nature of the writers' imaginative representation of past traumatic experiences for the stimulation of social interconnections in previously fragmented relations. The study managed to apply trauma theory within the framework of post-colonial readings on the narration of nation formation as an additional trajectory to the existing models on the analysis of nation formation in the East African novel. The study concluded that the writers have used diverse narrative strategies in testifying to the past to create memories essential for creating social affiliations in the survivors. Overall, the visions projected by the writers about the potential for the realization of nationhood in these societies are diverse. The findings add to the pool of existing academic knowledge on the narration of nations of trauma. Future research could examine the representation of nation formation from the perspective of writers whose focus is on the offspring of the survivors with no direct personal experience of these atrocities. Such categories of survivors only have a family memory or have post-memories of these experiences created by survivors' testimonies or other processes.

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DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Memory

In this study, memory is regarded in the sense proposed by Hodgkin & Susannah (2003) as a structured way of remembering past events. It is associated with narrating nation formation, which entails the writers' formulation of a well-organized and meaningful individual and collective/societal recollection of past events. Therefore, narrating nation formation is understood to entail the selective memory of past events that promotes the formation of the image of commonality in the members of these societies. Consequently, it is the kind of memories about the past atrocious experiences that the members of these societies keep which greatly shapes their national consciousness.

Nation

This study regarded nation as a social construct that exists arbitrarily. The study therefore inclined more towards the ideas of Anderson (1983) who proposes that people get to perceive themselves as a nation by virtue of the image created in their minds about their allegiance to that nation much as they have not met face-to-face to discuss about their nationhood. In this regard, Anderson proposes that a nation exists out of the act of imagination that allows a people to begin to identify with those whom they will neither meet nor get to see. He further suggests that the nation exists in the mind of a people in whom their lives the image of their communion. In his opinion, the nation is elastic since it can stretch beyond already established boundaries to regions beyond which lie other nations.

In light of Anderson's ideas above, this study perceived nation formation in the selected texts to entail the writers' creation of an image that becomes a focal point for the people's imagination of having a shared communion. According to the

Encyclopedia Americana, some of the shared images capable of arousing feelings of commonality include language, race, culture, religion, political and other institutions, a history with which they identify, a shared geographical location, and a belief in a common destiny.

Representation

In the context of this study, representation meant the writers' attempt to interpret and give meaning to traumatic experiences that have been survived but their recollection is repressed. As an artistic exercise, representation entails explaining the trauma of these societies by constructing images of past events to create individual and collective memories meant to repair torn social relations in the survivors. Therefore, in this study, representation means the writers' creative infusion of meaning of past traumatic events to help societal members understand their tragedy to recover their lost sense of communal connectedness. Representation of traumatic events entails the writers' use of appropriate narrative strategies to help society access traumatic experiences that are hard to fictionalization. The oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms considers representation as involving the creative imagination and generation of new meanings to events by using images or actions.

Trauma

This study adopts the definition of trauma supplied by Caruth as "an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena (1996: 11). This definition is similar to that of the Encyclopedia Americana, where trauma denotes the effects that proceed from tormenting experiences. In the case of this study the trauma of war is understood to tear social relations and impede the creation of new alliances.

In this study, the writers are representing nation formation against the backdrop of the fragmentation of society occasioned by the trauma of brutal ethnic wars and genocide. The overwhelming experience of war lives in the memory of the individuals and society thus disjointing assumed personal and communal relationships essential for nation building. The writers in this study are therefore striving to reorganize the memories of the past traumatic events in order to restore the lost sense of communal oneness. The study understands trauma to exist at individual and societal levels. Alexander, (2004: 1) argues that trauma at the communal level occurs "when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks on their groups' consciousness, marking their memories forever and changing their future identities in fundamental and irrevocable ways". This implies that when members of a society are collectively traumatized by a painful experience, their communion is disrupted and they disassociate themselves from the community.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, research assumptions, justification of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations, review of related literature, and the theoretical framework of the study are discussed

1.1 Background to the Study

Under this section, I discuss the nature of the study and the context/s of the setting of the selected texts. I also examine how some writers from other African countries with experiences of war and violence have fictionally imagined and represented nation formation of their traumatized societies.

1.1.1 Nature of the study

This study sought to examine how the writers in the selected texts go about fictionalizing past traumatic events in order to construct memories necessary for re-engineering the lost sense of communal belonging/s in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. The imagination of nation formation in the selected texts takes place in circumstances where the trauma of war and genocide has fragmented previously assumed stable communal relationships within society. The study set out to determine how the writers represent nation formation against the backdrop of cyclical waves of ethnically instigated wars that have severed social relationships in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan, thereby robbing the members of these societies the capacity to conceive themselves as members of their nation/s. According to Armstrong, war fragments previously assumed stable relationships at both the personal and communal

level and leads to the interruption of "the narrative of national and individual development." He therefore argues that the trauma of war has the potential to live on "in the memory of the nation" (2000: 174). Norris, on his part proposes that the trauma of war fragments the nation since it stretches far beyond the battleground and "permeates into private and domestic life." (1998: 506) This study argues that the repetitive ethnic-instigated wars in these entities have severed social relations and destroyed trust, which is an essential ingredient in creating a harmonious society. The study examines how the writers grapple with the representation of nation formation in this kind of background without fueling further trauma and aggravating the societal tear.

This study also examines the narrative strategies employed by the writers to portray the project of nation formation in the selected texts. Representing nation formation against a background of trauma poses challenges to any writer who chooses to use fiction as a mode of testifying to these traumatic events since this kind of materiality makes demands on the narrative strategy that a writer is to use in fictionalizing the past events. According to Rothberg, the extremity and incomprehensibility of traumatic experiences make fictionalization a big challenge for any artist who must search for "a narrative form appropriate for confronting that reality" (2000:3). Similarly, Lawrence Langer as quoted by Franklin argues that representation of such catastrophes comes with artistic difficulties: "the danger that art can impose a false meaning on events and thus imply that 'the inconceivable fate of the victims appears to have had some sense after all" (2011:12). Artistic representation of nation formation is problematic and involves, according to Franklin (2011: 12), the careful "distillation and pounding the chaos of life into something resembling a coherent shape." Consequently, this study sought to examine the narrative strategies that the

writers have employed to represent the past events with the intent to invest it with new and alternative possibilities for the reimagined nation.

A third objective of this study was to examine the vision/s of nation formation projected by the writers in the texts. Despite the challenges pointed above about the artistic bottlenecks of representing nation formation in backgrounds of trauma, this study shares in the arguments of Toni Morrison, as read by J. Roger Kurtz (2014: 431) about the capacity of a writer to employ fiction in "envisioning a new mode of existence following serious social harm." Further, the study identifies with Toni Morrison who argues that art can transform trauma "and turn sorrow into meaning." (Kurtz 2014: 431). Equally, Kurtz, as proposed by Lederach, (2005: 432), believes that the writer has the creative capacity to engage in what he refers to as "the moral imagination" which while grappling with "the challenges of the real world "is capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist". These arguments resonate well with the opinions held in this study. Writers, as Kurtz further suggests "offer new ways to envision the problem of trauma…and represent a rich cultural resource for healing…" (2014: 432). It is in respect to the foregoing arguments that this study examines the vision/s that the writers have projected about the potential for nation formation in these entities.

1.1.2 Background information on the settings of the texts

The selected texts are set in societies afflicted by the trauma of ethnic wars and genocide. The members of these societies have been the victims of some of the most horrendous violations of human rights. These societies have suffered catastrophes whose traumatic consequences resemble those of the Jewish holocaust under the Nazi regime. Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan's disasters evoke memories of the

holocaust which Rothberg (2000) has described as inexpressible and inconceivable. The three entities have experienced what Zeleza would refer to as "an endless spiral of self-destruction" (2008:1). The waves of war that have been witnessed in these territories, to once again borrow and paraphrase Zeleza, have exerted a heavy toll on their social fabric, economies and their developmental potential thereby robbing them the opportunity to function as harmonious nations. These societies have been the scenes of brutal civil wars, genocide and acts of gross human rights violations. The developmental, democratic and humanitarian costs of these calamities continue to curtail their capacities to function as harmonious nations. The conflicts in these entities have roots in the colonial and postcolonial eras and they have certain similarities with conflicts around the African continent which, according to (Nnhema 2008: 2) "exhibit multiple and multidimensional causes, courses and consequences."

According to Nhema the causes of conflicts in many African countries, including the three nations under this study, are multiple in their dynamics. They range from being "internal and external, local and international, economic and political, social and cultural, historical and contemporary, objective and subjective, material and ideological, concrete and emotive, real and rhetorical" (2008:2). Accordingly, Nhema is of the opinion that "the strategies for managing and resolving them can only be multidimensional" (2008: 2).

The sporadic inter-ethnic wars in the three nations have bred long simmering antagonisms and anxieties that have led to a great loss of life and erosion of trust. The wars in the three nations just like other wars in the African continent, according to Zeleza (2008: 15), have been "provoked and sustained by ethnic rivalries and polarizations, economic underdevelopment and inequalities, poor governance and elite political instability and manipulation." Accordingly, Zeleza (2008:15) argues

that most wars on the African continent can be attributed to "the political economy of colonialism, post colonialism, and non-liberal globalization. According to Zeleza, additional consequences of these wars include: " the devastation of the ecosystem, agricultural lands and wildlife, the destruction of society's material and mechanical infrastructures, the outflow of resources including 'capital flight' and 'brain drain,' the proliferation of pathological and self-destructive behaviors, and the deterioration in the aesthetic quality of life" (2008:23).

Henderson's (2008) statements about the role of colonialism in frustrating nation formation in many African countries are quite true to the experience of Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. He points out that colonialism played a big role in stifling the emergence of stable African states thus complicating the challenge of nation building. He observes that whereas state building demands the provision of equal economic development across the state most African governments, upon emerging from the grip of colonialism, have fallen short of meeting this demand, thus making the citizens to start feeling betrayed especially when their governments display unequal distribution of economic resources. Henderson's arguments above correctly reflect the situation in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan where a rivalry over the distribution of economic resources is a basis for some of the ethnic animosities witnessed in these territories.

The final important point to note is on the influence of colonialism to the instability of most African countries, including Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. Zeleza argues that "colonialism left a lasting legacy of conflict that, sooner or later, festered and erupted into vicious postcolonial conflicts" (2008:5). In Burundi and Rwanda, many years of rule by the Belgians who favored the Tutsi over the Hutu planted the seed for Hutu revenge against the Tutsi upon the attainment of independence.

1.1.3 African writers' representation of their emerging nations

The following is a discussion of how some writers drawn from other African countries with experiences of war and violence have fictionally imagined and represented nation formation of their societies. This analysis illuminates this study by demonstrating how these writers have employed narrative to construct a favorable collective memory of these atrocities for their societies. It also explains the vision/s of nation formation that they project in their works.

"Civil Peace" by Chinua Achebe is a story set in the aftermath of the devastation of the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970). The writer, through the protagonist explores the resilience that the Nigerian society should have in the aftermath of this war. The life of Jonathan, the protagonist, mirrors the horrors of the Biafran war, which Achebe presents as a very dehumanizing episode full of violence and chaos. In the story, the author presents a society with a post-war government authority that is unreliable to protect its citizens. The war has fragmented the nation and destroyed all sense of communal togetherness among its members. The survivors as exemplified by Jonathan are individualistic and only concerned with their survival and those of their families. Individualism also exists in Jonathan's neighbors who refuse to come to the rescue of his family when attacked by thieves. Jonathan's constructive outlook to life after his losses gestures to the optimistic vision for nation formation by Achebe. The government forces have heavily persecuted the Igbo and Jonathan considers himself lucky having survived the civil war together with his wife and children (however, he lost one son in the war). He also counts himself lucky for having not lost his bicycle in the war. The bicycle is a source of his livelihood as he uses it to start a taxi service after the war ends. Apart from this, his small and hand-constructed zinc, wood and cupboard house in his hometown, Enugu is still standing much as many better and

stronger surrounding houses have been destroyed. He is portrayed as a very resilient and optimistic man who quickly moves back to continue his life after the war. His children engage in the business of picking mangoes to sell to the soldiers' wives, while his wife makes breakfast to sell to the neighbors. On his part, he begins to run a palm- wine bar for soldiers and anyone who has money. Jonathan is a symbol of the war-ravaged nation. Through him, Achebe portrays the wreckage of the war not as a cause for grief, but opportunity. Just as Jonathan quickly picks up his pieces and exploits whatever he salvages from the war for the betterment of his family, so does Achebe call upon the Nigerian society to be forward–looking. Resilience is the rallying call that Achebe makes in the story through his protagonist. Jonathan serves as this symbol of resilience- a sure path to recovery and rebuilding of the fragmented nation. The title of the story "civil peace" is oxymoronic. It is ironical because the aftermath of the war is neither civil nor peaceful as the experience of Jonathan and the thieves indicates. The tensions that defined the period of the civil war are still evident in the society and the absence of war is but a continuation of the same societal problems. However, it is in such moments of ambivalence and societal fragmentation in this society that Achebe advocates for resilience, return-to-work and optimism for nation formation in this society.

Despite Jonathan's losses and tragedy (more especially his son's death) he embraces a more optimistic and pragmatic outlook to the future. He chooses to hold onto the kind of memory of the war that, much as it does not blind his tragedy, he remains thankful for his fortunes (the survival of his family and house) to move on. There is cause for mourning his losses but he concentrates his energies, not to self-pity, but rather to a right attitude and a positive work ethic. This helps him to navigate through the circumstances that war has thrust his family and nation into. Achebe suggests that

there are sufficient reasons for the Nigerian society to be pessimistic about its circumstances but he sees optimism as a more rewarding attitude for nation formation.

"Girls at War", by Chinua Achebe is another story that addresses the war between the seceding state of Biafra and the Nigerian government. It traces the story of a beautiful girl named Gladys who is pushed by the consequences of war into a relationship with an army officer in her struggle for survival. The story explores the tragic effects of war on the civilian population. Gladys is a girl with high moral ideals when we first encounter her but, like other girls, war erodes these ideals and the need for survival through the hard times leads her to make moral compromises.

The Biafran war is very disruptive and destructive. Young men drop out of school to enlist in the fight for the seceding nation. Little kids march up and down the streets. The war brings about death and starvation and tests the resolve of the civilians to hold to the integrity that they hold dear before the revolution days. War leads to moral decadence. The desire to survive the devastation of the war pushes girls such as Gladys to sell their dignity by getting into illicit relationships with army officers in exchange for gifts such as shoes, wigs and cosmetics, which they later sell to make money to use to survive. Women are forced into prostitution for survival and bear the greatest brunt of decisions taken on their behalf by men. Their fate in life is undermined by decisions made by a male-dominated society. Women are compelled to live off the largesse of army officers who have benefited the most from the raging war.

Achebe's argument in this story is that the Biafra war has destroyed social relationships in the nation as symbolized in the wretched lives that the women are living. The helpless state of the women is a reflection of a society that has morally

crumbled. Achebe reckons that the moral degeneration of the society can be arrested and a healthier nation built if the means of survival are availed to all its civilians. Overall, he depicts war as evil, fragmenting, and not healthy for Nigeria's nationhood.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun* also revolves around the events of the Nigerian civil war and the years before its start. The narrative explores the effects of the war on the characters. Adichie depicts the country as a dangerous tense place full of violence. She gives voice to the trauma of this war by writing about the personal horrors, rapes and deaths. Nevertheless, the mostly Igbo characters through whom the story in the text is told are presented as hopeful in the future of Biafra much as they have been ravaged by the massacres of this war. Adichie traces the troubles of the Nigerian nation to the colonialists and Nigerian politics. She blames England for its role in the colonization and stirring of ethnic tensions among the Nigerian peoples and for supplying arms to Nigeria during the war. On the political level, the author blames Nigerian politics for betraying the dream of the nation as reflected in the individual betrayals of Olanna to Kainene, Odenogbo to Olanna, and between Richard and Kainene. Adichie explores the different aspects and spheres of the Biafran conflict and the tragedies and obstacles on the path towards the achievement of Nigerian nationhood. The text explores the effects of war on individuals, ethnic groups, relationships and the nation in its entirety. She interrogates the role of colonialism, ethnic allegiance, class and race and the part they hold in the formation and/ or disruption of the Nigerian nation.

Veronique Tadjo in *The Shadow of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda* recounts the experiences of the survivors of the Rwandan genocide. She also draws the reader's attention to the role played by foreigners both from within and outside Africa to this conflict. She is concerned about the nature of reconciliation that the people of Rwanda

should embrace as a way of healing their nation. She also addresses the issue of the kind of memories that the people of Rwanda ought to cultivate about the genocide as a way of moving their communion forward. By writing about the genocide, Tadjo attempts to preserve the memories of this catastrophe and her exercise of bearing witness to the trauma of the event is useful for the creation of a useful memory for the nation.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

A study of many East African novels reveals a varied engagement with the imagination of nation formation by writers from this region. These imaginations have taken place against the backdrop of some of the region's historical tensions which Kurtz (2014: 425) has referred to, elsewhere, as the "traumatogenic experiences" of colonialism, the post-independence "East-West" cold war, and globalization. The writers' texts have a wide array of themes that subtly reflect the profound impact of these forces in shaping the history of the societies as well as the people's sense of having a shared communion. However, there is lack of scholarly engagement with the representation of nation formation by writers from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan where the imagination and narration of nation formation takes place against the backdrop of the fragmentation of social relations at both the personal and communal level occasioned by the trauma of ethnically instigated wars and genocide. This study is therefore curious to find out how the writers in the selected texts imagine and narrate nation formation in these societies without running the risk of fuelling further trauma in the already divided societies.

There is notable diversity in the analytical models that scholars have used to explain the writers' conceptualization of nation formation in the East African novel. However, for the reason that the trauma of war and genocide influences the imagination of

nation formation differently, therefore, the interpretation of nation formation in the novels from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan must be undertaken using a different model. For this reason, the application of trauma theory within the framework of post-colonial readings on the narration of nation formation in the East African novel is an outlook realized by the study. This approach gives new insights on the link between trauma, nation and nation formation, and narrating the nation within the novelistic form in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were as follows:

a) To examine the writers' selection of events, characters and experiences from the past to characterize the key moments in the search for nationhood in their societies.
b) To examine the narrative strategies that the writers have employed to portray the project of nation formation in the selected texts.
c) To analyze the vision/s of nation formation projected by the writers in the texts.

1.4 Research Questions

To meet the above objectives, the study sought the answers to the following questions:

a) Which moments/experiences/events/values in the history of these societies do the writers evoke as rallying points for instilling and restoring the sense of a-being-in-common in the members?
b) How does the structure of these narratives mirror the trauma of these societies and their journey/s to nationhood?

c) What do the narrative strategies, themes, choice of characters and character traits of the protagonists divulge about the image of the nation/s that the writers envision?

1.5 Research Premise

This study proceeded from the conviction that art is an effective avenue through which the writers have imaginatively represented the journey/s of these traumatized societies into nations. It assumed that the writers have creatively made use of appropriate narrative strategies in imaginatively representing the project of nation formation in the selected texts. The study also assumed that the writers' visions for nation formation in these societies are varied.

1.6 Justification of the Study

A number of scholars have engaged themselves with the discussions on the representation of nation formation in the African novel. They have explored the varied theoretical models through which a number of African novelists have abstracted nation formation of their societies. For example, some studies have interpreted the representation of nation formation in the African novel as a writers' protest enterprise against the homogenizing project of colonial and post-colonial capitalistic nation building. However, the existing models have not paid attention to the problematic of the novelistic representation of nation formation in the background of the trauma of ethnically instigated wars and genocide in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. These postcolonial societies have experienced brutal civil wars, genocide and acts of gross human rights violations that have traumatized their members and critically curtailed their nationhood.

There are a number of reasons to justify the study of the representation of nation formation in this kind of background. Firstly, writers from this setting face the challenge of fictionally imagining and representing the rebuilding of communal bonds in circumstances where the trauma of war and genocide has fragmented previously stable relationships both at the individual and communal level. Additionally, the ethical demand by the grieving survivors and victims for a truthful portrayal and non-dilution of the horror of these atrocities puts demands on the writers' choice of narrative strategy. This research is fascinated to examine how writers grapple with the challenges above to represent nation formation. The study is based on some selected novels from Rwanda Burundi and South Sudan in which the writers fictionally imagine nation formation in the survivors with a first-hand experience of war and genocide. The selected texts capture the writers' imagining of nation formation in these societies as they grapple with the catastrophic experiences of war and the resultant traumas. This study differs from other studies whose concern has been the analysis of the problematic and the manner of fictional and non-fictional commemoration of these atrocities.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study add to the pool of existing academic knowledge on issues regarding the narration of nations of trauma. This study also brings new insights on the application of trauma theory within the framework of post-colonial readings on the narration of nation formation in the East African novel.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

In order to obtain a focused and comprehensive analysis, this study limited itself to the analysis of the representation of nation formation in selected published novels from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan that address the trauma of the survivors with

a first-hand experience of war and genocide. The study explores the writers' representation of nation formation as implicated in the traumatic experiences captured in the selected texts. The imagination and narration of nation formation in the background of ethnically instigated wars and genocide is problematic because the writers stand the risk of fuelling further trauma in already fragmented societies. If other authors from the three societies or other works by different writers from elsewhere in Africa or the world were referred to, it was done for corroborating evidence in the primary texts. The following is a list of the texts studied in this research. The selected texts from Rwanda include: *Broken Memory: A Novel of Rwanda* (2011) by Elisabeth Combres and Shelley Tanaka and *The Hyenas wedding: The untold Horrors of Genocide* (2008) by John Rusimbi. The texts from Burundi include *Weep not refugee* (2012) by Marie -Therese Toyi and *Baho!* (2016) by Roland Rugero. The texts from South Sudan include *The Humanitarian* (2014) by N. Caraway and *The Mark: a Novel of Dinka in the Time of War* (2013) by Jeffery Deal. The scope of this study limited it to the novelistic genre. The representation of nation formation in other genres such as film and theatre were outside the scope of this study.

1.9 Review of Related Literature

The literature review consists of studies that have dealt with similar discussions on the selected works in this research. It also examines studies that are of a similar nature focusing on other texts from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan and related studies within the East African region. Additionally, it analyses studies that deal with other writers with similar issues from elsewhere in Africa, such as studies on some post-apartheid South African authors who have through their creative works endeavored to narrate nation formation and how the nation of South Africa can reconcile itself to its

traumatized past. Equally, the literature review discusses other studies that relate to this research but that deal with writers drawn from some societies with a background of genocide and atrocities of a traumatic nature comparable to the ones experienced in Rwanda Burundi and South Sudan. Examples of these literary studies include studies on the Holocaust, the Cambodian and the Lebanon genocides.

1.9.1 Assessment of similar discussions on the selected works

Tanganika (2014) studies the role that John Rusimbi's two novels: *(By the Time She Returned* (2000) and *The Hyenas Wedding: The Untold Horrors of Genocide) (2008)* play towards the development of Rwanda national literature and their suitability to be used as pedagogical texts in the Rwandan school curricula. He does a comparative study that analyses the manner in which Rwanda's post-colonial conflicts influence the two novels and how the writers interrogate "the colonial legacy and inept post-colonial leadership that led to disunity and political instability" (2014:49). His study is premised on the assumption that the two novels fall within the category of national literatures, therefore making their reading "imperative for national consciousness and development" (2014: 50). Tanganyika underscores the immense role that these texts have played in raising the consciousness of the Rwandan nation.

Tanganika argues that the suitability of the two novels as reservoirs of Rwandan literature rests in the manner in which they "mirror Rwanda's post-colonial history by highlighting the dark periods of exile, and genocide and reconstruction" (2014: 50). He argues that the two texts deconstruct ethnicity while promoting nationalism. He therefore proposes that the two texts are important resources to introduce into Rwanda's education curriculum as useful academic resources for national history. This research benefits from Tanganyika's study, which has underscored the

contribution that both novels have made in illuminating "the discourse of post-colonial conflicts that have afflicted his country" (2014: 48)

Tanganika's arguments about the pivotal role played by *The Hyena's Wedding (2008)* in re-awakening national consciousness in post-genocide Rwanda align with the views held by this study:

> After the genocide of 1994 against the Tutsis in Rwanda, a new nation was born. Subsequent socio-political developments and struggles by Rwandans to build a new society that ensued are captured in the two novels. Rusimbi's narratives…reflect on the reality of post-colonial Rwanda, particularly the experience of exile and the struggle to reconstruct the country after the genocide. (2014: 49)

Tanganika employs postcolonial theory in analyzing Rusimbi's two texts. In his study he observes that the themes of home and exile, the motifs of helplessness, depravation and uncertainty and the frustration of the refugees feature prominently in the two novels. These, according to him, are legitimate themes that justify the inclusion of the two texts into the school curriculum. He argues that it is essential for Rwandan children to be acquainted with these themes so as to deepen their knowledge about the history of the Rwandan society. He proposes that Rwandan teachers should use these texts to "spur memories and thoughts within the learners, by linking the texts to personal experiences…." (2014: 54)

Tanganika's proposals regarding the postcolonial themes that these texts address illuminate this study. However, while his key objective is to study the thematic concerns of the two texts to determine their suitability for the Rwandan school curriculum, this study examines the relationship between the representation of nation formation and traumatic experiences of wars and genocide as brought out in *The Hyena's Wedding (2008).* In this novel, Rusimbi explores how the traumatized

Rwandan society can begin to repair its fractured bonds to restore the assumed lost sense of nationhood. This study therefore examines how Rusimbi goes about this enterprise amidst the risk of further aggravating trauma in an already fragmented society.

Morrison reviews how Combre's novel: *Broken Memory: A Novel of Rwanda* presents the Rwandan Genocide of 1994. Morrison argues that the novel "offers thoughtful reflections and a first-person perspective of the Rwandan genocide of 1994" (2009: 148). Regarding the tone of this novel, Morrison suggests that the novel is "not particularly emotional: rather, the narrative is straight forward and removed despite the heavy topic", thus serving as a reflection of the protagonist's state of mind "as she works through her memories." (2009: 148). Ultimately, Morrison's review of the novel seeks to recommend it for critical scrutiny since, according to her, the writers of this novel succeed to "offer readers access to this chapter of history of Rwanda." (2009: 148). This study benefits from Morrison's ideas regarding the contribution that this novel makes in providing readers a glimpse into the dark history of the Rwandan genocide. It uses a discursive eclectic approach that includes aspects of postcolonial literary theories, semiotics and trauma theory to systematically examine the key moments within this genocide history that these writers capture to characterize the search for nationhood in Rwanda.

1.9.2 Analysis of Similar discussions on other texts from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan

Hitchcott (2009) examines how Diops' novel *Murambi: Le Livre: des Ossements(Murambi: The Book of Bones)* commemorates the extermination of around one million Rwandan people in one hundred days and how the readers of this novel are

conditioned into the commemoration and acknowledgement of genocide through its fictionalization in this text. Murambi Technical School in Gikongoro province in Rwanda was the site of the extermination of "an estimated 50,000 people" (2009: 48). This novel is therefore Boubacar Boris Diop's fictional depiction of that massacre. Hichcott's main concern is not only the analysis of the fictional commemoration of genocide as presented in Diop's novel but also an investigation of the success of this author to include the readers in the construction of the memories of genocide.

Hitchcott undertakes a comparative study of the commemoration of genocide, as done by the government vis-à-vis the fictional commemoration, as is the case with *Murambi: the Book of Bones by Diop*. He argues that the government's initiative of preserving the bones of the massacred victims in Murambi Memorial Site is static. The problem with memories preserved in museums, Hitchcott cites Susan, is that museums make "memories to become fixed through preservation and display" thereby influencing "what and how we remember" (2009: 49). This kind of commemoration, according to him, is political and "constructs a reductive version of the complex history of genocide" (2009: 49). He therefore argues that such fixed memories distort reality as they offer fixed narratives. Harrow, as cited by Hitchcott, is of the opinion that a better way to preserve the genocide memory is through fiction, Harrow notes:

> The only useful account of genocide is the account that refuses to leave the reader out of it: the account where the past is not distanced from our lives.... Shrines and testimonials fail to generate such a painful proximity'; works of fiction on the other hand can achieve this aim. (2009: 50)

Based on the ideas above, Hitchcott discusses the great distinction between the Murambi Memorial Site and the "fictional commemoration" of the genocide in Diop's novel. He analyses Diops' "fictional version of the Murambi massacre" as "a

commemorative work of fiction" in order to determine the extent to which Diop "creates an account that refuses to leave the reader" (Harrow as cited by Hitchcott 2009: 50).

Hitchcott argues that Diop's novel succeeds to, unlike the museums, "encourage the continuing process of memory rather than recording and fixing memories in the past (like museums do)" (2009: 50.) Diop's text, as he continues to point out, also succeeds to "resist a single narrative version of the genocide" (2009: 50) as is the case with the Murambi museum. Hitchcott's opinions resonate well with the assumption that this research makes that art is an effective avenue through which writers reorganize memories of trauma in these societies to imagine the emergence of nationhood after these calamities.

Hitchcott's assessment of Diop's text is that it emphasizes "on the real, the tangible, rather than symbolic abstraction" (2009:58). He however observes that commemorating genocide is no easy task because of the challenge of "imaging the unimaginable" (2009: 58.) The problematic with commemorating genocide fictionally lies in creating a fiction that calls a monster by its name. This research while examining the representation of nation formation in fiction takes cognizance of Hitchicott's argument that representation of an evil such as genocide is a big challenge that a fiction writer has to be alert to. His study takes a stylistic approach in the assessment of the success of this novel to represent genocide. This research is enriched by Hitchcott's study and employs an eclectic theoretical approach to discuss the fictional representation of nation formation in the three societies. This research also benefits from Hitchcott's arguments about the problematic of imagining or fictionally commemorating genocide for a writer.

> Diop's text reveals the difficulties of language in memorializing genocide and demonstrates the tension between a desire to tell "the truth" and the contractedness of the memory narrative. On the one hand, the genocide writer is concerned with the transmission of facts; on the other, texts like *Murambi* rely on our imagination for understanding and commemoration (2009: 58).

Finally, Hitchcott's opinions about the role of Diop's novel in the reconstruction of memory are very important to this research. His study holds that Diop's novel is important in the commemoration of genocide in Rwanda. According to him, the novel offers a space "that binds together the many different players in this story of genocide… thus acting as both a repository of memory and a trigger for the fictional reconstruction of memory by inviting the visitor's imagination in the reconstruction of that memory… and its commemoration and interpretation (2009: 59).

The study by Hitchcott has limited itself to the discussion of the problematic of finding a suitable mode for the representation of the traumatic experiences of the Rwandan genocide. This study benefits from Hitchcott's findings to examine how fiction as a narrative mode is used in the selected texts to not only represent the traumatic past but also explore nation formation in the background of the traumatic experiences of Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan.

Small (2007) examines the representation of genocide by a writing project called *Rwanda: Ecrire Par Devoir de Memoire* (translated as writing to fulfill the duty of memory, or the duty of remembrance), which brought together a group of established African writers from eight different African countries to write about the 1994 Rwandan genocide. This project of representing the genocide ultimately produced nine different works covering various genres: "one collection of poetry, two book length essays, four novels, and two texts … that fall perhaps under the rubric of 'travel writing" (2007: 85)

Small's article makes a comparative study to ascertain the extent to which this writing project succeeds to meet its objectives of testifying "to the moral solidarity of writers elsewhere in Africa with the Rwandan people" (2007: 86) Small acknowledges these texts' achievement of this goal. He argues as follows: "through the writing of these texts, the genocide becomes part of Africa as a whole, part of the literature, history and actuality of the African people, and inevitably not as a result or by extension, but simultaneously, part of humanity" (2007: 89). Small argues that this project aimed at the de-stigmatization of the genocide experience of Rwanda to place it within the African national literature to avoid the sidelining of the Rwandan experience by other national literatures from this region.

The four novels that Small examines are: Boubacar Boris Diop's *Murambi, Le Livre Des Ossement*, Koulsy Lamko's *La Phalene Des Collines,* Monique Ilboudo's *Murekatele* and Tierno Monenembo's *L'Aine des Orphelins.* While none of the four texts studied by Small are tackled in this research, I share in Small's assessment that memory can be constructed by a writer in a particular way as to influence certain outcomes. Consequently, this study examines how the writers from the three societies go about representing the past traumatic events and experiences to create memories favorable for restoring the assumed lost sense of nationhood.

Small's study also entails an examination of the narrative techniques used in the different works of the writing project. For example, Small argues that Monenembo's *L'Aine des Orphelins* uses "an inventive approach in terms of an attempt to construct a memory of genocide: his narrator Faustin is suffering from a form of what late twentieth century psychiatric medicine called …repressed memory" (2007: 89). Consequently, Small argues that "the narrative of genocide is gradually constructed through Faustin's random reminiscences but carefully created from the point of view

of the novelist Monenembo" (2007: 89). Small suggests that trauma victims have a consciousness that cannot coherently construct memory. This study uses trauma theory to make connections with the seemingly incomprehensible experiences so as to examine how those traumatic events or memories have been integrated into narrative language that explores nation formation in these territories

Small concludes that writers who undertake the task of imaginatively representing genocide ought to ready themselves for an uphill task of not only grappling with the ethics of such representations but also the challenge of understanding the experience that they want to represent. This research benefits from Small's opinions about the problematic of representation that traumatic experiences pose to a writer. With this awareness, this study set out to examine the narrative strategies used by the writers and their role in structuring the past traumatic events into narratives representing the search for nationhood in these societies. In order to do this, I study selected texts authored in English and set in three societies of trauma as opposed to Small's comparative study of texts set in Rwanda and written in French.

Applegate (2012) studies *Le Passe Devant Soi* (translated *The Past Ahead*) a pioneering novel written in French on the 1994 Tutsi genocide by Gilbert Gatore, a Rwandan writer. The key questions that she seeks to answer by her reading of this novel include "How does one write after Rwanda? How could writers comprehend and represent the killings in which at least 800,000 Tutsi and many politically moderate Hutu were massacred in a mere three months?...How does one represent not only the genocide but what genocide has left in its wake?" (2012: 71). Applegate argues that these are the thorny issues that are related to identity and reconciliation

that *Le Passe Devant Soi* addresses and these issues characterize the dilemma of all writers seeking to write to represent the genocide.

Paying more attention to the structuring of the text by Gatore, Applegate examines how the author has reimagined the allegory of the swallow and the toad to construct a post 1994 genocide identity in his characters. She is however critical of the novel's portrayal of the relationship between the killer and the victim, a portrayal she considers "unrealistic and even unethical" (2012:70). She argues that although this novel may not succeed to-accurately portray the psychology of the killer and victim, it has evoked questions regarding how genocide ought to be "memorized and represented in literature" (2012:70).

Applegate's in this article argues that the author has stylistically positioned Isaro (one of the characters) as an incarnation of the image of the swallow "drowning in the killings" of the Rwandan folktale while Niko assumes the role of the toad, " saved from drowning in poverty of grief "(2012: 71). This critic also argues that the symmetrical images, which locate Niko and Isaro as linked opposites, demonstrate the ways that genocide defined and victimized them.

Applegate argues that the structuring of the text is responsible for the reconciliation of the two characters. She further points out that the structural alternating of the pages devoted to Isaro's life with the ones devoted to Niko is the author's way "to reconcile Isaro to her past and to those who murdered her family" (2012: 75).

Applegate also discusses the other techniques that the author uses in this novel in the construction of identity by observing that the novel "blurs the division between perpetrator and victim through its nuanced representation of the character Niko, a killer, and of his connection to Isaro, a survivor" (2012: 71). Additionally, the novel

also presents a killer, Niko, who also suffers so that readers develop sympathy for him thereby depriving the readers the "opportunity to immediately dismiss him because of what he has done" (2012: 72).

Applegate concludes that this novel succeeds to "evoke the role of storytelling in the construction of identity and raises questions about the possibility of reconciliation" (2012: 70). She also suggests that *Passe Devant Soi* succeeds to handle the "history of ethnic stereotypes that prepared the Tutsi genocide and draws attention to the complexity of reconciliation in Rwanda today." (2012: 70). This study sought to examine how the writers have structured the events from the past traumatic histories into narratives representing the quest for nationhood in these societies. It benefits from Applegate's reading of Gatore's novel to examine the representation of nation formation in six selected texts written in English and drawn from two other regions with traumatic histories similar to Rwanda's. Unlike Applegate's study, it adopts an eclectic approach to theory that includes aspects of postcolonial theories, trauma theory, semiotics and Benedict Anderson's ideas of nationalism and imagination of the nation in the analysis of the primary texts. Engaging trauma theory in analyzing the representation of nation formation in the selected texts authored in circumstances of trauma further enriches the exercise of the reading of these texts.

Applegate's study of Gatore's novel arrives at a number of conclusions. Firstly, she takes issue with the manner in which this novel presents a victim of genocide confronting trauma "through imagining the mind of a Killer" (2012: 76). According to Applegate, Gatore's novel has been critiqued for "unethical presentation" and its critics have raised questions about "the ethics of representing genocide" (2012: 77). This is a challenge that, according to Applegate, confronts all Rwandan novelists. It is also Applegate's contention that the Rwandan genocide experience cannot allow

fiction writers the imaginative freedom enjoyed by other novelists who are writing about experiences from societies that do not have such experience. The argument this critic makes is that genocide imagination demands "a certain acceptable way of representing the subjective experience of those who have lived through genocide" (2012:79). Applegate's findings about the challenges of the representation of the trauma of genocide as captured in Gatore's novel greatly benefit this study. In addition to discussing the narrative strategies that the selected writes have employed in the selected texts, this study examines how those techniques serve to structure the past traumatic events into narratives that represent the journey/s of these societies' quest for nationhood. This research is also different in terms of methodology, and the issues under investigation

Rwafa (2010) makes a comparative study of the stylistic choices employed by the makers of the documentary films namely: A *Good Man in Hell* (2002), Keepers *of memory*, (2004), *Hotel Rwanda*, (2004) and *Sometimes in April* (2005) in the representation of the Rwandan genocide. Regarding the choice of documentary as a mode of representation in A *Good Man in Hell* Rwafa critiques the dichotomy adopted by the film in the representation of good vs. evil. Rwafa argues that it presents an inaccurate picture of the events since during the genocide there was a mixture of "good people who helped others to escape, bad people who killed others and those who were good and bad depending on the prevailing conditions" (2010: 392). The combination of talk show and interview in this documentary is also regarded by Rwafa as an act of "providing alternative ways of understanding 'truths' about the Rwandan genocide" (2010: 393). However, Rwafa's overall impression of the use of documentary as a stylistic choice of the representation of genocide in this

film is that it promotes "a Eurocentric perspective which does not allow the voices of surviving victims to narrate their side of the story" (2010: 393).

Unlike *A Good Man in Hell*, whose choice of representation is documentary, Rwafa argues that *Hotel Rwanda* explains the Rwandan genocide using ethnicity as the main cause. Rwafa critiques this film's mode of representation of genocide arguing that it perpetuates the ideology of portraying one ethnic group (Tutsi) as sole victims of the genocide. This portrayal, according to Rwafa, is revised in *Sometimes In April* where many characters react to genocide in a variety of ways. Rwafa's reading of this film is that it relies on "the spectacle of excess" (2010: 397) which is defined by Ndebele 1991, as quoted by Rwafa, to imply the dwelling on "the most startling or shocking events in which 'it is the manifest display of violence and brutality that captures the imaginations of the spectators" (2010: 397). Excess signification in the film, according to Rwafa, takes place through human corpses strewn all over the streets. These spectacles "show the horror of genocide and thereby create sentimentalism…which is a language of visual culture and is evident through the characters' clothes that are imagined as rags to show that the social fabric in Rwanda has been tattered and reduced to rags" (2010: 398). The unique mode of representation of genocide, as Rwafa finally points out, is the one adopted by *"Keepers of Memory"* whereby representation involves the female voice that is neglected by the other films thereby giving female voices the chance to retell their story.

Rwafa's comparative study of the stylistic modes of representation of the genocide by the film genre enriches this study. While benefitting from Rwafa's findings, this study concentrates on the novelistic genre to analyze selected novels drawn from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan as primary texts to examine the relationship between the

narrative strategies employed by the writers in these texts to represent the past traumatic experiences and the imagination of nation formation in these societies.

Breed (2008) does a comparative study of the performance of nation building through theatre, the rewriting history project and the grassroots associations in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide. The study does an exploration of the role that theatre in Rwanda plays in providing a platform through which "the narrative of a re-imagined identity is performed on a national level through government sanctioned theatre companies …and the rewriting history project, and on a community level through grassroots associations" (2008: 33). The study examines how the three avenues that Breed has identified above have become a path for nation building in a post genocide Rwanda through providing a space "for perpetrators and survivors to weave new relationships" (2008: 33)

Breed studies the technique that two theatre companies namely: "Mutabaruka "by Kalisa Rugano and "Mashirika *theatre companies*" by Hope Azeda use in the propagation of nationhood in their presentations. Some of the techniques used by *Mutabaruka's* theatre presentations that Breed identifies include the use of the national flag costumes and the staging of a legendary tale of Rwandan heroes as a strategy aimed at rekindling memories of shared heroic historical moments. He captures the other trope used by this group during one of these performances in the following words:

> As part of the performance, the national ballet of Rwanda, costumed in the national flags colors…staged a legendary tale of Rwandan heroes. Reflecting the practice of traditional Intore dancers who performed in the kings courts, the dancers…compare the beauty of a cow and the beauty of a woman….The men occasionally break out in monologues of self-praise called Icyivugu, which are used to relay tales of heroism to the king ….In the background a chorus sings in praise of Rwanda, the land of a thousand hills. (2008: 35)

Breed reveals in his study that evoking of the past as a reference point for national pride is a technique that other theatre artists also use in imagining nationhood in Rwanda,

Breed also analyses *Mashirika's* production of "Rwanda My Hope" and points out that the play uses personal testimonies of survivors to appeal for reconciliation. The play, according to Breed, appeals for remembering the atrocities of genocide as a way of dealing with all the truth instead of engaging in selective memory.

In the study of the theatre groups, Breed draws a distinction between the national theatre groups and the grassroots theatre and reconciliation association. Breed points out the difference in the way the two groups inculcate nationhood in the audience:

> While the current government may construct a historical narrative by weaving together tales of a pre-colonial utopia, grassroots theatre groups use art making involving both perpetrators and survivors as a tool of reconciliation. In grassroots theatre, rhetoric is put into practice. At the grassroots/ community level, participants face and address the harsh reality that during the genocide, neighbors killed their neighbors, husbands killed their wives, and parents killed their own children (2008: 34).

Breed argues that at the grassroots level, perpetrators and victims live close together and theatre tries to thaw the mistrust and unease amongst themselves. Breed cites one survivor who confesses that theatre and music "allowed her a kind of personal psychic freedom and the opportunity to participate in nation building" (2008: 35). This confession by this survivor alludes to how through theatre, victims can cope with the trauma of genocide.

Overall, it is Breed's opinion that in Rwanda, as exemplified in the theatre groups analyzed, theatre helps in creating re-memory. In order for theatre to help in attaining reconciliation and nationhood, Breed recommends that it must be participatory and

not merely the recitation of government propaganda. Besides this, "in rewriting Rwandan history, it is important to note what is being forgotten or remembered through cultural performances and grassroots theatre" (2008: 46).

Breed's study examines the role that theatre, the rewriting history project and the grassroots associations play in the formation of collective memory in the aftermath of the traumatic experiences of war and genocide in Rwanda. This study argues that collective memories are linked with the formation of "imagined communities" and therefore analyses some selected novels to examine the representation of nation formation as implicated in the memories of the traumatic experiences created by the writers. An eclectic theoretical approach is used to study the primary texts

Breed (2008) concludes that theatre plays an important role in Rwandan nation building. Breed's definitive vision of imagined Rwandan nationhood is revealed as follows:

> "While the genocide was imagined and then enacted through the myth of long-tailed Tutsi cockroaches that were going to invade Rwanda to kill the Hutu, reconciliation may be imagined and enacted through the myth of a unified land of a thousand hills where Rwandans live side by side in unity with one language and one culture" (2008: 48).

Hitchcoff (2013) studies Gilbert Gatore's 2008 novel to explain the dilemma of the Rwanda genocide survivors. He argues that these survivors are torn between the desire to remember the genocide and the duty to forget it (in compliance with the government national discourse of forgiveness and forgetting). He proposes that the struggle between remembering and forgetting is the hallmark of the Rwandan society after the end of the genocide. Hitchcott further asserts that the text uses "the figure of invisible Rwanda to create a fictional exploration of the tension between official and

personal processes of remembering and in doing so explores the importance of building the future by working through the past" (2013: 87).

Hitchcott argues that Gatore in his novel takes a diametrically opposed position from that of the government' initiated ideology that delimits remembering to the collective experience, as his novel makes a critique of individual and societal forces that try to control traumatic memories. For example the character Isaro is uncomfortable at her adoptive parents' attempted refusal to allow her to moan and remember her dead relatives (2013: 82). Hitchcott critiques this manner in which survivors such as Isaro are supposed to "perform a narrative of forgetting" thereby pushing them to "a prison of pain, resentment and hatred" (2013: 83).

The position that Hitchcott advances is that this novel not only "demonstrates the importance of recovering and remembering the past", but also "emphasizes the role of the story teller in the process of recovery" (2013: 85). The other thing that Gatore's text does is to suggest that it is impossible to control the memories of trauma. Consequently, Hitchcott suggests that the author demonstrates that "stories need to be told in order to process the horror some would prefer to forget" (2013: 85). For Hitchcott, Gatore's text challenges the government ideology requiring forgetting of events of 1994 as a way of forging forward and reinventing the post genocide Rwanda. Hitchcott also proposes that Gatore's novel succeeds to challenge the Rwandan government's attempt to promote reconciliation and official memory at the expense of individual remembering. Hitchcott observes that this novel critiques the way official memory marginalizes individual memories through the promotion of duty to forget (86). This study benefits from Hitchcott's study of Gatore's text immensely. I explore how the selected writers use fiction to help the survivors and the society to explore their traumatic memories and remember certain characters, events and

situations that can be the locus point/s for the imagination of their shared communion. The study examines how the writers strive to construct collective memories through the coalescence of multiple individual narratives in the selected texts. It is also worthwhile to establish whether the writers appeal to forgetting as an avenue for the restoration of the fragmented sense of national belonging.

1.9.3 Review of related studies on texts from the Eastern African region

Simatei (2001) examines the concept of nation building within East African literature. He argues that the East African novelists who write after the advent of independence write in a spirit of disillusionment following the betrayal by the ruling class who are no longer interested in delivering the promises of independence to the citizens. The writers therefore, as he points out, contest the postcolonial nation-state leading to "a re-conceptualization not only of the postcolonial subject but also of the forces which condition that subjects continued servitude" (2001:15). Because of the disillusionment of the writers, Simatei argues that the project of representing "the fictive nation" (2001: 15) after independence "is posted not on an identity, but rather on a difference with the nationalist project" (2001: 15). Discourses on nation formation in post-independence East African writers, as Simatei argues, revolve on antagonizing the "national project" by triggering "the disparate and at times discordant identities and voices within the national space" (2001: 161).

According to Simatei, the African writer writes in a space held captive by the imperial forces that have played a big role in shaping this continent. His literary imagination is therefore "enacted in a space already delimited by imperial imagination." These circumstances, as Simatei argues, "conditions the unique and complex relationship between literary imagination and nation building" (2001: 21). Imagining nation in the

circumstances of an oppressive ruling class after independence becomes an exercise akin to staging a coup against the nation as authored by the ruling elite. In Simatei's assessment, nation formation, as imagined in the East African novel after independence has become a project rejecting the homogenized nation building endeavor by the nation-state

It is against this background that Simatei does a comparative study on perspectives of nation building in the East African novel among black East African writers, East African Indian authors and some East African women writers'. The Kenyan works that he considers in his study include *Voices in the Dark* by Leonard Kibera and *Matigar*i by Ngugi Wa Thiongo. Regarding *Voices in the Dark,* Simatei argues that Kibera disavows the national project after independence given the manner in which it sidelines the freedom fighters in the nation formation project. He argues that "Kibera demonstrates the failure of nationalist objectives to achieve individual rights for all. The nation promotes neo-colonial interests and cannot therefore uphold the history of decolonization as its history" (2001: 53).

In his analysis of *Matigari*, Simatei argues that Ngugi discredits the nation-state in Kenya by "imagining a counter-nation" (2001: 56) in the text. This is because the nation-state has subverted "genuine nationalist culture and history" it has become "a neo-colonial instrument" and therefore cannot be the instrument for authoring "a national identity and culture"(2001: 57).

The East African Indian texts that Simatei studies include *The Gunny Sack* and *The Book of Secrets* by M.G Vassanji, and Goan Peter Nazareth's *The General is Up* and *In A Brown Mantle.* In these texts, Simatei's explores the representation of an Indian

society that is sidelined from the national project despite having made a contribution in the fight against colonialism.

Simatei also studies some three East African women writers' perspectives on nation building with the intention of finding out how they supplement " the search for a just society through a foregrounding of women's struggle for freedom from both oppressive patriarchal and political structures" (2001: 131). His study comes with varying conclusions. In *Coming to Birth*, for example, he argues that Oludhe narrates nation building from the perspective of the woman. He notes that the author conflates the story of the nation and that of the individual to present the disillusionment of independence at individual level. Therefore, as Simatei proposes, this novel bears "fictional constructions of the 'coming to Birth' of the Kenyan nation" (2001: 134).

This study benefits from Simatei's insights about the various models adopted by writers in the representation of nation building in the East African novel. However, the main thrust of Simatei's study entails the examination of the novelistic imagination of nation building in the East African novel after independence in a space held captive by the post-independence bourgeoisie nation-state.

The postcolonial environment of Simatei's study has certain similarities with the setting of this study. However, the novelistic imagination of nation formation in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan takes place in the background of the rapture of social relations caused by the trauma of ethnically instigated civil wars and genocide. The problematic of imagining nation formation in this background places unique demands on the writer in the search for an appropriate narrative mode to represent the past traumatic atrocities. This study therefore sought to examine how the writers undertake this enterprise without propagating further trauma in the process.

The study uses an eclectic theoretical approach that includes aspects of postcolonial theory, trauma theory and semiotics. It also utilizes Benedict Anderson's ideas on nationalism and imagination of the nation and makes connections with the traumatic experiences of Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan in order to explain how the writers have interpreted those experiences into narrative language to narrate nation formation in these societies.

Nyairo and Ogude (2003) study the manner in which the music of Nairobi city Ensemble (Ka Boum Boum) represents identity and articulates the Kenyan nation within the music genre. They explore how this music provides the metaphor and idioms with which to grapple with the challenges of contemplating the post-colonial Kenyan identity. They assess the central role that popular culture has played as "a major site of political and social negotiation in Africa" (2003: 3). According to them, music has become a powerful avenue used by the national bourgeoisie both as a tool for power brokering and the perpetuation of the ideologies of the nation-state as authored by the bourgeoisie.

They aver that some of the song-texts produced by this group allude to ethnic consciousness as a way of "reconstituting identity in a post colony" through an appeal to "the return to both the distant and the more immediate past" (2003: 3). They also argue that the overt ethnic stereotypes that are prevalent in a number of songs in the album are a strategy by the songwriters in "the making and reconstructing of cultural identity through difference, as a way of defining the self as opposed to the other" (2003: 3).

Regarding the issue of the role that Kaboum Boum plays in representing the idea of the nation, they propose that this music succeeds "to dramatize the actual disavowal

of the nation-state as authorized by the post-colonial leadership, in order to expose the complex and contradictory nature of the Kenyan nation – to point out its own antinomies" (2003: 3). The songs, as the two critics point out, exploit old themes of the 1960s and the 1970s and imbue them with "contemporary relevance" thereby constituting a kind of Kenyanness" whose national character is depicted in images of "docile urban workers, hustling urbanites …and intense class differentiation." (2003: 14). Ultimately, as they point out, the songs suggest that to claim membership of the Kenyan nation entails being alert to an idyllic past, being conscious of the present rot and looking ahead to the future.

In general, the study by Nyairo and Ogude discusses how music has been used as a genre to grapple with the imagination/contemplation of the post-independence Kenyan nation. Among the forces that they identify as playing a significant role in shaping the imagination of Kenyan nationhood include urbanization, and class differentiation. There are additional forces involved in shaping the imagination of nation formation in the current study. The trauma of wars and genocide thoroughly fractures societal relations and is difficult to represent through fiction. For this reason, this study examines how the writers use fiction as a representation mode in their attempt to imaginatively represent nationhood. Additionally, this study is different from Nyairo and Ogude's because the primary texts studied are novels. The study employs an eclectic theoretical model to read the representation of nation formation as implicated in texts drawn from societies fractured by the trauma of ethnically instigated wars and genocide.

Ndogo (2013) does a comparative study of the autobiographical works of four Kenyan writers namely: Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, Ngugi Wa Thiongo, Bethwel Ogot and Wangari Maathai, to determine how these writers construct the self and merge it with

the narrative of the nation. He also evaluates how these writers "utilize memory and other narrative tropes as means of reconstructing the past as well as constituting identity" (2013: 17). Besides this, he also engages with the manner in which the 'self' and "the prevailing socio-political contexts "converge and influence each other in the process of writing 'self'. He argues that the authors under study have succeeded to "engage with the official history or 'the grand narrative of the nation by intertwining it with their personal stories." In so doing, they not only "deconstruct that history but also invent versions of self and nation by linking personal histories with the grand narrative of post-independent Kenya" (2013: 17).

Ndogo's interest in the discussion of the conceptualization of the nation by the writers under his study has more to do with how those imaginations impact in the construction and representation of the self. This study is different because it foregrounds the discussion of the representation of nation formation as impacted on by the traumatic experiences of wars and genocide in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. The other difference between this study and Ndogo's is that I rely on fictional novels from Rwanda Burundi and South Sudan while Ndogo's primary texts are autobiographical and drawn from Kenya. Overall, this study benefits immensely from Ndogo's findings with regard to how writers imagine their nations and his conclusions on how the writers in his study have gone about doing this illuminate the arguments that we advance in this research.

1.9.4 Review of related studies on texts from elsewhere in Africa

Odhiambo (2009) undertakes a comparative study that evaluates Butake's vision of nation-ness as presented in his two plays namely *Family Saga* and *Betrothal without Libation*. His study draws a structural parallel between the Romantic genre and

Butake's plays and likens Butake's style to the Romantic poets. Odhiambo considers the nation projected in the two plays as being romantic and utopian. The focus of his study of the two plays is to answer the following questions:

> How does Butake use imaginative writing …to bring into presence that which does not exist, to bring into the region of possibility that which is yet to exist, such as the imagined postcolonial Cameroon nation and nationness? What exactly does literary imaginative vision in the two plays mean? (2009: 161).

Odhiambo reckons that the problem of nationhood in Cameroon is too complex to grapple with using Butake's "Simplistic resolution(s) preferred within the realm of dramatic fiction" (2009: 162). He points out that the vision in the two plays is utopian and romanticized, "a kind of desire or a wish to transfigure the sense of nation-ness to some kind of re-imagined 'Edenic wordings'" (2009: 161). Odhiambo suggests that Butake's obsession with the realization of his vision in these texts makes him ignore the strains and worries that have riddled the Cameroonian nation, thereby acting as bottlenecks to the realization of nation-ness in this country. Drawing a parallel between the textual structure of the plays and the romantic genre Odhiambo observes that:

> Deploying a textual structure, not too dissimilar to that of the romantic type, Butake therefore creates polarities in his imaginary worldings, with protagonists-heroes who seem to articulate his vision of the nation elevated to an upper world and those seen as antagonist to the vision relegated to the lower world….it is in the privileging of the enlightenment and modernity in this play that Butake's vision of the nation is particularly interpreted as romanticized, a vision that obviously obliterates the more complex and dynamic processes of the nation formation in the post colony: the role of colonial legacy and politics of ethnic patronage and material culture. (2009: 167)

Odhiambo's position is that this plays' dramatic structure serves Butake's vision of the imagined nation quite appropriately as it advances his romanticized vision. As he further posits, the plays' dramatic structure "dichotomizes the nation into the upper,

modern, urban and cosmopolitan against the lower, traditional, village, and rural to lead his readers to accept his romanticized vision of the imagined nation" (2009: 165). Consequently, Butake's envisioned nation in this play,according to Odhiambo, is that which is ordered along the Elissa's family which bears attributes of being " interethnic, "urbane, western, educated , modern, liberal, democratic, and gender sensitive" (2009: 166). Odhiambo contends that Butake's construction of "spatial polarities" in this play serves to "privilege the modern as the legitimate vision in nation formation" (2009: 166)

Regarding *Family Saga,* Odhiambo notes that unlike *Betrothal without Libation*, Butake "experiments with other structures" such as the use of allegory. The vision of nation in this play, as Odhiambo contends, "Is premised in the anticipated transcendence of the occupants of the lower worlds…who need to overturn the ubiquitous influence of the invisible imperial powers in the postcolonial period" (2009: 168). He submits that in this play "Butake conflates myth and history to show that Cameroon was one nation before its contact with the colonial agents" and that "the betrayal of the principles of the contract of the re-unification should not be allowed to break the nation. This according to Odhiambo's argument is because "the nation goes much further back in history before the coming of colonial powers" (2009: 170).

Odhiambo's reading of Butake's plays is very vital for this study as it discusses how narrative technique in Butake's plays reveals the playwrights vision of nation formation. In this regard, his study examines the parallels in the structural outlay between Butake's plays and the Romantic genre and makes the conclusion that the similarities apparent speak to Butake's romanticized vision for nation building in the

texts. This study employs an eclectic approach to theory to discuss the vision/s for nation formation in the background of traumatic experiences of war and genocide. For the reason that trauma poses challenges in fictionalization, I use semiotics to read the signs and images that the writers use to infuse new meanings of the past traumatic experiences of these societies to orchestrate new post-traumatic affiliations in the societies. This study benefits immensely from his analysis of the two Cameroonian plays but concentrates on the evaluation of the narrative strategies used in the novelistic form to narrate nation formation in situations where repetitive ethnic wars have fractured social relations and destroyed trust among members of society..

Elizabeth (2014) does a comparative and stylistic study of the novels by Nadine Gordimer (*None to Accompany Me),* Zakes Mda (Ways *of Dying*) and Ivan Vladislavic's (*The Folly*) focusing on the authors' depiction of "the nation's transition beyond apartheid" in these novels through the deployment of "the language and imagery of architecture" (2014: 75). She advances the argument that the three novels under study "although markedly different in form and style…imagine national recovery by figuratively conceiving of the state as a residence devised to house and incorporate a divided body politic" (2014: 76). She points out that the architectural imagery of the novels succeeds to "describe both nation and constitution alike." It is her opinion that the three novels portray the apartheid nation as "a compromised structure in need of a transfer or reconstruction." She further holds that these authors " all enlist the architectural metaphor to grasp the stakes and demands of nation building, and they do so in terms that simultaneously evoke the parallel labor of transformative constitutionalism" (2014: 91).

In this literary stylistic study, Elizabeth argues that for any emergent independent state " constitution writing has been a primary vehicle for formalizing and celebrating the nations sovereignty and self-determination just like constitutionalism has been vital to generating the perception of democratic membership and belonging in many nation-states" (2014:75). She lauds the critical role that the South African constitution has played in transforming the nation beyond apartheid and helped to forge post-apartheid South African democracy. This glorification of the constitution, as she continues to posit, has however not only been done within the legal and political domain but also "in popular imaginings of the document" (2014: 76).

Elizabeth's study is pivotal to this study as it sheds light on the imagination of South African nationhood in the backdrop of the experiences of apartheid. However, apartheid fragmented society through racial segregation while the societal fragmentation in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan is caused by internally instigated ethnic wars and genocide. This study therefore examines the imagination of nation formation in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan, where ethnic wars have eroded trust at individual and societal levels leading to the fragmentation of the assumed existent bonds. Imaginatively representing nationhood in this environment makes peculiar demands on the writers' narrative mode because the writers stand the risk of provoking further societal tear in their representation. This study discusses the narrative strategies used by the writers and how they are implicated in the representation of nation formation in the selected texts.

Gagiano Annie (2004) studies the contributions of three South African writers to "the formation of notions of national identity, or their rejection, in post-1994 South Africa." The three authors include Coetzee, Wicomb, Duiker and Langa. Gagiano points out the temptation to resolve "the fissures of apartheid's unjust, 'separate

development' through a project of enforced homogenization" (2004: 812). This project, according to Ingrid de Kok, as cited by Gagiano, comes to realization through the creation of a grand narrative and the repression of all other post-apartheid nation formation narratives. According to Gagiano, the novels analyzed show a re-imagination of the manner in which South Africans perceive themselves as a people away from the old pre-apartheid models.

Gagiano argues that the imagination and representation of the post-apartheid South African nation must include the viewpoint of well-established authors such as Coetzee and other authors. Just as the state can hijack and homogenize the nation formation narrative, it is Gagiano's opinion that privileged literary works perform the same error of legitimizing an "official and reductive master narrative" (2004: 813) while subordinating other narratives and their perceptions of nation formation. An example that Gagiano supplies of a privileged text is J.M Coetzee's *Disgrace, which* had achieved both local and international fame for its consideration as being "representative of the new South Africa" (2004: 814). Gagiano regards the image of the new South Africa as represented in the text as erroneous since the novel " endorses and legitimizes a number of prevalent stereotypes- particularly in its depiction of racial identities (and shifting roles) within the dispensation following the formal end of apartheid rule" (2004: 814).

Gagiano asserts that the conceptualization of the new nation of South Africa using the old stereotypical models is outdated but must accommodate new imaginations as evidenced in the three novels since "the three novels …take what are primarily black communities of various kinds (and variously constituted) as representative of present-day South African realities, issues and questions" (2004:815). Coetzee's novel: *Disgrace* is no longer reliable to dominate the national imaginary as Gagiano notes.

Therefore, the three novels subvert any "hegemonic old or new South African nationalism" (2004:815) They open up new ways of representing and understanding South African nationalism. Gagiano notes:

> These texts all depict other possibilities of human solidarity than the narratives of citizenship. In their shifting of boundaries, their dissolution of old rigidities and particularly in their refusal of the almost proverbial victim-or-resister roles for black characters, novelists like these three have started telling strange new stories. The stories are strange because the pasts called to mind are of the kind formerly obscured by the grand chessboard narratives of apartheid and because the present or the future envisioned in such novels illustrates what Mia Couto, in a memorable phrase, has called ' deep complex meshing of cultures. (2004: 816).

Gagiano observes that each of the three novels has its own unique way of portraying nationhood in South Africa. For example, Zoe Wicomb's *David's Story* "attempts to fill historical gaps and to redress some of the imbalances of previous historiography" (2004: 816). What the author does in *David's Story* as Gagiano observes is to engage in a "re-storying venture that questions the ideal of nationhood and national identity or belonging" (2004: 817). Sello Duiker's novel on the other hand searches for "new myths and a new frame of identity" and "rejects old racial categories." The text refuses to- wholesomely blame apartheid for "the unanchored quality of lives like Tshepo's" (2004: 819). The text also sets out to explore identities and a different type of nationhood.

As for Mandla Langa's novel: *The Memory of Stones*, Gagiano argues that the novel takes up "the uncomfortable issue of black-on-black betrayal, co-optation and predatory behavior." This novel subverts the usual stark, black-and-white opposition of most apartheid-era narratives. Ultimately, it is Gagiano's opinion that the three novels succeed to provide alternative voices to the privileged and prevailing narratives of nationhood. By so doing, the novels free society from the tyranny of

homogenizing narratives on nationhood conceived either by the state or by other privileged writers. In the process of doing this, Gagiano notes the re-discovery of South Africa "as a space protecting its multiple and shifting identities within a cluster of cultures" (2004: 824). Additionally, these novels discredit the old models of nation conceptualization through singular terms: victim vs. oppressor and present multiple ways of engaging with the nation. They reflect that there are multiple ways of representing nationhood. These ways are different from those espoused by their predecessors who viewed nation formation as an anti-apartheid regime project.

Gagiano's study is important because it acknowledges the possibility of writers to have new imaginations in their representation of nationhood. In situations where the trauma of wars and genocide has raptured the assumed existent social relations, writers play a significant role in nation building. This study therefore examines how the writers from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan have endeavored to construct memories of the past traumatic events to inculcate nationalism in these societies. The representations of nationhood within the settings where these imaginations take place make additional demands to the writers as opposed to the South African society that is the environment of Gagiano's Study. This is because apartheid relied on racial segregation to fragment society while the societal tear evident in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan emanates from internally instigated ethnic wars and genocide.

1.9.5 Related studies on the Holocaust, the Cambodian and the Lebanon Genocide

Tuon (2015) studies Him's autobiography and examines her attempt to recover and reclaim the history and culture of Cambodia through the autobiographical genre. Cambodia experienced genocide of over 1.7 million people killed by the Khmer

Rouge led by Pol pot (1975-1979). The Khmer Rouge believed that capitalistic western ideas had soiled the citizens of Cambodia and it set out to "clean" Cambodia of the soiled elements. Doctors, lawyers, Christians, Buddhists and Muslims citizens were marked as bearers of these western traits. In its effort to create an equal society, the Khmer Rouge rolled out a re-education program meant to create a classless society without competition, in which everyone worked for the common good. It is during the enforcement of this program that more than 1.7 million people were killed through work, starvation and torture (Akiki 2015) Tuon argues that Him's autobiography in *when Broken Glass Floats:*

> Demonstrates the intersection of the personal and the political. In writing about her traumas, Him also writes her life, reconstructing the memories and stories of the genocide victims, rebuilding a world that contains Cambodian culture and tradition and ultimately seeking justice in her own "personal court". She is writing against what the Khmer Rouge stood for; silence, isolation and death (2015: 587).

Tuon observes that Him explores and exposes the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge on the Cambodian people. Cruel and violent scenes are replayed with images such as those of the "weak and sick sent to die in hospital, where patients and rats struggle for life….Tuon argues that "Him's autobiography recounts the silenced voices and memories of family members and friends and gives them their destroyed humanities back" (2015:590).

Elaine Scarry and Judith Herman, as read by Tuon have observed that trauma, such as the one caused by the genocide of Cambodia, succeeds to disconnect the victims from their sense of self and the rest of humanity. "The individual's humanity is erased during the moment of trauma… and his/her point of view counts for nothing" (2015: 592) in the presence of the oppressing force. It is therefore Tuon's opinion that Him's autobiography avails an opportunity for the victims' opinion to count. Further, Tuon

states that “in writing about family, friends, community, the very things that make up the self, *when Broken Glass Floats* is reestablishing that connection with others and giving victims the dignity and the humanity that Khmer Rouge took from them (2015: 607).

Tuon asserts that the affirmation of Him’s humanity through this autobiography gives her an opportunity to remember the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge as a way of preserving these memories, to produce a common history for all Cambodians. Tuon also posits that Him’s autobiography introduces a new strand of literary writings in Cambodian literature. This is because the autobiography breaks away from the traditional Cambodian literary tradition whose literature was “always invested in social and political issues” and was always “a literary tradition provided by those in power with literary endeavors being motivated by political desires for national solidarity against foreign forces such as those of the French and Vietnamese” (2015: 590). Ultimately, Tuon suggests that this autobiography introduces a new “narrative impulse” (2015: 590) whose desire is “to tell one’s personal story that succeeds to heal and recreate one’s life and that of the society.

This research benefits from Tuon’s study to carry an analysis of novels written in circumstances with traumatic repercussions similar to the Cambodian genocide. The trauma of the cruelty and violence depicted in Him’s autobiography that Tuon studies is evidenced in the texts under this study. Nevertheless, in the case of this study, this inhumanity has been meted to the people both by government instigated machinations and ethnically motivated operations. Consequently, the resultant societal tear and mistrust poses enormous challenges especially to fictional writers regarding the technique to use in articulating these issues to visualize nation formation. This study utilizes an eclectic approach to theory to study how the writers imagine the

reestablishment of lost connections in Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan. The study concentrates on the novels from these societies but benefits from Tuon's study, which is autobiographical.

Mostafa (2009) not only studies how novelists fictionalize civil war, traumatic experiences, trauma and memory but also how such representations contribute to living through the Lebanese civil war. Mostafa explores and undertakes a comparative study of the representations of the Lebanese civil wars in Khour's two novels *Gates of the City* and *The White Faces* and Rabi Jabir's novel *Raif Rizqallah in the mirror*. He observes that 'trauma fiction' does not comply with any conventional or linear type of narrative "since the traumatic experience… defies linear time through interruptions and interference of the flashbacks and other traumatic disorders" (2009: 209).

Mostafa argues that the three novels have interrelated themes that center on trauma, memory and identity and that the novelists have presented these themes by structuring their novels differently to reflect " the profound impact of the civil war on shaping Beirut's past and the present history as well as its people's senses of identity and relationship to place" (2009: 234). Mostafa suggests that *Gates of the City* has structurally used a surrealistic form while *The White Faces* and *Ralf Rizqallah have* adopted a detective story line.

With regard to the vision that the three novels convey about a future Beirut nation after the war, Mostafa observes thus:

> The three novels seek to explore new spatial, social and political dimensions to the relationship between the estranged individuals and the city. The two novelists perceive the past or the war story as incomplete and indeterminate hence the past will always survive in the present, and the present should always intervene in the past and resurrect it by rescuing phenomena of the past from being lost or forgotten. (2009: 210).

According to Mostafa, the role of certain traumatic events and "how those traumatic events impact in shaping the protagonists' identities during and after the civil war" (p.210) will determine the new relationship that the survivors will have with Beirut. Consequently, Mostafa is suggesting that the narrative representations of the Lebanon civil war are critical in nation formation since these narratives will weave the civil war traumatic events and then shape them into being "part of the cultural history of the civil war and the post war era" (2009: 211).

Mostafa notes that differences in the structural outlay of the narrative of the three novels are a way of implying that "perhaps there is no one way to capture the totality or any coherent narrative of this war" (2009: 213). Instead "the two novels insist on reconfiguring the past and unmasking the present in order to be able to move into the future" (2009: 214).

This study sought to examine the narrative strategies that the writers in the selected texts have used to represent and envision nation formation in the background of the traumatic experiences of wars and genocide of these societies. The study benefits a lot from the findings of Mostafa (2009) to examine the different structural outlays adopted by the writers in representing these catastrophes. The study examines the narrative strategies and their implications in the imagination of nationhood in these societies

Forsyth (2008) undertakes a comparative thematic and stylistic examination of the artistic journey that Miller has had to travel through time and through his writings to overcome the fictional paralysis or what he refers to as "trauma of articulation" (2008: 43) that curtails writers who attempt to represent events surrounding the holocaust. The Holocaust refers to the Genocide orchestrated by Adolf Hitler and his Nazi

regime that oversaw the murder of about six million Jews. Through a comparative study of Miller's works Forsyth concludes that in *After the Fall* (1964), *Incident at Vinchy* (1964) and *Broken Glass* (1994), Miller has had to try different modes of representing the holocaust because of the complexity of this undertaking. Forsyth notes:

> Throughout his career, Millar was to vacillate between producing symbol-laden dramatic mediations (in *After the Fall)* and graphic flashback re-enactments of detainee/concentration camp life that centered upon key semi-fictional protagonists (Incidents at Vinchy and Playing for Time), until in 1994 he was to produce his most 'successful', if I can use that word in relation to the Holocaust and its representation, *Broken Glass* (2008: 43).

Forsyth considers Miller's two plays as "humanistic and even universalist-for they both engage the audience in an experiential consideration of the human condition" (2008: 47).

According to Forsyth, Miller's two plays: "*After the fall*", and "*Broken Glass*" succeed to represent the genocide because "a second generation writer" whose "trauma of representation" (2008:48) has been diminished through the passage of time writes them long after the Holocaust. Such a writer, as Forsyth argues, has a window to experiment with other modes of representation of the Holocaust. Forsyth notes that "After *the Fall* and *Broken Glass* "reflect an approach to the Holocaust that is replete with narrative and discursive strategies, including autobiography nostalgia, recollection, anecdote, fact, fiction and imagination" (2008:52). He also underscores the change of emphasis, tone, form and style in both plays. The "first generation writers" however, as Forsyth points out, have no such narrative leeway and are in too much dilemma that they cannot break from "the constraining, over determined and thus ultimately illusory realist project to mimetically represent or transcribe the holocaust" (2008: 52).

Ultimately, Forsyth argues that these two plays do not endorse " the concept of a fixed and static past reality to which we can...make reference" rather, they convey " the traumatic relationship we have and will continue to have with the Holocaust, by experientially engaging the audience in a dramaturgical recognition of what it means to remember" (2008: 53). This study benefits from Forsyth's observations. The scope of this study is limited to the explication of the narrative strategies that the first generation of writers from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan use to represent the atrocities of these societies in their imagination of nation formation. Subsequent studies can be carried on second-generation writers to examine the extent to which their "trauma of representation" (Forsyth 2008:48) has been diminished allowing them the opportunity to experiment with other modes of representation.

The literature review undertaken above shows scholarly awareness of the traumatic nature of experiences such as genocide and the challenges of representing them. Some studies reviewed: Applegate (2012), Rwafa (2010), Breed (2008), Hitchcott (2009), Small (2007), Elizabeth (2014) have discussed the various narrative modes employed to represent these traumatic experiences. However, these studies are not concerned with the explication of nation formation as implicated in those representational modes. Other studies reviewed: Tanganika (2001), Simatei (2001), Nyairo and Ogude (2003), Ndogo (2013), Odhiambo (2009), Gagiano (2004) have addressed a wide range of issues on nationhood. However, they have not foregrounded the discussion of the relationship of the representation of nation formation as impacted on by the traumatic experiences of wars and genocide. This study benefits from all these discussions to examine the representation of the past traumatic experiences in narrative in the imagination of nation formation in selected texts from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

The role of theory, according to Tyson (2006: 417) is to help us "to see connections where we didn't know they existed." This study analyzed six selected texts from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan to examine the relationship between traumatic experiences of war and genocide and the writers' imagination of nation formation. To achieve this objective, the study adopted an eclectic approach to theory that includes aspects of postcolonial theories, trauma theory, semiotics and Benedict Anderson's ideas of nationalism and imagination of the nation. Because the selected texts in this study deal with postcolonial traumatic experiences, their readings and analysis were guided by trauma theory. Additionally, since the interpretation of the representation of nation formation as implicated in the postcolonial traumatic experiences requires paying attention to the writers' employment of language, the study inclined on semiotics to interpret the assemblage of signs used in the texts to represent events that are hard to fictionalize. Finally, the memories and meanings created by the postcolonial traumatic experiences of war and genocide are capable of creating an "imagined community" of people who feel traumatized by a shared experience of pain. Additionally, the writers' imaginative representation of the past traumatic events has the capacity to evoke connectedness in the society and the survivors. Therefore, the study benefited from Anderson's ideas of nationalism and imagination of the nation in the reading and analysis of the representation of nation formation in the selected texts.

The selected texts in this study fall within the category of postcolonial literatures. Ashcroft Bill, Garth Griffins and Hellen Tiffin (1995: 2) define such writings as "those literatures written in English in formerly colonized societies." Therefore, the reading and analysis of the representation of nationhood in the environment of the

trauma of war in postcolonial societies, invites the application of postcolonial theory. Gilbert, (1997) defines postcolonial criticism as the set of reading approaches helpful in deciphering the predicament of formerly colonized societies. He notes that it comprises of a set of approaches whose preoccupation is the reflection upon:

> the relations of domination and subordination-economic, cultural, and political—between(and often within) nations, races, or cultures, which characteristically have their roots in the history of modern European colonialism and imperialism and which, equally characteristically, continue to be apparent in the present era of neo-colonialism (1997: 12).

Postcolonial theory helps this study to understand the predicament of achieving nationhood in the environment of colonial and neocolonial ideologies responsible for fomenting societal fragmentation in the postcolonial societies of the selected texts.

Frantz Fanon, whose thoughts on post colonialism inform this study, has made substantial contributions "for contemporary theorizing about racism, anti-colonialism, third world nationalism, and post coloniality" (Hawley, 2001: 162). In *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963), Fanon discusses the challenges of achieving national consciousness in the decolonized peoples. He explains the pitfalls to nationalism in the emergent nations as stemming from, among other reasons, "the global contestation for power between capitalism and socialism" (Hawley 2001: 166). Fanon (1963) argues that the achievement of national consciousness after independence is an illusion impeded by racism and tribalism. He explains at length the inherent weaknesses in the middle class who take charge of leadership after colonialism and their inadequacy to mobilize the spirit of national consciousness in the masses. He believes that the new ruling bourgeoisie has no economic power or knowledge on the management of a country resulting in the collapse of the clamor for national consciousness of the masses that then retreat to their shallow cocoons of tribe. He

allegorizes the inadequacies of one of such rulers who rise to power after independence to explain the bottlenecks to attaining national consciousness. Fanon, (1963: 168) laments:

> For years on end after independence has been won, we see him, incapable of urging on people to a concrete task, unable really to open the future to them or of flinging them into the path of national reconstruction, that is to say, of their own reconstruction; we see him reassessing the history of independence and recalling the sacred unity of the struggle for liberation.

Because my study is about the representation of nation formation as implicated in the traumatic historical events of three postcolonial societies, therefore the discussions of Fanon, (1963) on "the pitfalls of national consciousness" in postcolonial societies are handy in reading and analysis of the challenges of nationhood in the independent societies of the selected texts. The study specifically examines how the writers imaginatively conceptualize the actualization of national consciousness amidst the drawbacks of the traumatic experiences of wars and genocide.

For the reason that the selected texts in this study deal with postcolonial traumatic experiences, therefore, trauma theory guided the reading and analysis of the texts. Trauma theory, according to Kurtz, (2014: 423) is a series of "guiding concepts" on trauma emanating from "Freudian psychoanalysis, deconstruction and the Holocaust experience." He further notes that many other theorizations of psychological trauma have emerged since the nineteenth century, thus broadening the conceptualization and understanding of trauma. In general, there is a consensus from these different theorizations that trauma disrupts memory thereby curtailing narration. This is very important for the study because deciphering how trauma operates helps to analyze the psychological and fragmenting effects of the traumatic events of war and genocide on the survivors, the societies and their nationhood. The awareness of the drawbacks to

narrating traumatic events also enables the study to read and analyze the technique employed by the writers in capturing these events into narratives representative of the quest for nation formation.

The following theorizations of psychological trauma assist this study in conceptualizing and understanding the operations of trauma to apply in the reading of the primary texts. The trauma of war manifests itself at individuals and collective level. Robson (2004:1) argues that trauma at the individual level causes a "dissociation" of the brain of the victims from the experience/s thus producing "multiple personalities in the process." At the collective/ societal level, traumatic experiences produce a cultural trauma that leaves, to borrow Jeffrey C. Alexander *et al*., (2004:1) words, "indelible marks" in the "group consciousness marking their memories forever and changing their future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways." These statements suggest that the trauma of war and genocides has the potential to perpetuate the disconnection of liaisons at individual and societal level. The study therefore employs this theory to analyze how trauma at individual levels coalesces to destroy the members' sense of having a shared affiliation/s. Trauma theory helps this study to read the connections between the traumatic experiences and the psychological impact of those experiences to the individuals' and the societies' sense of oneness.

According to Herman, (1997: 60) traumatic experiences lead to "the formation of a collective identity and the construction of collective memory." This means that recollections of war have the potential to create "imaginary communities' of pain. In this study, I examine what memories of the traumatic experiences that the writers

create in their narratives and how those new memories assist to crystalize new national liaisons.

The proposals of Eyerman (2001: 61) that the writer is an interceding agency between the traumatic past and the present whose aim is "to reconstitute or reconfigure a collective identity, so as to repair a tear in the social fabric" are important to this study. Just like Eyerman, Robson (2004) suggests that the survivor needs assistance to transform the traumatic experience into narrative as the only way of restoring his/her identity. This study therefore uses the ideas above to examine how the writers attempt to re-order the past traumatic experiences into narratives geared towards restoring the sense of a shared communion in the survivors' psyche.

Rothberg (2000) has also theorized on trauma arguing that fictionalization of traumatic experiences is problematic because trauma is extreme and unintelligible. This therefore implies that the fictional writer must search for an appropriate narrative approach to represent traumatic events. Because my study examines the narrative strategies that the writers use to structure these events into narratives of these societies' search for nationhood, therefore the ideas of Rothberg about the pitfalls of the fictionalization of traumatic experiences help in the reading and analysis of the technique employed by the writers in the selected texts.

In discussing the writers' representation of nation formation as implicated in the postcolonial traumatic experiences of these societies this study examines how the writers' employ language in this enterprise. The study therefore benefits from semiotics to read and analyze the assemblage of signs used in the texts in representing traumatic events that are hard to fictionalize. Consequently, the study benefits from the model supplied by Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure of what constitutes

signification. Saussure defined a sign as being made up of a 'signifier' and the 'signified'. For him, the link between the sign and the signified is psychological and the bond between the two occurs in the brain and is arbitrary. For Saussure (1916: 66) "the linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image. The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses." He therefore proposes that since the sign has "no natural connection with the signified" "(1916: 69), the meaning of the sign will continuously keep shifting during the course of its usage. This study uses the ideas of Saussure to analyze how the writers employ signs and infuse them with meanings meant to reconstruct the past traumatic events to restore the fractured societal relations. For the reason that language is a system of signification, as Saussure suggests, then the writer can use signs to create and construct reality. Chandler (2007: 25) has responded to Saussure's ideas about the power to use language to construct reality in the following words:

> The Sausserian model, with its emphasis on internal structures within a sign system, can be seen as supporting the notion that language does not reflect reality but rather constructs it. We can use language ' to say what isn't in the world, as well as what is. And since we come to know the world through whatever is we have been born into the midst of, it is legitimate to argue that our language determines our reality, rather than reality our language.

Echoing the ideas of Saussure, Chandler suggests, that "a text is an assemblage of signs (such as words, images, sounds and/or gestures) constructed (and interpreted) with reference to the conventions associated with a genre and in a particular medium of communication" (2002:3).

Since this study examines the representation of nation formation in the selected texts, it analyzed the signs, images, sounds, gestures and words employed by the writers to represent the trauma of these past traumatic events, which are problematic to

represent because they are extreme and incomprehensible (Rothberg 2000). Semiotics assisted this study, to borrow and paraphrase Chandler (2002), to become more aware of the mediating role of signs and of the roles played by others and ourselves in constructing social realities. Semiotics as a model for analyzing the writers' use of language to represent the traumatic events provided insights in reading the connections between the use of signs in the texts and the meanings intended. Through semiotics, in Chandler's opinion, writers get involved in meaning making because meaning changes and therefore the re-interpretation of traumatic past of these nations is achievable through different signs used by the writers' in their endeavor to represent nation formation. Because this study examines the meanings that the writers infuse to the past traumatic events to create favorable memories for nation formation, semiotics helps to analyze the signs that the writers deploy to achieve this objective.

Given that signs and codes, according to Chandler (2002: 26), play a big role in the creation of meaning and given that "they serve ideological functions," this study examined how the writers employ them in challenging and/or affirming the meanings of the past traumatic experiences of these societies in the representation of nation formation. This study examined the meanings of the new signs created by the writers. It also discussed how they construct reality using signs to narrate nation formation. Signs according to Chandler can be in the form of images, sounds, odors, flavors, acts or objects and they "have no intrinsic meanings but become signs when we invest them with meaning" (2002: 26). According to Hurwitz (1993: 15) through signs and communication, reality is constructed, produced, maintained, repaired and transformed. Semiotics was therefore a very important theoretical tool for this study.

Benedict Anderson's ideas of how nations are formed is fundamentally pertinent in this study. Anderson (1983) explains why and how people come to 'imagine'

themselves as members of a nation. He offers material and psychological explanations for the emergence of nationalism. He argues that through printing, nations came into being as others crumbled. He further suggests that 'Print capitalism' strengthened vernacular languages and many people got to 'imagine' nations. He submits that the development of print opened new avenues to "the whole new ideas of simultaneity" (1983:37) within societies. He goes on to argue that "besides the printing press, the rise in science, the exploration of the world helped reshape thinking and societies, and it "changed the appearance and state of the world". (1983:46). Because this study is about nation formation in the traumatized societies of the selected texts, then Anderson's ideas on how people imagine their shared communion help in the reading and analysis of the text. The study examines the image/s that the traumas of war/s engrain in the survivors' and societies' minds thus creating 'imagined communities' of pain. It uses Anderson's ideas to read the new 'imagined' affiliations that the writers create in the texts by reconstructing the past traumatic experiences. The study therefore deploys Anderson's ideas to examine how the imagination of the past traumatic events by the writers facilitates the survivors' conceptualization of having a shared communion/s.

For Anderson, the nation is an imagined artifact where "members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members …yet in the mind of each lives the image of their community" (1983:6). Anderson's ideas help the study in the analysis of how the writers imaginatively reconstruct the past traumatic events to create the sense of connectedness in the minds of the survivors. Anderson further believes that "since any community larger than the "primordial face-to-face contact" is imagined, communities are distinguished not by their "falsity/genuineness" but by the way in which they are imagined" (1983:40). According to Anderson, people get to

perceive themselves as a nation by virtue of the image that they have created in their minds about their allegiance to that nation much as they have not met face-to-face to discuss about their nationhood. The study applies Anderson's proposals to read the texts as platforms used by writers to interpret the past tramatic events with a bid to infuse them with new meanings meant to stimulate the development of new psychological interconnections in previously fragmented social relations.

Scholars such as Partha Chatterjee have critiqued Anderson's material and psychological explanations for the emergence and spread of nationalism. Chatterjee (1993) opposes Anderson's ideas that the nation is imagined form certain 'modular forms' in Western Europe, The Americas and Russia. He argues that African nationalism need not be deduced using the modular forms of the west. As he notes: " the most powerful as well as the most creative results of the nationalist imagination in Asia and Africa are posted not on an identity but rather on a difference with the 'modular forms' of the national society propagated by the modern west" (1983:5). According to Chatterjee, nations are imagined differently and there is no universal pattern on this process.

This study is aware of other discussions on nationhood within postcolonial societies. These scholarly thoughts on this subject enrich my engagement with the analysis of the representation of nation formation in the posttraumatic societies of the selected texts.

One of the key influential and relevant figures who have made tremendous contribution in the field of postcolonial theorization is Homi Bhabha. He is a renown theorist of post colonialism .He is notable, for example, for his prominent concepts on hybridity, mimicry and ambivalence, which have greatly shaped postcolonial

theorization. His concepts are a very important reference in postcolonial discussions on the relations between the colonized and the former colonizers.

This study benefits from Bhabha's ideas, which are an important reference in the discussion on the subject of nationhood within postcolonial societies. For Homi Bhabha (1990:294), the nation is incoherent and ambivalent and he describes it as "the event of the every-day." Because of this, he disputes Anderson's proposals that a nation has boundaries that end where other nations begin. He argues that marking a nation's boundaries is problematic because of "the ambivalent temporalities of the nation-space." (1990: 295) He argues further that the grand narrative of nation as perpetuated by the state is constantly undercut by "counter narratives of the nation that continually evoke and erase its totalizing boundaries- both actual and conceptual." He therefore disputes the existence of 'imagined communities' founded on the basis of "essentialist identities." (1990: 300). The texts in this study can be classified as counter narratives to the hegemonic narratives of the nation/s as perpetuated by the state machineries of these societies. These texts suggest new 'imagined communities' through which the survivors form identities that evoke new national liaisons

Yewah (2001:47) suggests that the nation should be abstracted through multiple theoretical models that portrays its complexity as "a contested referent" (Esonwanne), an "imagined community" (Anderson), "an imagined construct" (Paredes) and as he proposes, –"a contested construct." For Yewah, the notion held by Anderson that the nation can be imagined by focusing on its physical structure that is, as a landscape with fixed boundaries, is a misconception. The nation according to him is an "inscape, amorphous and fluid construct" (2001: 44) and cannot be imagined, like Anderson

proposes, as comprising of finite boundaries, "beyond which lies other boundaries." (2001:45) Yewah critiques the political leadership for falsely inculcating the notion that there is nation with boundaries. Writers such as Sony Labou Tansi, Ngugi Wa Thiongo and Nurrudin Farah, as Yewah posits, have challenged the notion of nation as envisaged by Anderson in their works and have de-centered the nation by questioning established national boundaries. Yewah notes, for example, that Nurrudin Farrah's *Maps* "transgresses all kinds of boundaries –social, gender, generational, identity and geographical- to show the idea of nation as having a shifting and unstable significance" (2001:45)

Yewah's idea of nation as a contested entity draws from his desire to distinguish it from the term community (Anderson's imagined community) since as he states; the term community "conjures up the idea of nation as a fixed physical space" (2001:46). For him, to view the nation as a construct "conveys the idea of the nation as an artificially made structure, and, therefore, as something that could be taken apart and reconstructed" (2001:48). To think of the nation as a construct, as Yewah continues to note, is to view it as "a construct of the mind, a mental structure in the process of mapping and re-mapping itself." (2001:48)

A different scholar, Joseph Clara (2001) envisages the possibility of conceptualizing an African nation regardless of the fluidity in national boundaries and cultural demarcations that pose contradictions and challenges to the imagination of such a nation. In his opinion, "the contradictions and differences that the nation attempts to remove are in fact constitutive of the concept of the nation" (2001:57). The possibility of conceptualizing a unified African nation, as he therefore points out, does not preclude the differences in ideological persuasion of its writers.

Krishna (2013) argues that the trajectory of the representation of nation formation in African literature reveals itself through the analysis of three categories of African writers. He advances the argument that "first and second generation" African writers have been "largely characterized by their commitment to decolonization, independence and the nation-state" (2013: 75) and have looked at nationalism through the literary lenses of an anti-colonial undertaking, an outlook that is quite different from the "third generation" writers. In comparing the so called " second and third generation " of African writers in respect to their imagination of the nation, Krishna argues:

> Whereas these earlier writers have been viewed as embracing the imagined community of the constructed colonial nation-state as a means of resistance, authors of third generation literature temporally and spatially displaced from the event of colonization and the turmoil of independence have been described as reflecting a more varied engagement with the nation. (2013: 75)

Krishna observes that recent scholarship has tended to categorize "third generation" African literature as being more preoccupied with an emphasis on "diasporic identity, migration, trans nationality, and globalization." He continues to point out that this category of literature has shown "a diminished concern with the colonial past" (2013: 74). He further observes that these categories of authors have been identified for their acquisition of "a creative identity" (2013: 74) that is very different from their predecessors. This is because, as he further argues, they have ceased to look at the problem of nation formation in Africa as a colonial construct but have shifted to explore the place of nationalism in a globalized transnational world. He therefore proposes that nation formation in the works of the "third generation" set of writers is shaped more by "contemporary notions of cosmopolitanism, globalization, nomadism, and liminality than their predecessors" (2013: 74). Such writers, as Krishna further

posits, question the "over-determined identity marks and their deconstruction of "totalities such as history, nation and gender…." (2013:74). He points out that the idea of nation in the contemporary African literature is both "variable and shifting, responding to its immediate circumstances and demonstrating the potency of novel paradigms of belonging" (2013:73). For him nation and nationalism in these texts reflects "a deep ambivalence that mobilized multiple affiliations and, nevertheless does not preclude belonging and commitment" (2013:73). This to him is a new vision of nationhood and national belonging that accepts the idea of nation but looks at it in a different light.

Krishna's final observations are that despite the change in the location of the "third generation" writers in relation to the nation, "the expansion of national commitment from a singular mode of affiliation to a site of plural belonging does not necessitate the wholesale disavowal of nation as a site of belonging and negotiation" (2013:75). Instead as he continues to argue, "the relationship between the individual and the nation creates the space in which a plurality of national belonging and becoming may co-exist, complicating the presentation of the nation and its imagined community as well as the very divisiveness of categories of self and nation" (2013:76). In conclusion, Krishna argues that there is a plural space in national commitment.

The other arguments about the representation of nation formation in the African novel are by Tagoe (2006) who suggests that Africa thrives in a globalized space and therefore the interpretation of nation formation in the African novel must take place with the forces of globalization in mind. He is of the view that the forces behind globalization and global re-alignment of nations are too complex to be grappled with by the old post-colonial "center-periphery" theoretical models and he suggests that there should be an "overhaul of analytical models that had conceived of society

almost exclusively in terms of the bounded nation-state" (2006: 95). In his opinion, the current and existing post-colonial literary theories are insufficient to persist as models in representing nation formation in literature in a globalized world. He argues that globalization has created new imaginary "trans-national landscapes" that cannot be ignored by African literature. One of his main concerns is how we can re-think the conjunction of nation, culture and narrative in a globalized world. Globalization, as he notes, has created a new discourse on global nations, or what he refers to as "post national global relations" (2006:94) which must be addressed alongside "those conceptions of nation and narrative that African literature has posited since its emergence" (2006:94). Tagoe also points out that the global theme can no longer hover on the fringes of the national narrative but is now at the centre of post-colonial theorization. Due to this, it is no longer tenable to perceive the nation as "a geographic and culturally integrated space" (2006:96). He therefore proposes that globalization has occasioned a rethink of the relationship between space, culture and nation.

1.11 Research Methodology

This is a qualitative library-based research that concentrates on the analysis of published selected primary texts drawn from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. It uses qualitative data contained in six selected novels. A close reading of the texts takes place to obtain information and to make a critical evaluation of the material there in. The study examines how the writers strive to construct representations of the past traumatic experiences of these societies in a bid to catalyze the re-emergence of a sense of communal belonging/s in the members of these societies. To achieve this, the reading of two novels from each of these countries takes place. A textual analysis that entails an analysis of how the writers structure their narratives to create the meanings

intended is undertaken. The study examines two novels from Rwanda: *The Hyenas Wedding* (2008) and *Broken Memory* (2011); two novels from Burundi: *Weep Not Refugee* (2012) and *Baho* (2016); and two novels from South Sudan: *The Mark (*2013) and *The Humanitarian* (2016).

In order to get diverse insights on how different writers from varied backgrounds conceptualize nation formation in these societies, three of the authors studied are indigenous while the other three are foreign nationals who do not hail from any of these societies. For the reason that traumatic experiences resist representation through narrative, the study examines how these two sets of writers circumvent these creative bottlenecks to imagine nationhood in these societies.

The selected texts are a representative sample of the novels authored about the trauma of ethnic based war and genocide in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. They have been selected because they address the trauma of the first generation of survivors with a first-hand experience of war and genocide in these societies. The writers of these texts are exploring how this group of people and their societies struggle to memorialize their catastrophic past. There are three key areas that the study pays attention to in this study. These include nation formation, narrative technique, and vision.

In order to discuss the writers' representation of nation formation, the study examines the re-enactment of characters, events and situations from the traumatic past in the novels. The study discusses how the writers go about creating the perception that war and genocide are disruptive episodes in the histories of these societies and that the sense of communal oneness need not be completely obliterated by the stain of war or " the alien evil thing" as Thon chooses to refer to war in *The Mark* by Deal (2013:1).

The study examines how the writers use different strategies to help the reader and society access traumatic events, which are difficult to narrate using language (Sonia 2017). The strategies that are therefore examined include narrative structure, perspective, use of images, narrative voice/point of view, choice of narrator and choice of language register. In a sense, what the study does is to explore, to borrow and paraphrase Hawthorn (1985), the range of choices or instruments that the writers draw from in recounting the restoration of the sense of national belonging in these societies. The study examines and compares the narrative strategies employed by the writers who hail from these societies in relation to those strategies used by writers who are foreign nationals. The aim of doing this is to establish whether non- native writers get the leeway to experiment with certain narrative strategies given the aesthetic distance between them and the events narrated.

The study understands vision as a projection of the future-potential for the realization of nation formation in these societies in the selected texts. The study discerns the writers' visions about the possibilities for the transformation of these entities into nations in the selected texts through an examination of, to borrow Odhiambo's (2009: 161) words, " the new and alternative interpretations and meanings" that the writers infuse into these catastrophes in their bid to project the future. The study also acknowledges that in a work of art, writers seldom express their vision/s explicitly. Therefore the selected writers have, through a number of techniques alluded to their visions. Consequently, the study's conclusions about the writers' vision/s in the selected texts come about through an examination of narrative technique, characterization and thematic treatment. The writers deploy these factors, to borrow the words of Odhiambo (2009) once more, to serve their vision/s of their imagined nations.

This study also refers to other secondary materials from other disciplines such as history, film, anthropology purely for corroborating the arguments advanced regarding the primary texts.

CHAPTER TWO

IMAGINING NATION: TRAUMA OF ETHNIC WAR AND GENOCIDE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses how the selected writers imaginatively conceptualize nation formation after the trauma of war and genocide. The nation in this study implies "an imagined community", in the sense proposed by Anderson (1983: 6) as being: "imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know each other … yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."

Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan have histories abounding with cyclical waves of violence and war. Such wars have the effect of "problematizing relationships within the nation-space." Armstrong (2000: 174). By this, Armstrong implies that the trauma of war fragments social relations amongst the survivors destroying their sense of having a shared communion. Armstrong argues that the trauma of war lives in the memory of the nation and forms the image of the nation as it affects even those who may not have been directly involved in the war in the first place. The trauma of slavery is a good illustration to validate Armstrong's opinions. The harrowing experience of slavery continues to live in the memory of the African American, affecting even those who were never directly enslaved. This experience has become the rallying point for the formation of the imagined African American community.

In this chapter I examine how the selected writers, to borrow and rephrase Achebe's words as read by (Durrant2012), are fashioning the missing shared memory necessary for re-creating the sense of commonality in the society.

Collective memory implies that trauma is also a shared experience that affects people's memory as a group. According to Salat Austin, Nadav Ovitch and Michal

Alberstein (2007: 6) "sometimes the tissue of community can be damaged in much the same way as the tissues of individual's mind and body." Herman (1997) believes that traumatic symptoms that include denial, repression and dissociation do not just operate at the individual level but also at the societal level. In this regard, the trauma of the African American imagined community, for example, has certain similarities with the trauma of the individual slaves who had a first-hand experience with slavery. In this study, it is the individual experiences when narrated that coalesce into a shared/ collective/communal experience. The study therefore proposes that the six selected texts contain an array of stories about the trauma of these societies which when read become the collective memory of the people.

In representing nation formation in these societies, I examine the key moments, characters and events that the writers are selectively pointing their societies to in their bid to arouse the reemergence of a sense of communal belonging. I also discuss how the writers create a collective memory (a shared recollection of the past events) that will not spur antagonism in an already traumatized society but rather be what Wistrich (1997:18) would refer to as "a central axis" for the forging of a new alliance for the emergent nation/s.

This chapter examines the representation of nation formation by writers who write from the inside by virtue of hailing from these traumatized societies and who, I assume, are affected directly or indirectly by the trauma of war. These writers include John Rusimbi, Marie Therese Toyi and Roland Rugero. The chapter also discusses the imagination of nation formation by authors who write from without because they do not hail from any of these societies nor have a first-hand relationship of these countries' scars. They include N. Caraway, Jeffery Deal and Elisabeth Combres. The

above dichotomy seeks to establish the correlation, if any, between the writers' distance with the trauma of the society and how they conceptualize nation formation.

2.1 Imagining the Nation from the Rubble of the Burundian Refugee Crisis in Toyi's *Weep Not Refugee*

Weep not Refugee is a trauma narrative set in Burundi against the background of one of the many civil wars that Toyi refers to as the "nth war" (2012: 5). The civil wars in Burundi have created a societal rift and Toyi sets out to assist society work through its trauma to create a viable memory through which a new sense of oneness can emerge. In *Weep Not Refugee* the author endeavors to establish a link with the past inconvenient history of Burundi by, to borrow Offer's (2009: 13) words, helping society in reflecting on "the tension created by the rift with the past and the deep connection with the past, and on the other hand, the desire to preserve continuity"

The text largely addresses the loss of identity and the dilemma of national belonging for the Burundian refugees. The protagonist, who is a refugee himself, expresses the lost communion among the refugees in these words:

> We were at another junction in our life. After fleeing for our lives, we had now passed to elements dangerous to our country of origin. Where did we belong to? Where? Could it be true that we no longer had a country which we could call ours? Was there any other island on earth, still undiscovered, so that we could go and live there peacefully? (Toyi, 2012: 51)

The refugees are rootless and the author represents them as a people "who have a strong will to improve their conditions but who are compelled to silence, because they have no country of their own" (Toyi, 2012:.31). Toyi's text does not devote too much space in the explication of the Burundian civil war but rather attempts to dismantle the

ethnic stereotypes responsible for fuelling the current refugee crisis. Her text aims to erect new images to repair the fragmented Burundian society.

The two key figures in the narrative whose lives, experiences, and worldview are representative of the nation that the writer aspires for are Wache and his mother Kigeme. The writer employs their torn lives and experiences to mirror the fragmentation in the nation and through them she explores how the feelings of national consciousness can be revived. Through their stories, the author calls into mind some events, situations and other characters that have been obscured by the civil war calamity so that society can begin to imagine new possibilities of repairing its fissures and forming new alliances. By telling the silenced stories of Wache, Kigeme and other refugees, the text gives them the space to heal and recreate their lives and establish new connections.

Wache is as a rootless man born with a total absence of family relations. He is born in a refugee camp to Kigeme who is a Hutu and the only known blood relative. Wache is a product of rape. His father is the murderer of his mother's parents and "the cause of her orphan hood and her miserable life, the cause of my misery as well" (Toyi, 2012:.6)

The life of the narrator's mother, Kigeme, is equally symbolic of the fragmentation in the nation. At the beginning, the narrator describes her as "the beauty queen of her college in Burundi, from which she was cruelly separated by civil war" (Toyi, 2012:7). Because of the ravages of war however, she has now "turned sour and disfigured neither a woman, nor a girl, but an agonizing and emaciated creature closely resembling those skeletons she had studied in human anatomy" (Toyi, 2012:7). Her demeanor allegorizes the fracture in society. Like the traumatized nation,

she has adopted silence/ denial as a defense mechanism to cover for her shame and loss of identity. She bears a physical wound of rape and unwanted pregnancy and a psychologically deformed personality because she is ashamed by being constantly taunted as a "wife of the wind" (Toyi, 2012:7), which metaphorically means a prostitute. She is employed by the writer to mirror the effects of trauma to society.

The memory of war has engrained a negative identity in the members of the society. These events have shattered and polarized society and led to its disintegration. By writing about the refugees, Toyi endeavors to de-stigmatize them from this shame and humanize them. Remmler (1994) postulates that writing about people who have undergone dehumanizing experiences such as rape humanizes them. Rape carries shame that symbolically silences its victims. However, writing about them as Remmler further notes, helps to peel shame off the skin of the victims "and transcribe them onto a blank page in order to defy the dehumanizing effect they were meant to have upon their victims and their memories" (1994:175) This is the effect that Toyi hopes to achieve for the refugees in the text. *Weep Not Refugee*, reconstructs the heinous Burundian refugee crisis so as to help the society to defy its shame and forge a new image that is helpful in overcoming the embarrassing effect of ethnically instigated war among its members. It is also Toyi's endeavor in *Weep Not Refugee*, to borrow words from Remmler (1994:176), to represent Burundi "as both a site of utter humiliation and, conversely, as a place that resists the loss of identity forced upon it" by external forces and evil.

Ethnic war in Burundi has also caused the trauma of living without the knowledge of the whereabouts of missing relatives. Survivors therefore live in denial and false hope believing that their relatives are still alive. This uncertainty stifles recovery from these atrocities and curtails their participation as communal members. Kigeme is constantly

hallucinating about her brother, Kadogo and sister, Jane hoping to reconnect with them after the war is over.

Toyi's *Weep Not Refugee* (2012) is a site of memory and a creative space for the re-imagination of Burundi nationhood. According to Sicher (2000) the imagination of past horrendous events is possible through fiction. In *Weep Not Refugee*, Toyi points to shared common values as a way of awakening the sense of shared affiliations in the Burundian society. The author draws the attention of the society to the high and beautiful mountains and hills of Burundi as symbols of the magnitude of the effort that need to be put by the traumatized people to rebuild and repair a society torn apart by war.

Toyi's view is that it is possible to rebuild relationships shattered by war through social support and partnerships. It is for example through the advice of the old women at the refugee camp that Kigeme develops the virtue of hard work and resilience that helps her to fend for herself and develop a sense of pride and self-worth. The association she develops with her fellow refugees helps in the refashioning of her identity instead of collapsing under the weight of the memories of her immense loss.

As a way of helping the members build a different collective memory of war, Toyi in *Weep Not Refugee*, draws society's attention to other stories that comprise Burundi's historical past thereby creating counter memories of the past history of Burundi. One of such story concerns Kigeme through whom Toyi explores the role of women and mothers as agents of change and means through which a shattered union can be repaired. She presents mothers as life givers and protectors. Despite being raped and impregnated and despite witnessing the chopping to pieces of her father by the man who rapes her, Kigeme, the narrator's mother, still goes ahead to deliver the baby,

Wache even when her heart tells her to terminate the pregnancy so as to break loose from the traumatic memories surrounding this pregnancy. Kigeme's body, which symbolizes the torn nation, is a site of rape, reconciliation and recovery. Although she is a Hutu raped by a Tutsi, she opts to love Wache, her baby boy, much as she is aware that her fellow refugees do not like her son who has Tutsi blood. Her life is thus an enactment of both ethnic hatred and the reconciliation required between the Hutus and Tutsis of Burundi. Regarding his mother's bold decision not to abort him, Wache has this to say:

> Following the advice of the inhuman side of her heart, my mother would have aborted me, so as to be free to fight for her survival. It was not because of misery and marginalization that she was going to turn into a criminal. After all, a mother gives life; a mother protects life, no matter the cost. She recognized in me her child, and that was enough reason for her to love me (Toyi, 2012:15).

Toyi presents Kigeme as an example of how women and mothers can be catalysts to resuscitate pride and a sense of belonging to traumatized survivors. The author alludes to Kigeme's virtues of honesty, pride, and dignity as images of the new communion for the rootless refugees.

The name that Kigeme gives her son: Wache Waseme Watachoka, or Wache in short, translated to mean "let them talk, they will eventually tire " points to the bold and resilient spirit that Kigeme has and which Toyi deems appropriate to be embraced by the refugees as a way of recovery from the trauma of war. Living as a Burundian refugee is synonymous with walking with a tag of shame strapped around your neck. However, through the optimistic spirit of Kigeme, the writer encourages a positive attitude believing in the transitory nature of all circumstances. Wache is a symbol of the optimistic attitude to life that Toyi is championing. According to Wache, "to spend a whole life worrying about one's misfortunes can be more damaging than the

misfortune itself. It adds more bitterness to life, and a heart heavy with bitterness becomes dangerous" (Toyi, 2012:16).

Toyi points to the leadership of Joseph in the refugee camp as an exemplary illustration of how, with correct leadership, the society however traumatized can pull through its calamity. The author shares in Joseph's opinion that the true worth of an individual is measured not in his external circumstances but in his real life, which is internal. Accordingly, an individual's body and situation can look miserable but the life in him has the same value regardless of how traumatized he has been made to appear. The author suggests that Burundi as a society should re-look into its soul rather than solely defining itself based on its history of war. According to Toyi one's humanity fixes their identity and it is not something that is to be determined by ethnicity or the changes, circumstances or one's situation in life. Consequently, Toyi argues that regardless of their state in life, the refugees' humanity makes them an integral part of the Burundian nation. Therefore, Toyi criticizes the refusal to accept all refugees into the host country's society before their naturalization. He likens the requirement to a futile exercise akin to attempting to have a human being naturalized into an antelope simply because they have moved to a land occupied by antelopes.

The Burundian refugee crisis stems from an ethnically instigated war but according to Toyi, ethnic borders are permeable and humanly erected and possible to bridge as is demonstrated in the marriage between Ananias, a Tutsi refugee married to a Hutu wife. Despite being aware that he risks being killed by his fellow refugees who are Hutu if his ethnicity is discovered, Ananias still risks his life and disguises himself as a Hutu to live in the refugee camp with his wife. His act of bravery concretizes the view that Toyi is advancing that one's humanity rises above ethnic loyalties and identities. Wache's body is a site where ethnic stereotypes play out. His life

challenges the hypocrisy of using ethnicity, rather than humanity, as a defining image of one's national belonging. Born of Hutu and Tutsi parentage, Wache is at a loss to understand why Hutu refugees should fail to accept him as a member of their nation just because his father is Tutsi:

> Which was my crime? Just the Tutsi blood running in my veins? Was that really a crime? Why did they not identify enemies at a crime committed, and not for an identity which, in itself, was as pure as nature? (Toyi, 2012: 61).

Through the story of Wache, Toyi draws societies' attention to the idea that virtue should be the yardstick to accommodate one's membership to the nation as opposed to their ethnic extraction.

By way of example, Wache's experience with his newfound girlfriend, Loretta exposes the irrationality of using ethnicity or ones physique when determining membership to a nation. While the Hutu in Warodi refugee camp discriminate against Wache since he carries the blood of the Tutsi man who raped his mother, his Tutsi girlfriend also ironically forsakes him because he bears the physical features of a Hutu. Wache's flat nose is a complete disgrace to his girlfriend Loretta, and Wache cannot figure out the irrationality of breaking a friendship because of the shape of one's nose. Toyi uses this experience to question Burundi's reliance on physical features to determine an individual's membership to the nation. The weakness with this methodology as she argues is that "siblings from a same mother and a same father might not be with the same shape of nose, the same height, the same skin complexion, and when they grow up, they might specialize in different activities" (Toyi, 2012: 101).

The colonial influence in the distortion of Burundi's history comes out in *Weep Not Refugee*. This novel portrays a society caught up in circumstances that are not self-inflicted. War is not portrayed as something that Burundians relish engaging in but is presented as being a consequence of the colonial legacy of divide and rule through the manipulation of ethnicity.

Toyi uses the story of Michael, a Wirodi soldier, to argue that love is a way of building bridges ideal for cementing Burundi nationhood. Michael is a Wirodian soldier involved in the retaliatory expulsion exercise instituted by the government to return all Burundian refugees back to Burundi following the assailing of some Wirodi diplomats in Burundi. This exercise takes place with too much brutality against the refugees but Michael's humane demeanor stands out as he deals kindly with the refugees whom his fellow soldier, Robert, condescendingly scoffs at: "all of them look alike! Fearless no-hopers like bitches" (Toyi, 2012:118). Michael condemns Robert' stereotyping attitude and does not see why the refugees should be made to suffer for a crime that was committed in Burundi, a country where they fled from and are not wanted back. Michael vouches for the innocence of the refugees and the need to respect their humanity instead of dealing with them with cruelty and prejudice. Michael is a symbol of respect for all humanity that Toyi wants the people of Burundi to embrace about the need for the respect and dignity of all people regardless of their ethnicity.

The dignity of every life and the respect for every human life that Michael champions and that Toyi advocates for is also evident in Bugabo, Wache's schoolmate in Burundi. The narrator lauds Bugabo's friendly demeanor because, unlike his schoolmates, he is very hospitable to the new refugee students. He dissuades Wache against shying away from the rest of the students because, as he puts it, "all of us are

like one family….don't allow your language differences to overshadow your performance. The difference is a fact, but not an asset to cling onto like a precious souvenir" (Toyi, 2012: 136). Bugabo's words epitomize the accommodative spirit that Toyi envisages for the war-ravaged nation of Burundi. For Toyi, if tolerance becomes permeates in the society, it can replace the perceived image of Burundi as a nation of war and pave the way for the emergence of a new Burundian national image.

In conclusion, the intolerance of the principal to the slow pace of learning by the new students goes against the spirit of accommodation that is essential for the reintegration of the refugee students into the wider Burundi society. His adamancy and unwillingness to empathize with the new students and accept them in his school because of their poor command of French is an example of gross cold-heartedness, a trait that frustrates the re-erection of the nation's broken bridges, and an example of how neo-colonialism continues to hamper the nation's history much after independence. Wache expresses his frustration at the neo-colonial mentality of judging his academic prowess using French as a benchmark language: "why should I kill my ideas with a language unknown to me? (Toyi, 2012:146). The school principal's revulsion against the use of Kirundi language in school casts him as having an identity that is brainwashed by western values making people like him unfit to spearhead the gelling of the nation after the fragmentation of war.

2.2 Re-Imagining the Restoration of the Nation's Unmasked Countenance in *Baho* by Roland Rugero

Burundi has a long history of ethnic conflicts between the majority Hutu and the Minority Tutsi that has frequently degenerated into war. It has also been the site of five coup d'états, two presidential assassinations and two periods of heavy bloodletting that have been categorized as genocides. Ethnic conflict coupled with a

nagging refugee crisis has heavily blurred the sense of Burundian nationhood. The Belgian colonial masters introduced ethnicity to a people who, according to Rugaro, knew no ethnic distinction between themselves and had co-existed in peace for many years. They fragmented society by sowing ethnic division based on the people's physique and occupation. They extended favoritism to the Tutsi and treated the Hutus with a condescending attitude thus laying the foundation for the fragmentation of the nation through the ethnically instigated conflicts that ensued.

The events in *Baho* take place in the fictional region of Hariho against the background of the Burundian civil war of 1993-2005, a war that has fragmented the nation's personal and communal relationships. In this text, Rugero portrays a traumatized society enraged by rampant cases of rape and frustrated by war and a debilitating drought that has stretched on for far too long. The residents of the fictional region of Hariho have come to perceive themselves as members of a nation unified by a shared image of the trauma of calamity. However as the author proposes, the Hariho's are better off recalling their traumatic past in the present positively by forming a different collective memory that can be the image of their nation as opposed to projecting their trauma, as they are doing, through acts of mob justice against Nyamuragi-a mute man, traumatized himself for being falsely accused of rape. He is a symbol of his "mute" and traumatized nation and his inability to speak in order to explain his innocence parallels the speechlessness of the society in its failure to make sense of its calamity. Speechlessness is a characteristic of trauma. Robson (2004:11) holds the view that trauma intrudes on the present "demanding yet resisting articulation, wreaking devastating effects on the survivor's memory and identity." He is an embodiment of his traumatized nation because, according to Sarat, Nadav and Alberstein (2007: 6) "traumatic memories operate in the same way in communities as they do in

individuals." Kai Erikson, as read by Austin, Nadav Davidovitch and Michael Alberstein is also of the view that "sometimes the tissues of community can be damaged in much the same way as the tissues of an individual's mind and body." (2007: 6)

The nation, just like Nyamuragi, needs to work on its collective memory to arouse a new sense of nationhood. In the context of this study, *Baho* is the intermediate site where the reworking of the lost memory of the nation takes place.

One of the prominent characters in the text whose experiences embody the traumatized Hariho nation is the unnamed one-eyed old woman. The change of fortune in the experiences that she has lived through is symbolic of the fragmentation that has taken place in the Burundian society. She is a wife of a rich and prosperous man whose fields initially yield bountifully but things take a twist for the worst when her husband dies and in a sinister manner, one of her eyes goes blind. The fragmented nation of Burundi as imagined by Rugero in *Baho* is in a similar situation as the old woman's loss of vision. Through her experience, the author laments the fragmentation of the nation, something that the author symbolically refers to as the unmasking of "Burundi's countenance" (2016: 5).

Rugero, through the one-eyed old woman's nostalgic reminiscences of growing up as a child in a cohesive society castigates the divisive influence of colonialism to the Burundian society. He engages his society in, to borrow words from Sow (2010: 502), "subtle reflections on the possibilities" for dealing with the corrupting influence of colonialism, post colonialism and the civil wars to the nation "and for anticipating" the re-imagination of a new Burundian nation.

Nyamuragi's handicapped condition is a tag of shame because society views him as "sub-human." (2016: 56). He, just like the ashamed members of the Burundian society that he represents, has a deformed personality that makes him settle "for living out his inadequacy just for himself" (2016: 56). Nyamuragi's physical handicap parallels the nation's fragmented identity.

As an avenue of repairing its battered image, the author points society to the history of Burundi with its beautiful and peaceful seasons of bounty when "the granaries were filled to overflowing" (2016: 2). He nostalgically recalls the history of Burundi before colonialism drove a wedge in the nation by introducing ethnicity: "In those days, men were certain of their futures: repeated moments of repetition" (2016: 2).

According to the author, the pre-colonial Burundian nation cohered because of the manner in which the members cherished certain shared values namely: dignity, coherence and human values. The memories of families working the field together, wives taking their positions in the kitchen and children assisting with the fetching of water from the river, are according to Rugero some of the features of the lost communion. The past image of the Burundian nation that is presented in the text portrays a society at peace with itself: "The Harahai's would go to bed early in those times of little worry….after the evening gatherings, their clothing, their walls, and even their children's dreams were perfumed by stories and riddles around the cheerful fire"(2016: 3).

Besides this, the history of the nation that the author alludes to is one that synchronizes well with time and nature. Seasons merge with societal expectations and change seamlessly integrates into the greater national aspiration. The author presents a tranquil history of Burundi with a predictable, slow and well-paced life pattern where:

"one season peacefully leads into another, steady, slow, predictable and calm" (2016: 3). The cycles of life are in tune with those of the nation. By celebrating the past existence of a simple community life in Burundi he demonstrates that war and ethnicity are invasive episodes that have disrupted the cohesive narrative of the nation.

Rugero through Nyamuragi and the one-eyed old woman offers glimpses of childhood memories and experiences of growing up in Burundi that he wishes society to recollect and make the rallying point for the shared communion. The writer uses these recollections of a peaceful childhood to expose the manner in which the civil wars have played a part in the fragmentation of the nation. The two main characters display a celebratory tone in their recollections of a pre-colonial harmonious society untainted by war. For example, Nyamuragi's recollections of a classless childhood society devoid of ethnicity and individuality are evident:

> He remembered how a hint of cold wind would join forces with the moon to enter the courtyards encircling the Harihai's homes, and slyly set about tickling the peaceful country's children. …the children played with elements of nature, for they were nature. Umwana si uwumwe, tradition reminded them: "a child does not belong to anyone person exclusively," even its father or mother. That was how the elders explained that all families were linked. All formed but one: the community of life. Life was transferred during birth; it fed on nature and was made real through it. Umwana si Uwumwe. The child-that bit of humanity, that bud of life –belonged to none except nature. (2016: 8)

We can therefore infer that Rugero's endeavor to re-shape the memory of the war-ravaged society hinges on drawing member's attention to a pre-colonial coherent traditional life and sense of communal existence.

The drought that is ravaging the Harahio's is a metaphor of societal decay. Hunger and starvation threaten the society since war has made life unpredictable and seasons

have ceased being predictable and regular. The one eyed old woman nostalgically laments of times in the past when cycles of life revolved with "slowness and certainty" (2016: 4). The nation was imagined around certain shared values. These according to the one-eyed old woman included having a good marriage, raising children and tending over thriving fields. According to the author, the civil wars disrupted these shared values.

For Rugero, the pre-established bond that existed between the people and their natural world fostered the coherence of Burundi as a nation. The text presents the pre-colonial nation as naturally existing rather than being a consequence of human history and events. However, the many civil wars have disrupted this relationship pegging the longevity of the nation to human actions. By interfering with this pre-established relationship, which Rugero refers to as the "cycles of life," (2016: 4) war has dismantled the natural existence of the nation and made it subject to human manipulation.

Rugero through Nyamuragi's life presents a past society deeply connected to a simple rural life of herding sheep. Nyamuragi has a solemn and joyous relationship with his sheep and his family. This peaceful environment is however shattered when his parents die in a civil war; traumatizing him and making him "withdraw all trust from the words of men" (2016: 19). Trauma drives him to make a vow "to hold his tongue" and "enclose himself in a silence as thick as the wool of his sheep and his big-headed ram" (2016: 20). Likewise, the shame of war has enveloped the society and curtailed the capacity of its members to join hands as members of a nation. *Baho* becomes a site for the writer to help the members of society make sense of their catastrophic history.

The author also alludes to the role of colonialism in fragmenting Burundi by questioning the white man's education for playing a role in introducing classes in society especially through its discriminatory criterion of ranking learners and humanity. He notes thus:

> The Whiteman's school is discriminatory of human life. It should welcome all who desire to study and educate them according to their abilities? Why does it choose which ones will come to fruition? Why does it not dedicate itself to all the seeds presented to it by the people? (2016: 53)

Colonial education does not fashion learners to learn to embrace each other's discrepancies. Rather, like the mute Nyamuragi who is discriminated by his classmates for being handicapped, it has failed to fulfill the role of education in fashioning the human spirit (p.54). Viewed this way, Rugero blames colonial education for the introduction of ethnicity in Burundi.

According to Rugero, one of the consequences of the Burundian civil wars is the erosion of trust, which has always served as a shared image of the Burundian society. The solidity of Burundi as a nation in the past, according to Rugero, rested on the strength of "*ijambo*" or the trustworthiness of one's word. Speech/ was sacred and a man's word was "carved in stone" (2016: 43). The author argues that to make an oath by the forbidden made "the audience to believe that the one swearing was not capable of committing the act of which he was accused" (2016: 42). However, war has eroded this trust and mistrust has bred division and unaccountability. Rugero alludes to the role of taboo in enhancing communal co-existence. Communal respect and regard for the forbidden is one of the gestures that the writer points to for the existence of harmonious relationships and a sense of oneness long before colonialism.

In conclusion, the author argues that war has introduced mistrust in society and a man's word can no longer be taken at face value even if it is offered upon the forbidden such as: "may I undress my daughter if I stole the money" (2016: 42). He points to the past history of Burundi when "people put faith in exchanged words" (2016: 42) As a consequence of the many civil wars, to swear upon the impossible in explaining one's innocence no longer possesses the potency to earn trust from one's accusers:

> Is this the consequence of all these wars? The lie of division has come to roost. Squabbles, suspicions, and doubts were exacerbated by a history of massacres and broken lives. Distrust now lives among the *beneburundi,* those to whom Burundi belong….Too many deaths have taken away the people's beautiful united soul. And that unified people had a yardstick: its rich language and speech, *ijambo.* (2016: 43)

2.3 Healing the "Wounds of the Nation" in the Aftermath of Genocide in *the Hyenas Wedding* by John Rusimbi

Rusimbi metaphorically equates the situation of the Rwandan nation after the genocide to that of "a ruined building" (2007: 1). The personal relationships that symbolize the key pillars of this building have been greatly compromised thus hampering the functioning of the nation. He writes: "I saw children without parents, mothers without babies, old men and women who would never see their sons and daughters again. Victims of war and massacres, from all corners of the earth, had collected under a ruined building" (2007: 1). The Rwandan genocide is a tragic and horrible experience because it involves people with close relationships linked by common experiences. It has led to family breakdown and societal discord. In *The Hyena's Wedding,* the trauma of the war witnessed at personal level is also evident in the national body thus denting the sense of feeling as members of the same nation.

The trauma of the genocide as depicted in the text has become a focal point for the formation of a negative shared image of the society. The Rwandan "building" is in disarray and its inhabitants are in shock on what to do to repair the fragmentation in the previously stable and communal relationships: "we took charge of the building with no idea of how to revive and live in it. There was no other obvious course but to stay, defiantly planning of the next step. Life was sorrowful and crazy. Nobody seemed to understand where he was or what to do" (2007: 2). The effects of war to the Rwandan nation as portrayed in the text mirror the views of Armstrong (2000: 174) who postulates that war "constitutes an interruption in the narrative of national and individual development and furthermore, a rupture within the social body."

Harriet, a survivor of the genocide, is a symbol of the traumatized nation since her trauma parallels that of the nation. She is a victim of the trauma of genocide: "I always find myself in a crisis whose cause I have failed to understand" (2007: 41). Her trauma and confusion is individual but it reflects the collective trauma and fragmentation in the Rwandan nation.

Rusimbi's text acts as a creative space for the imagination of a collective memory essential for the formation of a more positive national identity for Rwanda. Ofer (2009: 13) proposes that writers have the capacity to use literature to "reflect the tension created by the rift with the past and the deep connection with the past, and on the other hand, the desire to preserve continuity."

Some of the questions that guide the examination of the representation of nation formation in this text can be summarized as follows: what images of Rwanda does Rusimbi project to counter the negative images that have shattered the sense of

nationhood in the society? How far do these new images enhance the formation of a useful memory that can be the locus for the emergence of new national sentiments?

One thing that emerges from the reading of *The Hyenas Wedding* is that Rusimbi endeavors to orchestrate the formation of a post genocide national identity by encouraging a perception of the past evils where the victims and the perpetrators see themselves as members of a nation taken advantage of by bad politics and colonial interference. He challenges the common approach of explaining the genocide using ethnicity by arguing that it is but a tool used to perpetuate "personal or group interests thriving at the expense of other people's lives" (2007: 46). He redefines the perception that the genocide was an ethnically instigated catastrophe. He does this to provide an opportunity for the gelling of unity between the two main ethnic communities of this nation. Using the analogy of the Nyabalongo River, Rusimbi suggests that ethnic identity marks are baseless human inventions just like the giving of different names to a river with the same water along the course of its flow. He gives the example of Nyabalongo River that flows across Rwanda, passing through Lake Victoria into the River Nile. However, along the way it is christened river "Kagera in Tanzania, and later it is referred to as the Nile in Uganda and in other countries in the north-east of the African continent" (2007: 47). Using this logic, Rusimbi blames the polarization of Rwanda to forces both within Africa and the globe in general thus reconstructing the narrative of the Rwandan genocide by suggesting that the image of ethnicity that has come to define the Rwandan society is colonially imposed and alien.

The text represents the trauma of genocide as in articulable. This is because some of these experiences such as rape are considered shameful. (Robson 2004) points out that certain experiences are renounced in particular social contexts making them hard to

represent in language. Rusimbi therefore endeavors to do what Armstrong (2000: 178) would consider as the act of helping the nation to "rewrite its narrative of devastation as a means of development." As a way of explaining the genocide, the author suggests that the nation is not guilty of the catastrophe and should be spared of this shameful label because the participants did not, in the first place, fully understand the ramification of embracing " the hyena" (2007:1) (genocide) but were used as pawns by colonialists and greedy politicians:

> There were the poor politicians, who failed or never bothered to harness the country's resources; the bad and greedy ones, who grabbed everything that was produced; and the majority of the population who followed the wrong path out of ignorance and negligence. (2007: 41)

In his opinion, the fragmentation of the nation has been occasioned by bad leadership from the past that has taught people to hate right from childhood (2007:9) Part of this poor leadership includes the colonialists who are to blame for introducing competitive politics into Rwanda. It is the colonialists to blame for inculcating divisions among the citizens by instilling the notion that anyone, besides the Rwandan monarch, has the capacity to seek political office and govern. In his opinion, the genocide ought not be perceived in isolation as an act but rather as a chain of events culminating in the massacres of 1994. Rusimbi therefore believes that Rwanda's history should be understood in the context of "pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial events …and the cruelty of regimes succeeding one another through violence" (2007:51). His argument is that "The burning of houses as the monarch is overthrown; the overthrow of the first republic government, the brutal massacres by Interahamwe" are all lead up events in Rwandan history that set the stage for the genocide of 1994" (2007: 51). The crumbling of the relations should be seen in the context of the other events that surround it rather than through the singular event of the genocide.

The fragmentation of the nation is also a consequence of a poor colonial education that prepared the youth for white-collar jobs, which were hard to come by thus making them opt to seek for positions in politics. The massacres of the Rwandan genocide were orchestrated by such disillusioned "intellectual frauds" (2007: 98) who hoped to make political capital by advancing division in society. Rusimbi suggests that the nation can cohere if it borrows from the old education that the parents and the clan inculcated on the children. This kind of education stressed on discipline in relationships among the members of the society and relied on taboos for guidance of the society in the right conduct. Accordingly, the education that is meaningful for the Rwandan nation is one that trains the young people and gives them skills for occupations that make them self-reliant. He explains the genocide by blaming the introduction of formal education by the colonialists that failed to train the youth on the value of working on the land but only offered them training in speaking foreign languages.

He portrays colonialists too as having had a hand in the genocide given the manner in which they manipulated the Hutus to hate the Tutsis by "using churches as their platforms" (2007: 9). In his view, the colonial Belgians instituted a segregated regime that favored the Hutus at the exclusion of all Tutsis from positions of leadership. It is this same regime that the narrator also blames for denying Tutsi children an opportunity to compete favorably in schools, business or any other fields. The narrator points to such acts of prejudice by the colonialists against the Tutsis as a pointer to the fact that hatred was introduced to the Rwandan society and was never a part of the people's way of life. He therefore argues that if the Rwandese can collectively recall their history that was devoid of colonial manipulation a harmonious nation can emerge out of the rubble of war. In his opinion, all Rwandans used to live together

harmoniously in the pre-colonial times and would offer cows to one another and even intermarry (2007: 24). He takes issue with the wobbly Rwandan history that promotes the idea that the Hutus and the Tutsis are different from each other yet it cannot give any tangible evidence to sustain itself. The narrator, Musonero Kiroko, nostalgically recalls the manner in which the Pre-colonial Rwandan nation, devoid of colonially instigated ethnicity cohered:

> While waiting for the roasted food, I reflected on the history of Kayumba hill, which used to hold its own in terms of beauty and liveliness before the genocide and war, when young women and men fed on milk and ghee that made their skins soft and smooth. Their ever-smiling faces left no doubt of genuine love and happiness among them. Whenever the moon appeared, celebrations marked with traditional dances and songs spread throughout the village. (2007: 15)

Scenes of happiness, liveliness and a shared heritage before the genocide as recalled above by the narrator speak to the memory that the narrator is spearheading to reawaken a positive image for the Rwandan nation in rebuilding the broken societal bridges.

The writer exonerates the Rwandan people from the genocide evils by laying the blame on the international community which "merely watched" (2007: 23) as the Tutsis and moderate Hutus died due to colonially instigated ethnic animosities. For Rusimbi colonial interference is the cause of the genocide and the fragmentation of the nation. This is what Kamali believes in when he says to the narrator:

> My son, it seems you know little about your history. When we fell out of favor with the colonialists, whose policy was divide and rule, they instigated Hutu against Tutsi by painting a bad picture of the Tutsi. The colonialists went a long way, even issuing publications that tarnished the image of the Tutsi. They misinformed the world that a Tutsi was an oppressor and a conqueror. In due course, they created many enemies against us and undermined our right to exist. (2007: 23)

According to Rusimbi a sense of national belonging between the Hutus and the Tutsis can be reactivated by the knowledge that their animosities have been engineered by a shared external enemy-the Belgian colonialists.

Rusimbi maintains that the church is not entirely guilty of the genocide as is commonly perceived. Father Stanislas Mugabo, for example, plays the role of a model priest who opposes anybody "including priests and nuns, who wanted to create ethnic hatred" (2007: 9). Because of his criticism of the church system that propagated hatred, he becomes unpopular and insecure within the church ranks and consequently chooses to leave the church and takes a gun to fight the establishment. He is a symbol of the role that the church has played in fostering reconciliation and recovery for the traumatized survivors. Besides acknowledging the embroilment of some of its clergy in the genocide, the author underscores the church's role in serving as a sanctuary for the recovery of the traumatized victims. The leader of the government delegation that officiates the burial of the genocide victims within the precincts of the catholic church thanks the church for serving as a national monument where the skeletal remains of the victims recovered from the " hills, valleys, pit latrines and other unworthy places" (2007: 61) can have a chance to be buried with honor. The church therefore humanizes the dead by giving them a decent sendoff while also acting as a recovery site for the survivors and reintegrating them back into the nation by encouraging the rebuilding of bridges with the perceived perpetrators. The church avails a site where the victims long silenced by trauma purge their emotions to break loose from their stifled development.

Rusimbi decries the role that stereotypes have played in the fragmentation of the nation. According to him, society should get rid of the stereotype that brands all Hutus as the perpetrators of the genocide by underscoring the role that moderate Hutus

played in ending the violence. He proposes: "if all Hutu had participated as Interahamwe, very few Tutsi would have survived the genocide or perhaps the revolution would have been delayed" (2007: 24).

Besides re-explaining the genocide, Rusimbi explores the practical steps to facilitate the repair of the nation's shattered image. The author regards these steps to the act of "putting of ointments on the wounds of the nation in the aftermath of genocide" (2007: 81). In imagining nation building, Rusimbi does not, just like Bolo Butake, as read by Odhiambo (2009), ignore paying attention to the inhibitors to the project of nation formation in Rwanda. He instead acknowledges that there are real and tangible obstacles to this project and thus offers practical proposals to catalyze the realization of the sense of national belonging that has been elusive in this society. These measures include reconstruction, reconciliation and rehabilitation of the people by teaching them the need for unity.

Mr. Mugabo's leadership acumen as the impartial chief of Nyamata commune is a microcosm of the practical steps the society needs to undertake to restore the lost sense of national belonging especially among the survivors of the genocide. The author highlights Mugabo's efforts of initiating security and starting programs for the provision of other social services such as schools, hospitals, and accommodation as key points in the restoration of Rwandan nationhood. As the chief, he advocates for the inclusion of people from all ethnic communities in the administration of the twelve sectors in Nyamata commune. His appointment of Mr. Musonero Kiroko (the narrator) as the leader of Kayumba sector is done based on Kiroko's ethics and integrity. Mugabo is as a firm believer in the values of democracy for he notes: "We need to know one another, establish a firm socio-economic base and devise an

appropriate form of democracy that shall favor the interests of the majority and values of the nation" (2007: 20)

One of the greatest hurdles hampering Rwandan nationhood that Rusimbi addresses is the problem of the resettlement of refugees. On this question, the wisdom of Mr. Mugabo is that all the land be declared as belonging to the government and to establish village sites where all people are encouraged to reside close together through the putting up of " special housing programs" (2007: 33) as a way of enhancing their sense of co-existence. He suggests the provision of enough security and other social services like hospitals and schools, as a worthwhile policy that can go a long way towards orchestrating harmony between the returnees and the rest of the community.

Mr Kiroko's leadership typifies the establishment of a good administrative organization. He is one of the new crop of visionary leaders whose leadership acumen symbolizes the kind of the new leadership skills that the Rwandan nation can tap from in steering reconciliation and harmony. He is a sectorial leader with good organizational and mobilization skills in Kayumba. He recognizes that to build consensus between the returnees and the rest of the society calls for tact and good mobilization. By establishing a trusted administrative structure, Mr. Kiroko's leadership is an image of a form of administration that is trustworthy and that can be the basis for consensus building among the returnees and the rest of the community. This new administrative structure is a focal point for the reawakening of trust unlike the previous administrative structures run by divisive politicians

Part of good administrative organization entails reconstructing houses for the poor survivors who are unable to put up their own houses and the participation of all leaders in this exercise. The writer sees the construction of these houses as a good step

towards the establishment of an image of solidarity especially among the youth who are not only likely to get jobs putting up the structures but will also get an avenue through which they will " interact and hold discussions on the existing challenges of this nation" (2007: 39). Rusimbi considers the establishment of this solidarity camps as a great step towards the establishment of unity, reconciliation and reconstruction. The author sees the youth as a very important cog in the national wheel and champions for their inclusion in the administration of the new nation especially as leaders in spearheading youth mobilization. In this sense, he interprets nation formation as a "construction process" (2007: 40) where success hinges on the inclusion of all members of society in the administration of the new emergent society

In conclusion, Rusimbi points to the significance of a national mourning exercise as an avenue of overcoming the nation's trauma. He underscores the role that this event plays in helping the nation overcome the stifling effect that the reliving of this past memories has on its conscience. According to Robson, (2004: 11) trauma has a way of making the past "intrude insistently on the present, demanding yet resisting, articulation, wreaking devastating effects on the survivor's memory and identity." Rusimbi lauds the decision by parliament for the exhumation of all skeletal remains of all the dead across Rwanda and their reburial with respect as an important gesture in making their death a national loss rather than the loss for particular individuals from a given ethnic community. National mourning therefore detribalizes the genocide and humanizes the dead by presenting them, not as members of the Hutu or Tutsi community but rather as human beings. It gives this catastrophe a national face and becomes a site for the rewriting of the Rwandan history in the sense that it achieves the effect of making the people collectively" feel guilty about the past crimes and struggle and hope for a better world to come." (2007: 43).He suggests that national

morning achieves the effect of integrating the traumatized survivors with the perpetrators since it makes the survivors feel that society has acknowledged its error and expressed its sorrow about its past sins.

2.4 Repairing Individual Trauma to Unshackle the Nation's Arrested Formation in Combre's *Broken Memory*

Broken Memory is a trauma narrative in which the author deals with the manner in which the trauma of the Rwandan genocide has dealt a blow to the individuals' psyche, leaving them in fragmented disarray and unable to conceptualize the nature of their catastrophe thus making it hard for them to be integrated into the community. Dominic Lacapra, (2001: 422), as read by Kurtz 2014 perceives trauma as "a disruptive experience that disarticulates the self and creates holes in existence." Emma is the symbol of what has happened to the survivors of the genocide. As the protagonist, nightmares constantly haunt her nine years after witnessing the brutal murder of her mother, Pacifique and trauma has conditioned her into a silence. She is in denial and has retreated into a cocoon to shield herself from confronting the reality of her experience. Her physical experience as she flees the scene of her mother's death parallels the psychological isolation of the society: "she walked down her road, more and more alone, walking between the dead bodies that blackened the fields and the roads" (2011: 6). The nation is unable to confront or make sense of its catastrophe in the same manner that Emma is confused about her loss. Emma's isolation from society points to the shame and seclusion that comes with being associated to a nation guilty of heinous crimes such as rape and murder.

The text presents the survivors' trauma as influential to their perception of life and their feeling as members of society. Combres endeavors in the text to help the survivors work through their trauma as a means of their integration back from their

denial. Combres helps society to form a new image of these atrocities. While acknowledging that the genocide was a political agenda targeting the Tutsis, she intertwines the experience of Emma and her rescuer, the old Hutu woman Mukecuru, to demonstrate that Hutu moderates equally suffered the trauma of the genocide while they sheltered many Tutsis who would otherwise have been victims to the Interahamwe. Mukecuru, is presented as putting her life on the line by hiding Emma in her house because according to the narrator, "if the killers found out that she had the girl with her, they would both be slaughtered immediately" (2011: 7). This representation of the genocide challenges the narratives that ordinarily represent the genocide as a Hutu orchestrated catastrophe thus dividing the nation along Hutu-perpetrator and Tutsi-victim.

The trauma of war as presented in the text denies its victims the capacity to feel as members of a harmonious nation. By way of example, Emma has an unsettled personality because she believes that the ghosts of her murdered and unburied relatives haunt her. These ghosts cannot give her peace given that: "in Rwanda, they said that when the dead were not buried, their spirits stayed around to haunt the living. They became the abazimu, the bad spirits-sometimes even bad for those close to them (p.14)". Emma perceives Mukecuru's life as being stable because of the decent burial that her parents received. Because of this, Emma believes that Mukecuru has a company of spirits of happy people that supports her. Emma's example therefore reveals a traumatized individual who has lost relatives through murder. The memories of these relatives come as nightmares and hallucinations that keep haunting her. She therefore cannot meaningfully recover from the past to-meaningfully build bridges of belonging with other members of the community. Tanaka endeavors in this novel to

explore how traumatized individuals such as Emma can overcome their trauma and find membership in the new post-genocide Rwandan nation.

The author suggests that the survivors' recovery becomes possible when their narratives are interwoven. For example, Emma's acquaintance with Ndoli's experiences emboldens her to face her trauma and to develop the interest to join school. She begins to envision a world in school away from her nightmares where she can be "caught up in a thousand and one activities, in a recess without end" (2011: 57). Ndoli inculcates bravery in Emma, teaching her the virtues that go with "standing up for oneself" (2011: 61). Besides this, Emma gets the acquaintance of other stories from survivors whose relatives died under similar circumstances. This group of survivors failed to have the honor of a decent burial but managed to overcome their individual traumas. The story of the old man is a case in point. According to Ndoli, the old man has endured suffering worth ten men.

> He had survived the many massacres that the Tutsis had suffered. In 1963 they hunted him down; in 1973 they cut his throat, treated him then hunted him down again; in 1990 they put him in prison and tortured him; in 1991 he was beaten before he managed to get away and hide; in 1994 he was captured and left for dead. All because he was a Tutsi. Now he was scarred but still standing, his dignity intact (2011: 67).

As has already been pointed out, the act of interweaving the narratives of the survivors facilitates not just their recovery but also creates a collective memory for the emergent nation of the survivors. Armstrong (2000: 180) sees a clear connection between personal narratives and the narrative of the nation: "the damaged people of a society/ their identities as a result of the war represent part of the arrested development of the nation." It is therefore clear that Tanaka uses Emma's experience and that of the other survivors to advance the argument that is in line with

Armstrong's (2000) proposition that it is until individual narratives are ordered out of the chaos of war that the narrative of the nation can progress. He also proposes that the traumatized victim needs assistance to "speak/ write the narrative of the past devastation as a means of development" (2000: 178). The old man assists Emma during the counseling sessions to begin recollecting, mastering and even reimagining the story of her past. In the process, she is able to create a helpful image of her past and weaves her story to merge with the stories of other survivors thus enabling her to recreate her identity and re-integrate her into the nation.

By creating a collective memory of the atrocities of the nation through the intersecting of Emma's silenced narrative with the narratives of other survivors Combres endeavors to make these narratives part of the history of the nation. I share in the ideas of Crane (1997: 1381) who argues that it is the individual who "gives voice to the collective memory." Crane further proposes that "individuals and collectives interact in their production of collective memory" (1997: 1381). In the writer's process of constructing a memory for the society, the Rwandan society moves from the trauma of denial to claiming and accepting the trauma as part of its history. I concur with Crane (1997) who proposes that once the nation masters these narratives, then the process of healing commences and new national bridges come about on the strength of the understood past.

Emma's recovery from the incomprehension that trauma has imposed on her and her decision to retrace the house where they lived with her mother before the genocide is symbolic of her reconnection with the missing links in her broken memory. Trauma has all along denied her the chance to see every human being for their true worth but as she rides home to reconnect with her past she is able to mingle with other passengers and begin to form a new image/perception of her fellow human beings

whom she has all along treated with suspicion. It is for instance on a trip that she begins to realize that "everything and every person has an outside and an inside, and that the two were not necessarily the same (2011: 80). In the vehicle, she discovers that it is wrong to rely on an individual's physical appearance as a yardstick to determine character

> There was a big tough-faced lad who she thought looked mean, until she watched him place his hand on the head of a baby swaddled on the back of its mother so that it wouldn't be crushed by the sliding doors. She admired an elegant woman until she saw her rudely scold a crippled old man who was trying to sit down to rest his legs (2011: 80).

This experience among others is very pivotal in enabling Emma to overcome the stereotypes that have all along curtailed her from building bridges with other members of her society that she has suspected of having had a role in the genocide.

Combres also points to nature and the beauty of the country as a unifying image capable of stimulating the building of national bridges among the traumatized people. As Emma rides to her birthplace, the beauty of the Rwandan landscape awes her. She discovers that the landscape carries no signs of the past horror and it bears no scars and is the image of the nation that the author envisions for the society. The landscape exudes the kind of tranquility that the writer believes is essential for the fomenting of new national character.

The author also sees potential for the survivor to overcome her trauma by getting involved in the hustle and bustle of everyday life. In this novel, the market place is a site for recovery and a scene for the merging of many narratives of survivors who share in Emma's plight. At the market place, Emma finds living/human company away from the memory of the haunting ghosts of her unburied relatives. The company

of the market place just like that of Mukecuru, as Emma confesses, does not necessarily "protect her from the nightmares or the ghosts, but makes her feel stronger and more able to face them" (2011: 27).

Besides this, Combres argues that annual commemoration ceremonies of the genocide are an avenue for helping the survivors and the nation "return to reality" (2011: 36) away from the nightmares and hallucinations of the genocide. The sharing of testimonies during the night vigils of the commemoration facilitates the emergence of a collective societal memory and a new image by which feelings of national belonging develop.

Survivors such as Ndoli, assist Emma to reconstruct the past memories of her slain family members by remembering, for example, her mother's generosity and gentleness. In this process, Emma humanizes them and begins to mourn them as fallen men and women of virtue instead of accepting the cockroach label that society had ascribed to them as a justification for their murder.

In conclusion, Combres takes note of the divisive role that politics played in the Rwandan genocide by attributing the onset of the genocide to the murder of the Rwandan president and the role that the media played in propagating the mass extermination of the Tutsis. She argues that the genocide was a politically instigated catastrophe that targeted the Tutsis and the Hutu moderates. By representing the past atrocities in this fashion, the narrative provides a site for the formation of a new image of the nation by seeking to mellow the attitudes held by a large section of the survivors that stereotypes all Hutus as the genocide perpetrators.

2.5 Conceiving the South Sudan Nation in the *Mark* by Deal

There are both negative and positive factors that motivate Deal to imagine South Sudan as a nation in *The Mark*. We begin by discussing the negative motivators and then later examine the events, situations, and characters the author points to as positive images that have propelled the members of these diverse and multi ethnic community to imagine themselves as a community.

The Mark is a novel set in South Sudan. Although the text largely centers on one of the South Sudanese tribes, the Dinka, the author addresses how this group of people perceive themselves first as members of the Dinka nation and then as members of the wider South Sudan nation. South Sudan is a fragmented society with a long history of violent conflict and oppression by colonialism and the internal oppressive rule of the north. The society has been embroiled in repetitive civil wars that span a period of over forty years. The members' sense of nationhood centers on a shared historical experience of resistance against different oppressive internal and external regimes. According to Frahm (2012), South Sudan has always found unity around the desire to fight internal or external aggression.

The action of this novel takes place against the backdrop of the perpetual threat to the Dinka by the Laraap, the Khartoum government, in an endless, repetitive and senseless war which society has come to christen as " the evil thing" (Deal, 2013: 1) because of its alien and intrusive nature to the society. The narrator represents a society traumatized by the effects of the cyclical waves of war. The Anyanya war, also referred to as "the venom of the snake", is, according to Thon, "an evil thing that threatened our souls" (Deal 2013: 2). It is a war that the South is fighting against the North leaving "death in waves like summer clouds" (Deal, 2013: 1) Because of its ubiquitous presence, the society has also symbolically likened war to "a creeping

darkness that enshrouded our land" (Deal, 2013: 11). The impending Anyanya war has produced trauma and uncertainty in society:

> The second Anyanya was still a small thing and had not yet spread to our lands, but as I think back to this time I think a deep part of us knew we had to brace ourselves to be strong against it. No words formed in my mind or came to my ears of the time of devastation to come, but somewhere inside of us, I think we all felt it looming across the horizon (Deal 2013: 8).

The Mark is a heroic narrative built around the journey of the protagonist, Thon who embodies his nation because his destiny intertwines with that of his nation. He exemplifies the accepted thoughts, actions and norms of the Dinka of whom the story entails. I share in the ideas of Ryken (1974: 5) that the hero in a heroic narrative "expresses an accepted social and moral norm; his experience reenacts the important conflicts of the community which produces him; he is endowed with qualities that capture the popular imagination." I concur further that the story of the hero embodies "the philosophical views of the culture producing it" (Ryken 1974: 45). Since this narrative revolves around the hero, Thon, his actions symbolize those of the nation that has produced him. Consequently, we can be able to discern the author's conceptualization of the nation by paying close attention to the hero's actions and his responses to situations. Equally, the representation of foil characters; "characters that provide a parallel and/or contrast to the hero, thus accentuating the hero's traits," (Ryken, 1974: 4) in the text are useful leads to the author's perception of the nature of nation actualization in South Sudan.

As signaled above, the Dinka cohere as members of the South Sudan nation out of what Jok (2011) would refer to as a "negative energy" (Deal, 2013: 1) that motivates the members to join hands to fend off outside aggression. The member's sense of communal belonging springs from a common lived experience of violence and

repetitive wars. The narrator laments the overbearing hand that war has in motivating the Dinka/South Sudanese sense of communal oneness when he complains that it is because of these wars that he has been compelled to receive the mark, which forces him onto a path not of his own choosing. War compels Koor, the narrator's father, to abandon his family and commit his life to the course of the liberation of his society. He tells Thon: "this war is my life now. It is all I know….it is what has been thrust upon me and it is now who I am." (Deal 2013: 198)

The Dinka society coheres as a community due to a set of shared rituals. The fear of war motivates some of these rituals. For example, initiation (receiving the mark) is a very central element in determining one's allegiance to the nation. The mark, seven cuts parallel to the ground made on the forehead, is a ritual among the Dinka that represents one's commitment towards the ideals cherished by the nation. It implants an indelible mark on the initiates' consciousness, and establishes a solid relationship with his nation. The initiate becomes "a man of men *(a Muonyjang),* husband and father, protector and guide to the people" (Deal 2013: 14). He holds a position that is irreversible and not transferrable as it engrains the identity of his nation into his conscience and he cannot henceforth transfer his nationality or his loyalty to another community or society.

The grisly manner of administering the mark requires the initiate to demonstrate the highest level of bravery by persevering through the excruciating exercise of receiving seven cuts on his forehead "without flinching, without tears or any sound" (Deal 2013: 9). This display of bravery guarantees the rest of the members of the nation of the initiate's identification with and commitment to its aspirations and his dedication to the furtherance of its harmony. The dignity attached to the initiation ceremony

gives Thon and Matak the contentment of belonging to the "best place in all the world" (Deal, 2013: 30).

The crowd that gathers to witness the initiation ceremony participates in the imagination and the actualization of their communion. The bravery exhibited by the initiates while receiving the mark percolates to the crowd to become one of the identifying symbols of their communion. The initiation ceremony becomes a site for the nation to parade men and women whose counsel and virtue are the bedrock of the ideals that guide the members. The ceremony therefore engages the attendees in an act of imagining their communion. They begin to perceive themselves as members of a nation who, as Anderson (1983: 7) postulates, inhabit a world that they share in common through a "deep horizontal comradeship." For Anderson, such a nation exists in the mind of a people in whom their lives the image of their communion.

Additionally, this rite of passage imprints an image of newness and hope in the collective psyche of the members amidst the death and looming destruction of the impending Second Anyanya. As Thon Bol receives the marks of the Dinka Agar, the members of the nation as a collective sigh in anticipation of triumph as they participate in forming a national image of bravery against the looming adversity. If Thon Bol is to fail the test by displaying any cowardice, the entire nation will disavow his membership and he is quite aware of this:

> I must pass the test without flinching, without tears or sound-I thought….I will show the clan that I am the one who would face death for them, thrust and receive the spear for them. The second Anyanya was still a small thing and had not yet spread to our lands, but as I think back to this time I think a deep part of us knew it was coming, knew we had to brace ourselves to be strong against it. (Deal, 2013: 8)

According to the author, internal aggression from the neighboring clans such as the Atuot is no hindrance to realization of the larger South Sudan nation. This is evident when Matak concedes that despite being a Dinka Agar, he would rescue an Atuot kid under attack from a crocodile out of instinct and out of the character of the man that he is rather than the man he would like to think of himself (Deal 2013: 49). The author also suggests that national borders are arbitrary since despite the rivalry between the Atuot and the Agar, he presents cases of intermarriage between people from the two rivaling nations. Accordingly, the writer suggests in the text that war is responsible for the existence of arbitrary and imaginary mental images that distinguish between the members of the wider South Sudan nation namely: Dinka, the Atuot and the Neur.

The author employs certain characters, to borrow Ryken's (1974: 5) terminology as "foils" to provide a contrast to the hero (who is a symbol of the nation), thereby amplifying the nation's positive image that the hero embodies. One of such characters is Chol who, Although Dinka, is represented as aggressive, a killer of children and believes in hatred as a channel of pursuing his inclusion into the society. The author identifies with Thon and Matak who project the image of a South Sudan nation built on the principles of peace and goodwill with other surrounding communities. Chol's clan believes in killing young girls and attaining fortune through magic. Throughout the text, Chol's actions are depicted by the author not as heroic but as cowardice and these actions are an antithesis to the actions of Thon and do not reflect the image of the South Sudan nation that the author is endeavoring to fictionally project.

Besides Chol, the author points to other characters whose actions are a betrayal to the collective conscious and shared image of the Dinka and the South Sudan nation that he is propagating. One of such characters is a nameless Dinka man whose lack of a

name reflects the disdain that the author has for his actions. He is a member of a cartel that works in collusion with Joseph Kony, the Ugandan leader of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), to abduct girls from Sudan and take them to Uganda for sacrificial rituals believed to enhance the supremacy of this rebel movement. It is through such clandestine abductions that the Dinka society is entrapped in war against their neighboring clans, the Neur, believing that they have a hand in the disappearance of Dinka girls. The author here underscores the role of foreign conspiracies in the destabilization of the Sudan nation. He seeks to debunk the argument that the Dinka are a combatant people by revealing the LRA's role, led by Joseph Kony, in interfering with the Sudanese nation through fomenting enmity between neighboring clans and consequently orchestrating the cyclical wars that have created societal disharmony.

Besides the negative forces that have played a role in arousing a sense of South Sudan nationhood as portrayed in the text, the author also points to positive motivators to the imagination of the people in this region as members of one nation. For the fact that this novel is a product of a period in South Sudan's history marred by war and its traumatic effects, the author nevertheless points the reader to the positive aspects of this society that motivate the sense of commonality in the people. By projecting pictures of a society governed by high family values, hard work and loyalty, Deal engages in what Sicher (2000) would refer to as the construction of a more useful collective memory that can serve as the focal point for the formation of new national liaisons.

According to the author, the sense of pride and resilience held by the Dinka against colonial and postcolonial aggression is one of the values at the centre of the people's imagination of themselves as a nation. In Maciek's words:

> We Dinka have lost more battles than anyone can count. We have lost men, women, and children. Before the British, the Laraap carried us away as *abeed,* slaves. They occupy our land for only a short time. But we always retake the land in the end. Before the British, the Turks came and ravaged the land, killed many. During that time and before, the Egyptians raided us. The slaves they take away are but flesh and blood that our strong Dinka women replace. The land has never been truly conquered and we Dinka have never lost a war. They always invade and we always fade away. We always return to the land and the invaders always leave. It is our curse and our blessing, this vast land. This is the way Nhialic protects us who live at the center of things where all life began (Deal, 2013: 131).

Besides this, upholding high family values, hard work and loyalty to the ideals of the society among both men and women become celebrated virtues and hallmarks of one's membership to the Dinka nation. According to the narrator, the longevity of the nation rests on the strength of women and their commitment to raise strong families and hard work on the land. The author identifies these virtues as gluing agents of a South Sudan nation.

According to the narrator, South Sudan nationhood draws from the shared belief in certain cultural values in the members. An example is the belief espoused by all the members in the wise leadership of Totems and elders. An example of such leaders is the *Beny Bith* (Master of the Fishing Spear) who is a holy prophet among the Dinka. The holder of this office has immense powers and plays a big role in guiding society. The writer draws the attention of the society to the role that Nhialic, the Beny Bith, and other institutions have played in the past in enhancing unity in the nation amidst the ravages of the multiple civil wars.

The people imagine their oneness from a collective belief that they share a land that sits at the "center of the world" (Deal, 2013: 1). Due to poor seasonal patterns, they have a collective nomadic pattern of life that makes them move around in search of

water and grazing grounds. This shared pattern of life has marked their identity and endeared them as members of the same nation.

The people also cohere through their shared agricultural practices. They have sorghum as their staple food crop and cattle rearing as a major occupation. The shared patterns of naming stand as one of the key components that helps establish social connections among the Dinka. People's names symbolize events in the environment, seasons, animals and the beliefs that the nation cherishes. Through naming, one's bond to the nation becomes concrete since they receive an identity that enables them to associate to a significant event in the society. The narrator, for example, identifies himself as Thon, named "after the bull which was the most prized of the cattle that my grandfather gave for my grandmother, a bull that would not be castrated" (Deal 2013: 3) His other name is Bol, which signifies that his birth occurred after his mother birthed twins. People are also given cattle names to symbolize the immense role that cattle rearing plays in gelling nationhood.

The author also presents hard work and strength as agents of coherence in the South Sudan nation. By way of example, the narrator describes his mother very glowingly as a very industrious woman. Despite having given birth to many children including three sets of twins she is still able to grow very tall sorghum and "her millet bends under the weight of fat seeds" (Deal 2013: 22). This is the reason why the narrator considers his father's offer of twenty-eight cows and seven goats as dowry for his mother as meager for the industrious woman that his mother has turned out to be.

According to the author, the Dinka people as depicted in the text are kind and hospitable. They are virtuous people who, according to the narrator, watch over each

other's cattle without taking concern over the plight of the rest of the cattle even though they do not belong to him.

The author endeavors to influence society into perceiving their nationhood to spring from the shared sense of the beauty of their environment. Thon says that he is content to be in "the best place with the best friends and the most beautiful cattle in the entire world" (Deal, 2013: 30). One way through which the people display their adoration and attachment to nature is through songs. Songs sang in praise of the cattle, the personality oxen, the sun, Deng, the divinity of the clouds and sky, the greatness of Nhialic, all serve to instill pride in the singers and gel their shared bond. Deal in T*he Mark* presents a society whose countryside abounds with beautiful birds such as "Piak Piak" (Deal 2013: 20) which follows the movement of the cattle so as "to snatch up the insects that they disturbed." Small swifts, with sleek wings dart in and out of treetops. The night is punctuated by the occasional whooping of hyenas and the air is filled with the constant bellowing of the many cattle that the Dinka keep.

Finally, it is worth noting that the author counters the popular image projected about South Sudan as a lawless society by presenting it a society made up of members with a deep sense of love for upholding the law. For instance, whereas the narrator undertakes leadership roles during his initiation, he is still expected to subscribe to the laws by which the society is governed. There is a clear hierarchy of power with the elders, the Beny Bith and the chief settling grievances arising among members. The upholding of societal laws during the dispensation of justice as portrayed by the author in the case against Chol is a case in hand that projects South Sudan as a nation glued around the members' love for justice and not as popularly projected as a society averse to order and the rule of law.

2.6 Charity and the Reengineering of South Sudan Nationhood in *The Humanitarian* by Caraway

In *The Humanitarian* (2012) Caraway introduces the reader to a destitute South Sudan society ravaged by war and dependent on food drops by the World Food Program (WFP) following a protracted drought. The collective suffering has produced a negative sense of oneness in the people. The people live in a destitute society that the author refers to as "a timeless place without form or boundaries" and "a cramped sealed-in tomb" (pp.14). Besides the failed harvest and dead cattle, the terrain of the land is a hot and vast mosquito infested swamp inhabited by poor villagers reeling from the effects of a twenty year old civil war in a " big sad country" (Caraway 2012: 85). He also describes it as "a vast, shapeless emptiness that stretched forever out across the water-logged plain." (Caraway, 2012: 87)

The trauma that war has caused society is evident in the many IDP camps scattered all over and an impoverished people who depend on food aid from the WFP. There is no sense of pride in belonging to a community comprising of members living in sprawling camps scattered all over and supported by food aid relief from the WFP. Aid workers and the leaders of the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRC) frustrate the WFP efforts at re-engineering hope in South Sudan. This is a relief wing of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) who corruptly use the food distributions to consolidate their influence among the starving populace. By so doing, the SRRC curtails the WFP's efforts to jumpstart the formation a more positive sense of oneness in the people.

Nevertheless, the author still finds fault in the WFP'S approach towards solving the South Sudan drought crisis by portraying its humanitarian efforts as being out of

touch with the necessary measures to orchestrate a lasting sense of national belonging among the traumatized people:

> The foreigner might be richer beyond anyone's dreams, flying in planes, bringing endless deliveries of grain and other goods as though they were nothing, but here, none of that counted for anything. Those who belonged here would survive with or without what the foreigners brought. (Caraway, 2012: 237)

The author holds that humanitarian food drops foster the development of a weak sense of communal belonging among the people. This is because such acts of philanthropy encourage the formation of a communion whose membership stems from the love for the largesse of the international community and not on the strength of any values or positive image that its members share and cherish. Caraway notes that "food aid created dependency, I had concluded, and did not slow exponential population growth….There was no solution in that, just an endless postponement and the prospect of endless dependency" (Caraway, 2012: 206). In Caraway's opinion, gestures of philanthropy by the UN and the WFP fall short of their objective because the field officers use their positions to enhance their power and authority among the afflicted.

In contrast to the efforts of the WFP, the philanthropic initiatives of Father Severino and Sister Lucy are examples of viable means of enhancing nation building in the impoverished members of South Sudan. The inhabitants of the South Sudan region where the two render their services comprise of displaced and homeless people scattered in camps and villages across a swampy land. The novel offers the reader insights into the conflict, its consequences and the challenge of redeeming humanity from the horrors brought by the civil wars.

The South Sudan citizens are a nomadic cattle-herding society heavily dependent on their cattle for a livelihood. A lasting sense of oneness in South Sudan, according to Caraway, is achievable through the promotion of the people's familiar lifestyle as opposed to huddling them in camps or shantytowns, as is the practice of the new South Sudan government.

The author attributes the fragmentation of South Sudan as a nation to a range of factors namely: its history of colonialism, domination by the Khartoum government and post-colonial mismanagement in leadership. One of the characters by the name John considers the instability of the nation as arising from external interest and interference in South Sudan's oil especially from the Chinese. He notes: "They say the Chinese are arming them now. He further accuses the Chinese of wanting to kill everyone "so that they can take the oil without any resistance" (p.119). An SPLA commander also blames the Chinese stating that: "they have always come to steal our riches, they kill and displace our people" (Caraway, 2012: 61).

Father Severino stands out as a character whose attributes represent the kind of traits that the author considers representative of a more positive image of the South Sudan nation. He comes out as a man "so full of hope and action" (Caraway, 2012: 73). The narrator's introverted character comes out as a foil to amplify Father Severino's philanthropic nature and his capacity to relate with "fallen humanity and all its foibles and the great and unbearable evils" (Caraway, 2012: 73). The narrator notes the devotion and self -belief of Father Severino and his determination to single handedly change the plight of the IDP'S even without financial assistance from anyone. According to the narrator, "the lethargy that draped itself over every effort and every endeavor in this forsaken land had not tainted this man; there was an energy

emanating from his tired eyes and sweaty, muscular body that was difficult to resist." (Caraway, 2012: 50)

Father Severino's philanthropic actions, a life inspired by hope, resilience against the harsh terrain and spirit of self-sacrifice represents "the good" that the author considers a necessary ingredient for injecting " a sense of purpose" for the achievement of nationhood for the traumatized South Sudan nation. His actions are a symbol of "the good things in human nature" (Caraway, 2012: 135) that society can use to restore broken relationships. Father Severino's philanthropic actions are a testimony by the author that "meaningfulness" (Caraway, 2012: 78) can be restored to humanity devastated by drought and war. The author draws from father Severino's experience of growing up in his troubled family to draw a parallel lesson for the South Sudan nation. Raised in a family of eight poor, malnourished children going to school in tattered clothes, he learns to find love and fulfillment amidst adversity: "I know that however much we suffered; there was happiness in my family. We were many and we all used to help each other and to fight and to argue, all of that too, but above all we were together" (Caraway, 2012: 97). Using this analogy, the author suggests that South Sudan can coalesce as a nation once its members who are drawn from diverse ethnic backgrounds recognize that they are members of a vast "house" with many communities with diverse temperaments. He likens the nation to a house with many noisy children who can appreciate the fact that there is warmth in many people's voices as opposed to the silence found in houses without diversity. The author argues that recovery from the trauma of war lies in the formation of beautiful memories of the past and the acceptance to overcome the past to begin to appreciate and live harmoniously with those who surround you. Father Severino's words to the narrator, Richards are quite telling of this:

> I do know memories are important. Of course they are. They should be beautiful, may be because they are what make us the thing we have become. But I know also that you have to live in the place you are and live the life of the person you have become, too. If you are going to be of any use to those around you who need you, you have to live with them and through them. And that means you cannot live inside a dream about the past (Caraway, 2012: 106).

The author points to the capacity of mutual love, as reflected in Father Severino's love for the natives, to lift the nation out of its fragmented condition. He is critical of the UN and the WFP for their programs, which, while intending to alleviate suffering, do not succeed in bridging the chasm that exists between the disparate ethnic communities of South Sudan. He argues that people can be meaningfully helped by knowing them and loving them through Father Saverino's model rather than through the WFP approach, that views the locals as mere statistics in its food drops program. The spirit of self-sacrifice demonstrated by father Severino is according to the author an archetype of the spirit necessary for activating new national feelings in the people of South Sudan. Father Severino has identified with the people's suffering and considers himself a member of their nation despite being Mexican: "so I feel these are my people…it is as though I have adopted them. I feel close to them, closer than with any of the others, and I find everything I need in this warmth I share with them, as though they were my family" (Caraway, 2012: 210). The text can also be read as a critique of the international community's approach of looking at the people of the war ravaged nation of South Sudan as statistics for their programs of philanthropy rather than looking at their catastrophe as an event experienced by a nation within the family of the universal humanity. Consequently, the author takes the view that the problem with the war-ravaged nation of South Sudan is a problem within the human family and not one single society. He therefore takes the view that philanthropy is not the only avenue for assuaging this problem. Ultimately, John, a South Sudanese employee

of the WFP believes that the Dinka, the Neur, the Toposa, the Jireh and the Turkana can cohere as members of the same nation "if there is justice and development" (p.206).

2.7 Conclusion

The study has examined the representation of nation formation in selected texts from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. The ethnically instigated wars have destroyed the social relations among the members of these societies. The chapter has discussed how the writers have represented the past to facilitate the re-emergence of new sentiments of oneness in the members.

A study of the selected texts concludes that the writers imagine nation formation in many ways. Firstly, they evoke the past as a reference point for national pride. They have referenced to myth, taboo and history to show coherence before these societies' contact with the colonial agents. By referencing to history, they re-enact the lost/ forgotten memory of the members' shared communion repressed by trauma. They have also represented the trauma of war as an intruding episode to unitary societies already linked through a shared set of values as epitomized in the lives of particular characters in the texts. They have argued that these values if revisited can be the gelling agents for the re-awakening of the shattered communion. Additionally, the writers have imaginatively represented nation formation in the selected texts by depicting colonialism and /or politics as the cause of the tear in the social fabric of these societies. They have argued that these external forces are to blame for manipulating the members to turn against each other. They therefore suggest that the lost communion is reparable once society appreciates who the real culprits of the tear are. They have solidified their argument about the innocence of the members in this fragmentation by refusing to interpret these calamities from the prism of victim-

perpetrator. Ethnicity is an external imposition and should therefore not be the prism through which these catastrophes are interpreted. Consequently, the writers have humanized the victims of these atrocities and presented them as victims rather than criminals. The study has also noted that the writers have represented nation formation by evoking pride in the societal members by pointing to the natural environment and the beautiful terrain of these territories as images of their shared communion. The representation of the destructive effect of the trauma of war takes place against the backdrop of the beautiful aura of the natural environment for which the writers call the attention of the survivors

CHAPTER THREE

STRUCTURING THE JOURNEY(S) OF THE NATION(S) INTO NARRATIVE

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the narrative strategies employed by the selected writers to explore nation formation in these traumatized societies with the understanding that "meaning in a text cannot be separated from an analysis of its literary techniques" (Arnold, 1993: 479). I examine the narrative strategies that the writers have used to represent traumatic experiences, which, according to Sonia (2017), repel narration using language. The study concurs with Whitehead (2004), as read by Rye (2009: 83), who proposes that literature has an edge over other forms of representation to represent what resists representation because of its " creativity, innovation, literary devices and techniques" by " mimicking the 'symptomatology' of trauma, by means of 'recurring literary techniques and devices."

The strategies that I examine include narrative structure, perspective, use of images, narrative voice (or 'point of view') language, and choice of narrator and linguistic register (for example, the choice between colloquial or formal language).The study explores the writers' use of images and how these figures of speech enable the writer to express the "unspeakable." Expressing trauma through images is helpful since "trauma exceeds the mind's capacity to assimilate or understand it as it occurs and by extension seems beyond language." (Robson, 2004: 12) I examine structure in the selected texts from the sense proposed by Hawthorn (1985: 118) as referring to "a novel's overall organization and patterning, the way in which its component parts fit together to produce a totality, a satisfying whole- or, of course, the way in which they

fail to do so." On the other hand, I discuss perspective in the selected texts from the understanding that it refers to the different characters involved in the telling of the story. The study acknowledges that there is not one particular way of testifying to a traumatic experience, therefore a single text can have multiple perspectives from which an experience is narrated as a demonstration of the writers' endeavor to create a shared account of the past. The study concurs with Muchiri (2004: 63) who argues that different perspectives in a story are related because they all relate to "their own versions of the same world."

Narrative technique as Hawthorn (1985: 81) points out, refers to the great range of choices that the writer makes/draws from in a work of art to help the reader imagine " what has already happened, that which is being recounted" to him. In order to do this, the writer has to rely on certain instruments to enable the readers visualize what they are reading. These instruments, Hawthorn further suggests, help to make the reader "see" and "visualize in response to a telling" (1985: 81).

This chapter examines the narrative strategies employed in texts authored by writers who write from the inside by virtue of hailing from these traumatized societies and who, I assume, have been affected directly or indirectly by the trauma of war and/or genocide. These writers include John Rusimbi, Marie Therese Toyi, and Roland Rugero. It also discusses the narrative strategies used in texts by authors who write from the outside because they do not hail from the societies represented in their texts and they do not have a first-hand relationship with these countries' scars. They include N. Caraway, Jeffery Deal, and Elisabeth Combres. An examination of the narrative techniques that each of these writers deploy in their works helps to establish the correlation, if any, between a writer's distance with the trauma of the society that

he/she is representing and the narrative techniques that he/she selects in the imagination of nation formation in that society.

3.1 Narrative Technique in Weep not Refugee, Baho and The Hyena's Wedding

3.1.1 Narrative structure, perspective and image in *Weep Not Refugee* by Marie Toyi

Weep not refugee (2012) has a linear plot. In as much as the novel aligns with Aristotle's beginning/ exposition middle and end/ denouement, Toyi begins the narrative in the middle of events. The author begins the story at the fictional refugee camp in Wirodi and gradually fills in the exposition with other characters' perspectives and situations that explain/reveal the background information to the refugee crisis in Wirodi refugee camp. This process leads to a plot that although linear, is disjointed just like the nation that the author seeks to narrate.

The writer has stylistically ensured that the events of the narrative are largely relayed through what Hawthorn (1985: 83) would refer to as "a personified narrator" whose observations provide an internal account of the life in the refugee camp. As an insider or what Hawthorn (1985: 3) refers to as an "intradiagetic narrator" he lives right "in the world of the story" and the reader perceives the trauma of being a refugee through his experience. The refugee experience traumatizes Wache: "I grew up with a wound, the wound of being a refugee. This wound bled as often as crises emerged." (Toyi, 2012: 280) A first person account of the events in the refugee camp as narrated by Wache gives a first-hand testimony to the reader about the traumatic experience of being a Burundian refugee.

For the reason that Wache is the author's mouth-piece, the reader therefore discerns the traumatizing effects of war on the individual's psyche and by extension on the

nation through the experience of the protagonist whose life reflects the paradoxes of his society from which he hails. The writer adopts a sympathetic tone in her presentation of Wache's refugee experience thus connecting the reader emotionally to the story. In this way the reader, who could be an outsider participates in a traumatic experience that he might not have interacted with firsthand. By empathizing with the narrator, he begins to identify with Wache's quest to find full reintegration back into the disintegrated Burundian nation.

The novel also has a plot in which the protagonist (Wache) makes a physical journey from the refugee camp in Warodi to Burundi and back in his quest to find his father and his roots. This physical journey while moving the plot of the text forward has a metaphorical connotation to the development of the protagonist and society in general. Nnolim (1976: 183) says the following regarding the impact that a journey can have on a protagonist:

> He ends up learning quite a few lessons about himself, about human nature in general or about the nature of the world. Ignorance gives way to experience. Wide-eyed naiveté yields to sophistication and wisdom in the ways of the world. The protagonist usually moves about spatially-from a narrow environment to a broader one…but concurrent with this physical movement is a metaphorical one (experience and maturation are gained).

A journey motif therefore (physical and metaphorical) partially shapes the plot of the novel. Through this journey, the narrator gradually gains insight into his membership in the war ravaged Burundian society. The events that unfold in the course of Wache's journey also carry ironical undercurrents that enrich the reader's/ societies appreciation of the trauma of the civil war in Burundi.

The writer uses Wache as her mouthpiece, a character who embodies the values of his society through whom the readers perceive the contradictions associated with

belonging to a Burundian community. Wache is a product of mixed parentage (he is a child of an orphaned Hutu refugee woman, raped by a Tutsi man). The author uses this fact to stylistically critique the common approach of interpreting the Burundi refugee crisis along what Kroll (2007) as read by Samuel (2010: 43) would refer to as "the 'safe' binary perspectives of subject-object, innocence-guilt, and victim-perpetrator." By using a narrator with mixed parentage, the author circumvents the trap of creating a lopsided narrative that would be a source of divisiveness in an already fragile society. By standing out as an individual who foregrounds humanity above ethnicity, the writer persuades the reader/ society that these binary divisions are arbitrary and an unnecessary hindrance to nation formation. The writer therefore uses Wache's life as the site where the fight for the reconciliation of the two main warring ethnic groups plays out and resolves in the text.

There are many instances in this story where the narrator interrupts the flow of the narrative with a series of rhetorical questions. These questions persuasively and emotionally appeal for the reader's empathetic engagement with the narrative bearing in mind that the reader may be an outsider who is not directly acquainted with the experience of the trauma of these catastrophes. Regarding the refugees loss of identity, for example, the writer emotionally appeals to the reader:

> Identity. You have your identity, don't you? Not that piece of paper with your name and a small photograph of yourself on it. You are a human being in your flesh and in your blood; you have a language and an occupation. Now imagine yourself, in your flesh and in your blood, taken to a land of antelopes and being told that, for the sake of adjustment you will now be called an antelope….just for the sake of adjustment….have you ever thought of changing your parents?...or have you ever thought of changing your clan, or changing your ethnic group? (Toyi, 2012: 53)

The rhetorical questions further remind the reader about the role that generational changes play in the creation of memory. Being an outsider to the Burundian refugee crisis the readers become aware that the kind of memories that they create as they interact with the trauma of Burundi is different from the one held by insiders and victims of trauma such as Wache. The readers' memory has similarities with the memory of the generation of Burundians with no such first-hand experience. By way of example, Wache poses a series of rhetorical questions complaining about his ill treatment by a group of Burundian students who have not gone through life in a refugee camp:

> What would they understand if they had never had experience of being sick without any hope of treatment, being hungry without hope of food, sleeping under rain, being refused in school and in a job for which they were highly qualified, simply because you are a refugee? What had they known of that despair which reached a level of giving away one's child to modern human traffickers disguised in candidates for adoption? (Toyi, 2012: 123).

According to Sonia (2017), trauma resists narration using language. Therefore In order for Toyi to narrate the pain and trauma of being a refugee she makes use of images, symbols and metaphors to enable the reader form mental pictures of an unfamiliar experience. Samuel (2010: 11) argues that symbols and images "provide readers with some form of access into the experience of genocide, and in this way aid in bearing witness to it. For example, after being forcefully conscripted into war in a strange country, the narrator returns and finds his mother in a deplorable traumatized state. He uses similes to describe her state in an attempt to help the reader grasp her situation:

> It is hard to describe the state in which I met her. Just for you to have an idea what it was like, take a cup of ground red pepper, pour it on your bleeding wound, and you will have a little idea what it was like. If you have no wound, well, we cannot discuss again, because there

> are things which you will never be able to understand (Toyi, 2012: 74).

This narrative is however not all about doom and gloom. The writer also tells the story from the perspective of other traumatized characters who have managed to surmount enormous challenges as to reaffirm their own humanity. An example of such a character is Rutare. Although this narrative has a linear plot, there are several breaks in its flow. One of such breaks captures Rutare's story. His story is one of those instances where the writer uses irony to demonize the barbaric nature of ethnicity. Stories of achievement by refugees such as Rutare rekindle hope about the prospects of Burundi overcoming its trauma on its path to nationhood.

The narrative breaks that introduce stories of other characters within the main story widen the perspective from which the reader understands the plight of the refugees. For example, there is an extensive insertion into the main plot of the story of the frustrations of Kibwa and Obute. These two characters leave the refugee camp in Wirodi and venture abroad to the fictional country of Lusaka in search of the supposedly greener pastures away from the squalor of the refugee camp. A character such as Fofo who is living in denial after the kidnapping of her husband by armed men is an example of the numerous traumatized refugees living while unaware of the whereabouts of their relatives whom they perceive as dead.

Intertwining Wache's story with the narratives of other characters who have been afflicted by the Burundi civil wars is also advantageous in the writer's overall objective because Wache's comprehension of the genesis of the refugee crisis and the gravity of ethnicity is limited having been born and raised in the refugee camp in Warodi. Therefore, through characters such as Andrew, the narrator and the reader get to learn of the gravity of the Hutu-Tutsi rivalry, a problem that Wache does not fully

grasp. The animosity between Hutus and Tutsis also plays out to the reader through other experiences in the lives of other characters. An example of such characters is Kabunda, a Tutsi, compelled by circumstances to-publicly disown his fellow Tutsis and his allegiance to his ethnic tribe so as escape his Hutu aggressors.

These different narrative perspectives coalesce into a common collective societal narrative, which then can become the memory of the nation. Radstone & Katharine (2003: 5) suggest that "cultural memories are constituted by the cumulative weight of fragmented individual memories." They also suggest that an array of narratives coalesce to produce "an agreed narrative that gives meaning and value to collective struggle" (2003: 101) I also share in Samuel's (2010:38) argument that it is necessary for a writer who is representing trauma to infuse as many perspectives into the narrative as possible because:

> the proliferation of individual narratives reinforces the notion of the collective as the reader is provided a kaleidoscope of various experiences, rather than being made to focus on only one individual…the reader thus gets to see the human face" of the calamity "rather than just the statistics, while simultaneously being shown its broad effects, the many people involved…on an individual and collective scale.

Additionally, breaks in the narrative are an imitation of the fragmentation within the nation. Besides this, a fragmented structure also alludes to the idea that nation formation is a complex process, not necessarily linear. According to Samuel (2010) fragmented narratives mirror the fragmentation at both the social and psychic levels of the individual and the society.

The writer also employs sarcasm to castigate or make a mockery of ethnic stereotyping in Burundi. Wache's encounter with Loretta, a Tutsi girl in Burundi who turns down his hand for love because of his flat nose, a feature normally associated

with being Hutu, is a case of one of the instances of sarcasm. The author castigates the hypocrisy of ethnic stereotyping when on the one hand, Wache who is of mixed Hutu and Tutsi parentage is sidelined by his fellow Hutu refugees for bearing Tutsi blood but is on the other hand ironically rejected by a Tutsi girl, Loretta, because of his flat nose, a feature associated with the Hutus. Toyi, through this experience castigates the criteria of using physical features to ascribe identity. She notes, "after all, siblings from a same mother and a same father might not be with the same shape of nose, the same height, the same skin complexion, and, when they grow up, they might specialize in different activities." (Toyi, 2012: 101) Through this episode, the author critiques the hollowness of using ethnicity and ethnic marks to determine membership in the Burundian nation.

3.1.2 Narrative techniques in *Baho* (2016) by Roland Rugero

Baho (2016) by Roland Rugero can be classified as a lyrical novel which Gardner describes as bearing the following features;

> What carries the reader forward is not plot, basically-though the novel may contain, in disguised form, a sequence of causally related events- but some form of rhythmic repetition: a key image or cluster of images (the ocean, a childhood memory, a snow-capped mountain, a forest); a key event or group of events, to which the writer returns repeatedly, then leaves for material that increasingly deepens and redefines the meaning of the event or events; or some central idea or cluster of ideas. The form lends itself to psychological narrative, imitating the play of the wandering or dreaming mind (especially the mind troubled by one or more traumatic experiences); and most practitioners of this form of the novel create works with a marked dream-like quality" (1983: 185).

Reading *Baho* (2016) one immediately becomes aware of the central manner in which the plot of the novel revolves around an array of images and repetition. The narrative revolves around a wide array of images ranging from drought, rape, flight, the landscape, the old woman's eye, time and the mute man. Deciphering meaning in this

novel entails a large exercise of assigning meanings to these images. According to Chandler (2002), signs have no intrinsic meaning. Therefore, the reader invests them with meaning based on the manner in which he interprets them. Chandler also suggests that through signs and communication, reality is constructed, produced, maintained, repaired and transformed. The use of images in this text is important given the fact that they enable the writer to paint a picture of the trauma of war in Burundi. In this way, the reader subjectively forms a mental image of an experience that is largely inaccessible not just to him but also to the survivors and the society in general. Part of reading this novel therefore involves an engagement with how the writer has used these images as signs, which represent certain meanings, and which facilitate the depiction of the process of the formation of a collective memory of Burundi as a nation.

Nyamuragi's wrongful accusation of rape is the key event/image in the novel. It is the main event around which all the action of the novel revolves. The manner in which the allegation of rape is enacted and resolved mirrors the struggle for the realization of Burundian nationhood. The communal drive to kill Nyamuragi symbolizes a continuation of violence as the fictional country of Hariho attempts to redeem itself from the trauma of war and its atrocities. The entire narrative oscillates around the purported rape incident but the narrative keeps changing focus to other incidents/ actions that broaden the reader's understanding/ appreciation of the meaning of the trauma of war in Burundi. Rape is not just physical violence but it symbolizes the psychological fragmentation of Hariho's social communion. In addition, just as rape involves the overwhelming physical and psychological control of the victim by the rapist, Hariho is a society that has been completely overwhelmed by the controlling power of the trauma of war. Besides this, rape is a humiliating experience to the

victim as it leads to denial. At a societal level, the trauma of ethnic war has led to denial and stunted the Burundian nation.

The narrative unfolds in a hunger stricken fictional country of Hariho amidst a debilitating drought. Hariho is a fictional country nourished by "a water blue" Lake Tanganyika and springs "scattered across the valleys surrounding Kanya" that have since run dry (Rugero, 2016: 1). The image of drought evokes a mental image in the reader of a people whose sense of existence as members of the same nation has been tattered because of what the writer attributes to be " the many sins that men have committed" (Rugero, 2016: 1). He nostalgically employs contrast and imagery to compare the current fragmentation in Hariho with the past by evoking memories of past tranquility and harmony when "the valleys were always green, the rain's absence offset by the murmur of many rivers flitting through the Hariho region" (Rugero, 2016: 2). The images of green valleys, abundant rain and flowing rivers gesture to the existence of harmonious relationships and communities before the intrusion of civil wars.

The author employs motion/movement very symbolically in the novel. Time and motion symbolize stability or turbulence. In the narrative, the pre-colonial period of Burundi's history is a period with predictable motions of time and society is well ordered around changes in seasons and periods that harmoniously synchronize with the societal aspirations and needs: "corn had its seasons. Millet and goose grass. Peas as well. And wheat and cassava. In moments of hunger, there was always a banana tree….In those days, men were certain of their futures: repeated moments of repetition" (Rugero, 2016: 2). Unlike in a traumatized setting where repetition signals stagnation and subdued development, the narrator associates its manifestation in the pre-colonial Burundian society with predictability/ constancy of life and

patterns/seasons that position man to order his life in harmony with nature. He notes thus, "slow seasons mark life moments. One season peacefully leads into another, steady, slow, predictable and calm. Just as life, itself is peace, regularity and slowness. What is new surprises, astounds, and disconcerts" (Rugero, 2016: 3). He alludes to pre-colonial communal oneness with real peace and harmony symbolized by the predictable "cycles of life, slowness and certainty" (Rugero, 2016: 5).

Rapid motion, on the contrary is a motif employed by the writer to represent turbulence/flight and instability and a form of escapism. Rugero argues that Burundi's decision to imbibe a lifestyle that veers away from the traditional life marks a break from this 'repetition' or 'noble way of life" (Rugero, 2016: 5). For the writer, one of the values that Burundi has embraced that has had the effect of fragmenting the nation is western formal education. However, it is the Burundi civil war of 1983, which the writer blames most for eroding society's harmonious co-existence: "the war severed time from humanity in the Hariho way of life" (Rugero, 2016: 5). Nyamuragi, the mute is thus employed as the embodiment of the Burundian society that has severed itself from this connection from "humanity, time and place". His flight from the false accusations of rape symbolizes a society that has broken apart. Nyamuragi's flight from his pursuers mirrors Burundi's departure from its past harmonious life. His muteness mirrors the society's paralysis and inability to find the language to make sense of its trauma because trauma resists narration using language (Sonia 2017). The physical deformities of Nyamuragi and the old woman are heavily laden with symbolism. Whereas he is mute, the old woman is one-eyed. These physical deformities can be read as symbols of the physical and the psychological wounds that trauma has imposed on the Burundian society. The physical deformity of the one-eyed old woman can be read as an image of the dent that trauma imposes on society's

vision as to how it can repair its tattered image. By helping Burundi form a useful collective memory of its past, Rugero is facilitating in the shaping of the outlook of Burundi or he is engaging in the act of giving society its full vision to help it peer into the future with clarity and harmony.

The structure of *Baho (2016)* constantly shifts to accommodate the multiple narratives of various characters and how Nyamurage's alleged act of rape impacts on them. This multiple narratives gesture to the fact that trauma cannot be narrated uniformly given that different individuals respond to it differently. For example, whereas chapter one captures the musings of the old one-eyed woman about what Hariho has lost by embracing change, chapter two focuses on the mute man Nyamurage who is fleeing his pursuers after being wrongfully accused of murder. Chapter four diverts the reader's focus to Kigeme, shocked and shivering from an ordeal that she can't understand but claims to be an attempted rape. In chapter six, the narrative is no longer about Nyamurage's crime of rape but rather the author introduces two characters: Mugabo and Irakoze who are having an altercation, with Irakoze enraged by what she considers as Mugabo's sexist and inappropriate touch of her exposed hip. The scene of this altercation unfolds quite tensely in a manner akin to the instability in the traumatized society. Chapter eleven takes the reader back to the scene on Kanya hill where Nyamurage is meant to be hanged but ends in an anti-climax when the charged crowd is dispersed by the police and Nyamurage is redeemed from what seems like an imminent death. The narrative shifts focus in chapter twelve to the execution of a traitor who is burned to death, as though to face a death he deserves in the place of the undeserved death of Nyamurage. In general, the narrative is fragmented and the constant shift of perspective from which the narrative unravels mirrors the fragmentation of the society that the writer is narrating.

Roland Rugero uses the oral literature of the society to depict how proverbs, wise sayings and other oral materials facilitated in the promotion of harmony in pre-colonial Burundian society. The rich customs of the society are very central components that have played a central role in orchestrating Burundi's existence as a community of shared values before colonialism. In the oral narrative, the writer explores through the one-eyed old woman the customs and norms of marriage in Hariho. The story portrays a well-cohered society with very clearly laid rules of courtship and marriage. In the story, the reader also notices the many shifts between the use of Standard English and a substantial number of words, sayings, and proverbs that are in Kirundi. Describing, for example, the seer's ,*mupfumu*, views about the dangers of Inabwiza's unmarried status as he attempts to resuscitate her, the narrator notes: "The word came: Inabwiza was sick because she was alone. *"Irungu riranunuza amaraso yawe"*" "solitude sucks one's blood" (Rugero, 2016: 67). These shifts in language although giving the narrative a local flavor, curtail the smooth flow of the story to the reader who is unacquainted with the Kirundi language. The unintelligibility of the wide array of words and expressions in this narrative could imply that narrating the trauma of Burundi is not a straightforward matter and the writer tries to represent it by drawing from the reservoirs of the English and Kirundi languages in his attempt to comprehend it. Equally, it also implies that trauma resists narration using language (Sonia 2017). Code switching therefore attests to the challenges in representing trauma and switching between languages is the writer's attempt to find an angle from which he can witness to it.

An omniscient narrator who is the author relays the narrative. However, the tense in which the story unfolds keeps oscillating between the past and the present. This tense shifting is evident in many instances in the story, for instance, while describing

Nyamurage the author observes as follows: “by the time the sun’s luminous fingers came to rest on Hariho’s fields, his neck *was* (emphasis mine) already sore” (Rugero, 2016: 7). However, a few lines later, the writer changes the tense: “all in all, he *is* quite pleased with himself, for his hunger *was* appeased. That is wisdom itself, *he muses*” (Rugero, 2016: 7). Further, down the text the narrator has this to say about Nyamurage: “his right foot *is* folded beneath his buttocks. His eyes *are* distant….at ten years of age he *began* venturing out from the family seclusion to play in the neighboring households He *heard* new stories. He *ate* new dishes.” (Rugero, 2016: 7). This back and forth bouncing of tense from past tense to present tense signifies the manner in which the past affects the actions at present. The narrative is not written in a chronological order and it becomes cumbersome for the reader who has to keep at pace with the shifting tense oscillation in the novel. This instability in the narrative structure mirrors the fragmentation in Burundi where the past traumatic events of war intrude into the present. It also suggests the manner in which trauma stifles the development of the individual and the nation.

The use of flash back in the narrative shows different characters reminiscing nostalgically about the past especially about the glorious days in the history of Hariho before the outbreak of the civil war. Flashback is a feature of the effects of trauma because it symbolizes the past’s intrusion into the present. Trauma can manifest itself in flashbacks that produce nightmares or hallucinations that wreak the survivor’s memory and identity (Robson 2004).

Roland Rugero gives the issue of ethnicity a wide berth. We learn nothing of the ethnicity of his characters namely Nyamurage, his uncle Jonathan, the nameless one-eyed woman and the other minor characters. The story ignores the role that ethnic conflict has played in engineering Burundi’s wars. Even when the author is describing

how Nyamurage's parents died, he avoids mentioning directly the role of ethnicity in the catastrophe: "it wasn't from some long and grandiose pronouncement that his parents had died, but from machetes and hate, from the lethal blow of an axe" (Rugero, 2016: 20). The author does not explain whether the hate responsible for their death had any connection with the ethnic animosity between the Hutu and the Tutsi. It is very clear that Rugero does not explore the Burundi fragmentation and nation formation through the prism of the stereotypical binary positioning of Hutu as perpetrators and Tutsis as victims. This is the reason why he does not disclose the ethnicity of his characters. He downplays the significance of ethnicity and its role in the fragmentation of Burundi:

> The one-eyed old woman has respect for every living thing living. From a young age she knew to respect the Twas, the third ethnic group after the Hutus and the Tutsis. It was even murmured that she might be one of them, but her father's bloodlines. *But it did not matter! the essential thing is to live"(*Emphasis mine) (Rugero, 2016: 69).

3.1.3 Reconfiguring the Rwandan nation: Narrative techniques in *The Hyenas Wedding*

John Rusimbi's *The Hyena's Wedding* (2007) fuses fiction with fact in its plot. It has a linear plot and the author seeks to represent the catastrophic nature of the genocide to the society by developing the story argumentatively "leading the reader point by point to some conclusion" (Gardner 1983: 166). Gardner holds that in such a novel, "events occur not to justify later events but to dramatize logical positions; thus event *a* does not cause event *b* but stands in some logical relation to it….by dramatized concrete situations the writer argues , say, ' if *a* does not work, try *b*; if *b* does not work, try *c*'" (1983: 166). In the case of this novel, there are two main points that Rusimbi wants to argue out. Firstly, he is out to explore how the rehabilitation of the

nation from its trauma by demonstrating that the Rwandan people's participation in the genocide was borne out of naivety and manipulation by internal and external forces. His second objective is to explore the practical steps that Rwanda has to put in place in its reconstruction efforts. He believes that meaningful psychological healing of the nation must go hand in hand with the restoration of security, the provision of education, the resettlement of displaced people and returnees and the institution of justice for the survivors. The plot of the novel therefore develops alongside the author's quest to demonstrate the path for the realization of these two main goals.

Regarding the psychological "rehabilitation of the people's minds," (Rusimbi 2007: 1) from the guilt of the genocide, Rusimbi uses the image of the hyena's wedding to exonerate the society from this guilt by likening their participation in the genocide to an act proceeding out of ignorance and manipulation. In the Rwandan society, the hyena is a symbol of greed and evil and for the author, the manipulation from internal and external forces played a major role in influencing the Rwandan people to embrace an evil alien to the societal norms and whose consequences they had no idea. The image of attending a hyena's wedding has the connotation of participating in a weird event alien to societal norms and values.

In explaining the reconstruction of Rwanda, Rusimbi uses figurative language by likening the state of the society to that of a "ruined building" (2007: 1) in need of revival. He therefore explores the practical steps essential for the reconstruction and eventual habitation of this "building". Using Nyamata sector as the symbol of the nation, the writer explores the mode of fixing the problems of security, social services, schools, and the resettlement of displaced people and returnees (many of whom had participated in the genocide). He argues that repairing the broken 'infrastructure' in the 'ruined building' (Rusimbi 2007: 1) is paramount towards the

realization of the ultimate goal of restoring a sense of communal belonging in the Rwandan nation.

According to Chandler (2002: 26) the use of images helps in the creation of meanings based on the manner in which we create and interpret them: " these signs can be in the form of words, images, sounds, odors, flavors, acts or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning". Signs are avenues of inferring meaning in a text. Additionally, through signs and communication, reality is "constructed, produced, maintained, repaired and transformed" (Hurwitz, 1993: 15). I concur with Samuel (2010: 22) who postulates that images have an analogous effect: "images provide an imaginative space where the reader is encouraged to interpret the narrative subjectively and engage with the represented world." The author's use of the image of the Rwandese attending the hyena's wedding, for instance, is meant to help the reader understand that genocide was an unfortunate moment of insanity in the history of Rwanda that should not be used as an identifying mark of the nation.

In this novel, Rusimbi has used a wide array of other images to help the reader form a mental image of the genocide, trauma and the reconstruction of the society. I would now wish to discuss a few of those images. The Hutu and Tutsi names are signs whose manipulated meanings propagated the ideology of hate and divisiveness. For Rusimbi, society arbitrarily assigns names and ethnic tribes. These signs have no intrinsic meaning. He uses the example of the changing names of River Nyabalongo as it winds its way from one country to the other across the African continent to illustrate this fact. According to him:

> "Nyabalongo River cut across the country, passing through Lake Victoria into the Nile River, it was said to be the one river that

> changed names depending on the course of its flow. It was Nyabolongo in Rwanda, Kagera in Tanzania, Nile in Uganda and other countries in the north-east of the African continent" (Rusimbi 2007: 47).

Although River Nyabalongo was the scene where Hutu militias threw Tutsi corpses believing that the river would relay them back " to the land of Hamites" (Rusimbi 2007: 47) where they are believed to have originated, the author imbues the river with new meaning depicting it as a site of reconciliation and regeneration.

The author also uses the football matches between the Anglophone and the Francophone schools as images of the healthy competition ideal for the promotion of tolerance and harmony between the disparate ethnic groups of Rwanda. As Mr. Kamanzi remarks about the match, the main intention is not to see who wins or who loses but rather "to bring people together and cement our relationship" (Rusimbi 2007: 94)

There are positive images employed to redefine the national identity of Rwanda. Honesty, kindness, sincerity among a number of the characters in the text project the Rwandese nation as one founded on humane values as opposed to the common images that casts the society as warring. One of the characters whose organizational acumen and kindness steers the reconstruction of the Rwandan society is a former priest and now chief of Nyamata, Mr. Mugabo. His one-legged demeanor is a symbol of the wounded nation (Rusimbi 2007: 19). However, his organizational skills as an administrator of one of the twelve sectors of Nyamata commune stand out as the image of the restored "Rwandan building" that the author is striving to project in the text.

By entitling the text: "*The Hyena's Wedding: The Untold Horrors of Genocide*" the writer intends to have a frank and deep engagement with the horrible stories of the genocide that have either been conveniently ignored or superficially witnessed to by society or that have been considered too traumatizing as to elude an appropriate language for their expression. These are the stories that according to him entail: "the chopping off people's heads, hacking wombs of pregnant women, cutting down young babies with machetes" (Rusimbi, 2007: 43). By writing candidly about this catastrophe the author aspires to humanize people such as rape victims who have been dehumanized and their stories silenced. By unshackling them from their silence of shame, they begin to-meaningfully participate as members of their community. According to Robson (2004: 11), "it is only when the seemingly unspeakable traumatic experience can be transformed into a narrative that the traumatic event can be put in the past and the survivor can begin to recreate an identity shattered by trauma." This is the same view held by Radstone (2003: 14), who proposes that "memories of events that shattered communities or nations may move in the course of a few generations from painful silence to stories that attempt to re-build consensus and re-establish community."

The writer therefore develops the plot of the novel argumentatively pointing out that a comprehensive engagement of the Rwandan genocide must not only frankly witness to the murders witnessed during the genocide but must address other emergent post-genocide challenges to the society that he considers as a threat to the achievement of meaningful unity and reconciliation in Rwanda. Towards this objective, the author addresses the question of the resettlement of displaced survivors and refugees as one of the 'untold horrors' of the genocide that, in his opinion, has been glossed over by writers and society. In his view, land resolution, which entails the resettlement of

displaced victims and returning refugees, (some of whom are perpetrators) is a pertinent issue that must be openly resolved if meaningful reconciliation and harmony in Rwanda is to be achieved. The other nagging issue that falls within the category of what he classifies as a genocide horror and that has to be dealt with is the quest for justice and reconciliation between the survivors and perpetrators. As he notes:

> It was pure logic that, as one counts a million deaths during the 1994 genocide, those responsible for the deaths may be more than twice the number….The hardest task lay in handling a situation where perpetrators of genocide were looking for immunity or continued to kill under the cover of a political rebellion, mainly in the northern part of the country; and dealing with the traumatized survivors to whom words like forgiveness, unity and reconciliation had no meaning (Rusimbi 2007: 65).

Rusimbi, unlike writers such as Rugero in *Baho* (2016) takes a rather direct engagement with the issues of human rights abuses, rapes, murders and the other evils of the genocide. Some of the issues ,such as ethnic identity and its role in the genocide, that are quite horrendous and painful and superficially handled by the other writers that I study in this research are candidly depicted by Rusimbi in *The Hyena's Wedding* (2008). The text draws the reader's empathy through the candid manner in which the representation of the plight of the survivors unfolds.

As a narrative strategy, Rusimbi directly and without mincing words boldly addresses the role of the Hutu-Tutsi ethnic divisions in the propagation of the genocide. He does not do this to reawaken ethnicity but rather to recreate national consciousness about the evil nature of ethnic stereotyping. I share in Hoerschelman's (2001: 89) views that the evil of the acts of war once candidly and openly exposed can "become the symbolic site for the creation of a more cohesive national community.

I also concur with Remmler (1994: 175) when he reminds us that writing candidly in the manner that Rusimbi does, helps to peel shame off the skin of the victims "and transcribe them onto a blank page in order to defy the dehumanizing effect they were meant to have upon their victims and their memories." Many scenes in the novel are laden with emotional intensity that evoke emotional engagement from the readers and establish an empathetic bond with not only the survivors but also with the writer quest to represent the Rwandan nation. At the national level Rusimbi's forthright engagement with the genocide in *The Hyena's Wedding* (2008) has, to borrow Remmler's words, represented Rwanda "as both a site of utter humiliation and, conversely as a place that resists the loss of identity forced upon it" by external forces and evil (2007: 176).

The other strategy that Rusimbi employs in narrating nation formation in post-genocide Rwanda is shifting styles of languages and registers. For example, the author in chapter seven shifts from narrative prose to legal prose. There is the disruption of the narrative of Kiroko by the author's introduction of the legal proceedings to try Karamira for his role in the genocide. In this process, Kiroko's story takes place alongside the legal engagement between the judges, the prosecutor and Karamira's lawyer. The intertwining of Karamira's legal proceedings with the narrative of the genocide produces a narrative structure that speaks to the multidimensional ways of representing the genocide fictionally. It can be argued that it is one of the writer's ways of, I borrow the words of Samuel (2010: 16) words, "trying to make sense of the incomprehensible" and one of his ways of "trying to facilitate some sort of engagement with the genocide in an attempt to gain at least a limited comprehension of the horror." This shift from the straightforward linear narrative concerning Kiroko to the legal proceedings of Karamira affects the reader emotionally, drawing his

empathy for the survivors through his engagement as a witness in the trial of a perpetrator who is guilty of very heinous crimes. The reader develops emotional attachment to the victims as he witnesses the painful testimonies rendered by them. Emotional attachment enables the reader to identify with the writer's project on the restoration of Rwanda's sense of nationhood. It also connects him to an event and experiences that he is largely unacquainted.

Rusimbi represents the trauma of genocide from different perspectives as a strategy of reworking these inaccessible experiences into narrative form and as a strategy to create a collective memory of Rwanda through the intersection of many individual narratives. He is cognizant of the fact that reconstructing ones past after the fragmentation of trauma demands that the victim interacts with other individual's narratives be they survivors or family members. It is through this interaction that the victims begin to understand their story and identity when they place their experience within the framework of the larger societal experience. As Remmler (1994: 179) points out, remembering, for a victim of trauma, "is dependent on the words and remembrances of others." Equally, Ofer (2013: 75) postulates that people, agencies and individual memories collectively coalesce to make a collective memory.

The scene in the national parliament where the survivors openly field questions to the police and army officer is an example of an interview forum where the writer veers from the linear flow of the main narrative to introduce the reader into the perspective of the other players in the genocide. Through the first-hand testimony of the officers, the reader becomes acquainted with role that the police and the army played in either quelling or facilitating in the murders during the genocide. The testimony of other afflicted individuals gives the reader the chance to see the genocide from the perspective of other characters rather than being limited to the narrator's opinion. In

this regard, Muchiri (2004: 63) is apt in arguing that there is a relationship in the different perspectives in a story because they all relate "their own versions of the same world."

3.2 Narrative Technique in *The Mark* (2013), Broken Memory (2011) and The Humanitarian (2014)

3.2.1 Narrative technique in *The Mark: A Novel of Dinka in the Time of War* (2014)

The Mark (2013) has a linear episodic plot. It might appear a misnomer for a trauma narrative to have a smooth structure. This is because such a structure would appear to fail to mirror the fragmentation in the society that it narrates. However, I argue that the writer has settled for this linear and smooth structure to fit well with his protagonist's innocent demeanor and incomprehension of the tensions and anxieties at the center of his society's struggle to actualize as a nation. The plot's flow also mirrors the cohesiveness evident in Thon's cattle camp, a kind of harmony that the writer envisages for the larger South Sudan community. Besides this, the plot also points to the relationship that the writer has with these events. Since the writer is not a native and has no personal relationship with South Sudan's history, his selection of a smooth plot for the novel with Thon as his mouth piece is authentic because there is a sense in which both of them are outsiders who lack a first-hand experience of these events as a part of their living memory.

The story unfolds through the first person account of Thon, who is the type of character that lives right "in the world of the story" (Hawthorn, 1985: 83). This is a deliberate stylistic choice meant to give authenticity to the narrative since Thon,

unlike the author, is an insider whose life mirrors that of his cattle camp society from which he hails.

The writer makes use of a young naïve man as the narrator. However, his understanding of the bottlenecks to the realization of harmony in his community grows as the narrative progresses. He lives in a fairly well cohered society that has had little or no experience with colonialism. The hovering threat to the stability of Thon's village camp and society is the civil war with the Khartoum government. In any event, this war takes place in the front line territories away from Thon's community and only reaches his cattle camp in waves that come and disappear. The villagers do not fully comprehend the cause of this war and to them it is some kind of nuisance. They view the war as an "evil thing" Deal, 2013: 1) that threatens their souls and their coherent community. Thon is an appropriate narrator because at his age, he has a very receptive mind and his innocence makes him a very sincere observer and commentator about the reality of his society. Telling this story from his perspective is a conscious stylistic choice by Deal. This is because Thon is a young man free from the influence of the socio-cultural and historical experiences of the larger South community. Consequently, his views about being a member of his society are in the formation process.

Apart from this, Thon is devoid of the knowledge of the war between the government, the SPLA and the other forces that are aggressively shaping the image of South Sudan. The selection of Thon as the narrator and his innocent but well cohered village as the site where the first part of the narrative unfolds is a deliberate stylistic choice. The author's intention is to expose the fragmenting impact that civil wars and colonialism have had on the larger South Sudan community that Thon ventures into as reflected in the latter part of this text.

There are several occasions where the third-person narrator interjects providing details on events and occurrences outside the physical or mental domain of the protagonist. Such instances are in chapter two, five, eight, ten, and chapter eighteen. In chapter five for example, the author unveils to the reader the Lord Resistance Army's (LRA) hand in the abduction of Dinka girls, and the role this plays in sparking ethnic animosities between the Dinka and their Atuot neighbors. Through the omniscient narrator, the scope of the narrative is broadened and reader learns about Kony's and other forces' foreign interference in the harmony of South Sudan.

The title of this novel: "The Mark" is a symbol that represents belonging and one's total loyalty to the community and its values. The author's choice of the title is stylistic. This is because it is the most prominent image in the text and all the other events in the narrative revolve around the title. The interpretation of all the other events takes place with respect to how they deviate from or amplify the symbolic significance of the image of "the mark". Thon, being the central character in the narrative and a recipient of this mark is the author's mouthpiece since the mark gives him the legitimacy of being the embodiment of his community. The reader therefore perceives the writer's imagination of the South Sudan nation through Thon's perspective and through the characters that identify with his course.

The author employs contrast to structure the subsequent chapters of the novel by portraying the traits of other characters and events that amplify or undermine "the mark's" significance. Examples of characters who espouse the societal values that reflect a sense of a shared communal belonging include Matak, Koor, Jurkuc, Garang, the Beny Bith, Deng, the clan Totems and many other leaders affiliated to the SPLA's liberation movement. The text also has events and characters that, while appearing to undermine the symbolic significance of "the mark," actually act as foils that further

amplify the prominence of "the mark" in the South Sudan community. An example of such characters include Thon, Daniel Awet, Joseph Kony and the other individuals engaged in the abduction of young girls to Uganda.

Some of the images in the text help the reader access how the people of South Sudan conceive themselves as members of one community. There is also another set of images employed by the writer to help the reader access the trauma of South Sudan. This second category of images help the writer in reworking or helping the reader to make sense of traumatic events which are characterized, in trauma studies, "for their inability to be assimilated into language" (Rye 2009: 1). Additionally, images help the writer in witnessing to traumatic events he has no first-hand experience of since he is an outsider who has not directly experienced or been affected by the trauma of these wars. Here below are samples of some of the images that Deal uses in the text.

The writer in demonstrating how South Sudan coheres as a community through naming explores how names signify one's identity and his relationship with his society. Since a name comes from the society, it imprints the image of the society in the bearer's mind. The children in Thon's society draw their names from societal activities, events, personalities and recognized icons in the community. Other names signify the central role that traditional beliefs play in fostering communal coherence. The nature of one's birth also influences naming. Therefore, names are laden with heavy symbolic significance and the fact that they signal societal activities and values serves to cement the sense of communal belonging in the bearers. Naming is therefore a form of contract that the individual enters into with his community. By receiving the name, the individual indirectly accepts membership into the nation whose features and values are signified in the name. By Thon Bol taking a name that refers to " the most prized of the cattle" that his grandfather gave for his grandmother, a bull " that would

never be castrated," (p.3) he enters into a symbolic contract with his ancestors that bonds his allegiance to the community. He identifies with cattle herding which is the main agricultural occupation that identifies him as Dinka. In general, therefore, a scrutiny of the names of all the characters in the text reveals their symbolic significance in revealing to the reader the worldview and pattern of life of this community.

Anne Whitehead (2004) as read in Rye (2009:1) argues that literature represents what resists representation by " mimicking the 'symptomatology' of trauma, by means of 'recurring literary techniques and devices', such as fragmentation, ellipsis, repetition, recurring motifs, tropes, etc." One of such recurring motifs in this novel is Thon's dream of "the dark mist covering the land" (chapter nine, p.90, chapter 12 p.130, chapter 15 p.161) which is a recurring symbol in the narrative that alludes to the psychological effects that trauma has on the individual and the society . His nervousness though manifested at an individual level is a representation of the nervousness at the collective level because trauma is both an individual and societal process.

The author also structures the plot of the novel in the form of a journey motif. The protagonist, Thon, makes a physical journey to the Northern war front to find his father. The journey enables the structuring of the plot through contrast since there is a parallel established between communal belonging as perceived in the village (Thon's cattle camp) and the larger South Sudan community. The reader experiences Thon's journey aware that it has a metaphorical angle to the development of the protagonist and the nation in general.

> The protagonist in such a journey ends up learning quite a few lessons about himself, about human nature in general or about the

> nature of the world. Ignorance gives way to experience. Wide-eyed naiveté yields to sophistication and wisdom in the ways of the world. The protagonist usually moves about spatially-from a narrow environment to a broader one…but concurrent with this physical movement is a metaphorical one (experience and maturation are gained) (Nnolim, 1976: 183).

Thon's physical journey broadens the scope of the narrative because as the dominant voice he is limited spatially while in the village camp. However, his journey to the North is not merely a revelation for him but for the reader as well. The journey also transforms generational status.

The writer, through Thon's perspective, spends the first ten chapters taking the reader through an exploration of the Dinka society, its tightly knit values and the nature of their communion before the innocent narrator ventures to the North a process that injects some psychological maturation in him. The narrator and the reader's understanding of the forces shaping the formation of South Sudan as a nation increases between the two periods mentioned above. The journey to the north broadens his scope of understanding about the sense of South Sudan nationhood from the personal and domestic to the collective and national. The symbolic significance of his physical marks mellows in light of his new understanding of the huge role he has to play to help his larger community achieve a meaningful communion. Looking at his father's sacrifice to his nation, he can now declare that "enduring the knife to get my scars seemed petty in comparison to the hardships of his life" (Deal 2013: 150). His journey to the northern war frontline brings him face to face with greed, murder, treachery, rape, ethnic wars. He also becomes acquainted with the role of colonialism in the destabilization of South Sudan thus making him reevaluate his earlier innocent and unadulterated notions about living in " the best place with the best friends and most beautiful cattle in the world" (Deal 2013: 30). The writer uses this journey to

explore the obstacles surrounding the actualization of a South Sudan nation. What clearly emerges is that just like the journey, the creation of a collective memory is a progressive and evolving process. Therefore the meaning of the journey "lies in the ongoing dialogue between the individual, the community, the society, and the events of the past as reflected by those who write, study and think about it, or present it in artistic form" (Ofer 2013: 83). In that regard, the journey therefore represents a society that is on a quest to understand the meaning of its wars in its "search for ways to incorporate its lessons into the collective memory" (Ofer, 2013: 83).

The writer also uses the journey as a narrative strategy to signal to the idea that nation formation is ultimately an ongoing negotiation process because of the generational changes of the different groups that emerge over the history of a society. Before he ventures to the north, Thon and his village mates symbolize a group that has no personal experience with the civil wars. However, his journey makes him join the category of people with a first-hand experience of these catastrophes. According to Ofer, (2009) each of such groups is bound to create a distinct image/memory of these past atrocities and it is this image that will be fundamental in determining their feeling about membership to their community. In other words, Deal does not envision a single South Sudan nation with fixed membership but rather multiple nations within the same society with membership for each nation formed based on the members' shared past experiences.

Apart from the metaphorical undercurrents of Thon's physical journey to the north discussed above, the writer uses it stylistically. This journey broadens the scope of the narrative by introducing the perspectives of other characters that Thon interacts with on his way thereby augmenting or challenging his perceptions about his society and consequently enlarging the reader's comprehension of the forces influencing the

formation of South Sudan as a nation. Thon is underexposed and his perspective is insufficient to convey the experience of a larger South Sudan community that is unfamiliar. Many more voices however come on board to help the naïve narrator conceptualize his place in the larger South Sudan community. These voices reveal to the reader that restoring a sense of oneness in South Sudan is a complex process of negotiation. Muchiri (2004: 63) notes that although independent, different narrative voices have a relationship in the sense that they all relate "their own versions of the same world." Therefore, all the voices in *The Mark* (2013) coalesce to reveal the complexity of achieving a sense of national belonging in South Sudan. Ultimately, it is apparent that Deal bemoans the disruption of a South Sudan community patterned in the fashion of Thon's cattle camp: a harmonious community unadulterated by genocides and the kind of ethnic hostilities apparent in the wider South Sudan society to which the protagonist journeys. Thon's and his village's innocence acquires symbolic meaning to embody the virtues envisioned by the writer for the realization of a cohesive community: purity, morality and harmony. In conclusion, I have observed that at the of the novel, the reader gets the impression that the writer is out to depict Thon and his village mates as victims trapped in their limited and naïve notions of reality about their place in the South Sudan nation. However, a close reading of the text reveals that the values espoused at the cattle camp are the reagents that the writer recognizes for the actualization of a sense of communal belonging in South Sudan.

3.2.2 Mending the Nation's Torn Memory: Narrative Technique in *Broken Memory* (2011) by Combres. E.

The structure of the narrative in *Broken Memory* (2011) revolves around a survivor's psychological quest to come to terms with the trauma of genocide by gathering bits and pieces of information from the testimonies of other survivors. The protagonist in

the text belongs to the generation of people for whom the genocide is a personal experience. Unlike the protagonist, the readers and the writer (she is not Rwandese) are outsiders. Therefore, they establish their relationship with this through the testimony of survivors such as Emma and Ndoli. Combres is an outsider by virtue of not being Rwandese or a survivor of the genocide. In order to overcome this distance, she selects an insider as her protagonist as a way of acknowledging her deficiency to witness to this catastrophe. Her text offers a platform where the survivor and society can order their memories. She also relies on the voice of the old woman, Mukecuru, to supplement the incomprehension of some issues by her young protagonist. Being an elderly person, she is able to provide the context of the genocide and her insights about the tensions between the Hutu and the Tutsi, which are beyond Emma's grasp, make it possible to grasp this catastrophe. She is a very important cog in the narrative because she is the reader's link between the history of the period before and during the genocide. Her account of the genocide broadens the reader's and Emma's perception of the catastrophe thereby facilitating an informed engagement with the genocide.

The writer's decision to intersperse Emma's narrative with that of some other characters also traumatized by their experiences of the genocide indicates that although not similar to Emma's, their stories concern the same genocide. Trauma is incomprehensible and narrating it is a complex undertaking that takes a multi-faceted approach. The writer therefore intersects Ndoli and the old man's story with Emma's with the understanding that though independent, these stories relate "their own versions of the same world" (Muchiri 2004: .63). The writer implies that achieving a sense of communal belonging in South Sudan necessitates the amalgamation of all the peoples' experiences towards the formation of a common memory of the genocide. I

concur with Crane's (1997: 1381) opinion that the creation of a collective memory for the nation occurs through the interaction of "individuals and collectives" and that "individual experience is never remembered without reference to a shared context." When Emma is able to place her story within the larger societal experience, she begins to find her footing within the society. Remmler (1994) believes that when all survivor narratives intermingle, a sense of national belonging begins to develop out of the feeling that the trauma is borne out of a common and shared experience and part of the history of this society. Remembering for a victim of trauma is therefore, according to Remmler "dependent on the words and remembrances of others" (1994: 180). He further points out that when individuals and society are enabled by their fellow survivors to overcome the trauma of silence, they reconnect with their past and look beyond the horrific events to then begin to re-member glorious instances in that past that they can relate with, the individuals and society begin to forge harmony and a sense of nationhood.

The writer structures Emma's story and the search for her identity to parallel that of the nation. Through Emma's experience, the reader deciphers how Trauma dislocates the individual and by extension the nation. Her quest to piece together the story of her past life is symbolic of the society's bid to recreate its collective memory.

The narrative has a linear plot with into four parts: Bad dreams (chapters 1-9), Keeping Watch (chapters 10-19), the return (chapters 20-28) and the epilogue. These parts are arranged to represent the psychological journey that Emma undergoes on her way to recovery from trauma. In "bad dreams", the narrative explores the fragmentation of Emma's day-to-day life brought about by the memories of the murder of her mother and the rest of her family. Her mind is in constant turmoil and her identity is shattered by the silence that trauma has imposed on her. In "keeping

watch", Emma begins to comprehend her trauma by interacting with other survivors such as Ndoli. She begins to intersect her experience within the larger experience of other survivors' testimonies during the Gacaga court hearings. In "the return," Emma, through the assistance of the old man, begins to master her past story. She confronts the past that has always eluded her leading to the refashioning of her identity. Through the help of the old man, Emma psychologically "returns" by overcoming her silence and being able to master her narrative of devastation.

The plot of the novel, just like the plot of *Weep Not Refugee* (2012) and *The Mark* (2013) is partially shaped by a journey motif. Emma makes a physical journey to her home village –her mother's village- to get documentation proving that she had been her mother's daughter. This documentation is necessary to help her access state money set aside for survivors. This "return" to her home village comes ten years after the end of the genocide (she is now fourteen years old). This physical journey has a metaphorical angle to her development and society in general for she moves psychologically from denial to acceptance and recovery. It is because of this journey that Emma is able for the very first time to know her mother's name, Pacifique, and retrieve an old picture in her late mother's dilapidated house. This is a very crucial development because naming of the dead symbolizes their humanization. The dead seize being genocide statistics and become humanized the moment they are given names. Naming is an act that signifies one's ability to take charge of his/her world. Participating in the nation becomes a reality when the survivor take charge of their own world and feel human and recognized.

The narrative concerns three categories of traumatized individuals. The first group consists of Tutsi survivors who fell victim to the Interahamwe brutality and witnessed the murder of their close relatives as represented by Emma and the old man. The

second group comprises of Hutu perpetrators who unwillingly participated in the killing of Tutsis under orders and threats from the Interahamwe as represented in Ndoli's story. The last category involves Hutu philanthropists who risked their lives to save Tutsis as represented by the old woman Mukecuru. The writer intersects these stories as a way of giving the reader a many-layered account of the catastrophe as opposed to a monolithic account that could be superficial and deficient in the formation of a collective memory essential for arousing a sense of national feeling and belonging in the survivors. By overlapping the stories of the survivors and the alleged perpetrators, the writer also intends to castigate the stereotypical construction of identity using the categories of Hutu-perpetrator and Tutsi-victim as commonly used in explaining the genocide. She does this by structuring the story around the philanthropy of a Hutu old woman who risks her life to rescue a young helpless Tutsi girl.

Concurrent to the narrative about Emma are the proceedings of the gacaga court in chapter sixteen where the suspected perpetrators of the genocide face trial. The writer interrupts the linear flow of the narrative to suggest that representing trauma and nation formation is complex and necessitates a writer to take a multifaceted approach. The gacaga court proceedings broaden the scope of the reader's engagement with the trauma of the genocide and the formation of personal and collective memory because the reader encounters the narratives of other survivors rather than focusing solely on Emma's story. This facilitates in the creation of a collective narrative and a collective memory about the genocide.

The writer uses the image of absent male relatives in Emma's life for symbolic purposes. Images provide a means for representing trauma. They facilitate "subjective, indirect confrontation with trauma, as the reader is forced to imagine

aspects of the genocide through individual interpretation of the image" (Samuel 2010: 150). Emma leads all her life in the absence of any close relationship with any male figures. According to the narrative, her father dies when she is only two and the only man that she remembers knowing, her grandfather, is brutal to his wives and Emma's mother. The only other male relatives- uncles and cousins- are unknown to her because they died in the genocide. In the narrative, Emma lives with an old woman, Mukecuru, who is also a widow following the death of her husband. The absence of a male figure in Emma's life symbolizes the fractured social relationships at a family level but they also mirror the fragmentation of relationships at the communal level. In a society such as Rwanda, genocide has ruptured relationships thus giving credence to Armstrong's (2000: 174) proposition that "war constitutes an interruption in the narrative of national and individual development and furthermore, a rupture within the social body." Emma's post-genocide close relationship with the first two male characters namely: Ndoli and the strange old man upsets, according to Combres, the instability in her relationship. This gesture also symbolizes the fomentation of a new urge to repair damaged relationships for the realization of a sense of communal belonging in the members of the society.

3.2.3 Narrative techniques in *The Humanitarian* (2016) by N. Caraway

The Humanitarian (2016) is a novel about the philanthropic missions of the United Nations to South Sudan as seen through the experience of Richard, the protagonist and an official of the UN. The writer employs contrast in structuring the narrative so that as the reader explores the complexities and the disarray in the UN's humanitarian mission to South Sudan, he realizes that they actually mirror the divisiveness and fragmentation in South Sudan, a society ruled by militia groups. The UN humanitarian mission, for example, mirrors the South Sudan society in the manner in

which it is represented as highly unstructured and poorly coordinated and run through poorly trained and corrupt field officials, leading to a situation where its food drops do not actually benefit the displaced people they are meant to reach. South Sudan on its part is chaotic because of war that has led to scattered IDP camps that are largely inaccessible due to dilapidated and impassable roads, making the UN mission quite daunting.

The writer equally uses the shambolic UN humanitarian mission in South Sudan as an image to reprimand the western/ outsider, postcolonial cynical attitude and naïve approach in mediating the re-emergence of a harmonious South Sudan society after the fragmentation of war. He demonstrates that the outsider should not gloat in his successful philanthropy to South Sudan because such largesse is insufficient in activating the emergence of a harmonious society founded on shared moral values. The narrator laments the inadequacy of the UN food aid to South Sudan: "most of our projects are just bits and pieces. We fly in, we fly out. We don't stay, we don't know the people in these places. We just call them beneficiaries and turn them into numbers in our reports….But I'll never get to know them or understand their world from the inside" (Caraway, 2016: 87). Father Severino, a Mexican, however comes out as the face of philanthropy that can meaningfully influence the resuscitation of nationhood in South Sudan. His admonition to Richards to "see the humanity in other people" (Caraway, 2016: 166) speaks to the spirit that the writer considers as vital in helping rebuilding the broken social bridges in South Sudan.

The writer is an outsider who is directly or indirectly unaffected by the war experience and trauma of South Sudan. He confesses his ignorance about South Sudan's history "I knew nothing about this country and its scars" (Caraway, 2016: 257). Because of this, he stands in a disadvantaged distance in terms of his ability to

imagine the formation of a nation whose trauma he has no part in nor whose history he does not understand. One of the strategies, however, that the writer could employ to circumvent this bottleneck in his quest to represent the society is by selecting a narrator/ protagonist with an insider understanding of society. Such a character would then come handy as the writer's mouthpiece in his/her fictional imagination of South Sudan nationhood. In this text however, the writer has selected an outsider who is unacquainted with the South Sudan traumatic history as his mouthpiece. He has stylistically chosen to parallel the shambolic mission of the UN and the South Sudan landscape by using them as images and recurring literary tropes that run across the text constantly. These images serve as a window through which the reader can visualize not just the physical disintegration of Southern Sudan physical frame but also the collective tear in the society's social fabric. Caraway describes the landscape variously throughout the text: "the timeless place without form or boundaries" (2016: 14), " a cramped, sealed-in tomb" (2016: 14), "a swamp" (2016: 72), "a vast shapeless emptiness that stretched forever out across the water-logged plain" (2016: 87), "the middle of so much darkness" (2016: 135).

There is also a sense in which the writer uses the narrator's personality and life experience as an image of the South Sudan society that he is narrating. As the dominant voice in the narrative through which the narrative unfolds, Richard's personality comes out as disjointed. He cuts the image of a lonely and miserable UN worker dispatched to South Sudan, an equally fragmented spot in the globe that he describes as: "a timeless place without form or boundaries" (Caraway, 2016: 14) and "a cramped, sealed-in tomb" (Caraway, 2016: 14). He is a traumatized individual, living in denial after losing his wife and a child in an accident. He is delusional, constantly haunted by his past life: "for me it is as though every breath I take comes

from somewhere else. I see pictures of past things like a window in front of the real things going on here and now" (Caraway, 2016: 102). There is a stylistic paralleling of the emptiness in Richard's heart with the collective misery in the South Sudan society. Besides that, the trauma of his life, which is a consequence of his inability to establish intimate human relationships after the loss of his family in an accident, mirrors that of South Sudan where the sense of communal belonging has been shattered because of the fissures that war has created on human relationships. Norris (1998: 506) argues that "war goes beyond the scene of combat and its effects percolate…to enter into the most intimate recesses of private and domestic life." Therefore, Norris observes that the effects of war extend beyond its specific "spatial and temporal confines" to invade even "the private space of personal relationships" (1998: 506).

The narrator's outsider status clearly creates a distance between him and the traumatized South Sudan society. This curtails his capacity to interpret the complexity involved in reimagining the new nation. This is a fact that he is clearly aware of and he acknowledges his incapacity to mediate nation building South Sudan: " underlying it all there was something fundamental, a badness and a wrong that was evident everywhere, but like an undisclosed illness it was never possible to prescribe the cure" (Caraway, 2016: 39).

Despite this discrepancy, however, the author has used Richard stylistically as the dominant narrative voice because of his frankness and un-romanticized observations on the situation of the current South Sudan society. His shortcomings are stylistically redressed through the interjection of other characters' perspectives that occasionally come in to provide details on events and occurrences that are outside the physical domain or not within his understanding. Such interjections are for example through

Father Severino, a philanthropist from Mexico who is much better acquainted with the South Sudan society. He acknowledges the humanity of the war ravaged people and the narrator refers to him as "a positively good man" (Caraway, 2016: 73) who understands the South Sudan society "from the inside" (Caraway, 2016: 87). The narrative is also enriched with the other characters' perspectives on the civil war through Richard's constant eavesdropping on or participation in conversations with his fieldwork colleagues. For example, Richards overhears a conversation amongst his South Sudan colleagues. He summarizes the conversation as follows: "They talked about the endless years of conflict, the absence of development, of schools or roads or clinics, of children with guns…a hard life on the edge that had persisted longer than memory, or history, or politics" (Caraway, 2016: 9). Other voices such as the SPLA army commander provide additional information. The narrative also breaks from time to time to allow the characters to converse amongst themselves, during which time they enrich the reader with information about the contribution of war and colonialism towards the traumatization of South Sudan and the fragmentation of the society.

The Humanitarian (2016) is written in a journal form. The novel documents the events and reflections in the life of Richards spanning a period of five days i.e. "Thursday night" to "Monday night and beyond". Although the arrangement of the journal gives it some form of coherence, it has a fragmented pattern that comes about by the inclusion of other characters' voices, discussions, and events that augment the narrator's naivety of the society that he is narrating. The events in the life of the narrator, as captured in the journal communicate a great deal about the effects of trauma at individual and collective level. For example, in the section entitled "Sunday morning" pg. 113-135 the author is depicted as restless, dreamy and hallucinatory. His mind is in turmoil and wandering from one place to the other and

into what his mind considers as "an endless series of other places that were always the same in the end" (Caraway, 2016: 122). The image of the dream repetitively occurs throughout the remainder of the text as he fantasizes about his "dead" life and the urge to "escape back into the warmth of a life lived with his dead wife and for and in other people" (Caraway, 2016: 130). The constant manner in which his mind is haunted by the memories of his dead wife represents the disruptiveness of trauma and its tendency to "disarticulate the self and create holes in existence" (Kurtz 2014: 422). The longing for meaning in Richard's life in the company of loving humanity mirrors South Sudan's quest for harmony after the trauma of war. Besides this, the hallucinations that he experiences at an individual level reflect what trauma does at a collective body: "the swamps were simply there before me every time, challenging and luring me into a darker contest with myself and with the dark angels and daemons that waited for me in the darkness" (Caraway, 2016: 130).

Finally, the writer uses many acronyms in this text. There are interruptions in the linear flow of the narrative by the numerous acronyms that intrude into the story thus compelling the reader to pause in order to find their translations before coming back to the story. Such acronyms include OLS, UN (OCHA), SPLM, SRRA, and SPDF among others. The fact that the reader cannot immediately decipher their meanings reminds him/her of his outsider status.

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the narrative strategies employed by the writers in the selected texts in imaginatively representing the formation of these war-traumatized societies into nations. For the reason that trauma "resists being captured in narrative form," Kurtz (2014: 425), the selected writers have deployed a wide range of narrative approaches in trying to witness to these catastrophes. Anne Whitehead

(2004), as read by Rye (2009: 83), who argues that literature has an edge over other forms of representation to represent what resists representation because of its " creativity, innovation, literary devices and techniques."

I have studied texts from two sets of writers: insiders and outsiders and argued that a writer who falls within the first category is one who hails from the society that he is representing in the text and consequently has been directly or indirectly affected by the war experience and trauma of that society. An outsider writer on the contrary stands at a greater distance from the society he is writing about because he lacks the direct or indirectly effect of the trauma of his target society. For instance, the writer of *The Humanitarian* (2016) falls within this category following the confession by the protagonist, who is his mouthpiece, that "I knew nothing about this country and its scars" (Caraway, 2016: 257). I have argued that the representation of trauma influences how the writer narrates situations, arranges the materials, describes scenes and events, and evaluates the society that he/she is fictionally representing.

Overall, the study has established that fictionally representing nations of trauma is a complex exercise both to the insider and to outsider writer. The study has also demonstrated that there are more convergences than divergences in the narrative strategies employed by the two sets of writers under examination in this study and I now turn to briefly highlighting some of the common threads in techniques in the two categories of writers before turning to their differences.

The study has found out that both sets of writers employ multiple narrative perspectives in their texts. They have demonstrated that narrating the formation of a collective memory for a traumatized nation involves the accommodation of as many experiences as possible. By doing this, they have shown their cognizance of the

weakness of relying on a single voice to narrate the past. They have thereby avoided coming up with a skewed individual account of the past that lacks the capacity to perpetuate nation formation. Narrating these experiences from multiple perspectives is an attempt by the selected writers from Rwanda and Burundi to help society to overcome ethnicity. The writers have overlapped the stories of the survivors and the alleged perpetrators as a way of circumventing the stereotypical construction of identity that divides society using the categories of Hutu perpetrator and -Tutsi victim.

The narratives in the texts also have a fragmented structure. A fragmented structure mirrors the fragmentation of the communities that writers represent. Gobodo Madikizela and Chris Van Der Merwe as read by Samuel (2010: 37), postulate that the structure of a trauma narrative mirrors the experience because "the experience of trauma splits and fragments the self and therefore 'the structure' of trauma, as such, is disjointed, non-linear, dreamlike, (or, rather, nightmarish) and fragmented." Narrative fragmentation manifests itself in the texts through multiple narratives that are interspersed with the main narrative thus introducing several positions regarding the shared experience. The narratives also have recurring literary motifs such as the journey motif and recurring tropes such as dreams and hallucinations. The shifting of narrative voices within the narratives and the use of images make meaning unstable by opening the narratives for subjective interpretation.

For the reason that trauma resists representation in language (Sonia 2017), the study has noted that representing nation formation imaginatively is challenging to any writer regardless of their positioning to the target society. Consequently both sets of writers in this study have used images, to borrow Samuel's (2010: 16) words, in "trying to make sense of the incomprehensible" and in "trying to facilitate some sort of engagement" with these catastrophes in their bid "to gain at least a limited

comprehension of this horror." Images and recurring literary tropes run across these texts thus serving as windows through which the reader can visualize the collective tear in these societies.

The study has also noted the trend in both sets of writers to structure all or part of the plots of these narratives using journey motifs. I have observed that this stylistic approach is laden with symbolic undertones. The protagonists' psychological transformation in the course of the journey signals to the writer's belief in the continuous nature of the societal memory formation process brought about by generational changes of the different groups that emerge over the history of a society. The study has pointed out that just like the journey, the creation of a collective memory is a progressive and evolving process. The meaning of this journey "lies in the ongoing dialogue between the individual, the community, the society, and the events of the past as reflected by those who write, study and think about it, or present it in artistic form" (Ofer, 2013: 83). The journey therefore is a representation of a society that is on a quest to understand the meaning of its wars in its "search for ways to incorporate its lessons into the collective memory" (Ofer 2013: 83).

I have additionally stated the stylistic role that these journeys play in broadening not just the spatial scope of the narrative but also the reader's comprehension of the experience of trauma of these societies through the introduction of the narrative perspectives of the other players that the protagonist interacts with in the course of his/her journey. The journeys broaden the scope of the reader's understanding about the complex nature of imagining nation formation in these war traumatized societies.

Additionally, the study has established that writers who are "outsiders" have sought to authenticate their narratives by using "insider" protagonists as their mouthpieces.

Through this way, such writers have bridged the distance between them and the trauma of these societies that they are representing. Additionally, "insider" protagonists who venture into a journey that broadens their grasp of their society are symbolically transitioning from an "outsider" to a new "insider" position. Suffice to say that this process not only applies to the protagonist but also to the reader and the writer, who come into the narrative from various positions, which keep changing in the course of the narrative.

Some of the salient features observed among the second category of writers notably N. Caraway in *the Humanitarian* (2016) and Elisabeth Combres in *Broken Memory* (2011) is the way they have universalized these catastrophes thereby suggesting that the catastrophes of these societies portray a failing that is common to all humanity. They interpret these events in a manner that imputes them with a universal meaning. In *The Humanitarian* (2016) for example, the writer uses the shambolic UN humanitarian mission in South Sudan as an image to castigate the western/ outsider, postcolonial cynical attitude and naïve approach in mediating the re-emergence of a harmonious South Sudan society after the fragmentation of war. He demonstrates that external generosity, devoid of a thorough understanding of the inside forces shaping the formation of these societies, is insufficient in rebuilding the broken social bridges in these societies but instead further fragments the beneficiary countries by perpetuating a cycle of dependency. For Caraway, the failure of South Sudan is a failure in humanity.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WRITERS AND THEIR VISIONS OF IMAGINED NATIONS

4.0 Introduction

Vision is a projection of the future. According to Laderich (2005: ix) it is the manner in which the writers imaginatively use the texts as spaces "to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world," such as the trauma of war in these societies, "yet capable of giving birth to that which does not exist" such as the imagined sense of national belonging. As a form of forward glance, vision is "those possibilities imbued in the fertile imagination of the creative writer as part of his conscious desire to invest his identifiable wording with new and alternative interpretations and meanings to project the future." Odhiambo (2009: 161). Taking cue from Odhiambo's definition above, the key questions in examining the selected writers' vision/s of their imagined nations are as follows: how do the "new and alternative interpretations and meanings" that the writers give to these catastrophes signal to their vision/s of the future likelihood of these societies transformation into nations? I could put it differently this way: what possibilities do the writers present about the potential of these war-traumatized societies transitioning into nations? How do the writer's "alternative interpretation" of the atrocities that have befallen these societies signal their visions?

The task of envisioning a harmonious nation out of a situation where violence has sundered social relationships is possible although onerous. Laderich proposes that this task:

> requires the capacity to imagine ourselves in a web of relationships that includes our enemies; the ability to sustain a paradoxical curiosity that embraces complexity without reliance on dualistic polarity; the fundamental belief in and pursuit of the creative act; and

> the acceptance of the inherent risk of stepping into the mystery of the unknown that lies beyond the far too familiar landscape of violence (2005: 5)

In the traumatized societies of Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan, visualizing the emergence of a sense of communal belonging after the devastation of war may sometimes seem like a utopian literary enterprise. Odhiambo agrees with the observations of Ernst Bloch, as read in Ashcroft that "literature… is inherently utopia because its *raison d'etre* is the imaging of a different world. It is by narrative, by stories we tell, that we have a world and it is by utopia thinking, utopia forms, and utopian narrative, that we may have a conception of a radically changeable world" (Ashcroft Bill, Gareth Griffiths & Hellen Tiffin (eds). 1995: 12).

Writers seldom express their visions explicitly. They however allegorize their visions through several ways. For example, Odhiambo in his reading of Butake's vision in *Betrothal without Libation and Family Saga* points out that "the dramatic structure that Butake deploys in his plays is intended to serve his vision of the imagined nation" (2009: 162). Odhiambo's ideas are quite applicable in discussing how the selected writers in this study have employed narrative technique within the novelistic form to figuratively signal to their vision/s of their imagined nations. On the other hand, the study proposes that characterization in these texts is an avenue through which the writers' vision/s for nation formation is discernible. This chapter therefore discusses how the writers employ narrative technique and characterization to allude to their vision/s of the imagined nations.

4.1 Journey Motif: Vehicle of Structure and Cue of the Vision of Malleability in the Imagined Nation

I have noted in the previous chapter that the various journeys in the selected texts play a stylistic role of broadening the spatial scope of the narratives. They also enhance the readers' comprehension of the experience of trauma of these societies as realized through the introduction of the narrative perspectives of the other players that the protagonists interact with in the course of their journeys.

Besides being a means through which the writers structure their narratives, these journeys allegorize the writers' vision/s of the nation/s. Jameson (1968: 69) recognizes the use of allegory in literature in his proposal that "all third-world cultural productions" are imbued with a quality of being allegorical and are to be read as "national allegory." The use of allegory in these texts, as Jameson further argues, implies that meaning is carried at two levels: the "private and public" level. He notes:

> Third-world texts, even those which are seemingly private and invested with a properly libidinal dynamic- necessarily project a political dimension in the form of national allegory: *the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society.* (Emphasis is in the original)(1968: 69)

Nevertheless, Jameson is not entirely right in his categorization of world literatures into the binary opposites of 'first-world and third-world'. Neither is he right that all the so-called "third-world texts" allegorize nation formation. While agreeing that literary texts are allegorical, the problem with Jameson's interpretation of the use of allegory in what he refers to" third-world" literatures, as Ahmad (1987: 5) points out, is his failure to acknowledge that " there is no such thing as 'a third-world literature' which can be constructed as an internally coherent object of theoretical knowledge." Ahmed therefore contends that "national allegory" within the so-called third-world

literatures is not the single, "even exclusive, form of narrativity" (19876: 8). Instead, Ahmad (1987: 15) looks at allegory broadly, as those connections made in a text that entail making links between "one's personal experience to a collectivity- in terms of class, gender, caste, religious community, trade union, political party, village, prison." In this study, I argue that narrative technique allegorizes the writers' vision/s of nation formation in these societies.

The journey motif in the selected texts suggests the writers' visualization of the process of nation formation as a continuous process of construction and negotiation. This process evolves with the changes that come about in the perceptions of the past traumatic history of these societies in the successive generations. Nation formation is therefore not fixed but continuous. It suggests the vision that, to borrow the words of Ting (2008: 457), nation formation is not static but "continues to be subject to contentions and variations." Alexander et al. (2004: 69) hold the view that "collective memory is always group based and subject to adjustment…and reinterpretation. For instance in *The Mark* (2013) by Jeffrey Deal, before Thon ventures to the north, he and his village mates represent a group that has no personal experience with the civil wars in the larger South Sudan community. However, the experiences he encounters in the course of the journey makes him join the category of South Sudanese with a first-hand experience of these catastrophes. According to Ofer (2009: 1), each of the members of the groups that interact with the history of a society is bound to create a distinct image/memory of the past atrocities that is fundamental in determining their feeling about membership to their community. We can therefore deduce that Deal does not envision a single South Sudan nation formed out of the coalescence of a uniform memory. This study argues that the various meanings that society attaches to the past catastrophic events play a central role in nation formation. These meanings

will lie, to borrow the words of Ofer (2013: 83), "in the ongoing dialogue between the individual, the community, society, and the events of the past as reflected by those who write, study, and think about it, or present it in artistic form." Ofer, (2013: 83) goes further to point out that "this dialogue represents an endless effort" to comprehend the meaning of these catastrophes "and a permanent search for ways to incorporate its lessons into collective memory." Ernest Renan as read by Croucher (2003) views nation formation as a continuous process. In a sense therefore, it is not far-fetched to infer that the writers' acknowledgement of the progressive process of the shaping and reshaping of societal memory signals to their vision/s about the continuous process of nation formation.

Dalia (2009) notes that after the passage of many years most of the people of traumatized societies will probably not have the experience of these catastrophes as part of their living memory but will interact with them as represented in literary texts. The kind of memories that they are likely to have will be quite different from those whose experiences of these histories are personal. The meanings that these later generation groups will carry about the traumatic histories of these societies will play a big part in shaping their sense of nationhood

The writers' vision of the progressive process of negotiating nationhood in these societies comes out quite apparently in *Weep Not Refugee* (2012). Through a set of rhetorical questions, Toyi reminds the reader about the role that generational changes play in the creation of memory. Being an outsider to the Burundian refugee crisis the readers become aware that the kind of memories that they create as they interact with the trauma of Burundi is different from the one held by insiders and victims of the trauma of war such as Wache. The reader's memory in this case has similarities with the one held by the generation of Burundians with no such first-hand experience.

Wache asks a series of rhetorical questions complaining about being ill-treated by a group of Burundian students who have not gone through life in a refugee camp. These questions are quite telling of the different memories harbored by different groups based on their experience of these atrocities and the role that these memories play in defining their nationhood:

> What would they understand if they had never had experience of being sick without any hope of treatment, being hungry without hope of food, sleeping under rain, being refused in school and in a job for which they were highly qualified, simply because you are a refugee? What had they known of that despair which reached a level of giving away one's child to modern human traffickers disguised in candidates for adoption? (Toyi, 2012: 123).

From the foregoing, it is not far-fetched to interpret Journey motif as a metaphor of the writers' vision of the continuous process of nation formation. Dalia's (2009) argues that nation formation is ultimately an ongoing process given the generational changes and images of these catastrophes created by different groups that emerge due to the passage of time. He points out that there is a group for whom the civil wars and genocides is a personal experience. He further points out that there is another group yet who are the offspring of the survivors, for whom the experience of these atrocities is a family memory. He also notes that there is a final group whose memory of these catastrophes comes about out of the "survivors' testimonies, social processes, and the internalization of cultural processes" (2009: 1). This study shares in his view that each of the above groups is bound to create a distinct image/memory of the past that will determine their nationhood.

4.2 Narrative Perspectives and Vision of the Collective's Role in the Actualization of the Imagined Nation

Narrative perspective refers to the angle from which the writers represent the traumatic experiences of these societies. The study has established that all the selected writers have weaved their narratives through the fusing together of the experiences of a wide range of characters affected by these atrocities. By so doing, the writers have demonstrated their aversion for nation formation through the inscription of a monolithic memory of the traumatic events. The future possibility of these societies transforming into nations, as the writers seem to project, rests on, I wish to borrow and paraphrase the words of Dalia (2009), the accommodation of a wide range of views and a diversity of voices regarding the understanding of the memory of the past. The writers are therefore envisioning that the actualization of nationhood in these societies rests in promoting the development of the sense of, to use Anderson's (1983: 7) words, "horizontal relationships," which avails spaces where the members of the society can be included in the construction of memory of these atrocities. As earlier stated, these writers reject nationhood based on the promotion of a monolithic memory of the past. According to Remmler (1994), a monolithic account of the past, such as is sometimes created in national monuments, produces a superficial sense of national feelings since it fails to address the deep seated feelings that the survivors harbor about the past. Therefore, the multiple perspectives from which the writers render the past in these texts is an attempt, to paraphrase the words of Dalia (2009) to provide various avenues of accessing and understanding the past.

There are several illustrations to demonstrate how the writers have used multiple perspectives to represent the past traumatic experiences. In *Broken Memory* (2011), three stories of traumatized individuals overlap within the main narrative. The first

story entails Tutsi survivors who fell victim to the Interahamwe brutality and witnessed the murder of their close relatives as represented by Emma and the old man. The second group consists of Hutu perpetrators who unwillingly participated in the killing of Tutsis under orders and threats from the Interahamwe as represented in Ndoli's story. The last category comprises Hutu philanthropists who risked their lives to save Tutsis as represented in the story of the old woman, Mukecuru.

In *The Humanitarian* (2016), the narrator's outsider status distances him from the traumatized South Sudan society thus curtailing his capacity to interpret the complexity involved in reimagining nation building in this society. This shortfall necessitates the interjection of other characters' perspectives to provide details on events and occurrences that are outside the physical domain or not within his understanding. Such viewpoints are realized from Father Severino, a philanthropist from Mexico who is much better acquainted with the South Sudan society. The narrative also benefits from other characters' views on the civil war through Richard's constant eavesdropping on or participation in conversations with his fieldwork colleagues. Additionally, the narrative also breaks from time to time to allow the characters to converse amongst themselves thereby enriching the reader with information about the devastating effects of war and colonialism in the traumatization of South Sudan and the fragmentation of the society.

In the case of *Weep Not Refugee* (2012), there is evidence of narrative breaks that introduce stories of other characters within the main story thereby widening the angle from which the presentation of the plight of the refugees takes place. For example, there is an extensive insertion into the main plot of the story of the frustrations of Kibwa and Obute. Their story covers their departure from the refugee camp in Wirodi

and their venture abroad to the fictional country of Lusaka in search of the supposedly greener pastures away from the squalor of the refugee camp.

I have noted that intertwining Wache's story with the narratives of other characters who have been afflicted by the Burundi civil wars is profitable in the writer's overall objective because Wache's understanding of the genesis of the refugee crisis and the gravity of ethnicity is limited having been born and raised in the refugee camp.

Baho (2016) is structured around the multiple narratives of various characters and their response to Nyamurage's alleged act of rape. For example, whereas chapter one captures the musings of the old one-eyed woman about what Hariho has lost by embracing change, chapter two focuses on the mute man Nyamurage who is fleeing his pursuers after being wrongfully accused of murder. Chapter four diverts the reader's focus to Kigeme, shocked and shivering from an ordeal that she cannot understand but claims to be an attempted rape. In chapter six, the narrative is no longer about Nyamurage's crime of rape but rather the author introduces two characters: Mugabo and Irakoze who are having an altercation, with Irakoze enraged by what she considers as Mugabo's sexist and inappropriate touch of her exposed hip. The scene of this altercation unfolds quite tensely in a manner akin to the instability in the traumatized society. Chapter eleven takes the reader back to the scene on Kanya hill where Nyamurage is meant to be hanged but ends in an anti-climax when the charged crowd is dispersed by the police and Nyamurage is redeemed from what seems like an imminent death. The narrative shifts focus in chapter twelve to the execution of a traitor who is burned to death, as though to face a death he deserves in the place of the undeserved death of Nyamuragi. In general, the narrative is so fragmented and the constant shift of perspective from which the narrative unfolds mirrors the fragmentation of the society that the writer is representing.

In The Mark, Thon's physical journey to the north broadens the scope of the narrative by introducing multiple perspectives. The journey enlarges the reader's comprehension of the forces influencing the formation of South Sudan as a nation. For the reason that Thon is underexposed, his perspective is insufficient to convey the experience of a larger South Sudan community that he is ill unacquainted. Many more voices therefore come on board to help the naïve narrator conceptualize his place in the larger South Sudan community. These voices reveal to the reader that abstracting nation in South Sudan is a multifaceted process requiring the input of many players.

Multiple narratives speak to nation formation as a fluid process that must accommodate what Joseph (2001: 57) refers to as "contradictions and differences." The study therefore argues that the writers envision nation formation by inclusion rather than exclusion of differences in the manner in which the members perceive the past traumatic experiences. By rendering the stories through multiple perspectives, the writers' envision nation formation by negotiation. This negotiation does not necessarily produce a singular affiliation to nation. Krishna (2013: 73) proposes that the idea of nation in the contemporary African literature is both "variable and shifting" and reflective of "a deep ambivalence." By approaching these catastrophes from different perspectives, the writers envision the emergence of nationhood based on the capacity of the members to develop connectedness that incorporates differences regardless of ethnicity. They are therefore imaginatively projecting nationhood in these societies based on collectivity rather than uniformity.

4.3 Plot Fragmentation and the Imagined Vision of the Complex Process of Nation Realization

The selected texts' plot structures offer important clues into the writers' vision(s) of nation formation in these societies. I understand plot structure in the sense proposed by Hawthorn (1985: 118) as "a novel's overall organization and patterning, the way in which its component parts fit together to produce a totality, a satisfying whole- or, of course, and the way in which they fail to do so." The plots of the selected have complex plots. This signals that the writers envision the actualization of nationhood in these war-traumatized societies to be an intricate process.

Combres' *Broken Memory* (2011) has a fragmented plot structure. Concurrent to the narrative about Emma are the proceedings of the gacaga court in chapter sixteen where the suspected perpetrators of the genocide face trial. The gacaga court proceedings broaden the scope of the reader's understanding of the trauma of the genocide. The interrupted narrative flow suggests the difficulties of representing traumatic events. It also alludes to the complex process of actualizing nation formation in these societies.

The narrative structure of Baho (2016) is fragmented because of the multiple narratives in the text exploring the reactions of various characters to Nyamurage's alleged act of rape. The narrative on the musings of the old one-eyed woman about what Hariho has lost by embracing change is interspersed with that of the mute man Nyamurage fleeing from his pursuers after wrongful accusation of murder. Mugabo and Irakoze's altercation, with Irakoze also forms part of the plot of the text. Additionally, the execution of a traitor burned to death, as though to face a death he deserves in the place of the undeserved death of Nyamuragi also forms a part of the constant shift of perspective that portrays the fragmentation of the plot of this story.

The Humanitarian (2016*)* is a journal. It has a fragmented plot that includes other characters' voices, discussions, and events that augment the narrator's naïve account of the society. There are also many acronyms that the writer employs in the text (OLS, UN (OCHA), SPLM, SRRA, and SPDF among others) that are unfamiliar to the reader thus fragmenting the linear flow of the narrative by compelling the reader to constantly seek for their meanings in the process of reading the story.

In The *Hyena's Wedding*, (2007) Rusimbi narrates nation formation in post-genocide Rwanda. There are shifts from narrative prose to legal prose. The intertwining of Karamira's legal proceedings, for example, with the narrative of the genocide as told from Kiroko's perspective produces a fragmented narrative structure that reveals the writer's vision of the complexity of restoring nationhood in Rwanda. The inclusion of the scene in the national parliament where the survivors openly field questions to the police and army officer who are trying to explain their experience with the genocide forms another example of narrative fragmentation.

Plot fragmentation is also evident in *Weep Not Refugee* (2012). For example, there are many instances of interruption in the story where the flow of the narrative breaks through a series of rhetorical questions. These questions persuasively and emotionally appeal for the reader's empathetic engagement with the narrative for the reason that the reader may be an outsider who is not directly acquainted with the experience of the trauma of these catastrophes. For instance, in seeking to explain the gravity and traumatic feeling of losing one's identity as a refugee the writer challenges the reader thus:

> Identity. You have your identity, don't you? Not that piece of paper with your name and a small photograph of yourself on it. You are a human being in your flesh and in your blood; you have a language and an occupation. Now imagine yourself, in your flesh and in your

> blood, taken to a land of antelopes and being told that, for the sake of adjustment you will now be called an antelope….just for the sake of adjustment….have you ever thought of changing your parents?...or have you ever thought of changing your clan, or changing your ethnic group? (Toyi 2012: 53).

In sum, plot fragmentation signals to the writers' vision(s) of the unstable process of abstracting nation formation in these societies. Yewah (2001: 44) proposes that the nation should be abstracted through multiple theoretical since it is an "inscape, amorphous and fluid construct"

4.4 Characterization and the Allusion to the Writers' Vision of Nation Formation

According to Kennedy (1976), the actions of a character(s) in a text are author motivated and driven by the desire by the author to demonstrate certain truths. Consequently, this study proposes that the choice and representation of characters are important cues in the discernment of the writers' vision. In this regard, responding to the following questions on characterization is a helpful exercise in the understanding of the writers' vision/s for the imagined nations in the selected texts: What kind of characters do the writers choose in narrating the stories? How do the writers handle the issue of the characters' ethnicity? How does this signal to the writers' anticipated vision/s of their nation(s)?

Perhaps it is important to begin by pointing out that all the selected writers have weaved their narratives from the angle of a wide array of characters drawn from the survivors of these atrocities. They have demonstrated their aversion for the role played by the perpetrators in the perpetuation of the evils that have tainted the history of these societies. Their imagined vision/s of nation formation hinges on the memories that the survivors as a collective can have regarding the past traumatic events.

In *Weep Not Refugee* (2012), Toyi has selected a protagonist Wache, who is of dual parentage (Hutu and Tutsi) as her mouthpiece. By presenting the refugee crisis through a character with dual parentage, the writer, to borrow and paraphrase words from Odhiambo (2009), has collapsed the feuding ethnic identities involved in the wars into an acceptable identity. Through Wache's birth circumstances, the writer castigates the artificial tribal marks of society used to assign identity. Her vision for the actualization of the imagined nation rests on society overcoming the artificiality of tribal identities, which originate from the colonial legacy of divide and rule. Toyi foregrounds Wache's humanity above his ethnicity thereby visualizing the actualization of the imagined Burundian nation realized on society's capacity to transcend the arbitrary ethnic binary divisions that act as bottlenecks to nationhood.

Combres in *Broken Memory* (2011) shares the same vision. She structures the novel around the character of a philanthropic old Hutu woman who risks her life to rescue a young helpless Tutsi girl. Through this, she projects the vision of her imagined Burundian nation undivided along the common categories of Hutu perpetrator and -Tutsi victim. The projection of the same vision occurs in *The Mark* (2013) where the unexpected friendship between the protagonist Thon (a Dinka) and Jurguk (a member of the Atuot clan, which has deep-seated ethnic rivalry with the Dinka) reveals Deal's vision of a de-ethnicized South Sudan nation. On his part, Rusimbi in *The Hyena's Wedding* (2007) envisages a cohered society formed based on a shared image of a unified Rwandan non-tribal nation. He endeavors to exonerate the society from the guilt of ethnicity by arguing that their participation in the genocide was an act proceeding out of manipulation by internal and external forces that drove the society to embrace an evil alien to societal norms and whose consequences they had no idea . Based on the illustrations given above, it is reasonable to infer that these writers

visualize the formation of their imagined nations based on these societies' capacity to create a collective image that transcends ethnicity. They espouse the outlook that nation formation is a possibility through the interpretation of these catastrophes as national problems, rather than ethnically motivated catastrophes.

In *Baho* (2016) by Rugero Roland, the writer's aversion for ethnicity becomes even more noticeable given the manner in which he disregards the idea of ascribing or revealing the ethnicity of his characters. We know nothing of the ethnicity of the main character, Nyamuragi, nor his uncle, Jonathan, The ethnic animosity between the Hutu and Tutsi does not even play out in the text but is mentioned only once in the entire text. Even in that one instance where the subject of ethnicity gets mentioned, its significance is understated, quickly dropped and the narrative shifts to other issues:

> The one-eyed old woman has respect for every living thing. From a young age she knew to respect the Twas, the third ethnic group after the Hutus and the Tutsis. It was even murmured that she might be one of them, by her father's bloodlines. *But it does not matter!* (Emphasis mine) The essential thing is to live. (Rugero, 2016: 69)

By sidestepping the issue of ethnicity and declining the open engagement with the characters' ethnicity and its contribution towards the destabilization of the Burundian society, Rugero is envisioning the centrality of inclusivism in the actualization of the Burundian nation. However this is the kind of vision that Odhiambo (2009: 162) would refer to as romanticized and utopian given, and I borrow his words, " the simplistic solution/s proffered" within this text for "the contradiction in the complex nature of tensions and anxieties" that impede nation formation in Burundi. The vision of Rugero also has what Odhiambo would refer to as romantic inclinations. Indeed this is the case in *Baho (2016)* where the one-eyed old woman's nostalgic reminiscences of growing up as a child in a cohesive society forms the core of the

writer's desire to restore nationhood through a return to an illustrious past communion. The pre-colonial period of Burundi's history when "the granaries were filled to overflowing" (Rugero, 2016: 2) and "men were certain of their futures: repeated moments of repetition" (Rugero, 2016: 2). Nyamurage's nostalgic reminiscences of a classless, childhood society, devoid of ethnicity and individuality also allude to this vision:

> He remembered how a hint of cold wind would join forces with the moon to enter the courtyards encircling the Harihai's homes, and slyly set about tickling the peaceful country's children.… Life was transferred during birth; it fed on nature and was made real through it. Umwana si Uwumwe. The child-that bit of humanity, that god of life –belonged to none except nature (Rugero, 2016: 2).

The study concurs with Christopher Schaefer's (the translator of *Baho* from French to English) views about Rugero's vision. According to Schaefer, Rugero envisions a spirit of restraint as an avenue to the realization of Burundian nationhood. He notes as follows:

> In a country where genocide is a recent memory, and where the thirst for vengeance is strong, the will of the people requires not expression but restraint….the message seems to be: justice can only occur within the constraints of a modern state. A modern state that, we might hope, is as blind to ethnicity as *Baho!* Is (Rugero, 2016: 96).

The writers' selection of their protagonists is another key pointer to their vision/s of the imagined nation/s. With the exception of *The Humanitarian, (2016)* by N.Caraway, all the other writers have represented the events of these societies through "intradiagetic" (Hawthorn 1985) protagonists. These are characters that live right "in the world of the story" (Hawthorn 1985p.83).The narrative in *Weep Not Refugee* (2012), for example, is largely relayed through "a personified narrator" (Hawthorn 1985) whose observations provide an internal account of the life in the refugee camp.

Wache confesses how he feels personally traumatized by this experience: “I grew up with a wound, the wound of being a refugee. This wound bled as often as crises emerged” (Toyi, 2012: 280) and his first-hand experiences of life as a refugee make for an authentic testimony about the traumatic experience of being a Burundian refugee to the reader.

Roland Rugero in *Baho* (2016) also relays the traumatizing experiences of Burundi through Nyamuragi who hails from the society and whose muteness mirrors the society’s inability to find the language to make sense of its catastrophes because, (Sonia 2017) believes that trauma resists narration using language. Nyamurage’s physical deformities are symbols of the physical and the psychological wounds that trauma has imposed on the Burundian society.

In the case of *The Mark* (2013) by Jeffery Deal, the writer chooses a young and naïve South Sudanese man as his mouthpiece. Thon is an appropriate narrator because at his age he has a very receptive mind and his innocence makes him a very sincere observer and commentator about the reality of his society. As a young man, the socio-cultural and historical trauma of the larger South Sudan community have not yet informed his views about his membership to his nation. The selection of Thon as the narrator exposes the fragmenting impact that civil wars and colonialism have had on the larger South Sudan community that Thon ventures into as reflected in the latter part of this text.

The narrative in *Broken Memory* (2011) revolves around a protagonist who belongs to the generation of people for whom the genocide is a personal experience. The author of this novel, Combres, is an outsider by virtue of not being Rwandese or a survivor of the genocide. In order to overcome this distance, she selects an insider as her

protagonist as a way of acknowledging her deficiency to witness to this catastrophe. The writer structures Emma's story and the search for her identity to parallel that of the collective search for nationhood. Through Emma's experience, the reader deciphers how trauma dislocates the individual and the society. Her quest to piece together the story of her past life is symbolic of the society's bid to reconstruct its collective memory.

From the observations above, it is not far-fetched to deduce that the writers 'selection of insider narrators/ protagonists as their mouthpieces through whom the reader discerns the traumatizing effects of war on the individual's psyche and by extension on these societies is intentionally meant to allude to their intended visions of the nations. The sympathetic tone with which the experiences of these protagonists unfold suggests the writers' vision about the potential of these societies' actualizing into nation/s through internally instituted mechanisms.

Furthermore, the use of an outsider as the protagonist in *The Humanitarian* (2016) where the narrator displays his detachment to the society also signals N. Caraway's belief in the capacity of South Sudan to rejuvenate the lost national sentiments in its members through internal mechanisms. Overall, by adopting a sympathetic tone in their representation of the plight of their protagonists' experiences, the writers hope to connect the readers emotionally to these experiences to endear them to their vision/s of their imagined nation/s.

Other salient issues about characterization that are worth exploring in decoding the writers' vision(s) are the character traits of the protagonists and antagonists and the values that they represent. Since the protagonists are the writers' mouthpieces, their character traits project the image of the nation/s that the writers envision. Overall, the

protagonists in these texts are virtuous men and women caught up in the crossfire of ethnicity and living in a world afflicted by war but trying hard to transform their society for the good of all the members of their communities. There are two central characters in *Weep Not Refugee* (2012) through whom the vision of the writer reflects. She sympathetically presents Wache as a virtuous young man growing up with a total absence of family relations: "I am a product of rape. I am a result of ethnic hatred, not of love between a man and a woman. My father is the murderer of my mother's parents, the cause of her orphan hood and her miserable life, the cause of my misery as well." (Toyi, 2012: 6)

His virtuous character and the sympathetic representation of his loss of identity occasioned by the refugee crisis allude to the writer's vision:

> We were at another junction in our life. After fleeing for our lives, we had now passed to elements dangerous to our country of origin. Where did we belong to? Where? Could it be true that we no longer had a country which we could call ours? Was there any other island on earth, still undiscovered, so that we could go and live there peacefully? (Toyi, 2012: 51)

Toyi's tone as captured above condemns ethnic stereotyping and projects her vision of an imagined Burundian nation founded on the firm belief on the humanity of its members over and above their ethnic extractions.

Kigeme is another central character in *Weep Not Refugee* (2012) whose psychological states symbolizes the fragmented Burundian nation comes out as "the beauty queen of her college in Burundi, from which she was cruelly separated by civil war." She bears a physical "wound of rape and unwanted pregnancy" (Toyi, 2012:5) and a psychologically deformed personality. She is ashamed because people constantly taunt her as a "wife of the wind", (Toyi, 2012: 5) to mean a prostitute. She embodies

the virtue of hard work, resilience, honesty, pride and dignity that helps her to fend for herself and develop a sense of pride and self-worth. The writer envisions the formation of a Burundian nation anchored on a shared set of values namely: honesty, resilience, hard work and dignity as espoused by Kigeme.

Rugero in *Baho* (2016) uses Nyamuragi, a character whose life celebrates a past society deeply connected to a simple rural life of herding sheep, to advance his romanticized vision of the nation. He has a solemn and joyous relationship with his sheep and his family. This relationship is however shattered when his parents die in a civil war; traumatizing him and making him "withdraw all trust from the words of men" (Rugero 2016: 19). His speechlessness parallels that of his traumatized society that is unable to comprehend its tragedy. Nyamuragi is an innocent man suffering at the hands of a mob that has falsely accused him of rape, a charge that he cannot defend himself against owing to his muteness. His ill treatment under the charged mob alludes to the writer's belief in the realization of the Burundian nation through restraint in its traumatized members. It is also noteworthy that the writer's failure to identify Nyamurage's ethnic tribe speaks to his vision of a Burundian nation founded on the firm belief of the humanity of its members over and above their ethnic origins.

Broken Memory (2011) uses a narrator with a psyche that is in fragmented disarray. She has a disrupted personality that has, to borrow and paraphrase the words of Lacapra (2001) as read by Kurtz (2014) disrupted her experience and disarticulated her. She comes out as a character constantly haunted by the nightmares of her murdered mother. As a victim of the genocide, she has an unsettled personality that mirrors her society. Besides her, the narrative unfolds through three categories of genocide-traumatized individuals whose stories overlap within the main narrative namely: Tutsi survivors, Hutu perpetrators who unwillingly participated in the killing

of Tutsis under orders and threats from the Interahamwe and Hutu philanthropists who risked their lives to save Tutsis as represented by the old woman Mukecuru. By structuring the story around the character of an old Hutu woman who risks her life to rescue a young helpless Tutsi girl, the writer alludes to her vision of an inclusive society that is devoid of ethnicity.

In the case of John Rusimbi's *The Hyena's Wedding*, (2007) Mr. Mugabo is the writer's mouthpiece. He stands out because of his leadership acumen in Nyamata commune. As the chief, his advocacy for the inclusion of people from all ethnic communities in the administration of the twelve sectors in Nyamata gestures to Rusimbi's vision of inclusivity in the nation. For example, his appointment of Mr. Musonero Kiroko (the narrator) as the leader of Kayumba sector rests not on Kiroko's ethnic identity but rather by his ethics and integrity. Mugabo is a firm believer in the values of democracy. His views resonate with the author's pragmatic vision on the centrality of a vibrant democracy in a post-genocide Rwandan nation: "We need to know one another, establish a firm socio-economic base and devise an appropriate form of democracy that shall favor the interests of the majority and values of the nation." (Rusimbi 2007: 20)

The Mark (2013) is a heroic narrative built around the heroic journey of the protagonist, Thon who embodies his nation because his destiny intertwines with that of his nation. He exemplifies the accepted thoughts, actions and norms of the Dinka of whom the story concerns. According to Ryken (1974: 45), the hero in a heroic narrative "expresses an accepted social and moral norm; his experience reenacts the important conflicts of the community which produces him; he is *endowed with qualities that capture the popular imagination*" (Emphasis mine). His commitment to the ideals of his community comes out through the bravery he demonstrates when he

undergoes the initiation of receiving the mark, seven cuts parallel to the ground made on the forehead, which is a very central symbol of one's allegiance to the nation. The mark symbolically engrains the identity of his nation into his conscience and he cannot henceforth transfer his nationality or his loyalty to another community or society. The bravery demonstrated by Thon and Matak when receiving the mark "without flinching, without tears or any sound" (Deal 2013: 9) demonstrates their commitment to the aspirations and the furtherance of their nation's communion. While the initiation ceremony plays a very central role in this narrative, it is the writer's vision that a cohered South Sudan nation is possible if the ideals of bravery, newness, hope, commitment and patriotism, become the rallying point for repair of the fragmented members' sense of their "deep horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1983: 7).

The narrator's introverted character in *The Humanitarian* (2016: 73) is a foil to amplify Father Saverino's philanthropic nature and his capacity to relate with "fallen humanity and all its foibles and the great and unbearable evils." Father severino's philanthropic actions, life inspired by hope, resilience against the harsh terrain and spirit of self-sacrifice represents "the good" that the author envisions as a cohering agent in injecting " a sense of purpose" for the realization of nationhood for the traumatized South Sudan nation. His actions are a symbol of the good things in human nature that society can turn to restore broken relationships. Through his charity, Father Severino's actions testify about the possibility of restoring "meaningfulness" (2016: 78) to a humanity devastated by drought and war. The author notes: "here in the misery and helplessness of this small, forgotten community the priest had found the need he could respond to, the answer to the question he had borne, the beloved for his love" (Caraway 2016: 200). Through Father Severino, we

can discern the author's imagined vision of a South Sudan nation founded on tolerance and a spirit of self-sacrifice (Caraway 2016: 152).

Equally helpful in perceiving the writers' visions of these nations is an examination of the representation of foil/antagonistic characters. These set of characters provide a parallel and/or contrast to the hero, thereby heightening the hero's traits, (Ryken 1974). Samples of the antagonists who are an antithesis of the virtues that the protagonists represent include Robert in *Weep Not Refugee (2012),* Karamira in *The Hyenas Wedding (2008),* Chol in *The Mark (2013),* and the corrupt WFP officers in *The Humanitarian (2016).* In this regard, the writers create the impression that they have a vision that acknowledges the possibility for the realization of these nations once society reverts to the virtues that the protagonists champion.

4.5 Conclusion

For the reason that war shatters and fragments social relationships thereby engraining what Ofer, (2009) would refer to as a negative identity in the national psyches of the citizens of these societies, this chapter has explored how the selected writers imaginatively visualize the transition of their war ravaged societies into nations. What the selected writers have done is to avail their texts as spaces, not just to help these societies make sense of their past but also to help them project their potential of restoring the fractured sense of oneness.

A scrutiny of all the selected writers reveals that they collectively champion, to borrow words from Kurtz (2013), restorative visions of these traumatized societies because of the manner in which their narratives allude to the hope for healing and renewal in the aftermath of war. The writers endeavor to create favorable memories

that promote harmony and healing in these conflict-ridden societies as avenues through which they can begin to coalesce once more.

Overall, the writers have not romanticized the possibilities of achieving nationhood in these societies. They have not overlooked the tensions and anxieties that impede this process and they have not superficially treated these catastrophes in their desire to project the future. According to Laderich (2005: x), a writer's vision "must emerge from and speak to the hard realities of human affairs," while the exercise of envisioning the future must take place with "a foot in what is and a foot beyond what exists."

In my reading of the texts, I have concluded that none of these writers has imaginatively envisioned the becoming of these war-traumatized societies into nations through the encouragement of the total forgetting of the past. Instead, they have visualized nation formation through selective remembering, a process that entails the encouragement of the remembrance of certain things at the exclusion of others.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter constitutes the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The study set out to examine how the selected writers from Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan fictionally conceptualize the journey of their societies into nations after the fragmentation and trauma of ethnically instigated war and genocide. The study used an eclectic approach to theory that includes aspects of postcolonial theories, trauma theory and semiotics. In addition, the study utilized Benedict Anderson's ideas on nationalism and imagination of the nation. The study was divided into five chapters with chapter two, three and four relating to the first, second and third objective respectively, while chapter one and chapter five entailed a discussion of the key elements of the study and the conclusion respectively. This chapter briefly highlights the conclusions of each of the sections.

5.1 General Conclusions

The first chapter discussed the background to the study, briefly examining how some writers from Africa strive to capture the essence of their emerging nations after the trauma of ethnic based war and violence. The chapter also constituted a discussion of the rest of the elements of the research namely: statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, research assumptions, justification of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations, review of related literature, and theoretical framework.

With regard to the first objective of this study, the second chapter examined the key past moments, situations, characters and events that the writers point their societies to

in creating memories, to rephrase Achebe's words as read by (Durrant2012: 96), necessary for conjuring "the sense of a-being-in-common."

The evidence from the texts indicates, for example, that some of the writers have demonstrated that these societies cohered as nations prior to colonialism through a set of shared values, myths of origin, and history. In this way, they have argued that colonialism was a disruption and a fragmenting force in the nationhood of these entities. By way of example, in *Baho* (2016), Rugero nostalgically recounts a pre-colonial Burundian society where families worked the field together with wives taking their positions in the kitchen and children assisting with the fetching of water from the river, to signal to lost pre-colonial alliances and the appeal to a return to those communions. By projecting positive past images of assumed lost adherences, the writers hope to use them as rallying points for forging new unions.

A number of the selected writers such as Combres and Rusimbi have therefore argued that colonialism and bad leadership occasioned the fragmentation of these societies. Rusimbi's argument in *The Hyena's Wedding* (2008), for example, is that colonialism and bad leadership occasioned the fragmentation of the Rwandan nation. In his opinion, the genocide should not be viewed in isolation but Rwanda's history should be looked at in the context of "pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial events …and the cruelty of regimes succeeding one another through violence" (Rusimbi 2008: 51). He therefore proposes that the genocide should not be the singular defining moment of Rwandan history. In this regard, according to Rusimbi, nationhood in Rwanda ought to be deduced heterogeneously in the context of the other historical events.

The evidence from the texts shows a trend where the writers employ protagonists and a set of other characters whose traumatic life experiences and progression from

disenfranchisement to reconciliation and eventual recovery enacts the steps in the formation of these nations. The moral values espoused by these characters such as honesty, pride, and dignity are alluded to by the writers as the pillars around which new national sentiments in these societies can be built. They propose that the upholding of virtue, as epitomized in the lives of the protagonists and the other select characters can be a gelling agent in the reactivation of the sense of oneness in these traumatized societies. Through the noble acts of many of these key characters, the writers have rewritten the past to instill a sense of pride in belonging to these societies. Drawing from the exemplary lives of these characters, the writers advance the argument that the virtue of an individual, rather than their ethnicity fixes their humanity and their nationhood. They therefore castigate nation by exclusion based on ethnicity.

The evidence from these texts also further reveals that the writers imagine nation formation through a process that entails the interweaving of survivor narratives. They advocate for a broad-based nation formation process that takes into account a shared collective history of these societies. They do this by intersecting many survivor narratives to demonstrate their aversion for monolithic nation formation processes that are normally promoted by governments in the aftermath of societal tears of this magnitude. Overall, none of the writers studied has championed forgetting as an avenue for dealing with the past traumatic memories in the perpetuation of a shared communion in the survivors.

The writers cast aspersion on the role of external mechanisms in fostering nationhood. By way of example, in *The Humanitarian* (2016), Caraway advances the view that foreign charity produces a superficial sense of nationhood promoted by the largesse of the international community and not on any shared values or common belief of

oneness among the members. Instead, he points to the hope and resilience espoused by Father Severino as hallmark values capable of spurring a sense of unity in a South Sudan nation torn apart by long periods of civil war.

In the third chapter the study discussed the second objective of the study. This entailed examining the narrative strategies employed by the selected writers to explore nation formation in these traumatized societies. Nation formation is related with technique since "meaning in a text cannot be separated from an analysis of its literary techniques" (Arnold 1993: 479). Representing nations of trauma is a challenging task that calls for creativity in the selection of literary techniques and devices to represent what, according to Whitehead (2004), as read by Rye, (2009: 1) resists representation. In sum, the strategies discussed in the third chapter included: narrative structure, perspective, use of images, narrative voice (or 'point of view') and choice of narrator.

There are multiple narrative perspectives used in structuring the selected texts. By overlapping the stories of many survivors in these texts, for example, the writers have demonstrated that the achievement of a meaningful communion for these societies hinges on the accommodation of many narratives about the recollection of the past traumatic events.

The narratives also have fragmented plot structures that mirror the fragmentation in the societies. Narrative fragmentation occurs in these texts through multiple narratives that are interspersed with the main narratives thus introducing several perceptions regarding the shared experience. There are also recurring literary motifs such as the journey motif, recurring tropes such as dreams and hallucinations, the shifting of narrative voices within the narratives and the use of images that make meaning

unstable by opening the narratives for subjective interpretation. The abundant use of images in the selected texts shows the writers' acknowledgement of the apparent challenges in representing traumatic experiences. These images therefore help the writers, to borrow Samuel's (2010:16) words, to "make sense of the incomprehensible" and in "trying to facilitate some sort of engagement" with these catastrophes to "gain at least a limited comprehension of these horrors." Images in these texts therefore not only assist the reader in visualizing the trauma of these societies but also facilitate in the writers' effort to grapple with the representation of experiences that are difficult to represent.

The study has also noted the trend among many of the selected writers to structure all or part of the plots of the narratives using journey motifs thus alluding to the continuing process of negotiation in the process of nation formation in these entities. The study has argued that the journey motifs in these texts point to the continuous process in the search to understand the meaning of these wars so that, to borrow the words of (Ofer 2013: 83) to "incorporate their lessons into the collective memory." Accordingly, the journey motifs allude to, to borrow the words of (Hoerschelman, 2001: 78), the "ongoing process of negotiation and contestation" in the structuring of the collective memory of these societies. The preciousness of brotherly love, empathy for others and unity also come out as other shared motifs that run through the selected texts serving as rallying points around which the writers strive to inculcate a sense of national belonging in the members of these societies.

The fourth chapter discussed the third and final objective of the study. It analyzed the writers' vision(s) of their imagined nations with the understanding of vision as a projection of the future. On one part, the study examined how the writers project the potential of these societies transitioning into nations based on, borrowing the words of

Odhiambo (2009: 161), the "new and alternative interpretations and meanings" that they infuse into these catastrophes. On the other part, for the fact that a writer's vision is seldom stated explicitly, the study argued that characterization and the narrative techniques employed in the texts are allegorical of the writers' vision(s) of the imagined nation(s).

The journey motif, as a narrative technique, besides structurally tying together the plots of some of the selected texts namely: *Weep Not Refugee* (2012), *The Mark* (2013), *Broken Memory* (2011) and *The Humanitarian* (2016), metaphorically speak to the writers' pragmatic vision/s about the journeys of their nations. These journeys allegorize the writers' vision of the continuous process of negotiation in nation construction in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. Ofer (2013) suggests that nation formation is a process entailing a continuous dialogue. The study has also indicated that journey motif signals the writers' aversion of nation formation in these entities through the creation of a monolithic/uniform memory among the members of these war-traumatized societies.

Additionally, the study has concluded that the use of multiple perspectives in the narratives the selected texts also reveals the writers' intended vision/s. The writers covertly reject attempts at nation formation in these entities based on the inscription of a monolithic memory of past events. Monolithic memories produce a superficial sense of nationhood. The evidence from the texts indicates that the writers envisage nation formation based on the capacity of the members to develop a new sense of connectedness that incorporates differences regardless of ethnicity.

Plot fragmentation is another noticeable narrative feature in the selected texts. This technique alludes to the writers' vision of the intricate/complex processes involved in

the restoration of the lost sense of nationalism in these war-traumatized societies. By plot structure, I borrow the definition supplied by (Hawthorn 1985: 118) as the novels' "overall organization and patterning, the way in which their component parts fit together to produce a totality, a satisfying whole- or, of course, the way in which they fail to do so"

The study has also proposed that the discernment of the writers' vision(s) is achieved through characterization. For instance, the noticeable trend where the writers amplify their characters' humanity over and above their ethnicity suggests their vision of nation formation in these societies through inclusivism. Through characterization, the writers reinterpret these calamities as national problems, rather than ethnically motivated catastrophes. In this way, they endeavor to make these atrocities national rather than tribal. An example of this is evident in *Weep Not Refugee* (2012), where Toyi selects a protagonist of Hutu and Tutsi parentage as her mouthpiece to foreground his humanity over his ethnicity thus gesturing to her vision of a cohered Burundian nation coalesced around the belief in the humanity of its members. A similar case applies to Combres, in *Broken Memory* (2011), where the narrative revolves around the character of a philanthropic old Hutu woman who risks her life to rescue a young helpless Tutsi girl thus challenging the common representation of the Burundian catastrophe along the binary opposites of Hutu perpetrator-Tutsi victim. Some of the writers envision nationhood formed based on the members' intertwined history and shared values.

Equally, the study has arrived at the conclusion that the writers' selection of insider narrators/ protagonists as their mouthpieces allegorizes their vision of internally instituted mechanisms as avenues for arousing national sentiments. Save for *The Humanitarian* (2016), all the narratives in the selected texts center around what

(Hawthorn 1985: 83) would refer to as "personified narrators" whose experiences provide an internal account of the catastrophes of these societies.

Overall, the protagonists and the major characters in these texts are virtuous men and women of valor caught up in the crossfire of ethnicity and war yet striving hard to transform their societies. For the fact that they are the writers' mouthpieces, it is not far-fetched to assume that the writers envision nation formation in these entities by the coalescence of the members around the common love for the ethical values espoused by the protagonists and other key characters.

5.2 Recommendations

Overall, this study has examined the representation of nation formation in Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan through the perspective of first-generation writers from within and without these societies. The study has concentrated on texts whose rendition of the catastrophes of these societies takes place through the perspective of protagonists and characters that fall within the first generation of survivors with a first-hand encounter/experience of these atrocities. Nevertheless, with the passage of time, and with the death of the survivors, a new generation of people with no direct or first-hand experience of these calamities as a part of their living memory will emerge. Consequently, future studies can examine how the next generations of writers who are far-removed from the direct encounter of these experiences go about in imaginatively memorializing the past traumatic experiences of wars and genocide to arouse national bonds in the survivors' offspring. Future studies can also examine the narrative strategies used by these new set of writers. Additionally, these studies can discuss the visions project in their works.

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