

LITERARY ARCHIVES OF CONFLICT, THE DECOLONIALITY OF MATERIALITIES AND
RESILIENCE IN SELECTED NARRATIVES OF GENOCIDE IN NAMIBIA

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ABSTRACT

The 1904-1908 Conflict has not received much attention as other genocides such as the Holocaust or the Armenian Genocide and with some scholars even arguing that it was not a genocide but just a colonial war. During this period in question, the natives of the then German South West Africa were stripped of both materialities and immaterialities. The extermination order issued by German General Lortha van Trotha meant to annihilate a nation as its instruction was to execute any native found by the *Schutztruppe* (German troops) as reflecting in the selected fictional texts for this study. The study explored the decoloniality of materialities and resilience in the selected genocidal fiction in Namibia's 1904-1908 Conflict. Additionally, the study was informed by secondary sources that facilitated more understanding on the topic of genocide and an expansion of knowledge regarding historical events in Namibia. Moreover, it was a qualitative desktop research and employed content analysis where the selected novels: *The Lie of the Land* by Utley (2017); *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* by Tjingaete (2017); *The Scattering* by Kubuitsile (2016); *Parts Unknown* by Van Den Berg (2018); and *Mama Namibia* by Serebrov (2013), were the reference material. Three theories namely: Trauma and Resilience supported by Ecocriticism and New Historicism framed the study. The findings of the study reveal literary evidence that the 1904-1908 Conflict is a genocide. Also, the dislodgment of the Hereros found them wanting of home, social set ups meddled, religion, culture and tradition invaded as well as sacred places pried on. The study also found that there exists a thin line between fictional historical novels and history proper and as such they could be used as perfect substitutes of each other, though an argument not readily accepted by some historians. The pragmatic disposition of these selected novels is promising and certain as the imaginary may naturally be transmuted into reality. Moreover, all the texts under study employ the selected art forms but in different ways considering the different backgrounds and motivations of the authors. The selected novels conjure literature's nearness to recreate some

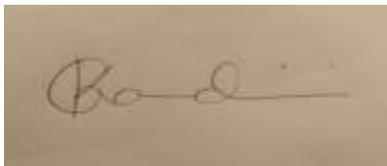
critical arguments that are still unsolved even in present day Namibia about the general well-being of the people with the conundrums still concomitant to a nation's past. With the genocide still making headlines in the contemporary media (newspapers), it is inevitable that there are unsaid issues that are still unsolved such as the reparations that are still to be attended to, meaning 'the show isn't over'. Additional to the findings, revenging and fighting back as well as the conscientising and mobilising amongst the Hereros and Namas emerge as forms of resilience in some of the novels. The study recommends for future studies that there may be need to merge fictional and nonfictional works on the 1904-1908 genocide and establish the link between the two. Also, like other genocides, the 1904-1908 genocide should have a representation of the epoch in film form to increase awareness of its existence and also be studied as part of human history. Lastly, there may be need to introduce genocide studies at the University of Namibia.

DECLARATION

I, Coletta M. Kandemiri, hereby declare that this study is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any institution of higher education.

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Coletta M. Kandemiri

April 2021

Date

DEDICATION

To my siblings: Nicholas, William, Susan and Desmond

&

To my 2 Jonathans

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ACRONYMS

BBC	- British Broadcasting Corporation REPRESENTATION
CCTN	- Cross-Cultural Trust of Namibia
GSWA	- German South West Africa
IKS	- Indigenous Knowledge Systems
IK	- Indigenous Knowledge
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WHO	- World Health Organisation

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter (Chapter 1) is a preamble to the entire study on the exploration of literary archives of conflict, the decoloniality of materialities and resilience in selected narratives of genocide in Namibia. Literary archives, also referred to as historical novels or narrative histories or historical fictions, provide a safe journey to past events where critical concerns might have been unheeded.

The chapter orients the study by providing firstly a background of the study which offers a general overview of the study. Secondly, the statement of the problem where the research problem was formulated also appears in this chapter. Thirdly, are the research objectives that the study sought to fulfil. These are followed by the significance of the study which highlighted the importance of carrying out this study.

Moreover, the methodology that was used in carrying out this research is also reflected upon in this chapter with attention given to aspects pertaining to the research design, procedure, as well as data analysis. Also, the research ethics section appears in this chapter then the setting of the selected representative fiction novels. This is followed by a section with the synopses of the selected texts. The organisation of the whole study is also considered as well as the listing of the key terms and concepts. Lastly, is a chapter summary which sums up the whole of Chapter 1.

1.2 Background of the study

One of the most significant events of the 20th century in Namibia is the 1904-1908 Conflict

and it is a central event in the history of Namibia (Alexander, 2013; Rivera, 2012). The Herero and Nama ethnic groups became victims of German invasion leaving many people dead and hence the term ‘1904-1908 Conflict’. It has been over a hundred years following the genocide, but this is still a sensitive issue and complex socio-cultural matter. This event has been represented in many facets including the literary perspective. This study thus endeavored at focusing on the Herero Nama ‘genocide’ from a fictional perspective. Though for some, the historical novels have not been readily accepted in the academy as a legitimate form of history, Young (2011) argues that “historical narratives can operate within the realms of ‘truth’ if the author does not compromise what is known to be ‘fact’” (p. 2). The present study thus sought to explore the fictionalisation of conflict in literary archives which are constructed within the jurisdictions of truth. Historical fiction deals with issues, events and complications that history proper cannot (Young, 2011).

Moreover, as a literary study, the focus was on the decoloniality of materialities as expounded by Maldonado-Torres (2011); Mignolo (2011); Nhemachena, Mlambo, and Kangira (2017); and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) as well as resilience. This has been instigated by the resurgence in the interest on the Namibia-German conflict which has found expression through fictional works like *Parts Unknown* by Van Den Berg (2018); *The Lie of the Land* by Utley (2017); *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* by Tjingaete (2017); *The Scattering* by Kubuitsile (2016); and *Mama Namibia* by Serebrov (2013).

Between 1904 and 1907, German South West Africa, present day Namibia, experienced conflict with German (De Souza-Correa, 2011). During that period, Namibians were stripped of critical materialities and immaterialities, hence they were ‘decentred’ due to exposure to ‘dehumanising’ incidents. Burden (2017) states that the German General, Lortha von Trotha overpowered the resistance of the Herero and Nama and drove them into the Omaheke Desert, where the majority died from dehydration. Historical events such as the Herero-German war

saw the extermination of approximately 75-80% of the Herero of the Okahandja and the seizure of their land amongst other issues (Warikandwa & Nhemachena, 2017). Additionally, Becker (2020a) notes that “By 1908, 80% of the Ovaherero and 50% of the Nama had died of starvation and thirst, overwork and exposure to harsh climates” (para. 1). Despite the deaths witnessed during this period in question, a few individuals were resilient, and they survived, which is of substantial interest in the present study as historical fiction writers have shown an interest in this phenomenon.

Mignolo (2011) asserts that decoloniality seeks to unmask, unveil, and reveal coloniality as an underside of modernity that coexisted with its rhetoric of progress, equality, fraternity, and liberty. Decoloniality aims at making known that coloniality was a foundation from which modernity germinated from in disguise of advancement. Additionally, Maldonado-Torres (2011) notes that, decoloniality is not a singular theoretical school of thought but a family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as the fundamental problem in the modern age. In essence, the presence of decoloniality is to reverse the challenges that were birthed by coloniality. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013, p. 11) further contends that decoloniality is premised on three concepts: coloniality of power; coloniality of knowledge; and coloniality of being. These three concepts are key to the development or stasis of any group of people. Also, according to Stanford University (n.d.), materiality studies involve the exploration of the situated experiences of material life, the constitution of the object world and concomitantly its shaping of human experience. Thus, during the 1904-1908 Conflict, victims were stripped of their materialities (for example physical resources such as the land) and the present study sought to explore the decoloniality of materialities as represented in the selected historical novels. The selected five novels, which are fictional historical novels, provided an exposition from a literary perspective of approximately the nature of the conflict and how conflict survivors endured and survived during the 1904-1908 Conflict.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The 1904-1908 Conflict has not received much attention as other genocides worldwide. The conflict is the first genocide in the 20th century and a precursor to the Holocaust yet it is significantly understudied. The problem investigated in this study was the decoloniality of materialities and the forms of resilience on the part of the survivors of the 1904-1908 Conflict. In recent years, there has been a world-wide interest in the 1904-1908 Conflict, ranging from the legal fraternity (Rivera, 2012; Harris, 2013); media community (Kaihurika, 2017); history (Kossler, 2012); and the literary circle (Van Den Berg, 2018; Utley, 2017; Tjingaete, 2017; Kubuitsile, 2016; Serebrov, 2013). The recent influx in genocide literary writing is a recognition of the problems associated with genocides, particularly in and about Namibia. For examples, Thornley (2013) attempts to explain why the German and British press largely ignored the Herero and Nama genocide in 1904. Furthermore, Van Mil (2011) sought an understanding of “why German became involved in imperialism and colonisation in the African continent, and why their campaign escalated into one of brutal violence” (p. iv) especially in German South West Africa where it escalated into arguably the first genocide of the 20th century.

The majority of studies in the preceding paragraph have endeavoured at confronting genocide and its subsidiaries from different perspectives and disciplines. Additionally, these studies invariably express and perpetuate the trauma, victimhood and reparations discussions that colour ‘genocidal’ discourses and somehow pay little or no attention to recording the resilience and survivor personalities, which was a critical issue of concern that this study sought to address. Thus, it appears that no study has striven to foreground the survivors of the 1904-1908 Conflict as presented through the burgeoning corpus of fiction, hence creating a research gap for this study.

1.4 Objectives of the study

Much has been written with regards to the Herero Nama 1904-1908 conflict and the works include those by Burden (2017); Warikandwa and Nhemachena (2017); Rampke (2016); Abiatar (2020) and Kossler (2012) to mention but a few. Interestingly, little if any of these studies has taken the stance of considering the period in question precisely using the selected five historical archives and examining the decoloniality of materialities and resilience on the part of the survivors. Thus, this study was guided by the following research objectives which were to:

1.4.1 Explore the literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict as presented in the selected literary archives of conflict;

1.4.2 Investigate the ways in which the survivors adapted to the sudden change of their lives upon the inception and during the conflict as presented in the selected novels; and

1.4.3 Examine the forms of resilience that the survivors adopted as the means of coping and survival tactics as presented in the selected narratives of genocide under study.

1.5 Significance of the study

This study may be of significance to the reconstruction of the Namibian history through fiction as the historical genocidal novels provide a safe journey to the past by confronting previously disregarded experiences. Besides, a study of this nature puts people back into history as the historical novel is capable of turning the past into a dynamic place and at the same time encouraging a search for meaning in the past.

Additionally, Vambe (2018) observes that “African studies lag behind theorising genocide” (p. 1). It can therefore be mentioned that this study becomes a significant one as it is a study from Africa that is giving attention to the theorisation of genocide and propelling forward the

genocide corpus. Moreover, “There is still little critical consciousness among African academics in Africa and outside Africa about the nature of genocide as an existential threat to African humanity” (Vambe, 2018, p. 1). In this way, it may be asserted that readings related to genocide are under-applied and under-theorised in and out of Africa and the unquestionable impact it has on the Africans. Thus, this study may contribute in boosting the knowledge base of Namibian literature and history, and at large, as the study on genocide and atrocities demonstrates the ways in which past events can contribute in affecting the present, particularly in the planning and driving of socio-economic and cultural progress as well as matters pertaining to decoloniality.

Furthermore, most studies were indeed on the 1904-1908 genocide but they have not contemplated particularly on the resilience of the survivors of the genocide, making this study crucial as it provides a nuanced and novel analysis of the selected genocidal novels. With regards to genocide, Dyck (2014) notes that “rather, carefully contextualised genocide scholarship can honour the memories of millions of genocide victims by helping scholars and policymakers to understand how genocide really works and how to prevent it in the future” (p. 173). Thus, the findings of this study may sensitise societies on prevention of potential genocide as well as the promotion of human rights.

1.6 Research methods

Specific methods that are aligned to this study have been followed regarding the initial stages through completion of this present study. Creswell (2009) notes that “research methods involve the forms of data collection, analysis and interpretation that the researcher employs in their study” (p. 233). Thus, the distinctive methods for this study are discussed in the subsequent sub-sections.

1.6.1 Research design

The research adopted a qualitative literary research approach which explored the decoloniality of materialities and the forms of resilience of the conflict survivors, a phenomenon that is qualitative in nature. Research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009). Thus, with a qualitative study, it goes beyond the numerical representation of data as much pronunciation is on quality dealing with human feelings which are naturally innumerable. According to Crossman (2017) “qualitative research is a type of social science research that collects and works with non-numerical data and that seeks to interpret meaning from these data that help us understand social life through the study of targeted populations or places” (p. 1). Non-numerical data were collected from the selected five primary texts and numerous secondary sources and meaning was derived from the analysis of such data. Thus, the qualitative approach was particular on the merits that it is interpretive in nature and aspires at understanding the qualities of social life, hence selected for this study.

1.6.2 Procedure

A thorough reading of the selected novels was done with the researcher taking notes of the relevant themes, characterisation, settings and style in the novels that reflect on trauma and resilience of the characters and their interaction with the environment. Related and relevant direct quotations and their specific page numbers were also taken into consideration. These direct quotations were later used in the analysis and discussion chapter of this study to support arguments and issues addressed by the research objectives. Additionally, the researcher considered relevant secondary sources such as journal articles and text books that complemented the analysis of the selected novels. The data collected from these secondary sources also augmented and formed part of the discussion and analysis of the selected five

novels. Moreover, the restrictions of the theories (Trauma and Resilience, Ecocriticism as well as New Historicism) were considered in the analysis. The boundaries of these theories also aided in providing demarcations that limited this study and that in turn refrained the researcher from including irrelevant issues. The collected data were grouped thematically and was subjected to content analysis. This eventually culminated in informed findings and judgements which were then grouped and presented in narrative form as well as concluding the study and providing the recommendations.

1.6.3 Data analysis

Content analysis was employed to analyse the data that were collected for this study. According to Krippendorff (1980), content analysis is a research method for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context, with the purpose of providing knowledge, new insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action. Additionally, it is a method of analysing written, verbal or visual communication (Cole, 1988). Elo and Kyngäs (2008) observe that content analysis permits the researcher to test theoretical concerns to enhance comprehension of the data. Moreover, it enables inferences to be made which can then be corroborated using other methods of collecting data (Stemler, 2001). Thus, this study was framed by Trauma and Resilience, Ecocriticism and New Historicism in understanding the concepts of resilience and decoloniality of materialities as presented in the selected genocidal novels as well as making inferences to the reviewed literature.

Also, content analysis does not involve measuring and quantifying patterns, instead, it interprets opinions and viewpoints of numerous subjects (Shruti, 2016), consequently becoming suitable for this qualitative study. However, content analysis does not progress in a linear fashion therefore making it more complicated and arduous when compared to quantitative analysis as it is less rigid (Polit & Beck, 2004). Thus, there are no stipulated strategies for data analysis as each inquest is unique, and the results are depended on the style

of the researcher, analytic capabilities and insights (Hoskins & Mariano, 2004). Moreover, content analysis has the quality of being inconspicuous and being expedient in handling large volumes of data (Stemler, 2001). Similarly, it is conceivable in distilling words into fewer content related categories through content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Thus, this study adopted content analysis and the gathered data were organised into categories for easier management. It was then interpreted under the framing of the Trauma and Resilience Theory, Ecocriticism and New Historicism. Thereafter, the data was presented in narrative form according to themes. Finally, findings were then extracted from the interpretation and analysis that formulated discussions and conclusions.

1.7 Research ethics

Before the research was conducted, ethical clearance was sought from the University of Namibia's Research and Ethics Committee. Besides, this study was based on fictional novels that are readily available in the public domain whose characters are of imaginative formations, thus, no direct human participants were involved. Nonetheless, the researcher considered not deriding the authors of the selected works. Also, the researcher strived to be objective by analysing and reporting different perspectives and contrary findings as presented in the selected novels.

1.8 Setting of the selected representative fiction

The researcher felt it necessary to include the map of Namibia (former German South West Africa) as the selected novels make reference to different parts in Namibia. Reading through the map would complement the comprehension of the selected novels as the reader would have a general idea of the bearings and movement of characters from one place to the next. Figure 1 shows the different places that are referred to in the selected novels under study and the map also provides the setting for the study.

Figure 1: Map of Namibia



Retrieved from <https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/namibia-administrative-map.htm>

1.9 Synopses of the selected texts

This section focuses on the synopses of the selected five texts under study. The synopses provide a general feel of what each of the novels entails. All novels point to the 1904-1908 Conflict though told from different perspectives. Regarding the plot and setting of the five stories, each synopsis would give the reader a condensed version of each novel. The following subsections present the brief synopses of the texts under study.

1.9.1 *The Lie of the Land*

The Lie of the Land is a novel written by David Jasper Utley in 2017. The novel is set against the background of the German war that took place between 1904-1908. Sam goes to German South West Africa as a British undercover disguised as a linguist. He witnesses the ruthlessness levied by the German soldiers on the Hereros and does not readily consent to that. This included the brutal killings and the charring down of Herero people's villages. After the extermination order is announced, Sam arrives at a place just before a couple of war prisoners had been rounded up by German soldiers preparing to execute them. Sam identifies and saves one of the prisoners as not Herero and therefore did not fall under the orders of the extermination order. Later, Sam separates from the troops and elopes into the wilderness with the prisoner. Survival skills become practical as Sam and the prisoner have to fend for themselves. Life was better and enjoyable that way though Sam knew it would not last. They are ambushed, Sam and the prisoner are forced to part ways as the prisoner is taken to the death camps and Sam re-joins the Germany troops. Unexpectedly and as if the commander of the troops was reading Sam's mind permits Sam to leave the troop and go after the prisoner. Considering the harshness of the terrain, the Commander had hoped Sam would not take the offer. Sam leaves the camp in his quest to look for the prisoner and finds himself at the Orange River bordering German South West Africa to the north of the river and South Africa to the southern side. As if directed by magic, Sam meets a man who gives him directions to the death camp. Sam diligently takes the instructions and finds his way to the death camp. At the death camp, the place was appalling exhibited by the appearance and the conditions of the slaves. Sam searches for the prisoner and finds her, fathoms a plan and smuggles the prisoners out of the death camp in a wooden box. The prisoner was so emaciated and received medical attention too late. Sam suffers a blackout and when he recovers in an African village, he learns of the death of the prisoner who was with child. Sam returns to Britain and mourns sincerely the death of the prisoner.

1.9.2 *Parts Unknown*

Parts Unknown is authored by Zirk Van Den Berg in 2018. The train is a significant appearance at the beginning of the novel as it ferries key characters at the same time to their destinations with the majority of them not even knowing each other. Mordegai as a prisoner, escapes from the death camp by unconstitutionally boarding the same train in which Pitzer and other German troops were on. Siegfried is also on the same train. All characters are on the same train but with dissimilar agendas. Mordegai jumps from the moving locomotive and momentarily suffers a blackout but resuscitates before the train stops and well in time before the German soldiers come to him. Siegfried sees the hiding Mordegai but neither does he do anything to him nor notify other German soldiers about him. Siegfried and the other German soldiers return to the train and Mordegai escapes inner land and as means of surviving, he depends heavily on the mercy of the environment. Survival skills are exhibited as he manages to get food and continue to live. The train arrives in Windhoek and Siegfried is posted to a police post in the outskirts and meets Pitzer who was carrying out his experiments on the local Nama people meant to prove the superiority of the German race. A young woman punches Pitzer in the face after he had wacked her little baby. A school principal is against the presence and actions of the Germans and mobilises the community to rebel. Pitzer tastes his own medicine when he is subjected to the dehumanising measurements that are taken when naked. The whole village together with the principal, escape from the place and join Mordegai. A war breaks when the German soldiers follow the villagers. The principal is killed and Mordegai is critically injured. With the help of Siegfried, Mordegai is carried back to the police station where Pitzer is requested to attend to him.

1.9.3 *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*

The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors was written by Rukee Tjingaete in 2017. Mbakondja is raised by his grandmother as his father's whereabouts is unknown and the mother is said to

have followed tracking the father. The presence of the Germans causes unnecessary relocating of the Herero people in order for the Germans to amass much land. Mbakondja is incensed by the cruelty of Germans and the instability they have brought to the Herero people's lives. He learns about his father, who was and is still recognised as a real warrior who some believed had died fighting in war. At Otjimbingwe, screaming conditions of poverty were obvious, and so was drunkenness and helplessness. The new settlement of the displaced Hereros and Damaras that had converted into Christians but at the expense of their own culture and traditions had nothing but misery. There was chaos in place and more signs of restiveness. The graveyard was no longer taken care of but looked more like a grazing field. Mbakondja organises and mobilises people to take up arms against the Germans. The move to organise the Herero army was not easy and at the same time the Germans had the state of the art artillery which made it difficult for the Hereros to defeat the Germans and get back their land. Despite all that, Mbakondja successfully builds an army to fight the Germans. The Hereros learn about the intentions of the German governor to erect of a military post at Okanguvi. The villagers show defiance and the German General visits Okanguvi with more than 800 soldiers. Then Mbakondja's army at the Waterberg Mountain is followed by the German soldiers and a war breaks out. One of the Herero fighters is captured alive by the German soldiers and then lynched. Mbakondja is injured in the war but manages to escape with six other Herero fighters. The extermination order had been issued and the German soldiers poisoned waterholes and tracked surviving Hereros who were trying to escape to Botswana. Those Hereros who were caught were taken to the concentration camps where they laboured as slaves and experienced differing forms of dehumanisation. Mbakondja suffers from dehydration and from the wound and that stopped him from progressing further with escaping to Botswana. Sadly, he is caught by the German troops and killed instantly.

1.9.4 *Mama Namibia*

The novel *Mama Namibia* was written by Mari Serebrov in 2013. The novel starts with when life for the Hereros appears normal; people living harmoniously in villages, following their culture and tradition as necessary. The advent of the Germans comes with the violation of numerous aspects of the Herero lives. The Germans tamper with the Hereros' graves which is a direct attack and insult to their ancestors and the spiritual jurisdiction. The Hereros are subjected to supplanting as a means to pave way for the Germans and they find themselves escaping to the Waterberg Mountain where they are later attacked by the Germans. After the attack, Jahohora loses her family members as they all perish except her brother whom she does not meet throughout the story but only at the end of the novel. Jahohora begins a life of solitude in the wilderness and survives by relying heavily on the environment, constantly dodging the German soldiers and adopting numerous skills for survival. The food is scarce and so is the water. She witnesses traumatising events of men slaughter, numerous people dying and sees large numbers of corpses scattered all over the surfaces of planes, with no one to bury them. She encounters old women who could not run away but were just waiting for the German soldiers to just come and end their life, they tell Jahohora to keep running as she is the hope of the Herero people, that she must live to tell their story of what transpired. Those words of encouraging built resilience and an understanding of the significance of life and become a reason for Jahohora to soldier on regardless of the intensity of the adversity. Jahohora becomes of her vulnerability and as such seeks refuge for protection from the environment. She gets a water bottle and little food that was quietly left to her by a generous 'snake hunter' who had seen that she was not dead though lying amongst dead. She remembers the poisonous plant that she had learnt orally from her father and uses it as a fortification against abduction by the German soldiers or their agents. She develops a severe skin condition from using the poisonous plant and that aided in prolonging her life in the wilderness as the agents could not even get

close to her. Later on with those severe wounds and her body emaciated, she is picked by the generous German and adopted by a German family where she is instantly stripped of her identity as her Herero dress is torn down and a new name, Petronella commonly Penny, indorsed. She grows in that foreign home, marries and finally reunites with her brother.

1.9.5 *The Scattering*

The Scattering is a novel authored by Lauri Kubuitsile in 2016. *The Scattering*, amid other issues delineates the lives of two women that are coming from different points: Tjipuka from Okahandja Namibia and Riette from Transvaal South Africa. These two women, Tjipuka and Riette, journey on different paths yet their voyages reach the same station and automatically become friends. Life is stable for Tjipuka as she grows up in Okahandja and she shows traits of a nature loving person. The only challenge she has is that of not understanding the human beings hence failing to understand the motives behind the Germans coming and bringing war to the Hereros. She marries Ruhapo and they have a son. The attack by the Germans on the Herero villages saw many Hereros scattering all over the land, some dying and scattering on the ground and some scattering in all directions escaping with their lives. She escapes after she realises it fruitless to wait for the return of Ruhapo as previously agreed between them, and is happy to reunite with her friend. In the wilderness, they experience a tough life as food was not easily available and had to rely on nature's kindness. Their group is tricked and goes into the holding camps. Tjipuka realises their leaders hanging on a tree just in time before they enter the camp and escapes with her friend back into the desert where again they experience the deaths of many people and witness traumatising scenes of women being raped and a live baby bayoneted. They are recaptured and taken to the death camps where they are further exposed to the brutalities that are dehumanising. Tjipuka is brought to work for a white man outside the camp. The white man gives Tjipuka food but also subjected her to sexual molestation. Tjipuka gets a chance to escape and for her first attempt she gets caught and returned to the white man

who whips her for escaping. The white man takes Tjipuka with him on his business trip to Botswana fearing that she might escape again if left behind alone. There in Botswana, she meets Riette and reunites with Ruhapo who further abuses her emotionally and physically thinking that she had volunteered to be with the white man for a comfortable life. Tjipuka delivers a coloured baby, leaves it for Riette to take care of it, and vanishes into thin air. On the other hand, Riette grew up in Transvaal South Africa and when she was a young girl, witnessed the death of her brother, Koos, as a result of the absence of proper medical attention. That incident prompted Riette to consider taking up nursing as a profession. She experiences the brutalities of the raging war in South Africa and ends up escaping into Botswana to start a new life. She settles in a village and has a shop where she meets Tjipuka and they instantly become friends. She is then left in custody of Tjipuka's blue eyed baby. Mysteriously, the two women, Riette and Tjipuka share a history of lives disturbed by war till they strangely meet in Tsau Botswana. The wars these women encountered were different wars, and at the same time marked with varying forms of violence and gross abuse on female characters.

1.10 Organisation of the study

The study is organised as follows:

Chapter 1 is the orientation of the study giving the background of the study, statement of the problem, its significance, objectives, the methodology as well as the research ethics and the setting of the representative novels. Additionally, a section on the synopses of the selected texts is included. Also, this chapter, presented how the study was organised, key terms and concepts and lastly a chapter summary.

Chapter 2 focuses on the three theories namely: Trauma and Resilience, Ecocriticism and New Historicism, and how they best suited in framing this study as well as the reviewing of the relevant literature for this study.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the analyses of the selected five novels basing on the first objective of this study which was set to explore the literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict as presented in the selected literary archives of conflict.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to the second objective which was set to investigate the ways in which the survivors adapted to the sudden change of their lives upon the inception and during the conflict as presented in the selected novels.

Chapter 5 earmarked at fulfilling the third objective of the study which was set to examine the forms of resilience that the survivors adopted as means of coping and survival tactics during the period in question.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion and recommendations. Also, the limitations and delimitations of the study are highlighted as well revisiting of each of the set objectives of the study including the title of the thesis. It is in this chapter that the rest of study is concluded.

1.11 Key terms and concepts

The following are terms and concepts as well as their definitions that have been employed throughout this study:

Adaptability: is defined as the capacity to be flexible and resourceful, and to cope with adverse environments and adjust oneself to fit into changing conditions (Taormina, 2015).

Coloniality: is defined as “long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjectivity relations and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration” (Maldonado-Torees, 2007, p. 242).

Decoloniality: Ndhlovu-Gatsheni (2015) defines decoloniality as epistemological and political movements and advances decoloniality as a necessary liberatory language of the future of

Africa. Moreover, Mignolo (2011) asserts that decoloniality seeks to unmask, unveil, and reveal coloniality as an underside of modernity that coexisted with its rhetoric of progress, equality, fraternity, and liberty. Additionally, Maldonado-Torres (2011) notes that, decoloniality is not a singular theoretical school of thought but a family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as the fundamental problem in the modern age.

Endurance: is defined as the personal strength and fortitude that one possesses to withstand unpleasant or difficult situations without giving up (Taormina, 2015).

Fiction: Fiction is derived from the Latin word *fictum* which means ‘created’ and it is a term used to denote anything, mainly stories or accounts that are not real. It is any form of narrative which deals, in part or in whole, with events that are not factual, but rather, are imaginary and invented by its author (Chuks, 2018, p. 5).

Genocide: is defined as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (UNESCO, 2017, p. 26)

1904-1908 Conflict: this refers to the war that happened between 1904 and 1908 in which many people of the indigenous Herero and Nama ethnic groups lost their lives to the German colonisers. For those that survived, they were homeless and were exploited by the Germans.

Historical fiction: According to Chuks (2018), historical fiction places imaginary characters into real historical events.

Holocaust: used to refer to the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators. (UNESCO, 2017, p. 22)

Literary archives/literary collections: According to *Group for Literary Archives & Manuscripts* (n.d.), the definition is not only limited to specific formats or record types as any literary archive may be comprised of some or all of the following:

- *Literary manuscripts:* These are documents (in a range of formats) which relate to all phases of the genetic history of a literary work through the stages of its life cycle – from the avant-texte stage, through the textualisation stage, to the post-text stage.
- *Letters:* These can be personal (family, friends, lovers), literary and cultural (other writers, artists, musicians, film makers, performers, critics, academics, reviewers), or business-related (agents, publishers, literary organisations and institutions, gas board, bank).
- *Diaries:* These can be personal or engagement diaries.
- *Audio-visual material:* This can include photographs, films, videos, tape recordings, CDs, drawings.
- *E-records:* These can be software files, emails, websites, floppy disks.
- *Printed sources:* These can be news cuttings, annotated books, journals, magazines.
- *Legal documents and economic records:* These can be contracts, court proceedings, cheque books, account books, bank statements.
- *Objects:* These might include pens, locks of hair, typewriters, writing desks.

Materiality: According to Stanford University (n.d.), materiality studies involve the exploration of the situated experiences of material life, the constitution of the object world and concomitantly its shaping of human experience. Also from a general perspective, materiality refers to the quality or state of being; something that is material (Merriam-Webster, 2018)

Resilience: an individual's ability to overcome stress and adversity (Kirmayer et al., 2009). Mlambo (2013) annotates that resilience "emphasises the strengths that the people have, rather than their vulnerability, through the coping strategies that they exhibit" (p. 37).

Violence: The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. (WHO, 2002, p. 4)

Schutztruppe: German soldiers/troops

1.12 Chapter summary

Chapter 1 discussed the preliminaries on the exploration of literary archives of conflict, the decoloniality of materialities and resilience in selected genocidal fiction in Namibia. The purposively selected historical novels were specified in this chapter. The statement of the problem and the significance of the study have also been stated. Besides, the critical objectives of the study were specified as well as the methods employed and the ethics. Moreover, the setting of the representative novels was established. Afterwards, the synopses of the selected novels were provided followed by the organisation of the study which provided an abridged version of the entire thesis. This was then followed by the listing of the key terms and concepts employed in this study and lastly a chapter summary. The next chapter (Chapter 2) concentrates predominantly on the three theories which framed this study and the reviewing of the literature.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses mainly on the theories that have been selected to frame this study as well as the reviewing of the relevant literature. The theories were discussed primarily so that the confinements in which the study is set are instituted out-rightly. The three theories that have been selected are discussed in-depth in this chapter. Equally, the notion and rationale of merging the three theories is reflected upon. The reviewed literature is also guided by the framing and restrictions of the theories hence the theories discussed foremost.

2.2 Theoretical frameworks

This study is framed by three theories, the main one being Trauma and Resilience supported by Ecocriticism and New Historicism. Firstly, conflict brings about trauma and out of that trauma, resilience emanates. Often Trauma Theory and Resilience Theory are used congruently and in the case of this study; the 1904-1908 Conflict was traumatic and the victims and survivors had to develop some kind of resilience. Secondly, is Ecocriticism, a theory concerned with the investigation of the relationship between man and nature (Asika & Madu, 2015). The 1904-1908 Conflict occurred in an environment in which survivors had to be dependent on the environment in some way in order to survive. Lastly is New Historicism which assumes that a literary work is the product of the time, place, and circumstances of its composition (Tiwarly & Chandra, 2009), thus, the selected novels are an echo of the epoch in question. The theories are discussed in the following segments.

2.2.1 Trauma and Resilience Theory

The main theory for this study was the Trauma and Resilience Theory used in the analysis of the traumatic experiences encountered by the 1904-1908 Conflict survivors and how they built resilience from the traumatic encounters. Trauma can involve physical and psychological

injury, and usually refers to a stressful or life-threatening situation that overwhelms someone's ability to manage (Lemaire, 2011). Moreover, trauma is "a person's emotional response to an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standards by which one evaluates society" (Balaev, 2008, p. 1). Thus, trauma may also be defined as the distressing circumstance(s) which devastate, annihilate and occlude one's capabilities in responsiveness to tribulations.

According to Marder (2006) and Caruth (1996), the precise definition of the modern concept of trauma varies according to context and discipline. However, Caruth (1996) provides a general definition and states that "trauma describes 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" (p. 11). Nonetheless, the survivors of the 1904-1908 Conflict were victims of trauma that was aggravated by the repressive nature of the German settlers, hence the study adopts the Caruth (1996) definition of trauma.

To add on, Walsh (2007) notes that, with traumatic experiences, the body, mind, spirit, and relationships with others can be wounded, along these lines concurring with Lemaire (2011) who refers to trauma as damaging and injuring both physically and psychologically. The wound being referred to here is not a physical wound, but rather metaphorical in nature and may not necessarily be discernible to the naked eye, but one that goes beyond even the pain of a physical wound, a pain of a much higher level. Thus, Marder (2006) asserts that, there is a general consent that if trauma is a wound, "it is a very peculiar kind of wound" (p. 1). With regards to earlier studies on trauma, Bonanno (2008) points out that, whereas positive emotion and laughter in the face of adversity were formerly thought to be forms of unhealthy denial, more

recent studies on trauma and loss are showing that these actions reduce negative emotions and increase social support and contact.

Resilience is the term that comes from the Latin *resilire* which means “to recoil”, thus, resilience means to rebound, spring back, and have elasticity, flexibility, or recuperability (Taormina, 2015, p. 36). The Resilience Theory is explained as a dynamic process wherein individuals display positive adaptation despite experiences of significant adversity or trauma (Cloete & Mlambo, 2014). Ledesma (2014) notes that “Resilience is defined as the ability to bounce back from adversity, frustration, and misfortune” (p. 1). Simply put, resilience is about an individual’s ability to overcome stress and adversity (Kirmayer, Sehdev, Whitley, Dandeneau, & Isaac, 2009). In addition, survival, recovery, and thriving are concepts associated with resilience and describe the stage at which a person may be during or after facing adversity (Ledesma, 2014). The selected historical novels for this study, have characters that developed some kinds of resilience and survived the less-than-favourable conditions.

Ledesma (2014) is of the assertion that, “In essence, resilience researchers agree that resilience is concerned with individual variations in response to risk” (p. 2). Thus, individuals’ reactions to certain traumatic experiences vary from person to person. According to Fletcher and Sarkar (2011) “Most researchers concur that, for resilience to be demonstrated, both adversity and positive adaptation must be evident” (p. 5). In other words, in as much as people differ in responding to calamity, conversely, key elements pertaining to ‘adversity’ and ‘positive adaptation’ should not be left unconsidered. The surviving characters in the selected novels reveal traits associated with resilience though at varying levels.

However, one of the main difficulties in conducting research on resilience is that broad inconsistencies exist in the way that resilience is defined and conceptualised as either a trait or a process or an outcome (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2011). Davydov, Stewart, Ritchie, and Chaudieu (2010) reinforce on the wide inconsistencies by observing that conceptual discrepancies hinder the evaluation and comparison of resilience research findings, preclude meta-analysis, and make it difficult to operationalise the construct for measurement purposes. Fletcher and Sarkar (2011) acknowledge that “this definitional debate is important to highlight since concepts provide researchers with theoretical boundaries that help determine the nature, direction and veracity of research inquiry” (p. 4). Thus, for this study the resilience that is considered is that definition provided by Cloete and Mlambo (2014) wherein individuals display positive adaptation despite experiences of significant adversity.

Also, Fletcher and Sarkar (2011) assert that, resilience is conceptualised as the interactive influence of psychological characteristics within the context of the stress process. Additionally, Fletcher and Sarkar (2011) note that there are factors that are linked to resilience and these include: hardiness which involves committed to finding meaningful purpose in life; self enhancement which is a trait associated with high self-esteem but also with narcissism; repressive coping which involves some level of emotional dissociation or detachment. Further, Ungar (2011) alleges that “Not only can a person bounce back from substantial adversity, but he or she can actually grow through their challenging experiences” (p. 2). Mlambo (2014) employs the resilience theory and emphasise that the resilience is espoused “on the development of competencies, strengths and the ability to adapt and survive harsh conditions where there are limited opportunities” (p. 41).

From what the majority of scholars (Balaev, 2008; Bananno, 2008; Cloete & Mlambo, 2014; Davydor et al., 2010; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2011; Kirnmayer et al., 2009; Lemaire, 2011; Mlambo, 2014; Taormina, 2015; Walsh, 2007) have defined, discussed and critiqued Trauma and Resilience, it appears the two theories can be combined and used congruently. For resilience to be there, there initially must be an/some element of trauma, thus, resilience may be deemed contingent to trauma, hence combining the two to form Trauma and Resilience Theory.

2.2.2 Ecocriticism

Ecocriticism was the second theory selected for this study and it is a theory concerned with the investigation of the relationship between man and nature (Asika & Madu, 2015). The theory was used to explore the material and immaterial ramifications of the 1904-1908 Conflict. Having originated in the United States as a minor, mostly regional form of environmentally oriented approach in the late 20th century, Ecocriticism has since proliferated throughout literature departments, and become a flourishing new tributary of the humanities not only in the United States and Europe but globally as well (Zapf, 2010). Ecocriticism gets its motivation from the three major American writers whose works celebrate nature as a life force, and the wilderness as manifested in America and these are Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), and Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) (Kumar, 2016, p. 169).

The term ecocriticism was first coined by William Rueckert in *Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism* in 1978 (Kumar, 2016; van Wyk, 2012, Shikha, 2011; Glotfelty & Fromm, 1996). Rueckert's (as cited in Glotfelty & Fromm, 1996) was the first publication to use the term 'Ecocriticism' as an environmentally minded literary analysis that discovers "something about the ecology of literature" (p. 71), nonetheless, it is Henry David Thoreau who is considered to be the father of Ecocriticism (Kumar, 2016). However, the term 'ecocriticism' can be traced back to William Rueckert's 1978 essay and it was never used until

1989 when Cheryll Glotfelty revived the term and urged its adoption thereafter (Branch & O'Grady, 1994). The word 'eco' comes from the Greek root word 'oikos' which etymologically means household or earth and 'logy' from 'logos' means logical discourse (Kumar 2016, p. 168). Eco is short of ecology, which is concerned with the relationships between living organisms in their natural environment as well as their relationships with that environment (Sahu, 2014).

Ecocriticism has a number of definitions as demonstrated in the following lines. Buell (1995) defines Ecocriticism "as a study of the relationship between literature and the environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist's praxis" (p. 430). Gloetfelty (1996) defines Ecocriticism as "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (p. xviii). Ecocriticism is divided into two waves and the first wave took place during the 1980s and the 1990s, characterised by rumination on nature writing as an object of study and raising awareness, in a way human beings speaking on behalf of nature (Barry, 2009). The second wave brought with it a redefinition of the term 'environment' by expanding its meaning to include 'nature' and the 'urban' (Bertens, 2008).

Ecocriticism takes an earth-centred approach to literary criticism and it is capable of comprising non-human as well as human contexts and concerns (Fenn, 2015; Glotfelty & Fromm, 1999; Habeeb & Habeeb, 2012; Love, 2003). The earth centred approach realises the interaction of humans and the environment that surrounds them. Thus, Kandemiri (2018) comments that, with the earth-centered approach, it may be established that Ecocriticism hinges its analysis on characters and the space they inhabit in a given text. Moreover, Jimmy (2015) echoes the same sentiments by noting that ecocriticism asserts the primacy of the natural world

by inflating the field of literary study from just social relations to broad constructions of nature in texts.

Additionally, Sahu (2014) notes that the term Ecocriticism has a broad domain and has been expressed through many literary genres. van Wyk (2012) comments that Rueckert's original conceptualisation of ecocriticism still shares commonalities with Ecocriticism in its modern form. Furthermore, van Wyk (2012) observes that Rueckert's version of ecocriticism differs on quite a fundamental level when compared to how ecocriticism is currently used and understood that it was more concerned with reading texts as ecosystems, rather than reading texts about ecosystems, which is how ecocriticism is, to a large extent, practised today. However, Sahu (2014) states that some of the most widely known ecocritics are Lawrence Buell, Cheryll Glotfelty, Simon C. Estok, Harold Fromm, William Howath, William Rueckert, Suellen Campbell, Michael P. Branch and Glen A. Love. Some popular names for this relatively new genre are ecopoetics, green culture and environmental literary criticism (Sahu, 2014, p. 24).

Ecocriticism is an attempt to understand human and non-human interactions and inter-relationships as well as to reintegrate the human and the non-human, to retrace the lost links between humanity and the world out there (Rampal, 2013). Nonetheless, Oppermann (1999) argues that "the attempt to synthesize natural phenomena with literary criticism raises conceptual problems, because ecology itself is an abstract concept that emerged in a historical process of academic formation" (p. 30). On the other hand, Sahu (2014) asserts that Ecocriticism is not only the application of ecology and ecological principles but also the study of literature and theoretical approach to the interrelations of nature, culture and sometimes even supernatural elements in nature. Sahu's (2014) assertion is further reinforced by Rampal (2013) who notes that Ecocriticism reintegrates the text and the world, history and narrative, meaning

and value. In addition, Oppermann (1999) alleges that Ecocriticism mainly concentrates on how literature relates with and participates in the entire ecosphere. Buell (2001) comments that Ecocriticism widens its scope to genres other than nature writing, as long as the works examined “manifest ecological awareness” (p. xxiii). Moreover, the relationship between man and nature is not just interdependent but also interrelated (Sahu, 2014). Thus, Ecocriticism is a notion that draws its interpretation and comprehensibility from studying a combination of literature, culture and components of nature.

Kumar (2016) testifies that Ecocriticism is an intentionally broad approach which is by its very nature interdisciplinary and draws its sustenance from the existing literary theories. Conversely Buell (2001) precisely limits the restrictions of nature writing to “nonfictional texts such as science papers, philosophical writings, travel guides, with the essentially and prototypically American nature essay at the center, ecological awareness” (p. xxiii). Nonetheless, Buell’s (2001) limitations may be contested as nature writing is also prevalent in fictional works and presented globally (not in America alone), such as the nature writing prevalent in the selected genocidal fiction for this present study. Sahu (2014, p. 24) notes that Ecocriticism “attempts to explore the expressions of environment in literary texts and theoretical discourse and that it is also a study of language through which literature is expressed.”

In addition, the book *Eco-critical Literature: Regreening African Landscape* (2013) is commented by Pasi (2017) as a “project that engages ecocriticism and ecofeminism by showing how feminist issues and issues in the environment affect and are affected by human and non-human nature in African literature” (p. 56). Pasi (2017) observes that the book contains essays that illustrate a shift of traditional ecocriticism beyond the western definitions of ecocriticism which reflects growth of ecocriticism in African context. Moreover, the variety of environmental literature in t *Eco-critical Literature: Regreening African Landscape* (2013) offers new ways of viewing African literature (Pasi, 2017). Thus, ecocriticism is more of a

universal theory, as nature writing seem not to be confined to a specific geographical area, hence Ecocriticism selected as one of the theories for this study.

Kumar (2016) perceives Ecocriticism as an interdisciplinary approach and as such, all sciences come forward to contribute to the field, hence new theories such as Post-colonial Ecocriticism, Ecofeminism, Ecomarxism, Ecospiritualism amongst others are coming into light. In addition, Buell, Heise and Thornber (2011) state that, across these various subfields of research, “ecocriticism has sought to investigate how particular templates of storytelling and image-making shape humans’ real-life interactions with the natural world in ways that are historically and culturally distinctive” (p. 419). Moreover, Kumar (2016) claims that:

All other theories are marked by their individual ego-consciousness while Ecocriticism is characterized by ecoconsciousness. In short, it is an earth centric approach to literary studies which promotes the understanding of who we are, where we stand, how we should behave with our mother nature. (p. 169)

Numerous studies which include Pasi (2017); Sahu (2014); Oppermann (1999); Kandemiri (2018) have been carried out employing Ecocriticism as a theory. To begin with, Pasi (2017) investigates the relationship between humans and the natural environment in selected literary works by black female writers in colonial and post-colonial Namibia and Zimbabwe. Sahu (2014) discusses the role of ecocriticism in literature by citing how the theme of ecocriticism can be interpreted through the reading of three Indian novels, namely, *Nectar in a Sieve* by Kamala Markandaya, *Cry, the Peacock* by Anita Desai and *The Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh. Sahu (2014) concluded that “Ecocriticism engages with the logic of ecology and expressions of the theory”. Moreover, Sahu (2014) noted that the study is a cautionary warning to mankind that the misuse of nature over long periods of time would eventually cause nature to retaliate. In the current study, nature imageries in the selected novels are used to express the emotions and even shortcomings of the characters.

Oppermann (1999) emphasises the significance of eco-literary discourses in the practice of ecocriticism in the course of an ecocritical assessment of two postmodern novels namely Graham Swift's *Waterland*, and Jim Crace's *The Gift of Stones*. Oppermann (1999) argues for the need of an extensive theoretical approach in investigating the connections of the literary and the natural occurrences and comments that:

The narrative structure of *Waterland* is based on the repetition of eco-literary metaphorical paradigms, such as land re-clamation, water, Fenlands, and the European Eel, as well as the metafictional paradigms of historicity, textuality, discontinuity and circularity. (p. 41)

The analysis of *Waterland* shows that there exists a connection between literary works and the natural phenomena. With regards to the other novel *The Gift of Stones*, Oppermann (1999) alleges that:

The novel puts a special emphasis upon the idea that the villagers act along with nature, and are unaware of the dualistic forms of living. They blend into the landscape. Their interconnection with their environment is used as a strategy to subvert the conceptual frameworks of today's destructive perception of nature. Therefore, the novel is able to present nature as an active subject of the story in an ecologically informed literary discourse that challenges nature/culture dichotomy. (p. 43)

The study concluded that applying ecology or ecological concepts and themes to literary criticism is an enhancing process to literary studies. Moreover, contemporary novels already make use of parallel paradigms between ecology and literature which await detailed critical exploration and evaluation in terms of an interdisciplinary approach of ecocriticism (Oppermann, 1999). Thus, the present study employed Ecocriticism as one of its theories which served as an extensive theoretical approach in investigating the connections of the literary and

the natural occurrences in the analysis of the selected genocidal novels. The study adopts Gloetfelty's (1996) definition of Ecocriticism that it is "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (p. xviii). This study draws its analyses from works of literature and in these works, the physical environment is weaved in the narration of the stories. Ecocriticism stood in for that element involving the interaction of humans and the environment in the analysis of the selected texts.

2.2.3 New Historicism

The third theory for this present study was New Historicism, also known as Cultural Poetics (Ardian, 2011; Kaçmaz, 2011). According to Kaçmaz (2011), Cultural Poetics is often called the New Historicism in the United States of America and the Cultural Materialism in the Great Britain. This study however adopted the term New Historicism. This theory assumes that a literary work is the product of the time, place, and historical circumstances of its composition rather than as an isolated work of art or text (Mojdegani, 2016; Tiwary & Chandra, 2009), hence the selected five novels' history revolves around the 1904-1908 Conflict. New Historicism came in existence in 1980 as a result of the critical manifesto of Stephen Greenblatt, who coined this very term for the first time with an objective to propose new critical methods for interpreting the Renaissance texts (Sharma, 2014). Nonetheless, Ukkan (2002) observes that, though the term seems to have been coined by Michael McCanles, New Historicism rose to prominence with Stephen J. Greenblatt's *Renaissance Self-fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (1980).

Like any other theory, New Historicism also has its genesis and its founder. According to Potter (as cited in Ukkan, 2002), New Historicism springs forth from a diverse set of practices that are not in themselves new and attributes the origin of this practice to various figures as Louis

Althusser, Michel Foucault, Frederic Jameson, Raymond Williams, Mikhail Bakhtin, Terry Eagleton and Hayden White. To add to the list, Ukkari (2002) notes that other frontline practitioners of New Historicism Theory include Jerome McGann, Marjorie Levinson and Marilyn Butler. Moreover, Ukkari (2002) asserts that:

The emergence of New Historicism was predominant in the 1980s, and its origin can be traced back to Raymond Williams's *Marxism and Literature* (1977) which inspired the rehistoricization of literary studies in England and America, and Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) which gave a new impetus to the eurocentric cultural discourse and questioned the preeminence of Western culture. (p. 2)

Besides, Sharma (2014) states that New Historicism is a critical approach which "disrupts the extremity of purely formal and linguistic critical canon and dogmatism of close textual analysis of a work at the expense of extrinsic value embedded implicitly in its intrinsic part" (p. 2). To add on, Kaçmaz (2011) notes that New Historicism states that all history is subjective and cannot be objective, since people's prejudices and biases affect their interpretation of the past. Moreover, New Historicism involves a parallel reading or juxtaposition of the literary and the non-literary texts of the same historical period (Ukkari, 2002; Kaçmaz, 2011). Thus, this study incorporated both the historical texts and the selected literary novels in fulfilling the research objectives.

Kaçmaz (2011) asserts that New Historicism is "literary criticism and literary theory based on the principle that a literary work should be considered a product of the time, place, and circumstances of its composition rather than as an isolated creation" (p. 52). On the same footing, Ukkari (2002) alleges that:

In the same way New Historicism contends that a work is not an autonomous body of fixed meanings, but represents a diversity of dissonant voices and unresolved conflicts

in a specific culture. It affirms the importance of the text, though it does so in relation to the context which becomes the co-text. (p. 5)

To reinforce Ukkan's (2002) (the latter quotation), Hickling (2018) contends that what New Historicism does is engage in the emphasis on power relations operating within the society of its time and it consciously engages the idea that the past is inevitably read from the present. Above all New Historicism shows a resurgence of interest in history and that it treats a work of literature not as a story of analysis but a representation of historical forces (Ukkan, 2002). Taking Ukkan's (2002) stance on issues pertaining to the past, this study read and analysed in the present the 1904-1908 Conflict through the selected historical novels which are a representation of historical forces, hence New Historicism framing this study.

In a similar study, Abiatar (2020) employed New Historicism in the analysis of *Mama Namibia*, *The Scattering*, and *The Lie of the Land* but *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* and *Parts Unknown*. The study explored "the literary representation of the Herero-Nama genocide in the three selected novels in order to explain the contribution of historical fiction to the excavation of occluded narratives and engaging with Namibian history and related discourses" (Abiatar, 2020, p. vi). The study found that the selected three novels amplify history comprehension by correlating it in a literary form and adding meanings to the cruelties, as well as offering a platform to go through recorded and shared material which represent alternative histories thereby furthering historiography. However, this present study besides New Historicism, also had two more theories namely Trauma and Resilience as well as Ecocriticism as parts of its framework.

Nodari (2010) employed New Historicism constructing a new historicist identity by analysing Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. Nodari (2010) views *The Color Purple* as a form of historical

representation and the analysis aims at showing that the formation of separated communities in the United States was a way of promoting the construction of a racial identity by the African-Americans. Also, given that New Historicism deals with issues related to historical facts, and the formation of such separated communities is an instance of a historical fact (Nodari, 2010). Nodari (2010) concludes the study by noting that:

Although a modern reader can never experience a text as its contemporaries did, Walker poses a meaningful narrator in Nettie since she successfully portrays what she experienced of life in Africa to the reader, despite her intentions and acts of interference in the local culture caused by her belief of equality. Moreover, to an attentive reader her portrait helped in the construction of a clear and broad vision of a people that vanished in history though unwillingly left roots in all continents. (p. 16)

From this present study's perspective, the experiences of characters in the selected genocidal novels bring to the present day the 'brutal' incidents they encountered during the 1904-1908 Conflict. In essence, as already established, New Historicism assumes that a literary work is the product of the time, place, and historical circumstances of its composition rather than as an isolated work of art or text (Mojdegani, 2016; Tiwary & Chandra, 2009).

2.2.4 Integrating the three theories

Firstly, by contemplating on the 1904-1908 Conflict in question, the survival of the characters (the target of this study) is profoundly anchored in their resilience which is stirred by the traumatic adversity instigated by the presence of the Germans, hence Trauma and Resilience Theory. Secondly, the characters, in the advent of being displaced (materialities) as well as in their ability to be resilient, they interacted considerably with their environment, hence Ecocriticism. Lastly, the 1904-1908 Conflict befell in excess of a century ago, but is made accessible today through the historical novel which is deemed a product of the time, place, and circumstances of its composition, hence New Historicism. Thus, this study focused on the

resilience and decoloniality of materialities particularly on the survivors of this epoch in question. These three theories have compatibility qualities of allowing themselves to work together at the same time, and when weaved together, they show how ductile some theories are in literary studies and this has given birth to an in-depth analysis of resilience in the selected historical genocidal novels.

2.3 Literature review

This section focuses on the reviewing of the relevant literature framed by the Trauma and Resilience Theory, Ecocriticism and New Historicism. Aspects pertaining to the period in question, the 1904-1908 Conflict, are discussed in-depth, thus a critical literature review gives weight and value to the analyses of the selected literary works. According to Creswell (2012), a literature review is a written summary of journal articles, books, and other documents that describes the past and current state of information on the topic of your research study. Moreover, a literature review is a written report that summarises and optimally critiques the literature on a particular topic (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016). Furthermore, “It also organizes the literature into subtopics, and documents the need for a proposed study” (Creswell, 2012, p. 80).

2.3.1 The typology and comprehension of genocide

The term “genocide” was coined by lawyer Raphael Lemkin, a Polish-Jewish refugee, in an attempt to describe the extermination of a group of people on the basis of their purported race, ethnicity, nationality or religion (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2017). The term was later, with certain amendments, used as a fundament for a legal concept within International Law, and a basis for a 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which has, up to now, been the main legal tool for recognising and punishing genocide (Barloda, 2013).

According to Förster (2007) a generally accepted definition of genocide does not exist as scholars' conceptions on what the genocide is differ extensively, in spite of the fact that they dwell on the same elements. Moreover, every genocide has its own character and context (ten Have & Boender, 2012). Thus, the differences suggest distinguished incongruities possibly over emphasis. However, genocide may be grouped into specific categories and Charny (1999) notes that Helen Fein, a leading scholar of genocide put forward four basic forms of genocide in terms of motivation namely: Developmental; Despotic; Ideological; and Retributive. Each of the four forms is summarised in the following Table 1 below:

Table 1: Basic forms of genocide

FORM	EXPLANATION
Developmental	encompass those in which the targeted groups are seen as an impediment to the colonisation or the resource exploitation of a given geographic area
Despotic	involve situations in which a government uses genocide as a weapon against rivals for political power
Ideological	concerns the attempted destruction of a population because of a system of belief or beliefs
Retributive	genocide is perpetrated by one group against another to protect or change a hierarchical and stratified political and/or social order

Adapted from Alvarez (2014, pp. 2-3)

With regards to the categories of genocides, the selected novels directly engage with the 1904-1908 Conflict which reflects and best fit the developmental explanation as Germans saw Hereros and Namas as an impediment in fulfilling their colonial agendas. Thus, a genocide was instigated to get rid of the natives of German South West Africa. According to Förster (2007), currently most authors are desperately trying to define the meaning of genocide and observes that “The definition given in the United Nations Convention on Genocide mainly has served legal purposes” (p. 70). Besides, Barloda (2013) observes that “Genocide is a difficult concept to define, and a lively debate on its nature is ever present in the discussions of scholars” (p.

31). Under the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide adopted in 1948, genocide is defined in Article 2 as:

Any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. (UNESCO, 2017, p. 26)

The following table, Table 2, provides the other definitions by other thinkers and the definitions vary from one thinker to another though they dwell on almost the same sentiments as mentioned earlier on by Förster (2007).

Table 2: Genocide definitions

Thinker	Definition
Lemkin (1944)	By ‘genocide’ we mean the destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group. This new word, coined by the author, to denote an old practice in its modern development is made from the ancient Greek word <i>genos</i> (race, tribe) and the Latin <i>cide</i> (killing) thus corresponding in its formation to such words as tyrannicide, homicide, infanticide etc.
Wallimann and Dobkowski (1987)	the deliberate, organized destruction, in whole or in large part, of racial or ethnic groups by a government or its agents. It can involve not only mass murder, but also forced deportation (ethnic cleansing), systematic rape, and economic and biological subjugation.
Chalk and Jonassohn (1990)	a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator.
Fein (1993)	sustained purposeful action by a perpetrator to physically destroy a collectivity directly or indirectly, through interdiction of the biological and social reproduction of group members, sustained regardless of the surrender or lack of threat offered by the victim.
Katz (1994)	the actualization of the intent, however successfully carried out, to murder in its totality any national, ethnic, racial, religious, political, social, gender or economic group, as these groups are defined by the perpetrator, by whatever means.
Charny (1994)	in the generic sense means the mass killing of substantial numbers of human beings, when not in the course of military action against the military forces of an avowed enemy, under conditions of the essential defencelessness of the victim.
Krain (2005)	mass killings in which the victims are defined by association with a particular communal group.
Barloda (2013)	intentional or unintentional murder in whole or in part of a social collectivity by a state or another collectivity in a position of power, where both collectivities are defined through an idea of unity based on perceived common roots.

Compiled by the researcher - 2018

Barloda (2013) observes that the generally used criteria for defining genocide is either through defining the agent or the victim, though there is much incongruity among genocide scholars concerning both. Nonetheless, from Table 2 above, the recurring use of words such as (deliberate; purposeful) and phrases as (structural systematic) in the definitions of genocide

show that genocide is an act that may not be classified as an error, rather it is done with the intention to annihilate. Relatedly, ten Have and Boender (2012) discern that “Some researchers oppose to using the term genocide, as the general definition of genocide does not encompass all the complexities and differences” (p. 8). Moreover, Barloda (2013) states that “it is difficult to distinguish, which of the many different types of atrocities should or should not be included in the definition of genocide” (p. 32). However, this present study takes the stance that as long as the agent intentionally annihilates the victim in part or in full, for the purposes of gaining over victim’s land and resources or other reasons, then it may be considered a genocide. Thus Barloda (2013) asserts that “land and resources are the central goal of genocide” (p. 40). Hence this study drew in aspects pertaining to decoloniality of materialities in the analysis of the selected genocidal novels with land as one of the key areas central to the analysis and discussion.

2.3.2 Other world genocides

The 1904-1908 Conflict was the first 20st century genocide as ascertained by scholars as Abiatar (2020), Kossler (2015) and Thornley (2013), however, there are other genocides that occurred at other times globally. The impact of genocide leaves enduring scars and eternal memories for the affected groups of people. Also, genocide and mass atrocities are issues that reveal the manners in which past events can continue to shape the present (UNESCO, 2017). Therefore, this section highlights some of the genocides, not for comparative reasons, but for enriching the comprehension of the genocide notion. Thus, only two (Holocaust and Rwanda) genocides were reviewed.

2.3.2.1 The Holocaust

Though it has received much attention, the Holocaust was not the only genocide in the history of humanity. However, the Holocaust was a unique genocide in a way and the term genocide

today still is described as the most radical attempt to destroy every member of a group without exception (Kaiser, 2014). According to UNESCO (2017), before the Holocaust transmuted into a genocide, the Holocaust started off with abuses of power known as gross violations of human rights.

The term “Holocaust” (or Shoah, meaning “catastrophe” in the Hebrew language) refers to the organised, bureaucratic, state-sponsored subjection and murder of six million Jews by Nazi Germany and its allies (UNESCO, 2017). The word Holocaust comes from the Greek word *holokauston*, which is a translation of the Hebrew word *olah*, which during Biblical times, an *olah* was a form of sacrifice to God that was entirely consumed or burnt by fire (Shoah Resource Centre, n.d.). Holocaust is a word that originates from Greek connoting “sacrifice by fire”. Anti-Defamation League (2012) affirms that:

Between 1933 and 1945, Nazi Germany and its collaborators murdered six million Jews and five million other civilians, including Sinti and Roma people (also known by their derogatory label as Gypsies), Poles, people with physical and mental disabilities, gay men, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents. (p. 1)

Just like the 1904-1908 Conflict, where victims were chained and had to have some kind of identification (pass-badges: see image 7 in section 2.3.3 of this study) around their necks, the same system prevailed during the Holocaust. During the Holocaust, Jews were segregated on racial grounds and specific areas were designated for Jews only which later made it easier for deportation to the death camps. Yahya (2017) provides a description of the life experienced by Jews:

The largest of the ghettos was that in Warsaw, the capital city of Poland. The poorest areas of the district were set aside for the Jews and Jewish residents from all the other parts of the city. The Jews were now forcibly moved into the ghetto. Before they were

incarcerated in the Warsaw Ghetto, all their money and valuables were taken from them. Life in the Ghetto was horrendous. Death stalked the streets of the Warsaw Ghetto, which was eternally gripped by fear. One of the greatest enemies on the streets of the ghetto was total starvation as Jews were given only 184 calories a day. (Yahya, 2017, p. 6)

The issue of starving had earlier on been experienced by Hereros and Namas in German South West Africa where majority had meagre food provisions and people died in numbers as also lived through by the Jews. In the areas occupied by Nazi Germany (in Radom, Warsaw, Lublin and Krakow), Yahya (2017) asserts that:

The Nazis confined the Jews to ghettos, always in the poorest areas of the neighborhood with no infrastructure, in dilapidated buildings with about 10 people in every room, and deported the Jews to newly constructed forced labor and concentration camps. All Jews were forced to wear yellow stars of David on their clothes so they could be immediately identified. It was now easy to mark, single out and target the Jews. (p. 5)

The conditions they were forced to live in were dehumanising and relegated them to mere animals. As if not enough, the Jews were then moved to concentration camps where majority encountered their fate. The Holocaust would not have been conceivable without anti-Semitism, an inherent animosity of Jews behind the myth that they were responsible for Christ's death was chiefly relentless (ten Have & van Haperen, 2013). Furthermore, Yahya (2017) confirms that:

Jews were subjected to persecution and genocide. They were forced out of their homes, and incarcerated in concentration camps under inhumane conditions. Millions of Jews were tortured and murdered in the Holocaust, which was a horrific period unprecedented in the history of mankind. (pp. 1-2)

The concentration camps during the Holocaust were the same stratagem that had earlier on been witnessed in German South West Africa (1904-1908) where they were literal death camps through starvation. Amongst other malevolence, at the end of 1930s, Hitler directed a programme of euthanasia to be performed on people who were disabled and the mentally or terminally ill, thus, from 1940, gassing experiments were carried out (ten Have & Van Haperen, 2013). However, the gassing programme was aborted following church protests but already 360,000 people had been slayed, and impacted negatively on the Jewish population (Gilbert, 1987).

Accordingly, from the period starting from the last months of 1941 to the end of 1944, a total of 11 million people, of whom 5.5 million were Jews, were murdered in gas chambers and by other brutal means and many of the inmates died of starvation, illness, disease and maltreatment (Yahya, 2017). It may therefore be commented that there may not be scepticisms that the Germans's actions aimed at the annihilation of the Jews and other nominated groups as presented by the empirical data. The same empirical data is what fiction writers would expand further on by breathing life in the characters and allowing them to present an event as well as their emotions as presented in the selected historical novels for this study.

2.3.2.2 The Rwandan genocide

The Rwandan genocide is a more recent and distinguished genocide in the world histories which happened exactly fifty years after the Holocaust. On 6 April 1994, an aircraft carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi crashed on its approach to Kigali airport killing everyone on board and the death of Rwanda's president Juvenal Habyarimana triggered a new wave of human slaughter in a country that already had witnessed recurring massacres that quickly transfused into genocide (Shaw, 2012). Within the hour after the plane crash, and prior to its official broadcast over the radio, members of the Interahamwe (Hutu militiamen) had already begun to launch road-blocks in Kigali and between 6 and 7 April, identity cards of

passers-by were inspected searching for Tutsi, members of opposition parties, and human rights activists and anyone affiliated to these groups was set upon with machetes and iron bars (Magnarella, 2002). An estimated 5-10 per cent of Rwanda's population was then killed between the second week of April and the third week of May 1994 (Hintjens, 1999).

According to Magnarella (2005), "Within a period of only three months, approximately 800,000 Tutsi and between 10,000 and 30,000 Hutu, or 11 per cent of Rwanda's total population, had been killed" (p. 84). Hintjens (1999) remarks that a diverse of both public and private establishments were liable for the perilous task of setting up the genocide in advance, and for ensuring its successive operation through the involvement of most Rwandan people, by victimising a significant minority. Additionally, Magnarella (2005) informs that "Armed with machetes, spears, knives, and clubs, they roamed from village to village and house to house, hacking every Tutsi in sight. Churches and schools were transformed into killing fields" (p. 814). Nikuze (2014) reports that "In this genocide, more than one million Tutsi were killed for the sole reason of being Tutsi" (p. 1086). Just like in the Holocaust, majority of the Jews died for the sole reason of being a Jew and in the 1904-1908 Conflict, majority died for the sake of being Herero or Nama.

"A particularly lethal combination of obfuscation, terror and victim blaming is identified as having facilitated genocide in the particular case of Rwanda" (Hintjens, 1999, p. 244). The murderers were not just comfortable with simply killing Tutsi and Hutu rivals but they expended much of their time and effort torturing and mutilating their victims (Magnarella, 2005). Moreover, Nikuze (2014) claims that the Tutsis were considered as Hutu oppressors who should be eliminated and this ideology incited sporadic killings of the Tutsi, pogroms, exiles and humiliations of all kinds, resulting in the 1994 genocide. Magnarella (2005) further notes that rape was used extensively, even against wounded women and since "the psychological need to eliminate the Tutsi was so great that Hutu extremists hunted down and

killed the pregnant Hutu wives of Tutsi men, so that their ‘Tutsi’ foetuses would not survive” (p. 816).

This genocide was a consequence of a deep-rooted philosophy of hatred, discrimination, and disharmony that stimulated the Hutu ruling regimes to believe the Tutsi as imposing foreigners (Nikuze, 2014). On the same footing, Magnarella (2005) also comments that “the ultimate cause of Rwandan genocide was the increasing imbalance in land, food and people that led to malnutrition, hunger, periodic famine and fierce competition for land to farm” (p. 821). According to Nikuze (2014) “This genocide, committed by Rwandans against Rwandans, destroyed social bonds between Rwandans and damaged economic institutions” (p. 1086). Other than that, the genocide itself brought with it problems associated with displacement and according to Magnarella (2005) “About 2,000,000 people were uprooted within Rwanda, while the same number of Hutu fled from Rwanda into Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire” (p. 816). However, even after the gruesome murder of people during the Rwandan genocide, Nikuze (2014) notes that “Despite this, the survivors, the genocide perpetrators and their respective families now have to live together in order to overcome their painful history, as they envision an optimistic future” (p. 1086). For the sake of progress, people involved may be prepared to forgive each other and move forward but the act itself is not easily obliterated as it leaves permanent scars that are passed on from generation to generation. Just as the 1904-1908 Conflict that happened over a century ago, but the wounds caused by the act are still as fresh and the scars visible and permanent. Just like the Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa, if the element of justice is left out, then there are no possibilities of lasting reconciliation as perpetrators have to be brought to book.

2.3.3 The period 1904-1908 in Namibian history

Considerable amount of literature has been published on the 1904-1908 Namibian history. These include studies as that by De Souza Correa (2011) who researched on some forms of

sharing experience, with the task of memory and of rewriting history in view of the genocide during the Colonial War (1904-1907) in South West Africa. The study concluded that the conflict of specifically the Herero ethnic group, was the first genocide of the 20th century and that it fits in with a series of others (of Armenians, Jews, Tutsis) which took place between 1904 and 1999. To add on, Dyck (2014); Kossler (2015); Thornley (2013); Van Mil (2011); Burke and Oltermann (2017); Kluessien and Ramos (2017) echo the same sentiment that the conflict of the Herero was the first genocide of the 20th century, yet aspects pertaining to decoloniality of materialities and resilience in survivors of the conflict remain un-investigated thereby leaving a gap for this study.

Also, the conflict was instigated by German settlers' demand for land and at the same time their condescending racial privilege which Kameeta (2003) describes the Germans as having "a very brutal, imperial, and savage power" (p. vii). Silvester and Gewald (2003) allege that "Starting in Okahandja, the war spread across central Namibia and developed in intensity and brutality as fresh contingents of German troops disembarked and attempted to impose their vision of order on the territory and its inhabitants" (p. 281). This resulted in deaths of black men, women and children and the excruciating experiences of survivors at being exposed to brutal inhumane circumstances. Though from a fictional perspective in the selected historical novels for this present study, the history is captured as approximate to the real events as presented in historical sources. Moreover, Silvester and Gewald (2003) reveal that "In a policy of genocide, German soldiers and settlers sought out, shot, beat, hung, starved and raped Herero men, women and children" (p. 281).

The genocide came to being as a result of the destructive passions that the Germans had by initially settling on land that was never theirs. On 4 August 1904 General von Trotha

announced his command for the attack on the Hereros at the Waterberg (Olusoga & Erichsen, 2010). A few days later after the directives were issued, the Germans encircled the Herero camp at Waterberg and at 6 o'clock in the morning on the 11th of August 1904, the "Germans guns burst into life" and that morning most of the Hereros were sleeping in their shacks "people were blown apart by shrapnel and their *pontoks* incinerated" (Olusoga & Erichsen, 2010, p. 145). The battle lasted for 9 hours and around three in the afternoon, the Hereros managed to have a breakthrough on the Eastern side of the encirclement but led their life into the Omaheke desert.

Thereafter, the Hereros never recovered to fight back; they fled into Omaheke where the desert itself was equally a death trap and "dehydration was the biggest killer" (Olusoga & Erichsen, 2010, p. 148). Then General von Trotha issued the extermination order on 3 October 1904:

I, the Great General of the German troops, send this letter to the Herero...The Herero people must leave the land. If they do not do this I will force them with the Groot Rohr [Cannon]. Within the German borders every Herero, with or without a gun, with or without cattle, will be shot. I will no longer accept women and children, I will drive them to their people or I will let them be shot at. These are my words to the Herero people. Signed: The great general of the Mighty Kaiser, von Trotha. (Bridgman as cited in Dyck, 2014, p. 153)

von Trotha delivered his infamous extermination order at Ozombuzovindimba, after the Ovaherero already suffered military conquest. Additionally, Sprenger, Rodriguez, and Kamaṭuka (2017) acknowledge that though General von Trotha delivered his infamous extermination order at Ozombuzovindimba, the Ovaherero had already experienced military defeat. The extermination order had a negative impact on both the Hereros and Namas who

agonised as a result of this order. In an effort to bring to fruition of the extermination order, the Germans instantly shot or bayoneted any Ovaherero they encountered, armed or unarmed, capable or incapable of resistance (Drechsler, as cited in Dyck, 2014).

On the same day when the extermination order was dispensed, Rivera (2012) reports that von Trotha remarked that he deemed that the nation be annihilated and that they should perish other than diminish the Germans' supplies of water and food. This may be argued as incongruous considering that the land (with its water and food) justly belonged to the Hereros and Namas. Sprenger et al. (2017) further accentuate that, "Immediately following the decree, Germans lynched several Ovaherero in front of thirty Ovaherero prisoners to reinforce the seriousness of the German claims" (p. 129). After the lynching, the Germans then provided each of the prisoners with a duplicate of the extermination order and discharged them to propagate their impending fate (Rivera, 2012). All the selected novels for this present study at some point make reference to the extermination order and how it propels forward each of the stories' plot.

In the following year (1905) the Germans officials with the support of the missionaries, formed "holding camps" to collect all of the Ovaherero survivors (Sprenger et al., 2017). The Herero survivors were potently collected into the concentration camps from where the German military institutions coupled with private companies obtained slave labour (Zimmerer, 2008). Conditions in these camps overwhelmed the surviving remaining Ovaherero people, as the Germans deliberately subjected them to starvation and maltreatment (Hull, 2005). Furthermore, Sprenger (2017) alleges that German colonial officers studying eugenics took advantage of this opportunity to amass hundreds, possibly thousands of skulls of the deceased Hereros from the Shark Island and Windhoek concentration camps and exported them to Germany for research, some of which Germany send back to Namibia in 2011. The conditions

in the concentration camps were dehumanising and the selected novels for this study expose and provide an introspective of the macabre inclination of genocide. Though they are fictional novels, they conjure the vilification and malevolence of the Germans's aberrant volition attuned to the evidence provided by historians thereby equally interrogating the silenced past.

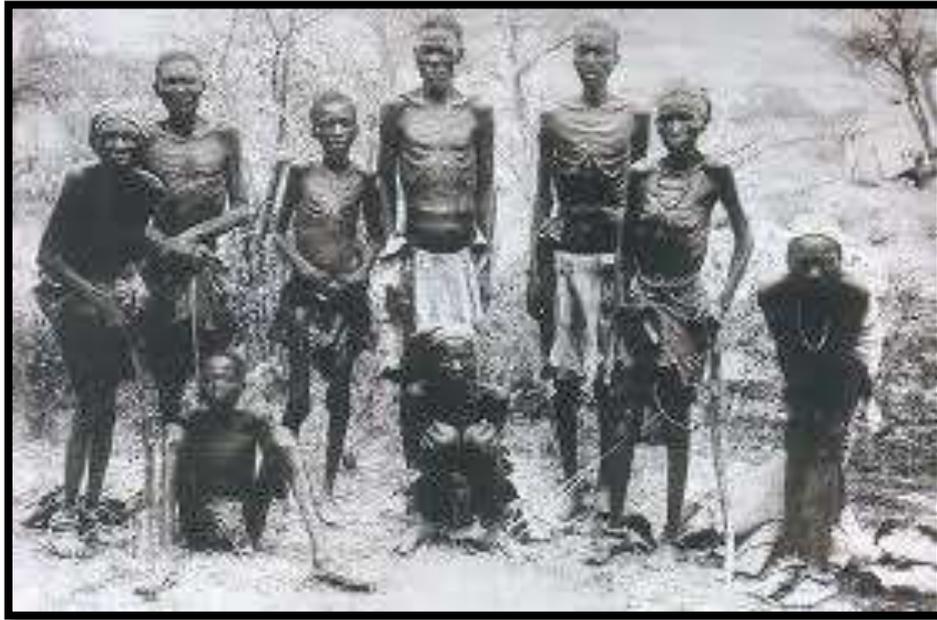
Every picture tells a story and the following images tell the 1904-1908 Conflict in pictures. Fiction writers would paint events and epochs using words stylistically and historians of course, would have images as evidence of a specific period or event. The images are some of the commonly available pictures in the history of the conflict showing different points of the events of the 1904-1908 Conflict. These images authenticate the descriptive narratives as presented in the selected novels such that even if the selected novels are fiction, the fiction is representative. Thus, the following images are evidence of what transpired during the 1904-1908 Conflict that augment the events in the selected five novels under study.

Image 1: The hanging of Herero Nama victims



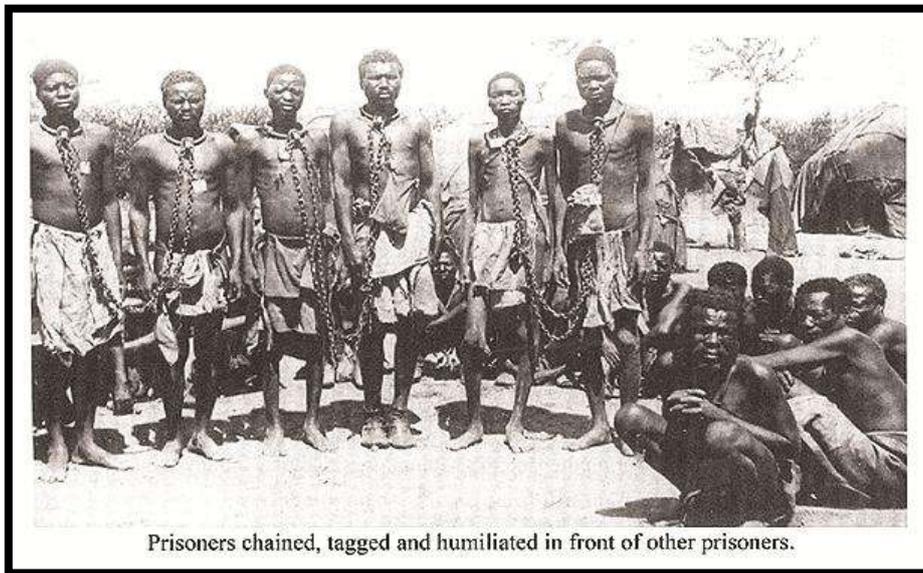
Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=the+herero+nama+conflict+pdf>

Image 2: Survivors in the Omaheke Desert



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=the+herero+nama+conflict+pdf>

Image 3: Black people captured and chained by the German soldiers



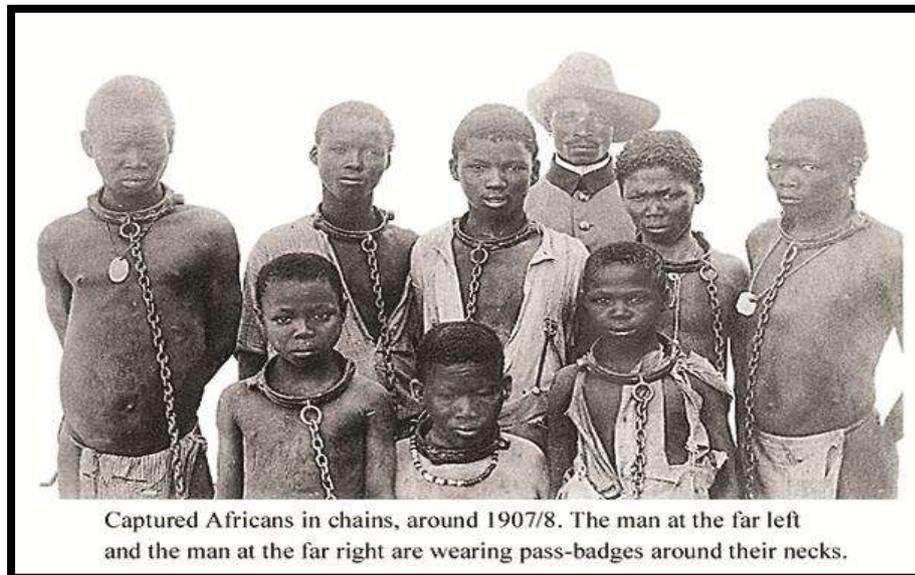
Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=the+herero+nama+conflict+pdf>

Image 4: Chained Herero and Nama men



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=the+herero+nama+conflict+pdf>

Image 5: Chained Africans in GSWA



Captured Africans in chains, around 1907/8. The man at the far left and the man at the far right are wearing pass-badges around their necks.

Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?biw=1332&bih=598&tbn>

Image 6: Herero survivors



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=getty+images+herero+nama+genocide&source>

Image 7: At Shark Island



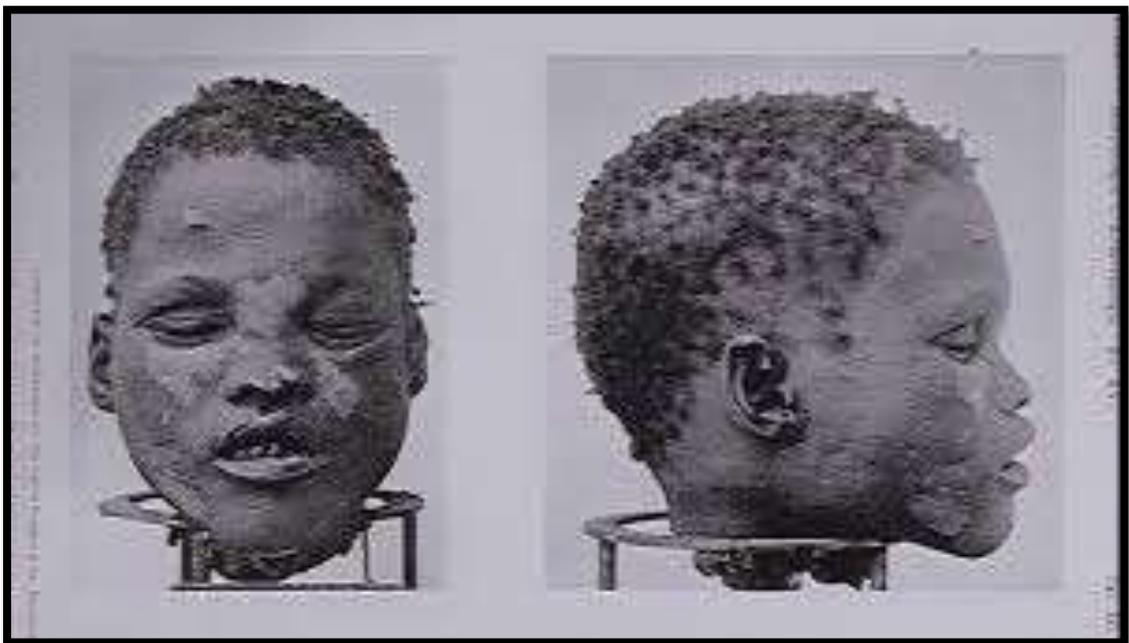
Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?biw=1332&bih=598&tbn>

Image 8: Prisoners at the concentration camp



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?biw=1332&bih=598&tbn>

Image 9: Preserved human head



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=shark+island+herero+nama+genocide+conditions+in+images>

Image 10: Packing of human skulls ready for exporting to Europe



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=shark+island+herero+nama+genocide+conditions+in+images>

Historians would use or make reference to images above as evidence of the 1904-1908 Conflict. However, literary artists with their fictional approach to represent the same event in question, still capture the same events by exposing the insanities and at the same time bestowing striking similarities. Literary artists go an extra mile to share what could have possibly happened at the time the pictures were taken and also go further to capture the qualitative tendencies that real history fails to apprehend.

Literary artists breathe life into those frozen pictures and set them in motion in telling how it happened. It may be commented that fictive texts can, to a greater extent command considerable truth, hence they are equally important as the non-fiction history. The images above tell the same stories as those in the selected novels (*Parts Unknown*, *Mama Namibia*, *The Scattering*, *The Lie of the Land* and *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*). According to Sprenger et al. (2017), “The result was that the Ovaherero people lost eighty-one percent of their population and over ten thousand Nama perished at the hands of Imperial Germany’s

schutztruppe” (p. 122). Thus, literary novels play a significant role in the representation of historical reality.

2.3.4 Significance of the historical novel

According to Young (2011), narrative histories, or historical fictions, have not been readily accepted in the academy as a legitimate form of history. Also, Hatavara (n.d.) notes that historical fiction as a genre has been doomed impractical due to an inevitable conflict between artistic composition and historical verisimilitude. Bortolotti (2015) attempts to model the ‘inevitable conflict’ by noting that Historians seek to answer the question ‘What happened?’ and therefore they turn to empirical data while writers of historical fiction seek to explain ‘What was it like?’ and therefore tend to create. It may thus be interpreted as that, Historians concentrate on the events and on the other hand historical fiction writers pay attention on the persons (characters) implicated and at the same time imagining those events.

Optimistically, Pinto (2010) supposes that “Historical novels are often carefully constructed, fastidiously researched, and historiographically self-aware considerations of the past” (p. 192). Moreover, Waghorn (2011) alleges that “Recognising a work of fiction as ‘historical fiction’ depends hugely on the context and experiences of the individual reader.” (p. 8). Thus, the selected genocidal historical novels all recount the 1904-1908 Conflict from a literary perspective but speaking the truth of that particular event. Furthermore, Bortolotti (2015) opines that “Historical fiction writers are not in the truth game, but rather in the believability game” (p. 118).

According to the Historical Novel Society (as cited in Rodwell, 2013), “To be deemed historical (in our sense), a novel must have been written at least fifty years after the events described, or have been written by someone who was not alive at the time of those events (who

therefore approaches them only by research)”. Given the preceding criterion, the selected five historical and genocidal novels by Van Den Berg (2018), Utley (2017), Tjingaete (2017), Kubuitsile (2016), and Serebrov (2013) all qualify to be historical novels (written over a 100 years after the historical epoch) which were used in fulfilment of the study’s objectives. The selected novels result from a milieu and the literary engagement with the fictional past mirror the concerns of the Namibians’s past. Further, Bortolotti (2015) alleges that “the value of any historical fiction, like all fiction, rests on a valid portrait of time, place, and character” (Bortolotti, 2015, pp. 118-119). Thus, the selected genocidal novels fictionalise the actual historical period in question resting on a valid representation of time, place and character.

Historical narratives fit into two broad forms with the first placing its events within an historical backdrop or period and the second employing historical ‘fact’ to tell its story (Young, 2011).

Bortolotti (2015) further elucidates on the understanding of a historical novel thus:

In historical fiction, the basic dimensions of culture – the political, aesthetic, and cognitive – all converge to give the reader a sense of truth and authenticity. The hybrid amalgamation of history and imagination helps to render a representation of the past while at the same time acting as an instructional and inspirational literature tool. The retelling of historical “fact” inevitably ends in storytelling; therefore, in order to be regenerated, historical “fact” becomes historical “fiction.” Fiction thus becomes not the opposite of fact, but rather its counterpart. (Bortolotti, 2015, p. 112).

The merits attached to the historical novel are that historical fiction transports readers to the past and makes them feel what otherwise would remain dead and lost, through a path that is unavailable to prescribed modes of historical research (Young, 2011; Bortolotti, 2015). Furthermore, Bortolotti (2015) argues that if a piece of historical fiction elevates the reader’s understanding of the human condition, it justifies itself beyond moral concerns such as lying

and manipulating. In essence, the very best of historical fiction undeniably grants its reader with a kind of a truth of the past that is not offered by the history books, but a greater and more important truth of the heart (Bortolotti, 2015, p. 116).

Pinto (2010) did a research using a historical novel *The Secret River*, as an attempt to come to terms with the nature and ramifications of Australia's colonisation. The study considers the *The Secret River* in terms of its historical project, for its attempt to make sense of its past and this is done in order to interrogate the ways in which this particular novel represents its past; to make use of this interrogation in order to offer a methodological way forward in the historical analysis of the genre of the historical novel; and to begin to consider the implications of this analysis upon the workings of historical representation (Pinto, 2010, p. 193).

Pinto (2010) discerns that *The Secret River* is one project of loss observed in the loss of control, lost peoples, lost knowledges, lost mythologies and lost chances. Moreover, the novel not only foregrounds these losses, but keeps hold of them. Accordingly, the constructing of such a history, the novel narrates Australia's colonisation melancholically, hence consequently constructed and told emotionally, thus representing the past with feelings (Pinto, 2010). As such, the selected genocidal novels for this present study are equally constructed and told emotionally in recounting the 1904-1908 epoch in question, where the genocide is re-enacted in the form of a story, telling about lost folks, lost wisdom, lost traditions as well as lost opportunities.

For this present study, thus the historical novels stand as significant features as they are "the most natural form of storytelling" as suggested by Bortolotti (2015, p. 116). The study focused on the decoloniality of materialities and resilience on the part of the survivors of the 1904-1908 Conflict and the only way one can access the 1904-1908 genocide today is through the

historical novel. Kameeta (2003) remarks on that “An oral heritage that describes the horror that Herero and other communities experienced during the war can, it seems, no longer be found” (p. xiii). The capability of the historical novel to interrogate the past and awaken imaginations to sense of the past as well as linking the past and the present has made this present study feasible, hence the historical novel important.

2.3.5 Indigenous Knowledge Systems as a fulcrum for survival

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) perform a critical role in making human beings able to sustain themselves in the face of adversity. Numerous scholars have attempted to define IKS as illustrated in the subsequent sentences. Mapara (2009) defines IKS as “a body of knowledge, or bodies of knowledge of the indigenous people of particular geographical areas that they have survived on for a very long time” (p. 140). Additionally, Mhache (2018) asserts that “IKS refer to the complex set of knowledge and technologies existing and developed by communities, residing in a defined geographical location” (p. 97). Moreover, Das-Gupta (2015) provides a wordy but indispensable definition and annotates that:

IKS is the systematic body of traditional or indigenous knowledge acquired by local people through the accumulation of generation-wise experiences (intellectual reasoning in daily life) as results of informal experiments through trial and error, intimate understanding of the environment in a given culture, practical rather than theoretical facts, asymmetrically distributed traits and associated with culture or folk life for higher longevity. (p. 16)

In essence, thus, it is knowledge held by local people, outside the formal scientific domain and is the local knowledge which is unique to a defined culture or society or ethnic group as Mhache (2018) alludes. With regards to knowledge, it is further expounded by Das-Gupta (2015) that;

Knowledge is a part of culture and works as a set of various facts and information traits. It is of two types: scientific and traditional. Traditional knowledge traits are best maintained by indigenous peoples are hence known as Indigenous Knowledge (IK). Latter works in a systematic way and hence is treated as Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS). (p. 16)

Maunganidze (2016) argues that “Because human identity is regarded as an extension of the environment, there is an element of inseparability between people and the natural world” (p. 2). Thus, indigenous knowledge is therefore generated by a particular society within a geographical area and transmitted from one generation to another in order to provide solutions to the existing problems of that time (Risiro, Tshuma, & Basikiti, 2013). In the selected novels under study, the survivors correlate with their environment basing on the knowledge they are familiar with to survive. The concept indigenous refers to a sense of belonging naturally to a place (Shizha, 2013). To add on Das-Gupta (2010) further clarifies that:

Knowledge is a philosophical term and can be conceptualised as a set of various facts and information traits. Knowledge is categorised into two types which are scientific and indigenous. Scientifically proven knowledge is the scientific knowledge, whereas knowledge of the indigenous peoples is indigenous knowledge (IK). IKS is the actual knowledge of a given population that reflects the experiences based on traditions. (p. 58)

According to Shizha (2013), in the course of producing IKS, indigenous people take into consideration their cosmos, spirituality, ontological realities, land, sociocultural environment and historical contexts. Also, IKS has political, social, economic, technological, administrative, religious, and a host of the other functions in society (Emike, Sanni, Iyiola, & Eje, 2016). Further, Mapara (2009) observes that indigenous knowledge systems manifest themselves

through different dimensions and among these are agriculture, medicine, security, botany, zoology, craft skills and linguistics. However, the system works in all languages and cultures without compulsorily having specific theories for specific languages (Emike et al., 2016). Thus, Maunganidze (2016) comments that indigenous peoples have a longstanding relationship with land, forests, rivers and the air. The survivors in the selected novels are conversant with their environment and thus it helps them to survive despite the adversity brought about by the Germans.

Mapara (2009) underscores that, “They are knowledge forms that have failed to die despite the racial and colonial onslaught that they have suffered at the hands of Western imperialism and arrogance” (p. 140). Notwithstanding the increased awareness about the role of indigenous knowledge in the socio-economic development of developing countries, it continues to be labelled variously and misconceived at international discussions and in modern literature (Nwokeabia, 2003). Yet indigenous knowledge has been an inherent component of traditional disaster management systems where over centuries people have adjusted their lives and livelihoods to adapt to changing context (Mavhura, Manyena, Collins, & Manatsa, 2013). On the other hand, Nkondo (2012) argues that the western perception of African indigenous knowledge as mere repetition of practices without any theory to explain them is a depiction of western cultural and intellectual arrogance. Nonetheless, the non-theoretical practices (from a western view) are those that are actually inspiring the surviving characters in the novels under study, meaning to say that there may be weaknesses in some of the western worldviews that they fail to acknowledge other’s practices resulting from self-centredness and superiority complexes.

Indigenous knowledge system is also known by other nomenclature such as indigenous ways of knowing (IWK) and ethno-science (Mapara, 2009). Moreover, it may also be referred to as local knowledge, others refer to it as indigenous knowledge, while others prefer traditional

knowledge (Mhache, 2018). It is the awareness of this indigenous knowledge that the victims of the 1904-1908 Conflict could survive such as knowing which tubers to dig from the ground for food and rehydration. Thus, this study explored the IKS of the survivors as a means of survival and resilience in the face of adversary as presented in the selected genocidal novels. The IKS as presented in the novels were not documented and proven scientifically, but were potently passed on from generation to generation orally.

2.3.6 The decoloniality of materialities

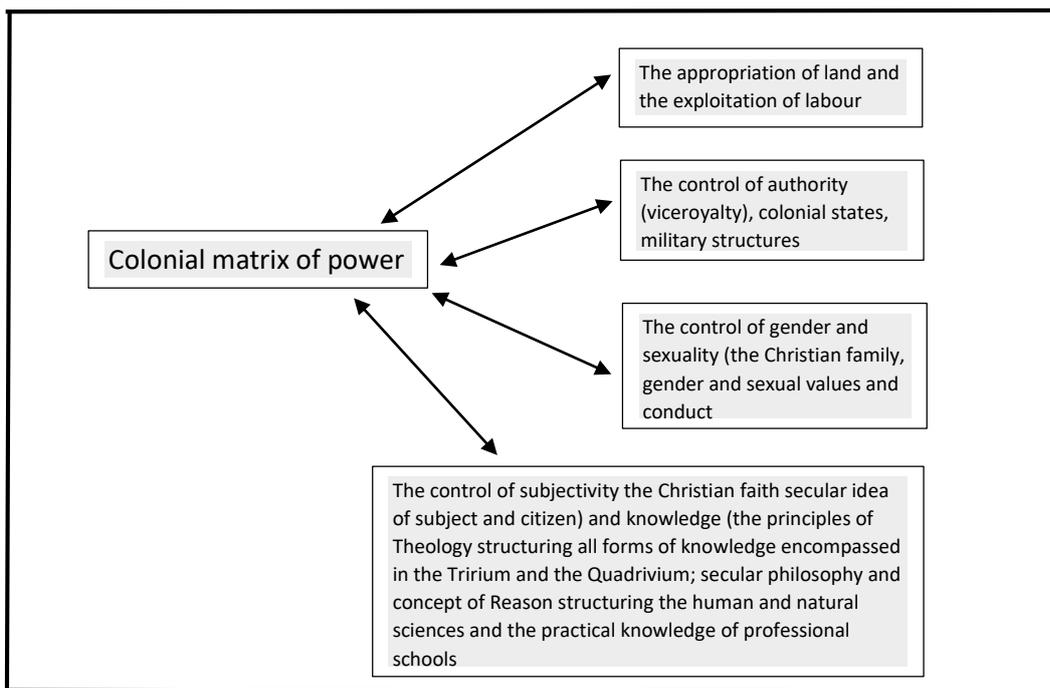
Decoloniality involves the moving away from that notion of ambivalence and advocates for the disengagement from western ideologies and bringing the centre to Africa. This section is an attempt to fathom the concept of decoloniality of materialities and how it finds space in this present study. waThiongo (1986) states that, “The present predicaments of Africa are often not a matter of personal choice: they arise from an historical situation” (p. xii). It may therefore be ascertained that the use of the selected historical novels in this study becomes imperative as they succour in interpreting the present day Namibia by closely studying how literature acts as representing and being representative of the historical situation.

Ndhlovu-Gatsheni (2015) defines decoloniality as an epistemological and political movement and advances decoloniality as a necessary liberatory language of the future of Africa. Furthermore, Mignolo (2011) asserts that decoloniality seeks to unmask, unveil, and reveal coloniality as an underside of modernity that coexisted with its rhetoric of progress, equality, fraternity, and liberty. Additionally, Maldonado-Torres (2011) notes that, decoloniality is not a singular theoretical school of thought but a family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as the fundamental problem in the modern age. For clarity, Maldonado-Torres (2007) notes that coloniality is different from colonialism. On one hand, colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the

power of another nation, which makes such a nation an empire (Maldonado-Torres, (2007). On the other hand, coloniality refers to “long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, intersubjectivity relations and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration” (Maldonado-Torees, 2007, p. 242). Present day Namibia faces the challenge of land not being in the hands of the rightful owners, thus the contemporary challenge is directly linked to the past, going as far as the 1904-1908 genocide and even earlier.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013, p. 11) further contends that decoloniality is premised on three concepts: coloniality of power; coloniality of knowledge; coloniality of being. Quijano (2007) identified the key contours of the colonial matrix of power as consisting of four interrelated domains namely control of economy; control of authority; control of gender and sexuality; and, control of subjectivity and knowledge. According to Mignolo (2010, p. 10), Quijano “has been exploring the colonial matrix of power in four different and mutually articulated domains”. In the following Figure 2, the colonial matrix of power is further explained:

Figure 2: Colonial matrix of power



Adapted from Mignolo (2010, p. 334)

Thus, with the matrix of power, the surviving characters in the selected novels have their life revolving around this matrix where everything is essentially controlled by the Germans who have basically taken over the victims' land. The survivors end up in concentration camps and their life is literary in the hands of the Germans who are unquestionable slave drivers.

Coloniality of knowledge according to Escobar (2012):

Enables an investigation into epistemological foundations of development as a modernist apparatus that has been utilised to construct what became known as the 'third world'/'developing world' inhabited by a people whose being was constituted by a series of 'lacks' and a catalogue of 'deficits' that justified various forms of external intervention into Africa including the notorious structural adjustment programmes. (p. viii)

The selected novels demonstrate that Africa was not constituted by "a series of lacks and deficits" therefore the colonisers' argument has no substance as their agenda was to invade Africa by superseding Africans through gruesome acts like the genocide of the 1904-1908. In fact, "settler colonisers came to stay and displace or erase indigenous spatialities to assert their own sovereign spaces and it is therefore possible to construct several different types of colonial positionality and identity" (Barker, 2012, p. 39). Concurring, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015) notes that "coloniality of knowledge is useful in enabling us to understand how endogenous and indogenous knowledges have been pushed to what became understood as 'the barbarian margins of society'" (p. 490). Thus, with coloniality of knowledge, it entails the reversal of such claims and deeds by the coloniser by repositioning Africa to its true definition and reflection by considering how the past was as well.

Coloniality of being according to Maldonado-Torres (2017), spans the debates to the jurisdiction of modern subjectivities and perceptions of humanism. Moreover, it is prominent where racial hierarchisation and classification of people according to race consequently pushing Africans to the lowest rank of human ontology, where even their being human was doubted and where they existed as objects of development (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Besides, according to Wynter (2003), coloniality of being gestures into the pertinent questions of the making of modern subjectivities and into issues of human ontology. Additionally, “coloniality of being is very important because it assists in investigating how humanity was questioned and the processes that contributed to the ‘objectification’/‘thingification’/ ‘commodification’ of Africa” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a, p. 4). Thus, through the selected novels, the corollaries of being African are exhibited through the treatment of the Africans by the Germans. Moreover, the prejudice is drawn on racial grounds with the Germans claiming to be the superior race and thereby relegating Africans to the level of animals. Nonetheless, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015) holds that one of the continuing struggles in Africa is focused on resisting the objectification and dehumanisation of black people on the world scale as well as a struggle to regain lost subjecthood.

In essence, decoloniality is premised on the three concepts of power, knowledge and being. A further understanding is emphasised where Nhemachena (2016) observes that:

As ritual sacrificial imperial subjects, pushed to liminality, Africans are and were dispossessed of their sovereignty, autonomy, forms of order, forms of personhood and their land so as to cushion settlers who had been dispossessed by their western enclosure system for which they needed an antidote in Africa (p. 19).

Moreover “Africans were and are considered to be indistinct from animals such that their lives were/are not valued as human lives requiring human dignity, ownership of property, freedom

and liberty” (Nhemachena et al., 2018, p. 6). Subsequently, decolonial thinking becomes a necessity. Poks (2015) asserts that “To think decoloniality is to think from the borders of languages, religions, epistemologies; it is to think from what W. E Dubois and Frantz Fanon theorised as ‘double consciousness’” (p. 64). In addition, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015) argues that since:

the domains of culture, the psyche, mind, language, aesthetics, religion and many others have remained colonised [thus] decoloniality calls on intellectuals from imperialist countries to undertake a deimperialisation movement by re-examining their own imperialist histories and the harmful impacts those histories have had on the world. (p. 485)

Furthermore, according to Stanford University (n.d.), materiality studies involve the exploration of the situated experiences of material life, the constitution of the object world and concomitantly its shaping of human experience. Thus, during the 1904-1908 Conflict victims were stripped of their materialities (for example physical resources), hence the present study sought to explore the decoloniality of materialities as represented in the selected historical novels.

2.3.8 The public discourse – Newspapers and the 1904-1908 Conflict

Ever since Namibia attained its political independence in 1990, on numerous occasions the newspapers would report news directly and or subtly linked to the 1904-1908 Conflict. This in a way steers the seamless nexus between the past and the present. Kossler (2015) alleges that these historical events remain of great importance to many Namibian and such relevance sprouts from material circumstances and tenacious trauma transmitted through generations. This section randomly selected newspapers written in English that had the genocide news and

attempts to review how the newspapers have handled and reported on issues pertaining to the period in the post independent Namibia.

In the *New Era* newspaper of October 2006, in a headline ‘Nama Genocide (1904-1907)’, Jacobs (2006) reports on how Nudo President, Kuaima Riruako, tabled in the National Assembly to debate genocide in which many Namibians died commenced at a positive pace, although discussions so far seemed to disregard one of the formidable ethnic groups of the time, the Nama. Jacobs (2006) goes further to note that:

The colonial forces reacted to fierce opposition from this tribe [Nama] with mounted reprisal, and with superior weaponry killed, raped, maimed, drowned, fed to sharks, beheaded, deported and besmirched more than half of the Nama population, with resulting loss of precious lives, land, possessions and property at the hands of the German occupation forces. The brutal killings of the Nama by German forces cannot be treated as an inconspicuous piece of historical irrelevance, and Nama traditional and political leadership should make it their responsibility to highlight the prominence of the Nama genocide within the historical realm of this country. (p. 1)

A history on how the Nama cannot possibly be excluded in the genocide discussion is also featured in the article and it ends by stating that “Captain Hendrik Witbooi, in a dignified fashion, is looking down from the face of the Namibian dollar, believing, as faithful as they are, that one day fruits of the liberation struggle waged by them will benefit his off-spring, the Nama” (Jacobs, 2006).

On 4 June 2007, *The Namibian* newspaper carried a story reported by Bigitte Weidlich entitled ‘Germans to debate Herero genocide’. The article reports that “The German parliament is to debate the genocide and war atrocities committed against the Herero and Nama communities during the German colonial period between 1904 and 1908” (Weidlich, 2007). Additionally,

the secretariat of the Berlin parliament (Bundestag) had informed the Left Party that its application to table a motion in that regard was successful and the debate was to start early that month. Weidlich (2007) further notes that “Herero Paramount Chief Kuaima is expected to attend the first session of the Bundestag on the topic”. The article also notes that:

The Left Party’s motion requests the Berlin parliament to call on the federal government of Germany “to accept its historical responsibility and to recognise the right to reparations of the Herero and Nama peoples for the genocide” perpetrated by the German Schutztruppe (colonial troops) on these people from 1904 to 1908 and to “inform the Namibian Government of its readiness to enter into an open dialogue about reconciliation and reparations” for those groups. (Weidlich, 2007)

According to the article, the Left Party further requested that German companies or their legal successors which profited from forced labour and land expropriations in then German South West Africa should be involved appropriately in the payment of compensation to those groups. Additionally, as the legal successor to the German Empire, the Federal Republic of Germany, too, has unfortunately failed to meet its historical responsibilities with respect to the descendants of the victims of the genocide (Weidlich, 2007). Nonetheless, Weidlich (2007) further reports that the German Foreign Affairs Ministry rejected the reparations claims made by the Herero in 1990 after independence and has refused since then to enter into any dialogue. On 16 March 2016 in *The Namibia* newspaper, Hartman Adam reported on hundreds of Ovaherero/Ovabanderu and Nama people who took part in the 9th Annual Swakopmund ‘reparation walk’ on a Saturday to remember the 1904-1908 genocide. The article further reports that:

Participants from all over Namibia took part in the annual event organised by the Ovaherero/Ovabanderu Genocide Foundation (OGF). They walked through

Swakopmund, displaying posters that castigated the German government for murdering and raping their victims and keeping them in concentration camps in which tens of thousands died. The genocide took place under the command of German general von Trotha. (Hartman, 2015)

The theme of the march for that year read “It cannot be about us without us; anything about us without us is against us. The time is now” (Hartman, 2015). The article goes further to report that the genocide was characterised by widespread deaths from starvation and thirst as those who fled the violence were prevented from leaving the Namib Desert. To add on, some sources claim that the German colonial army systematically poisoned wells in the desert (Hartman, 2015). The article ends by stating that “There are different opinions among the Ovaherero as to how their ‘anger and sadness will be appeased: some say an apology with money, while others said they want the land the Germans took from them, back’” (Hartman, 2015).

On 29 April 2016, the *New Era newspaper* carried a story entitled “German genocide occurred from 1884 to 1915” reported by Metusalem Neib. The article notes that “The Cross-Cultural Trust of Namibia (CCTN) is herewith lobbying for parliamentarians to review and declare genocides in the then South West Africa to have occurred between 1884 and 1915” (Neib, 2016). The article goes further to report that:

In the book “The Hiding in Full View: Forgotten Bushman Genocides of Namibia”, Robert J. Gordon examines the Bushman genocide of 1912 to 1915 which, despite overwhelming evidence of it having occurred, has been largely ignored by both scholars and the local populations. (Neib, 2016)

Other than that, the article reveals how the genocide may not have only occurred between 1904-1908 by testifying that:

The Damara and San atrocities had been equally severe in South West Africa. They were regarded as slaves and traded as labourers, disappeared and many were killed between 1884 – 1903, massacred between 1904 and 1908 and San people suffered particularly through genocide from 1912 to 1915. (Neib, 2016)

Moreover, Neib (2016) further reports that “It is unfair and discriminatory that parliament and the governments of Namibia and Germany only recognise Nama and Herero genocides from 1904 to 1908 but exclude others committed between 1884 and 1915”.

On 10 January 2017, the *New Era* newspaper published a story entitled “Kazenambo welcomes genocide lawsuit” related by British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The outspoken Kazenambo Kazenambo was quoted as saying “I don’t care whether we lose the case in court. What I’m interested in is the awareness the lawsuit creates about the atrocity committed by the German imperial government against the Nama and the OvaHerero communities during 1904-1908,” (BBC, 2017). Besides, Kazenambo was noted to have said that both the Namibian and the German governments have for very long taken the genocide issue for granted. Moreover, both governments had betrayed the blood of the Nama and Ovaherero and this lawsuit would serve as an eye-opener to them. Also, “the level of publicity the case is attracting at international level is enough to satisfy the affected communities” (BBC, 2017). The article goes on further to state that “Unlike with the Jewish victims of World War Two atrocities, Germany has refused to pay reparations to victims of its policies in Africa, saying it contributes millions of dollars in development aid to Namibia annually” (BBC, 2017). In addition, the suit claims damages on the basis that from 1885 to 1903, about a quarter of Herero and Nama lands were taken without compensation by settlers with official oversight and that the German descendants still farm some of that land today (BBC, 2017).

On 22 March 2017, *The Namibian* newspaper published an article entitled “Ovaherero>Nama could win genocide case against Germany” reported by Ndanki Kahiurika. The article reports that “Germany last week failed to send a representative to the pre-trial conference at which information was reviewed before the case goes to trial” (Kahiurika, 2017). The article further states that “This follows the January lodging of the lawsuit against Germany in the New York court over its refusal to have representatives of the Ovaherero and Nama communities at the 1904-1908 genocide reparations’ negotiating table”.

New Era newspaper of 28 March 2017 published a story that the government of Namibia was unaware of Germany’s atonement plan. The story was reported by Kuzeeko Tjitemisa who recounted that “Windhoek-Namibia’s Special Envoy for the Negotiations on Genocide, Dr Zed Ngavirue, has said government is unaware of Germany’s proposed atonement plan for Namibia”. Tjitemisa (2017, March) further reports that “The Sächsische Zeitung reported last week that Germany has proposed a German-Namibian future foundation and structural fund as part of its atonement for the injustices of the German colonisation of southwest Africa”. The article recollects that successive German governments had refused to characterise the massacres as genocide. Nonetheless “The present government only agreed to the description of the German colonial troops’ actions as genocide in 2015, reversing its earlier position. The dialogue between Germany and Namibia includes discussions about an official apology for the genocide” (Tjitemisa, 2017, March).

On April 12, 2017 the *New Era* newspaper carried an article reported by Kuzeeko Tjitemisa entitled “Genocide reparations to benefit ‘all Namibians’”. The article conveyed that “The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah said all Namibians would benefit from genocide reparations, either directly or indirectly” (Tjitemisa, 2017, April). Additionally, Tjitemisa (2017, April) further notes that Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah said that the 1904 genocide has negatively impacted Namibia’s image because

whenever they try to market the country to investors they are always reminded of its small population. Moreover, contributing to the debate, DTA president McHenry Venaani said that one key thing lacking in the reparation demand process was adequate consultation by the government on the matter. However, the same article reported that the government had confirmed the previous month that it had appointed five British lawyers and one local lawyer to help in the current genocide negotiations between the German and Namibian governments.

On 8 January 2018 in the *New Era* newspaper, Tjitemisa Kuzeeko reported that the Genocide case was to be back in the US court that month. Tjitemisa (2018) further reports that “Windhoek-The lawsuit filed by the Ovaherero and Nama people, in which they seek reparations from the German government for the Ovaherero/Nama genocide, is set to be heard for the third time in a US court, later this month”. Additionally, the case, scheduled for January 28, was brought to court in the US as that country allows lawsuits that address claims on behalf of entire communities. Moreover, the class-action suit, filed by Ovaherero Chief Vekuii Rukoro and Nama Chief David Frederick, seeks reparations from the present German government for genocide carried out by German colonial troops, in what is now Namibia, more than a century ago (Tjitemisa, 2018, January).

On 15 January 2018, the *New Era* newspaper carried a headline entitled “Germany makes U-turn on genocide lawsuit” reported by Tjitemisa. The report carried that;

Following a protracted legal challenge, the German government has finally accepted a court summons to appear in the United States Federal Court in New York in the class-action lawsuit for alleged crimes against humanity that the Ovaherero and Nama people filed against it.

Also, the plaintiffs are also demanding that their representatives be included in ongoing talks between Germany and Namibia, which aim for a joint declaration on their common past

(Tjitemisa, 2018). The article goes further to state that “The dialogue between Germany and Namibia includes discussions about an official apology for the genocide. However, Germany’s ambassador to Namibia, Christian Schlaga, has publicly ruled out paying reparations directly to present members of the Ovaherero and Nama ethnic groups” (Tjitemisa, 2018). Earlier, Schlaga last year had hinted, though, that Germany would be willing to pay Namibia compensation from which its entire population would benefit.

The continual appearance of the stories related to the 1904-1908 Conflict in the present day newspapers is a signal that the event is still pervasive in Namibian people’s lives. The event directly impacts on the progress of the country especially the economic part where land (the means of production) is still a pending issue that needs to be resolved. Thus, though the event happened over a century ago, its ripple effects are still being felt today. There is injustice that needs to be addressed and land should be given back to the rightful owners. The selected novels under study illuminate on how the land was inappropriately taken from its owners and the newspaper stories act as outcries on the need to resolve the problem. Thus, the newspaper articles complement the representation of the 1904-1908 Conflict and the problems that resulted from the genocide.

2.3.9 Literature on the literary representation of the Namibian genocide

A number of literary studies on the representation of the 1904-1908 Conflict have been done. This section considers some of the studies that are related to this present study. Becker’s (2020a) study is on the Herero and Nama genocide that transpired between 1904 and 1905. The study also confirms that “For many historians this first genocide committed by Germany provided the template for the horrors that were to come 40 years later during the Holocaust of the European Jews” (Becker, 2020a, para. 3). More is drawn from this study as it reveals the challenges associated with the minimal information regarding the 1904-1908 genocide. Becker (2020a) states that “We know very little about the experience of those who lived through this

first systematic mass extinction of the 20th century” (para, 4). However, the little information available, that is “Forty-seven testimonies were recorded and published in 1918 in a scathing official British report about German colonial rule in Namibia, known as the Blue Book” (Becker, 2020a, para. 4) provides an idea of what transpired. Further, the study makes reference to *Mama Penee: Transcending the Genocide*, by Uazuvara Ewald Kapombo Katjivena (2020). *Mama Penee: Transcending the Genocide* is a form of history in which Katjivena (2020) “tells his grandmother’s story in a biography deeply infused with family and oral history” (para. 6). The common mark between Becker’s (2020a) study and this present study is both studies are on the 1904-1908 Conflict. However, Becker’s (2020a) study makes reference to Katjivena’s (2020) *Mama Penee: Transcending the Genocide* which also non-fiction yet the present study makes reference to five fictional novels on the genocide.

In another study, Becker (2020b) reads three recently published fiction novels that attempt to write the early 20th century Namibian experience of colonial war and genocide. Mari Serebrov’s *Mama Namibia*, Lauri Kubuitsile’s *The Scattering* and Jaspar Utley’s *The Lie of the Land* set out to write the genocide and its aftermath. Becker (2020b) observes that *Mama Namibia* and *The Scattering* are written from the perspectives of the Herero female characters which sets the two texts “apart from the earlier literature, which—despite an enormous divergence of political and aesthetic outlooks—tended to be written from the perspective of German male protagonists” (p. 361). Becker’s (2020b) study considers both fiction (*Mama Namibia*, *The Scattering*, *The Lie of the Land*) and non-fiction (*Mama Penee: Transcending the Genocide*). For Becker’s (2020b) study, all three fictional novels are read against an oral history-based biography *Mama Penee: Transcending the Genocide*. Nonetheless, for this present study, focus is only on the selected five fiction novels and does not include nonfiction in the analysis.

Krishnamurthy (2020) examines Utley's *The Lie of the Land* "with a view to exploring the ambivalence in its writing" (p. 396). The study further investigates the narrator's language and reveals the ambiguities in the novel "using witness bearing and the concept of the 'Other' in postcolonialism" (Krishnamurthy, 2020, p. 396). Moreover, the study traces the route of "the eponymous hero from being a witness to the Nama Genocide to an active involvement in the rescue of a Nama woman whom he falls in love with". The investigation focuses only on one novel which is also one of the five selected fictional novels for this present study.

In a different study but still on the genocide, Abiatar (2020) explores the literary representation of the Herero-Nama genocide in *Mama Namibia*, *The Scattering* and *The Lie of the Land*. The study aims to "explain the contribution of historical fiction to the excavation of occluded narratives and engaging with Namibian history and related discourses" (Abiatar, 2020, p. iv). To add on, under the theory of New Historicism the study examines the literary representation of the genocide, assesses the reflection of contemporary discourses on land and reparation, and investigates intertextuality in the three novels. However, Abiatar's (2020) study is limited to only three novels yet this present study adds two more novels (Van Den Berg's *Parts Unknown* and Tjingaete's *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*) to the three. Also, Abiatar's (2020) study is framed by one theory, New Historicism and the present study adds two more theories, Trauma and Resilience as well as Ecocriticism.

Baer (2018) focuses on the notion of the genocidal gaze as well as the African gaze of resistance to it. The study carefully employs the continuity thesis where Baer (2018, p. 5) follows "the threads of shared ideology and methodology in both the genocide of the Herero and Nama, and in the Holocaust." Also, the study *The Genocidal Gaze*, is an intervention that aims to demonstrate the ways in which perception of the "other" unavoidably links the genocide of the Herero and Nama with that of the Nazi Holocaust. Moreover, as a trope of perspective and central to the argument of the study, Baer (2018) considers "how the imperial gaze creates or

destroys identity, casts the gazed upon into captivity, and morphs into the genocidal gaze” (p. 6). Baer’s (2018) study does not have nonfiction novels as part of its writing which makes it different from this present study although both studies are anchored in the 1904-1908 Conflict.

2.4 Establishing the gap from the reviewed literature

The present study was framed by the merging of three theories (Trauma and Resilience; Ecocriticism; New Historicism) and it appears from the studies consulted so far none has employed all three in one study. The nature of the theories accorded congruency which allowed the theories to work together at once, and at the same time confirmed how pliant some theories are in literary studies. The merging of the three theories has given birth to an in-depth analysis of resilience in the selected historical genocidal novels.

The few studies including De Souza Correa (2011), Thornley (2013), Van Mil (2011), Reches and Sondaite (2016) and Dyck (2014) that have so far been considered in the literature review section of this study seem to have probed the 1904-1908 Conflict of 1904-1908 from different perspectives, which provides a foundation of understanding the undertakings of the period in question, which again is the setting of all the five selected novels. However, it appears little, if any, of these existing studies has attempted to deliberate precisely on decoloniality of materialities and resilience of the 1904-1908 Conflict survivors thereby leaving a gap that this study has attempted to satisfy.

Kossler (2012) looked at genocide in Namibia, the holocaust and the issue of colonialism but not including aspects pertaining to decoloniality of materialities and resilience. Besides, Rampke (2016) paid attention to interconnectedness, healing and harmony by applying the concept of *Ubuntu* in peace research about Namibian-German postcolonial disputes emerging

from the return of human remains that were shipped to Europe for experiments during the 1904-1908 period.

Most recently, Warikandwa and Nhemachena (2017) emphasised on colonial land dispossession and restorative justice for the Nama and Herero reparation claims which are anchored in the 1904-1908 Conflict. This present study sought to examine the forms of resilience that the survivors of the 1904-1908 Conflict adopted as means of coping and survival tactics, an area that appears not to have been researched and that needed consideration, hence this study.

In a similar study, Reches and Sondaite (2016) analysed how Holocaust survivors coped with different painful situations in their lives during the Holocaust through identification of factors of resilience to the trauma they experienced. The study suggests both external (social support and circumstances) and internal factors (changes in values, integration of traumatic experience and self-reliance) determine resilience to trauma by Holocaust survivors. Thus, this study pursued an exploration of the resilience in the survivors of the 1904-1908 Conflict from a literary perspective that had not been investigated.

Dyck (2014) notes that, it might be puzzling that the genocide in then German South West Africa remains little studied if compared to other events of similar categorisation. Moreover, Dyck (2014, p. 154) remarks that “the methods of killing during the Herero conflict were similar to those the Nazis used in Holocaust, thus both genocides involved premeditated starvation, dehydration, and overwork in concentration camps, and mass executions”. This is what is invariably encountered in the selected novels for this present study. However, there were survivors who warrant special attention for investigation, hence this study.

Balorda (2013) researched on the genocide and modernity and made a comparative analysis of Bosnia, Rwanda and the Holocaust. The study used mainly the Critical Theory and other theoretical standpoints in comparing the Bosnia, Rwanda and the Holocaust genocide contexts along the lines of: organic nationalism, scientific racism, instrumental rationality, utopianism, obedience, efficiency, numbing and Gesellschaft/Gemeinschaft social ties, in order to create a complex understanding of the relationship between modernity and genocide. The study in its findings has proven that in relation to the execution of genocide, all three cases fit within the category of modern genocide and are not a result of ancient hatreds.

With regards to the newspapers and the recurring stories that fall back to the 1904-1908 epoch it may be argued as a demonstration that the genocide did not end in 1908 but rather is persistent and present today and being experienced across generations. Thus, this study became relevant as it addressed some of the aspects of materialities rooted in the 1904-1908 Conflict which is a prevailing debate in present day Namibia particularly the issue of land. The continual resurfacing of the conflict in a way illuminates on the injustices anchored in the genocide. Thus Nhemachena et al. (2017, p. 2) affirm that “No amount of ideological ritual chanting of “justice, equality freedom democracy transparency accountability or rule of law has helped to undo the historical effects of the material dispossession, enslavement, disinheritance and impoverishment in Africa” (p. 2).

2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter firstly provided the three theories that framed this study with the main one being Trauma and Resilience supported by Ecocriticism as well as New Historicism. The discussion on each individual theory put the theories in isolation though the theories demonstrated to have compatibility qualities that allowed themselves to work together at the same time and they

showed how ductile some theories can be in literary studies. Secondly, literature was reviewed and attention was given to the understanding the concept of genocide, its definition and how it came to be. Similarly, reference was made to the Holocaust and the Rwandan genocides. Thirdly, the history of Namibia between 1904 and 1908 was considered as it facilitated a backdrop from which the fictional novels under study were motivated. Moreover, the significance of the historical novel was also reflected on and it was established that historical fiction undeniably grants its reader with a kind of truth of the past that is not offered by history books. Furthermore, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) formed part of the review and how the IKS acts as a fulcrum for survival which catered for the resilience part of the survivors in the selected novels. Additionally, aspects pertaining to decoloniality of materialities were also considered as well as the idea that decoloniality is premised on three concepts: coloniality of power; coloniality of knowledge; coloniality of being and that was brought to the fore. Besides, newspapers in recent times as public discourse have also been consulted on how they were reporting stories associated with the 1904-1908 Conflict. Lastly, the chapter also discussed the reviewed literature to establish the gap that this present study supposedly attempted to satisfy. It may be commented that genocide and mass atrocities are topics that demonstrate the ways in which past events can continue to affect the present. The next chapter (Chapter 3) explores the literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 1904-1908 Conflict as presented in the selected literary archives of conflict based on the first objective of this study.

CHAPTER 3: EXPLORATION OF THE LITERARY RECONSTRUCTION OF THE 1904-1908 CONFLICT

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 focuses on the first objective of the study which was set to explore the literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 1904-1908 Conflict. The restoration of the history was accomplished through re-enacting the period in question through literary delineation. The selected historical novels reiterate the same event but from dissimilar angles yet numerous incidences emerging in the novels concur. The different voices from the historical novels paint a magnificent picture exhibiting the diverse components blending harmoniously in reciting the event. Though historical fictions have not been acknowledged as valid history construct in the academy (Young, 2011), they have been condemned for unavoidable variance between imaginative compositions and historical credibility (Hatavara, n.d.). Nonetheless, it appears the selected historical novels for this present study seem to contradict this line of thought as they are sincerely fiction that is articulated upon a factual history. Also, with the selected novels, this present study observed that there seem to be a thin line between the imaginative compositions and the historical credibility.

All the selected five novels, though with differing characters, make reference to the battle at the Waterberg Mountain, the escaping of the Hereros into the Omaheke Desert as well as the deaths due to dehydration and some survivors making it to Botswana while some recaptured by the Germans and taken to concentration camps for slavery. This chapter considers the pragmatic disposition of the 1904-1908 Conflict as presented from a fictional perspective and how it is relevant to the reconstruction of the Herero Nama history. Moreover, there are numerous art forms that provide new modes of expression for the reconstruction of the same historical event and this chapter again gives attention to some of these forms as presented in *Parts Unknown* (2018), *The Lie of the Land* (2017), *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*

(2017), *The Scattering* (2016), and *Mama Namibia* (2013), as a way of showing the transformation of the history.

3.2 The pragmatic disposition of the 1904-1908 Conflict from a fictional perspective

The selected historical novels present the 1904-1908 Conflict from a fictional point of view. The reviewed literature for this present study in Chapter 2, was adapted from the factual historical information from diverse sources including scholarly and journal articles. This section sought to establish how far the selected fictional novels complement or contravene the already acknowledged historical facts of the epoch in question.

Firstly, what is known about the 1904-1908 Conflict is largely based on historical data from historians whose works are based on empirical data. The selected novels: *Parts Unknown* (2018), *Mama Namibia* (2013), *The Scattering* (2016), *The Lie of the Land* (2017) and *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), despite the fact that they have different plots and more or less the same settings, announce the similar dates and timeframe of the events of the conflict in question. For instance, *The Scattering* (2016) uses dates for its chapter titles for example “Omaheke Desert, German South-West Africa December 1904” (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 118). *Mama Namibia* (2013) provides dates in its narrative in reference to past events that shape the plot of the story for instance, “Bismarck sent me in 1885...” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 52). The use of the real dates in a way brings about authenticity and life to the fictionalised history as it is constructed on a valid portrait of time. Additionally, the use of dates validates the stories and makes them tangible and believable. Thus, with genuine historical dates specified, the fictional stories in *Parts Unknown* (2018), *Mama Namibia* (2013), *The Scattering* (2016), *The Lie of the Land* (2017) and *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017) become justifiable.

Secondly, the use of real names of places in the selected novels (Okahandja, Windhük, Swakopmund, Gobabis); real names of people (Jahohora, Gen. von Trotha, Göring); real names

of ethnic groups (Nama, Herero, Damara, Masarwa); and real names of races (Africans, Germans, Jews) also bring about credibility to the fictionalised history. In essence, the aspect of verisimilitude comes to play as the names used are relatable and proverbial, making the stories satisfactorily close to the actual event. Moreover, these real names give potency to the fictionalised stories and allow for the occupation of the identification space, hence enabling the imagined true-to-life.

Thirdly, the descriptions given for specific scenes in all the selected novels solicit believability as the metaphors used mirror the precise events as conserved in history proper. For instance, the descriptions given for the hanging of people in *Mama Namibia* (2013) provide an imagined account detailing what could have possibly happened before, during and after the hanging as detailed:

The news gets worse. When the soldiers from the boat came to Karibib, they beat some Herero and forced them to tell lies about how their friends and family killed German settlers. The soldiers tied ropes around the necks of the men who had been accused of murder. They tied the other end of the ropes to the tree branches spreading high above the earth. They left the men hanging from the trees as food for the vultures. Then the soldiers began killing everyone who lived in Karibib. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 92)

The detailed fictional account given in the immediate quotation give an interpretation of an image that was taken during the 1904-1908 epoch as follows:

Image 1: The hanging of Herero Nama victims



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=the+herero+nama+conflict+pdf>

Regarding the evidence in history, as already discussed in the literature review of this present study, Sprenger et al. (2017) underscore that, “Immediately following the decree, Germans lynched several Ovaherero in front of thirty Ovaherero prisoners to reinforce the seriousness of the German claims” (p. 129). It is from this conception of the hanging of the Herero that basically happened that the selected fiction writers base their reconstruction of the history in question by adding flesh and motion to the picture, which is a form of creativity. They reinvent the scene by creating a conceivable and feasible event that acknowledges and complements historical facts.

Still on the same picture of lynching of the Herero, in *The Lie of the Land*, Utley (2017) weaves in the hanging of the Herero. Just after the extermination order was delivered “Ropes were slung over a tree and two men were hanged” (Utley, 2017, p. 77). And also in particular, the scene when Leah is rescued by Sam just before she got hanged with the rest of those that were captured by the German soldiers:

The soldiers cut the woman [Leah] free and roughly shoved her to one side. She stood there making no attempt to leave, rubbing her wrists and staring at alternately at me [Sam] and at the ropes and the tree. The rest of the group fell to their knees, praying. She turned her head away at the sound of necks stretching and legs kicking and large tears ran down her cheeks. The stench of voided bowels drifted over the group of soldiers. None of them noticed. When the dead Ovaherero had been cut down and left for the dogs, I rode over to her. She raised her head and looked at me. (Utley, 2017, p. 86)

Again, with Utley (2017), the idea of bringing to life the lynching is emphasised. According to history (§2.3.3 *The period 1904-1908 in Namibian history*), at some point the Hereros were hanged and the fiction writers as part of the forces behind the reconstruction of history, would take note of such a critical incidence in the history of Namibia and would creatively rework on the fact by imagining how the hanging could have possibly happened.

Also, in Kubuitsile's (2016) *The Scattering*, the lynching that happened during the 1904-1908 is also featured noted when the Herero were tricked to go into camps with the intention of taking them later to the death camps. When Tjipuka and other characters arrived, they see their fellow Herero still hanging on the nooses at one of the holding camps:

Then the fire flared and she saw them. On a long branch some distance to the east of the camp. the man who had come for them, the Herero man on the horse who had said everything was all right, that the Germans wanted to make peace, hung from a strand of wire attached to a long, thick branch, his arms at his sides, his head tilted at an odd angle. Next to him were the three men from their group and then Kahaka. The strong, wise Kahaka hung from a wire, his trousers soiled, his eyes open and bulging. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 117)

A recreated scene of this nature, where flesh (elaboration) is added to the skeleton (fact), helps in the indulgence of what could have possibly happened when examining the real pictures in history proper that show hanged people during the conflict. In *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*, the character Kuvare one of Mbakondja's fighters is a victim of hanging evinced from the text, "The guerillas fought back gallantly but in the end, they were overrun. The Schutztruppe rounded them up like rats and shot them one by one. Kuvare was captured and later hanged" (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 220). If fiction composers can invent an imaginable story that expound real events, then there may be no rationale behind dismissing historical novels in academy as legitimate form of history as previously observed by Young (2011). With the evidence from *The Lie of the Land* (2017), *Mama Namibia* (2013), *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017) and *The Scattering* (2016) on the elucidation of the lynching, it is evident that the works were carefully constructed from thorough research which echoes Pinto's (2010) supposition on how historical novel are composed.

Moreover, in an attempt to reconstruct the history, the fictional writers rebuilt the history basing on what is deemed as the truth. To borrow from Bortolotti (2015), unlike Historians who seek to answer the question – what happened, fiction writers seek to explain – what it was like. This is precisely what is attested in the four examples for lynching that have been highlighted so far as presented in *Mama Namibia*, *The Scattering*, *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* and *The Lie of the Land*. The four examples respond to Bortolotti's (2015) question what it was like, hence the use of eloquent language in illustrating the lynching. Therefore, the reconstruction of the history in this case has been successful, as the representation of the history of the lynching is believable and in actual fact, it augments and adds meaning to the historical truth. Consequently, the pragmatic disposition of these selected novels is promising and certain as the make-believe may effortlessly be translated into reality. Thus, the line between fiction and

history proper performs the role of separating the two although they occasionally thaw into each other.

Another aspect that attests to the pragmatic disposition of fictional representation of the 1904-1908 Conflict is observed in the integration of culture and tradition of a people in the reconstruction of the history in question. In all the selected five novels, the cultures of different groups are renowned and form part of the reconstruction. The allusion to these cultures also aid in authenticating the fiction works and bringing them more to life, that is, the notion of verisimilitude. For instance, *Mama Namibia* highlights an attribute that is peculiar to Herero, that of orality, where information and knowledge is passed on from one generation to the other as confirmed from the text:

I [Jahohora] sit on the ground as Mama begins the story. “On first day, Njambi Karunga called the ancestors from the trunk of the omumborombonga tree. One by one, they stepped from the sacred tree. Mukuru and Kamangarunga, the first Herero tate and mama, stepped from the tree. Then the first Berg-Damara tate and mama. The first Nama tate and mama. The first tate and mama of the Ovambo. The first tate and mama of every tribe on earth.”
(Serebrov, 2013, p. 3)

This transmission of knowledge from generation to generation through word of mouth is common amongst African cultures. The term ‘oral literature’ is defined by Nyagu (2017) as “any form of verbal art which is passed down from one generation to another generation by the words of mouth instead of being written down” (p. 1149) and Serebrov (2013) incorporates this culture as part of reconstructing the history in literature form, which becomes oral literature. The term ‘oral literature’ is marred by controversy considering that it is a compound noun formed by merging two dissimilar and contrasting terms (oxymoron), hence the term is self-contradictory, where ‘literature’ is that which corresponds with the written down words

and ‘oral’ operates in the sphere of the spoken word (Kandemiri, 2019). Nonetheless, to eliminate this problematic expression, the term ‘orature’ is a more recent but less widely used term which emphasises the oral character and nature of literary works (University of Cambridge, 2011).

So, this orature part specifically points and expounds a characteristic associated with the Herero people and how that was a form of effective informal schooling. The character, Mama, shares a story which tries to elucidate the genesis of everything and in stories of this nature, the children would learn about their origins and who they are, that is their identity and in turn when they become adults, they would be also mandated to pass on those stories to their children and it becomes a continual process.

In *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*, Tjingaete (2017) notes that, “The use of proverbs in the Herero culture is a device to enhance the beauty of language while offering proof of their social and cultural existence. It is a way of giving meaning to social, political and cultural phenomena” (p. 12). The Herero people’s language is a repository of their culture and tradition hence incorporating it in the reconstruction of the history authenticates the piece of fiction as it would closely represent reality. In *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*, Tjikuu who is Mbakondja’s paternal grandmother, would teach Mbakondja and Tjijandjeua through the word of mouth about their origin as well as their history and Tjikuu would repeatedly ask Mbakondja to verify if he had accurately comprehended her teachings. This is attested by the following excerpt which is a dialogue between Mbakondja and Tjikuu his grandmother from *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*:

“Tell me Mbakondja, who is your father?” Tjikuu asked. The boy looked deep into her red eyes and replied humbly:

“Yes grandmother, I want to listen to the weeping graves of my ancestors.”

Mbakondja replied. He had been told to reply that way.

“I asked you, who is your father?”

“My father is Mbangane the man they captured at Hoachanas.” Mbakondja replied, knowing precisely what the next question would be.

“What does it imply?” She asked.

“I am carrying the blood of a fighter in my veins, but I am a shepherd.” Mbakondja said loudly and proudly.

“Where is Hoachanas?” She asked quickly.

Mbakondja looked sideways and replied:

“It is the place where everything about us started; the time, the moon, the sun, the birds, the wind, the water. It is the place that gave birth to earth.” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 12)

In this excerpt, the word of mouth is predominant and serves the same purpose similar to that of a conventional school where there is a teacher and some students as well as a certain portion of payment in monetary terms for school fees. Again, Tjikuu uses the word of mouth to impart knowledge freely to the next generation about their place of origin and their history which is crucial as it informs their identity. Thus, with these two illustrations from Serebrov (2013) and Tjingaete (2017), it is evident that, the integration of a people’s culture and tradition in fiction writing further certify authenticity in the reconstruction of a people’s history from a fictional perspective. The culture aspect included here is one that is relatable and realistic hence making the fictional novel a possible fountain for the reconstruction as it is a combination of history proper and imagination.

The embedding of quotations from factual history in the writing of fictional works substantiate the recreated forms. As mentioned earlier that the recreation is a further development through elaborating and fleshing the available skeletal facts. Thus, more information is provided to transform the fact into somewhat more tangible and visible to the mind. Particularly from the selected texts, authors incorporated von Trotha’s extermination order (Bridgman, as cited in Dyck, 2014) (§ 2.3.3 *The period 1904-1908 in Namibian history*) either as stated in the original order itself or would make reference to it by alluding a few to several words.

What started off as a colonisation enterprise by the Germans, propagated into a genocide after the declaration and issuing of the infamous extermination order at Ozombuzovindimba. It is the impact of the infamous extermination order that the selected authors had to creatively bring to life the events surrounding the order. As such, all the selected novels referred to the extermination order either partially or in full. The authors vigilantly selected the diction used to bring to life what could have possibly happened just before, during and after the issuing of the order. Re-enacting the events brings more understanding to the agendas, politics and motives behind the extermination order.

In *Mama Namibia* (2013), the extermination order as a direct quotation from history, is blended in the reconstruction of the fictionalised Herero history. The character and narrator Kov, provides an account that they had pursued the Herero further into the inauspicious desert and moreover away from their land for them to encounter their fate through dehydration and hunger. Kov says:

A reconnoitring party comes back with the news that Major von Estorff's division had surprised the enemy. After a skirmish, our troops pushed the Herero deeper into the Omaheke. But still it's not enough for General von Trotha. We will continue our pursuit, he says. Our victory is not yet complete. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 273)

The accomplishment of General von Trotha's victory is what morphed into the genocide that was motivated by the extermination order. This type of genocide is the one that may be classified under the form known as the developmental (§ 2.3.1 *The typology and comprehension of genocide*). Hence, General von Trotha issued the extermination order to realise total conquest through the annihilation of a nation. Kov notes that, "With Estorff's reinforcements, von Trotha decides to make one last stand to eradicate the enemy, who are at what is reportedly the next, and final, waterhole" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 273). The word

‘eradicate’ is a perfect synonym to ‘extermination’ implying wiping out, which was what the General envisioned with the help of the German soldiers, on their last encounter with the Hereros at the last waterhole. All these descriptions facilitate a deeper mental re-performing of possibilities behind the extermination order. Again, such metaphors allow the generation and accumulation of a people’s history.

So, in *Mama Namibia* (2013, p. 274) the extermination order is referenced to in full, and it is General van Trotha who reads it out to his army and particularly to the few Herero prisoners they had captured. In *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), the extermination order is alluded to in partial but retained its impact:

They [Mbakondja and the six surviving fighter] now faced a long and desperate escape into Bechuanaland, without sufficient food and water supply. Most of the water-holes in the northeast had been poisoned by the Germans. This was part of the *Extermination Order* issued against the people. The Order was broadly defined to cover a wider scope of brutal activities such as the poisoning of water-holes, taking those captured to the concentration camps, slave labor, burning down of homesteads, confiscation of livestock and land. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 222)

In *The lie of the Land* (2017, p. 77), reference to the extermination order is done in full and it is General van Trotha who recites the order. This makes the story relatable and true-to-life. To reinforce the impact of the order, the narrator comments that, “A nation had been sentenced to death” (Utley, 2017, p. 76). In *The Scattering* (2016, p. 109), the extermination order is insinuated in full which Kubuitsile (2016) creatively expands convincingly on what could possibly have happened before and after the extermination order was delivered. Lastly in *Parts Unknown* (2018), the extermination order is mentioned in partial as the novel itself focuses on the time after the extermination order had been proclaimed as observed from the text:

The Germans gave them too little food and shelter, and too much work. They could not survive. He had last felt like this as he had wandered about in the Omaheke Desert with the Herero after their defeat at Waterberg, looking for food and water. The Germans had poisoned small water holes and guarded the big ones. Van Den Berg (2018, p. 13)

Nonetheless, the aftermath of the extermination order is what makes the bulk of *Parts Unknown* (2018) but the immediate quotation above insinuates the extermination order. In substance, the attempt by the five authors in the creation of stories surrounding the extermination order reflect on the subtle autonomy engraved in literature that of being precisely related to reality.

Thus, these collages of illustrations and expansions surrounding the extermination order bring home and to light what the situation was like even if it occurred over a century ago. As already expressed, history proper answers to ‘what happened’ while fiction writers strive for – what it was like (Bortolotti, 2015), the selected novels magnificently respond by imagining what it was like. Moreover, through these fictional novels, the Herero Nama historical truth in merging with fictional artistry, is thus revealed in detail. For that, historical fiction should be given recognition as it is but only a different regime of truth. As exhibited in the above excerpts from the five selected novels, though fictitious in nature, they nonetheless essentially exhibit layers of reality in an attempt to reconstruct meaning. Thus, with reference to known quotations from history proper, either directly or indirectly, further substantiate historical fictional writing into works that are convincing, as in the case with the extermination order and how it is incorporated in the selected novels under study.

3.3 Literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict from the selected texts

Literary reconstruction of history in simpler terms may be viewed as rebuilding through adaptation of the past and in this case the rebuilding is from a fictional point of view. There are numerous art forms that provide new modes of expression for the reconstruction of the same

historical event. According to Laishram (2017), there are three major art forms namely: visual arts, literature arts and performance arts, where literature arts are self-expressive involving the author's emotions, point of views, emotions and much more. The literature arts best describe the selected five historical fiction novels for this study. Moreover, Laishram (2017) further asserts that, literature arts are both imaginative and informative. Sanders (2015) identifies some of the literature arts forms such as “variation, version, interpretation, imitation, proximation, supplement, increment, improvisation, prequel, sequel, continuation, addition, paratext, hypertext, palimpsest, graft, rewriting, reworking, refashioning, re-vision, re-valuation” (p. 5). Additionally, Poole (2004) underpins “borrowing, stealing, appropriating, inheriting, assimilating, being influenced, inspired, dependent, indebted, homage, mimicry, travesty, echo, allusion and intertextuality” (p. 2). This study employed some of Sanders's (2015) and Poole's (2004) art forms in the exploration of the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict through the selected historical novels. The researcher purposefully selected: variation, version, rewriting, borrowing, homage, travesty, as well as intertextuality, art forms as the basic but critical concepts. These are discussed in the subsequent sections alongside analyses and reference to the selected historical novels in an attempt to establish the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict.

3.3.1 Variation as represented in the selected historical novels

Variation in general entails differences, and as a literature art form, variation highlights the dissimilarities in literary works. The novels, *Parts Unknown* (2018); *The Lie of the Land* (2017); *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017); *The Scattering* (2016); and *Mama Namibia* (2013) are all making reference to the 1904-1908 Conflict. However, the way this conflict is narrated in each of the selected novels brings about the variation. It may therefore be commented that, it is the same story but told in different words and in different voices.

The variation is distinct in that, the novels are written by five different authors with different backgrounds as well as different perspectives and motives. These differences would impact on the way the 1904-1908 Conflict is presented on paper hence, the variations. Interestingly, variation becomes a critical aspect in the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict. Of much benefit to the reader is that, the variations bring in a wider pool of understanding the period in question as well as allowing varying clarifications.

Considering Van Den Berg's background (which the researcher learns through a personal email from Zirk Van Den Berg), it has considerable influence in the penning of *Parts Unknown*. Van Den Berg was born in Walvis Bay in 1960 and left for South Africa, Cape Town at the age of 6 years but frequently visited German South West Africa during school holidays (Z. Van Den Berg personal communication April 13, 2020). His grandparents from both sides had come to German South West Africa much earlier in the 1920s. The grandparent, whose name Van Den Berg inherited, had come to the country as part of the South African army in the first world war. Later he returned and settled in the Kalahari not far from the town of Gochas which provides the background of a part in *Parts Unknown*. The grandparent was what was known as 'poor white' who lived as a labourer on someone else's farm (Z. Van Den Berg personal communication April 13, 2020). The communication further states that, Van Den Berg's grandfather on the mother's side bought a farm near Gamsberg where the grandfather and Van Den Berg's uncle stayed and now belongs to his cousin. The farm is called Chaibis and it is where the character Mordegai Guruseb in *Parts Unknown* (2018) settles.

Such a background shows sentimental attachment of the author of *Parts Unknown* to the landscapes that form the setting of the text. Van Den Berg uses his grandparents' real farms to be the space for the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict hence providing a variation in the reconstruction of the story. Of course, the writing of *Parts Unknown* (2018) was motivated after reading a book on Namibian history and Van Den Berg in the personal email

acknowledges that “I will confess not having a great interest in politics, generally. But I care for people. Reading the history [Namibian history], I could not help but be affected by it” (Z. Van Den Berg personal communication April 13, 2020). Another aspect observed is that of Van Den Berg’s benevolence as the history he had read, moved him hence prompting him to write *Parts Unknown*. It appears he is not race biased as he was affected by the mistreatment of the black people during the conflict, which incited him to write about the harsh conditions experienced. Van Den Berg openly states that, he “loves people” and that could be a possibility why he was touched by the conflict as he read about a people being destroyed through extermination. This allows and stimulates for variation in the reconstruction of the history.

Jasper David Utley’s love of the land and experiences of extensive reading on the ‘ghastly’ Herero Nama war motivated him in writing this *The Lie of the Land* (2018). The researcher learns from a personal email from Utley that, when he stayed in Namibia, he found the history of the country intriguing and states that:

During my five years in Namibia, I became fascinated by the colonial history of a country that had never been part of the British Empire. (Apart from Wallis Bay). I read extensively about German colonial life and, in particular, about the ghastly Herero - Nama War. The more I read, the more I wanted to use this as a background for a story. (J. D. Utley, personal communication April 20, 2020)

Other than that, Utley is a devotee of spy stories and after gathering all his research material, he felt the war would provide the perfect setting for such a story. It so happened that the war was the 1904-1908 Conflict. The time Utley stayed in Namibia, he got attached to the country noted where he states that, “I also fell in love with the country itself: its indigenous people as well as its plants and animals. I wanted to express my love in the novel” (J. D. Utley personal communication, April 20, 2020).

Also, Utley uses his writing prowess to challenge the universal complications that keep the global nations apart. Through *The Lie of the Land* (2018), he informs the readers that, though the Herero Nama war is not that pronounced as other ‘prominent’ genocides, it is in actual fact linked to the Holocaust. The researcher learns this where Utley says:

Above all, I wanted to create a good old-fashioned yarn that would enthrall (I hoped!) while at the same time confronting the difficult issues of race, of colonialism and of genocide. In particular, I was concerned to link these atrocities to those committed in Nazi Germany. To that end, I not only emphasised the very real historical links (eg Herman Goring and his father) but also made Sam Jewish. (J. D. Utley, personal communication April 20, 2020)

Just as Van Den Berg, Utley fell in love with the land and decided to write *The Lie of the Land* (2018) to expose the injustices that the indigenous people of that land suffered at the hands of the Germans. Utley’s background and understanding of the 1904-1908 Conflict brings in another variation of the epoch as his writing is based on his personal interpretation of the historical period.

Lauri Kubuitsile is a renowned writer and the Herero Nama history must have touched a sensitive spot in her which then prompted her write *The Scattering* (2016). Her approach is that which is typical of describing ‘how’ it happened, thereby appealing to the mental imagination by using vivid descriptions of scenes. Kubuitsile gives an explanation on how she ended up writing *The Scattering*:

When I set out to write this book, I thought about how horrible tragedies like war are often given to us in numbers. The mortality rate in the concentration camps was between 45–75%, with 12–18 people dying every day. You feel war and tragedy in your

heart when it is brought down to the individual life. That's what I wanted. I wanted to create a novel that made war real through individual stories. (para. 1)

To add on, when Kubuitsile was writing *The Scattering* (2016), she also considered books like *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Adichie's, which focuses on the Biafran War, as well as *Memory of Love* by Aminatta Forna, which focuses on the war in Sierra Leone. Kubuitsile is said to have commented that, both Adichie and Forna's novels made war real through individual stories and not through battle plans and statistics on causalities (Baaitse, 2016, para. 6). Using the background history of the 1904-1908 Conflict, Kubuitsile felt her novel should be the same as Adichie and Forna's. Thus, Kubuitsile was quoted by Baaitse (2016) to have said, "I wanted to create a novel like that," hence *The Scattering*, a variation of the 1904-1908 Conflict.

Rukee Tjingaete wrote *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017) after he had observed that their story was in the hands of others. They had the story as Hereros but did not own it as someone had to tell it on their behalf. This is observed where Tjingaete (2017, p. 5) states that:

This story attempts to tell a story about us that have been always told by others for us.

This story cries for dialogue about why affected communities are seeking reparation, restorative justice and reconciliation for the genocide committed against us.

Thus, Tjingaete, through *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), highlights to the world the rationalisations behind the Hereros are calling for compensations for the crimes committed against them. It is through this novel that the crimes committed by the German army are exposed. Other than that, Tjingaete also argues that the contemporary complications faced by Namibians are allied to the epoch in question by testifying that:

Today, mass poverty among the affected communities is a direct consequence of property confiscation, displacement, and extermination order and the psychological

alienation stretching over a period of ten years between 1897 and 1907. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 5)

In essence, Tjingaete's motivation of writing *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017) also confers another variation of the 1904-1908 Conflict. Besides that, Tjingaete gets the opportunity to tell the story from the Herero people's perspective and at the same time enlightening the world on how the crime committed did not just end with the end of the conflict.

Mari Serebrov, just as the other selected authors for this study, wrote *Mama Namibia* (2013) after she had been moved by heartrending history the 1904-1908 Conflict. With history proper, that is, factual history available, she felt breathing life into those facts would definitely impact positively on the understanding of the history itself noted where she says:

...historical fiction can do something other fiction genres can't do. When it puts a face to the facts of history, it can flesh out real events and times gone by, letting us experience and understand the past in a way no textbook ever could. (Serebrov, 2017a, para. 4)

Moreover, the idea of the 1904-1908 Conflict receiving little attention as if it never happened also drove Serebrov to write *Mama Namibia* (2013). Through writing the novel, the story of the epoch in question would be kept alive and would one way or the other, reach other people in other lands as they access *Mama Namibia* (2013). Thus, Serebrov (2018) argues that, "We can't let that story be swept away as just a footnote in the history of colonialism. It's a story that must continue to be told" (para. 7). The notion of preserving the 1904-1908 Conflict is what motivated Serebrov to write the novel basing on the fact that the story should not just be unheeded.

None of the five authors was present to have had a first-hand account of the 1904-1908 Conflict, thereby rendering them all critical researchers. They all had to thoroughly research

for them to be able to reconstruct the event in prose form. Their works are closely related to the history proper of the 1904-1908 Conflict thus conforming to the theory of New Historicism which assumes that a literary work is the product of the time, place, and historical circumstances of its composition (Mojdehani, 2016; Tiwary & Chandra, 2009). By virtue of being individual entities with differing motivations, the authors' works exhibit heterogeneity, hence the variations in the selected five novels.

3.3.2 The versions of the 1904-1908 Conflict

The novels, *Parts Unknown* (2018), *The Lie of the Land* (2017), *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), *The Scattering* (2016), and *Mama Namibia* (2013) all carry different versions of the same historical background. According to the *Cambridge Dictionary* (2020), a version is defined as “a particular form of something that is slightly different from other forms of the same thing.” The selected five fictional works are all anchored in the 1904-1908 Conflict but create versions as each novel has its own story line. Besides the different versions, the selected novels have all the selected theories for this study namely: Trauma and Resilience Theory, New Historicism as well as Ecocriticism as a common feature. However, the way the theories are portrayed vary from text to text hence creating the different versions. The formation of such versions may be argued to be attributed to the different stand points from which the authors would be standing hence the different versions. This approach becomes critical and relevant in the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict as the varying versions widen the understanding of the conflict.

3.3.3 The rewriting of the 1904-1908 Conflict from a literary perspective

The concept of rewriting is a major way of reconstructing a people's history. The *Cambridge Dictionary* (2020) defines rewriting as to write something similar to a book or speech again, in order to improve it or change it as new information is available. Thus, with regards to the selected novels: *Parts Unknown* (2018), *The Lie of the Land* (2017), *The Weeping Graves of*

Our Ancestors (2017), *The Scattering* (2016), and *Mama Namibia* (2013), they are all products of rewriting. The novels are written by adding flesh to the skeleton facts available in history proper as well as adding motion to pictures using descriptive language. History has it as a fact that the conflict happened between 1904 and 1908 (De Souza-Correa, 2011; Burde, 2017; Warikandwa & Nhemachena, 2017). It is this fact of the existence of the 1904-1908 Conflict that fiction writers would build stories on that fact as the case with the selected texts under study. Another random example of a historical fact could be that of the dehumanising conditions that the victims encountered as the survivors of the Omaheke Desert that they were emaciated resulting from starvation and dehydration as illustrated from Image 2 below:

Image 2: Survivors in the Omaheke Desert



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?q=the+herero+nama+conflict+pdf>

The emaciated state of the survivors relates to the interaction of humans and the environment. Though the German soldiers were after the extermination of a nation, the environment did not allow every being to perish hence the survivors had to adapt to the environment for survival. An example could be drawn from *The Lie of the Land* (2017) through the character Mordegai who had to rely on the environment for food. Also in *Mama Namibia* through Jahohora when she survived in the desert again relying on the environment for both food and security. The It

is against a fact of this nature that fiction writers would built on by imagining possible rationales causing the characters to be emaciated. This is evident in the selected texts as in some of the characters including Jahohora in *Mama Namibia* (2013), Novengi in *The Scattering* (2016) and Leah in *The Lie of the Land* (2017), to mention but a few. Thus, history is modified and transformed into fiction through rewriting.

3.3.4 Borrowing as an artistic form in the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict

The novels: *Parts Unknown* (2018), *The Lie of the Land* (2017), *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), *The Scattering* (2016), and *Mama Namibia* (2013) all borrow words from other languages other than the English language used throughout the novels. Horobin (2007) defines borrowing as “The process by which words are adopted into one language from another” (p. 192). In *The Lie of the Land* (2017, p. 1), the word “Willkommen” which is translated to English as ‘welcome’ is used and also “Gans” (p. 24) which means ‘goose’. In *Mama Namibia* (2013, p. 13) there is “Uri naua?” translated to ‘How are you?’ and “Mukuru ngakare punaove” (p. 191) translated to ‘God bless you’. In *Parts Unknown* (2018) there is “Gans Wüste” (p. 106) which translates to ‘goose desert’ and “!gâ || goas” (p. 184). In *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), there is “Schutztruppe” (p. 39) which translates to ‘protection force’ and “Komoororo! Mutuaove komoororo!” (p. 199) translated to ‘You will never succeed bastard’. Other than words, the use of indigenous names also bring to light the issue of borrowing. Names such as Jahohora, Tuaekua Ehi, Karemarama, Tjipuka, Ruhapo, Mbakondja, Mbangane, Guruseb are used in the reconstruction of the history through fictional writing. For that, Windt-Val (2012) asserts that, “the names in the novel generally will convey important information on many different aspects of the persons–family history, social setting, environment, self-image, personal ambitions, social status, and relationships between the characters” (p. 278). Thus, through a dialogue between Mama and Jahohora, the meanings of the indigenous names have links to the people’s history as illustrated from *Mama Namibia*:

I think about my name. Jahohora means “our home is getting weaker.”

“I don’t like my name,” I tell Mama. “It’s sad.”

“My name is sad, too,” Mama says. “Tutejuva means ‘we die day by day’.”

“Why do we have sad names?” I ask her.

“Our names tell about the days when we were born. I was born when the Witbooi were fighting the Herero. Many people died.”

“What about my name?” ...

“Your name is like Tuaekea Ehi’s name. when she was born, the white people began taking more and more Herero land. Her name means our land was taken away.”

(Serebrov, 2013, p. 10)

In the dialogue above, the meanings attached to the names have historical background of Jahohora’s people. Events such as the war involving Witbooi is thus recorded if a family member born during that time. Also, the names remind the people of the time they were stripped of their materialities (the land) as the Germans expanded their colonial territories. Moreover, aspects related to both materialities and immaterialities are thus highlighted as the invasions of the Germans involved among other issues, the tampering with Herero people’s graves. Thus, the taking over of Herero people’s land by the Germans resulted in the coloniality of power (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Quijano, 2017; Mignolo, 2010). The Herero people would react to the coloniality of power through naming their children that are born during specific and critical events that form their history. This is evident from *Mama Namibia* where Mama further explains to Jahohora that, “And when you [Jahohora] were born, white people took the land where our cattle grazed. And they dug up the graves of our ancestors to plant maize and calabashes” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 10). Names such as Jahohora would be constant reminders of those people’s history. If such names form part of writing in fiction, it further adds value to the piece of writing. With this borrowing, particularly indigenous names into fiction writing, it brings about

some authenticity in the reconstructed history. Thus, events in people's lives are stowed in such names bearing their history.

3.3.5 Reconstruction of the Herero Nama as homage of the past

Homage entails respect. Thus, the writing of these selected five novels is a gesture of paying homage to the 1904-1908 Conflict that saw the destruction of thousands and thousands of people through a genocide. The *Macmillan Dictionary* (2020) defines homage as “something that someone does or says in order to show respect or admiration.” So, it is through the rewriting of the 1904-1908 Conflict in these selected novels that the victims are remembered and their history is also preserved and would be accessible to generations to come. Thus, Serebrov (2017b) remarks that, “For every genocide we ignore or deny, we grant permission for the next.” In rewriting the conflict, homage is thus paid and at the same time, the history lives on. Also, by giving attention to the 1904-1908 Conflict, in a way it is a preventative measure for possible future genocides.

3.3.6 Travesty as an artistic form in the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict

The novels, *Parts Unknown* (2018); *The Lie of the Land* (2017); *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017); *The Scattering* (2016); and *Mama Namibia* (2013) all make reference to German soldiers. Reading between the lines in all the selected texts, it appears the German soldiers are being lampooned as observed through their behaviours. At the same time, the novels may be described as those that adopted travesty as a way of reconstructing the 1904-1908 Conflict. Holman and Harmon (1986) describe travesty as a “writing that by its incongruity of style or treatment ridicules a subject inherently noble or dignified” (p. 511). In the selected texts, the Germans as they came to Africa, they regarded themselves as superior and civilised. However, their superiority and civility becomes sardonic considering the displacements, killings, raping and other dehumanising deeds they performed on the Hereros

and Namas. Thus, all selected texts ridicule the presence of the Germans in German South West Africa as what they brought was destructive and against what they claimed to be.

3.3.7 Intertextuality in the reconstruction of the conflict

Intertextuality is another art form that was used by the authors of the selected novels in the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict. Nordquist (2020) observes that, “intertextuality refers to the interdependence of texts in relation to one another (as well as to the culture at large” (para. 1). Thus, with the five novels, the authors had to research intensively from other texts regarding the 1904-1908 Conflict in order for them to be able to create using that period as a background of the novels. This concurs with Literary Terms (n.d.) that, “Every text is affected by all the texts that came before it, since those texts influenced the author’s thinking and aesthetic choices” (para. 2). None of the authors was present during the 1904-1908 Conflict, hence they had to research to learn about the conflict. It may not be possible to tell exactly which texts the authors read as they researched, nonetheless, they managed to reconstruct the history, hence the five novels.

Specifically, for Kubuitsile as mentioned already that, she also considered books like *Half of a Yellow Sun* by Chimamanda Adichie’s, which focuses on the Biafran War, as well as *Memory of Love* by Aminatta Forna, which focuses on the war in Sierra Leone. This may imply that *The Scattering* has some influence of the mentioned novels as they also have a war background. For that, Nordquist (2020) comments that, texts can influence, derive from, parody, reference, quote, contrast with, build on, draw from, or even inspire each other. In essence, it may therefore be noted that all texts are intimately interconnected, they depend heavily on each other and that way, it allows for the production of meaning.

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter deliberated on the first objective of the study that focused on the literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict. The selected historical novels reiterate the same event but from dissimilar angles yet numerous incidences emerging in the novels concur. Also, with the selected novels, this present study observed that there seem to be a thin line between the imaginative compositions and the historical credibility.

The selected novels evoke literature's immediacy to recreate some critical arguments that are still unresolved even in present day Namibia about the general welfare of the people with the problems still linked to the nation's past. Through the purposefully selected art forms, it became clear how the history was reconstructed in the selected five novels. The next chapter (Chapter 4) is dedicated to the second objective of this study.

CHAPTER 4: SURVIVORS' ADAPTATION TO SUDDEN CHANGE

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the thrust is on the second objective which was set to investigate the ways in which the survivors adapted to the sudden change of their lives upon the inception and during the conflict, as presented in the selected novels: *Parts Unknown* (2018), *The Lie of the Land* (2017), *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), *The Scattering* (2016), and *Mama Namibia* (2013). A number of stratagems which are discussed in this chapter are devised and these depended heavily on the form of challenge being encountered at any given time. This chapter converges on how the characters successfully and unimpressively devise survival ploys under the dehumanising conditions as presented in the selected texts. Attention is given to displacement which resulted in the homelessness and the disruption of social setting. Also, the use of indigenous knowledge plays a role as it forms part of the survival tact.

4.2 Displacement

The arrival of the Germans to German South West Africa brought with it the displacement of the local indigenous people to pave way for the colonisers. The displacement resulted in distressing almost, if not all, spheres of the Herero people's lives ranging from homelessness to violation of sacred places. These acts instigated by the presence of the Germans, were dehumanising and underrated the Herero way of life beneath the least level of human recognition. The displacement came without a warning and that led to the hasty and spontaneous transplanting of the Hereros from their homes and lands of original settlements. Successively with that displacement, the Hereros had to acclimatise to the sudden shift in how they normally would live as they unexpectedly found themselves wanting of home, social set ups meddled, religion, culture and tradition invaded, as well as sacred places pried on. Life had to go on, and for those who were fortunate, they had to adapt as a means of surviving.

4.2.1 Homelessness

The spiteful presence of the Germans drove the Hereros into instant destitution as they were forced to move out of their homes into the endangering battlefield at Waterberg Mountain, then into the menacing Omaheke Desert. The motive behind transplanting the Hereros revolved around aspects pertaining to materialities, the number one being land, that the Germans also had interests in, in their bid to satiate the expansion of their colonies. Fittingly, the only way the Germans could get the land was by imposing and driving the Hereros away to create space for themselves. This was done in an unforgiving way as the Germans proved to be vicious and unrelenting as already established that the Germans had “a very brutal, imperial and savage power” (Kameeta, 2003, p. vii). This could best describe what the Germans were at that time, as filching and owning land was what had intoxicated their minds.

In *Mama Namibia* (2013), displacement is apparent when Jahohora and the rest of the village members had to relocate from their village to live on the Okavaka Mountains after they learnt of the Germans coming to fight them out of the land. Mutihu (Jahohora’s father) had consulted the ancestors through the holy fire for guidance on how to handle the looming challenge as confirmed in *Mama Namibia*:

‘The ancestors say we must leave this village and go to the Okavaka Mountains’ he tells us. ‘We will be safe there until this ends. We will be far from the Germans, so they won’t mistake us for warriors.’ (Serebrov, 2013, p. 93)

Thus, with the instruction from the ancestors, Jahohora and the rest of the villagers vacated to the designated place identified by the ancestors themselves. For those other Hereros that had remained in their villages elsewhere, their villages were destroyed by the Germans and they instantly became homeless. This is acknowledged by Uncle Kazondanda when he reports that, “I met a Herero who was wandering in the veld. He told me the German soldiers burned all the

villages back that way” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 120). None was spared as all the villages were incinerated echoing Olusoga and Erichsen (2010) who, in history proper, highlight on the burning down of Herero homes. Thus, the survivors had to interact with nature as what they had once called home had been devastated and reduced to ruins. Such a reliance on nature is not voluntary but steered by the Germans and this is associated with what Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) refers to as the ‘coloniality of power’. They had to seek refuge in the wastelands as they had nowhere else to go as the Germans had occupied the Herero people’s lands.

In *The Scattering*, displacement is also highlighted when Ruhapo and a couple of villagers fight the Germans and confiscate cattle. The Hereros were quite sure that the war had ended as “Samuel Maherero had assured them all the trouble was over. It would be only peace now.” (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 39). Now with so much cattle in Okahandja, they decide to take another direction to look for pastures for the large herd of cattle, thus they move to Ohamakari though “Tjipuka didn’t like leaving their home, even if Ruhapo assured her they would return.” (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 38). This was a form of displacement that had resulted which was radiating from the presence of the Germans in the Herero land. It is at the new place, in Ohamakari that they move to, in which they are ambushed by the Germans and the survivors escape in all directions and the majority into the Omaheke Desert, and instantly becoming homeless. The idea of losing a home led the survivors to adapt to the vulnerable plains alongside wild animals. They had no choice as the callousness of the Germans was beyond imaginable magnitudes, hence escaping into the wilderness.

To add on, in *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), the mass exodus in Chapter Four similarly manifests displacement which resulted in homelessness of the Hereros in a bid to pave way for the German settlements. A similar case of displacement is observed under the

Rwandan genocide as Magnarella (2005) states that, “About 2,000,000 people were uprooted within Rwanda, while the same number of Hutu fled from Rwanda into Tanzania, Burundi and Zaire” (p. 816). Detachment from home is what the Hereros experienced as they under duress, moved from Okangondo to Okandjira. Tjikuu had at first refused to leave Okangondo but later concedes, of which her decision induced a metaphorical wound “Although she [Tjikuu] agreed, she felt as if part of her body had been cut off and left behind. The hard choice to leave had been taken in hope of preserving the future” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 30). Of course, under such circumstances where decision making is critical, there are those who always oppose whatever decisions are passed, even by the majority. There are those few elderly people who refused to be uprooted from their indigenous land and vowed to face whatever circumstances they had to confront:

Most people had left except a few hardcore elders who had refused to move. They had decided to defy the odds and face the wrath of the Governor who intended to settle German farmers in their area... The people knew that any resistance to move would be met with heavy-handed treatment, including cold-blooded killings as had been before. Despite knowing this, some refused to surrender the claim to their grazing lands. They stayed to face death. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 31)

Resistance is illuminating in this immediate quotation as uprooting results in homelessness. The sad part is that, even though with so much resistance, still the resistors were eliminated in the most brutal ways of manslaughter.

Not long before those Hereros that had left Okangondo and settled at Okandjira, they then encountered their first clash with the Germans and the Hereros won in this battle. Unfortunately, they had to decide else where to go abandoning once again Okandjira as they knew the Germans would come back, “‘The Schutztruppe will return.’ Kambanderu said”.

(Tjingaete, 2017, p. 41). This further migration reproduces homelessness as the Hereros have literally converted into wanderers, hence questioning their autonomy and capacity as a nation. The Hereros have lost footing of ownership to land as they literally transformed to wanderers and the saddening factor is that, the disturbances are motivated by external forces whose agendas are stirred by the expansion of German territories and colonies in Africa.

Utley's (2017) *The Lie of the Land*, the character Leutwein had been considered as a leader of the troops who was weak and had his post taken over by von Trotha. Leutwein had successfully deracinated the Hereros and driven them to Waterberg observed when Hartman talks to Sam, "One good thing Leutwein did do was to herd the Herero north at the Waterberg" (Utley, 2017, p. 39). Relocating the Hereros is displacement and implies homelessness as they are further pushed into the Omaheke Desert after the battle at the Waterberg Mountain. After the extermination order was declaimed, a number of homeless Hereros were caught and forced to disseminate the extermination order "To celebrate, the General then ordered some thirty natives to be brought forward. They had been caught near the edge of the desert and consisted mostly of old men, women and children" (Utley, 2017, p. 77). After sometime, Hartmann and Sam rode their horses trailing behind the tracks that the Hereros had left behind as they went into the Omaheke as substantiated from the text that, and "After some hours, it became clear that there was no sign of any of the Ovaherero attempting to return to German territory. They had all vanished into the desert" (Utley, 2017, pp. 78-79). The vanishing into the desert implies homelessness of the Hereros.

Lastly, Van Den Berg's (2018) *Parts Unknown* reveals the status of the homeless people the first time Siegfried Bock Reiter lands in German South-West Africa for the first time on a misty day. The presence of the mist draws in another critical aspect in the analysis of literary works,

that is, pathetic fallacy. This pathetic fallacy is what Ackerman (2015) designates as a literary device wherein human emotions are ascribed to bearings of nature, for instance, dark clouds in a scene where characters are mourning. For further explanation, Kandemiri (2018, p. 21) justifies that, “A relationship of complementarity exists between humanity and their surrounding environment and literature has the potency to depict that complementarity through a literary device referred to as pathetic fallacy.” In this case, the mist, which is a weather element, may be interpreted as concealing, as it obscures Siegfried’s visibility of what German South West Africa is like. It is the time when prisoners were in concentration camps where they were exposed to atrocious and dehumanising conditions. The prisoners are the displaced Herero and Nama people who had their land taken by the Germans and majority of them driven into Omaheke Desert to perish. The treatment they got from the camps, through the description provided by Siegfried, signify homelessness as under ‘normal’ circumstances, none would not labour in that way, particularly in a place they call ‘home’. This is evidenced from the text:

The white swirling mist diffused all light, but it was pierced through by sounds. There was a new rumbling from his left, not the waves, but something crisper, hard surfaces crunching together. The creak of straining ropes. The heaving of beasts. He expected oxen, but his eyes revealed something else. From the haze, a black woman appeared, wearing an unbleached canvas cloak, leaning forward, holding thick rope over her shoulder. Behind there was another woman, hauling the same rope, then another, a whole row of them, pulling something. They did not look his way. Something moved beside them, a second row of women echoing the first. And then the heavily laden cart they were hauling came into view. Siegfried stood still as it rolled by, crushing gravel under its ironclad wheels. A uniformed man sat on the driver’s seat, idly playing with a whip in the hand. (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 11)

The presence of the whip alludes to slavery and oppression hence these homeless and hopeless and women slaved in the camps. The presence of the Germans had stirred their homelessness, to think that before the battles with the Germans, these Herero people once had their flourishing villages, with lively people and so much of materialistic wealth such as vast lands and significant herds of cattle.

Still in *Parts Unknown* (2018), Mordegai is a victim of homelessness; he escapes from the death camp and preferred to be wandering in the wild to being trapped living under dehumanising conditions as indicated from the text:

After Mordegai jumped from the train, he walked south-eastward for four days, following zebra paths and dry riverbeds. He was careful to remain unseen, skirting inhabited places or if the area was too large to go around, sneaking through at night. (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 88)

Mordegai was homeless, he had nowhere to go. Also, the Josef family became instantly homeless when the Josef daughter smacked Pitzer after he had slapped her baby during the time when Pitzer was carrying out his 'ridiculous' measurements and experimenting on the locals. The mother of the baby reacted by fighting in defence of her defenceless baby as evidenced from the text:

The next moment, a blow struck him on the side of his face. The mother's palm crushed his nose and her finger whipped into his eye, sending his pince-nez flying. She shouted something. Then she rushed out of the door with her clothes in one hand and the child clutched under her arm. (Van Den Berg, 2018, pp. 145-146)

It was after this incident that the Josefs disappeared from their quarters as the act was punishable. They found refuge at Chaibis, where Mordegai had settled. After this incident, the rest of the villagers also desert the Hoachnamib village after Alvaus Luipert had organised a

revolution against this experimenting by measuring the locals for Pitzer's research and made Pitzer to taste his own medicine; they stripped him naked and measured him just like he did on the locals at Hoachnamib police station. The villagers become homeless as they fled away for their own lives' safety from the cruelty of the Germans.

Central to this theme of homelessness, is the issue of land. The Germans had to use cruel stratagems such as indiscriminate killing, in order to move the Hereros and pave way for their own personal aggrandisement. Just as the case with the Rwandan genocide (§2.3.3.3 *The Rwandan genocide*), as Magnarella (2005, p. 821) remark that, "the ultimate cause of Rwandan genocide was the increasing imbalance in land, food and people that led to malnutrition, hunger, periodic famine and fierce competition for land to farm" (p. 821). Consequently, it may be commented that land proprietorship is what drove the Germans to come to German South West Africa with a cruel and uncompromising system of exclusion that advanced the massacre of a grander population of the Hereros and Namas. All the selected five texts express concrete situations regarding the displacements that took place between 1904 and 1908 that culminated in unwarranted deaths and homelessness of the victims.

4.2.2 Disruption of social settings

All societies have social setups that vary from one society to another. It becomes a conundrum when another society tries or essentially imposes its setups on another society which already has its own in place and functional. The advent of the Germans brought with it imposing and threatening systems into the Hereros and Namas' societal setups as presented in the selected fictional novels of this present study. This reverberates Silvester and Gewald's (2003) history proper allegation that, "Starting in Okahandja, the war spread across central Namibia and developed in intensity and brutality as fresh contingents of German troops disembarked and

attempted to impose their vision of order on the territory and its inhabitants” (p. 281). These enforcements resulted in the disruption and disorientation of the Hereros and the Namas’s social environments or social settings. Barnett and Casper (2001) state that, “Human social environments encompass the immediate physical surroundings, social relationships, and cultural milieus within which defined groups of people function and interact” (p. 465). All these spheres of the Hereros’ life were infected, affected and dismantled resulting in dysfunctionality in their social settings. However, even under such uncompromising changes, the survivors had to adapt in order to continue with life.

The social environment of the Hereros could have possibly changed at some point or was perchance undergoing some subtle changes, which is predictable. This echoes Barnett and Casper’s (2001) and Mundra’s (2017) observations that, social environments are not static as societies are capable of changing over time prompted by both external and internal forces. Internal forces could be the constant raids that occurred between Hereros and Namas with little or no fatalities at all. On the other hand, the presence of the Germans could be designated as a more bolstered external force that spawned a drastic change in the Herero social environment commanding almost everything to perplexity.

4.2.2.1 Interference with family setups

The presence of the Germans instigated a variation and redefinition of what a family is. The family members were separated and a majority of them were killed resulting in a regression on the continuity of life. *Your Dictionary* (2020) defines family as “a specific group of people that may be made up of partners, children, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents” typical Herero family. The Hereros had their family members together and that defined one of their cultural and functional traits. According to Tayengwa (2018):

A functional and ideal family is identified with salient features such as sharing of all available resources, caring and supporting one another, committing and identifying with one another, preparing and sustaining the welfare of children born until they become adults just to mention a few.

These groups of the Herero people, were living harmoniously but unfortunately had their social setup of being a family subverted. In *Mama Namibia* (2013), Jahohora loses almost all of her family members after the ambush at the Waterberg Mountain except for her brother Ramata whom he meets later in life as indicated close to the end of the story on page 301. Jahohora endures a long time (2 years) in the desert by herself as her family had perished. She had no one to help her as she budded into a woman but survived on instincts:

...I am becoming a woman...I need Mama and Tjikuu to tell me what to do. I have so many questions. I know they have the answers. But they're not here to give them to me.

I must learn this on my own. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 193)

The transition from girlhood to womanhood required that special and key family members as Mama and Tjikuu to be present and tutor Jahohora on what should be expected of her now that she had progressed into an adult. The absence of family denied Jahohora the right to know and discover her newly found stage in life. As a way to adapt to the new life, Jahohora depended on the environment, thus interpreting the nexus between human beings and nature. She reveals that, "I gather some large leaves and tie them between my legs with a long thin piece I cut from the cow skin" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 193). According to Ecocriticism, the reliance to nature as seen through Jahohora further reinforces the interaction of human and non-human (Rampal, 2013). The absence of critical family members and in such a significant point in the life of Jahohora is evident of family disintegration. Their presence could have made an impact; the knowledge that could have been passed on from Tjikuu and Mama to Jahohora would in the future have been passed on orally to the next generation on becoming a woman.

In *The Scattering* (2016), Ruhapo is separated from his wife Tjipuka and their son, baby Saul. Many families had the same predicament as family members just scattered all over the place trying to escape from the jaws of the Germans. The separation came as a result of the battle at the Ohamakari where German soldiers with sophisticated artillery, overpowered the Hereros leaving a number of them dead and the survivors escaping into the Omaheke Desert and some in other directions:

The smoke was so thick Tjipuka could barely see. Saul cried on her back. She could wait no longer. The noise was all around her...She sneaked out of the house and checked her father-in-law's hut; the beds were empty. They had fled already. Outside, the kraal was open. In all of the noise she had heard nothing. She headed for the bush. Her eyes burned. Smoke of burning houses filled the cold morning air; she couldn't see clearly where she stepped. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 41)

This separation is the one that may be described to result in family disintegration with some family members dying and some running and escaping in different directions. Family members become scattered without retaining and maintaining bonding as there is no longer that room of being in touch. Thus, as the huts were gutted in fire, it marked the destruction of social infrastructure as well as untying familial bonds as some members die, while others scatter all over the place as they attempt to escape.

As for Novengi, her family also encounters disintegration as she first loses her daughter in the battle, "In a flat voice, squeezed clean of any feeling, Novengi said, 'She's [Maveipi] dead. She is dead like all of them'" (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 47). This leaves Novengi devastated and Tjipuka extremely traumatised "Tjipuka couldn't believe that Maveipi was dead. Saul's big sister, gone like all the other. This little girl with the entire life in front of her" (Kubuitsile, 2016, pp. 47-48). Death brings with it the collapse of dreams, hopes and anticipations that

adults might have noticed in the child's character and capabilities. The same with Maveipi, all the hopes she had anticipated in the child were wrecked by the child's untimely death. This echoes Christ, George-Bonanno, Malkinson, and Rubin's (2003) observation that, "when a child dies the dreams may die too" (para. 12). The death of Maveipi may therefore be interpreted as death of the family as the family is destroyed before it is even conceived, as observed in this child's premature death. Also, the death of Saul may as well be decoded in the same way as the death of Maveipi as Rogers, Floyd, Seltzer, Greenberg, and Hong (2008) observe that, "The death of a child is a traumatic event that can have long-term effects on the lives of parents" (p. 203). Thus, the deaths of Maveipi and Saul devastated their parents, leaving them with permanent and unbearable scars, that even with time, may never heal, hence resonating Krisch's (2020) observation that, "The death of a child may be the worst trauma a human being can experience" (para. 2). As a result of the traumatic nature of death, in this instant, the death of the children stimulated the disruption of social settings in the Hereros' lives.

Secondly, Novengi's husband is also lynched, leaving Novengi as the only surviving member in her family. Novengi's case may therefore be viewed as more than a multilateral tragedy; losing a child; losing a husband; and enduring under the fangs of the brutalities of the German invasions. Novengi's family, as with majority of the Herero families, faces extinction as the disintegration is not just separation but obliteration, as nothing to define a family is permitted to live on, let alone propagate.

Still in *The Scattering* (2016), Mara's children are tortured and the elder one being killed in her eyes. The idea of a family being protective and supportive of each other as observed by Tayengwa (2018) is what Mara's boys tried but ended up being brutalised by the German

soldiers and consequently the mutilation of family. Mara's boys could not stand the German soldiers defiling their mother:

In front of everyone, before they [German soldiers] began the shooting, they raped her [Mara]. One by one. But before that, when they'd only just began, her sons tried to fight them off. The elder one was shot in the forehead, dead before he hit the ground. But the younger one, a sweet boy, not even fourteen, they made him suffer. They shot his feet so he could so he could not move. Then they took turns on his mother. No one in the group raised a voice to help her. They saw what they would get if they did. I covered Tjirwe's eyes, but he knew what was happening. Everyone knew. When they were done with her, they shot the boy in the eyes. She fell to him. Mara, she fell to her son and never spoke again. Everything died then. (Kubuitsile, 2013, p. 138).

Destruction of family units is what resulted of the Germans' pervasiveness in German South West Africa which is an aspect associated with immaterialities. As for the characters in *The Scattering* (2016), the death of a child was essentially an additional affliction as they were already battling with the cruelties levied by the Germans hence intensified privation resonating Christ et al.'s (2003) assertion that, "The death of a child of any age is a profound, difficult, and painful experience" (para 1). Thus, family knots are loosened by the devastating hostilities waged by the Germans in an effort to supplant the Hereros from their native lands. Thus, the supplanting is a trait linked to displacement that is associated with Mignolo's (2010) colonial matrix of power that has to do with appropriation of land. The soldiers' presence registers disruption of social settings of the Hereros and at the same time prompts the questioning of the soldiers' sanity.

In *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), Mbakondja starts losing his family members at a much tender age starting with the father, Mbangane as recited by Tjikuu, Mbakondja's

maternal grandmother that, “The Schutztruppe set several huts ablaze. Mbangane was captured together with Nama and Herero fighters. They were marched in chains out of Hoachanas” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 19). A family would function properly in the presence of all family members but Mbakondja’s life was deprived of the existence of a father as a result of the brutal war which adulterated the Hereros and Namas’ social environments. It is at the same incident that Mbakondja loses his mother, Kotjize as Tjikuu overtly narrates, “I tried to find Kotjize. Their hut was empty and on fire. I was later informed that Kotjize and many other survivors had escaped to Okandjira in the east of Okahandja. I hope they are alive” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 19). As a result of the war, the absence of parents is also a pointer to disturbances in social settings. The same story is just the same as that for Tjijandyeua, he lost his mother in the same battle that Mbakondja’s parents were victims. The sad story of how it happened is forlornly related by Tjikuu as stated in the novel:

Tjikuu turned to Tjijandyeua and said:

“I saw you crying near the body of your mother. You were stuck to her breast. She had been shot and killed.” For the first time that evening, Tjikuu looked fragile and vulnerable. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 19).

The idea of Tjikuu being in custody of Mbakondja and Tjijandyeua, shows how affectionate and humane she is, a sharp contrast to the German soldiers’ intentions. Though not a perfect substitute to the boys’ lost mothers, Tjikuu nonetheless, manages to raise the boys in an environment where the Hereros’ social environments, including those of familial knots, having been disturbed through and through.

The Lie of the Land (2017) takes a different twist as it describes how the German soldiers’ families are equally affected by the 1904-1908 Conflict. It becomes evident that, regardless of colour, race or any other designation, human beings all belong to the same taxonomy when it

comes to those emotional matters that are naturally affixed to human physiognomies. The way social environments for the Herero people are disturbed is the same way in which the German families are equally affected. According to *The Human Journey* (2020), “Human beings all over the world share the same basic emotions which are: sadness, anger, disgust, fear, surprise and happiness” (para. 22). Thus, David’s parents were affected as they separated with their son as he came to German South West Africa, as evidence from the text:

As Jews...we had no rights except that of dying for the Tsar. My father understandably does not like my joining the marines but finally accepted the argument that we owed it to the Germany that had provided us with sanctuary. My mother said nothing but she cried a lot. (Utley, 2017, p. 27)

Just like the mothers in *The Scattering* (2016), Mara, Novengi and Tjipuka, David’s mother became emotionally charged as she separated with her son David. This further testifies that, regardless of colour or creed, human beings are the same, though there are those who may feel or judge that they are more superior than others. If all these mothers can feel the pain of separating from their children, then once more the rationalities in the Germans’ intentions become debateable.

In *Parts Unknown*, again the issue of disruption of social settings is equally highlighted. Women working laboriously in the camp is an indication of disrupted social environments. These women’s right to freedom has been grossly violated as they are being enslaved and subjected to dehumanising conditions. This is evidenced from the text expressing Siegfried’s reaction to the sight of the women that, “The unexpectedness of what he had seen, the absurdity, the cruelty of it had Siegfried transfixed” (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 11). The women have been deracinated from their lands, villages and homes, only to be forcefully placed in these

despondent death camps. All their everyday social life has been infringed as well as their surroundings and spaces trespassed.

Mordegai does not have any of his family members mentioned in *Parts Unknown* (2018). Since he had handed himself to the Germans after wandering in the grave Omaheke Desert, “He had decided that anything had to be better than dying of thirst in the desert, so he surrendered to save his life. But what sort of life was this?” (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 13). Though not stated, but there is a possibility that his family, like Jahohora’s in *Mama Namibia* (2013), could have perished in the life threatening desert. Nonetheless, the idea that Mordegai had found himself in the death camp is symptomatic of disrupted social settings, hence his escape from this camp is justifiable. The feeling of regaining self-autonomy from the viciousness of the camp is what drives Mordegai and with the slightest chance, though extremely perilous, he successfully escapes.

Mordegai highlights the significance of a ‘normal’ social environment that is free of hostilities as he tried to explain to Alvaus Luipert that, himself Mordegai and the people he was already leaving with, were at peace and did not expect violence to interfere with their social settings.

‘You see the huts down there?’ he said. ‘Those people want to eat and drink. They want to enjoy each other’s company and the warmth of a blanket on a cold night, shade on a hot day. They want to make babies and see their children grow up. They do not want to fight with the Germans.’ (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 185)

Mordegai’s words insinuate a ‘normal’ life of which that is only possible in the absence of the Germans who deliberately tamper with the indigenous’ social lives. Compared to the life in the death camps, all the key aspects highlighted by Mordegai are deficient hence life being tough with no food, no proper clothing and on top of that is hard and exhausting work. It is as a result

of the interference with the social settings that Mordegai settles at Chaibis and later joined by the whole of the Hoachnamib villagers after they escaped from being unethically measured for experimentations by the German scientist, the character Albert Pitzer.

It may therefore be pronounced that, the Germans employed the interference with social environments as one of its conspiracies in the overall conquest of the indigenous Hereros and Namas, as presented in the selected texts. The Germans, attacked and disrupted family setups and were aware that a family is a key in the propagation of a nation. Hence the intentions of exterminating a nation was realised in the Germans' actions that left the victims physically without anything tangible (materialities), mentally and spiritually (immaterialities) paralysed.

4.2.2.2 Discounting religion, culture and tradition

Other than the weakening of family knots as discussed in the previous sub-section 4.2.2.1 of this study, the presence of the Germans also discounted yet another critical area pertaining religion, culture and tradition of the Herero people's life. This then points at the multidimensional nature of the corroding approach employed by the German soldiers. It can therefore be asserted that, the undertaking was designed for the total obliteration of a nation, that is, to completely amputate even the slightest miscellanies that identified with the Hereros. This was done with tact as the Germans also extended their brutalities and pounced on and interfered with the religion, culture and tradition of the Hereros, leaving them exposed and precisely powerless.

Just akin to any of the African groups, the Hereros held values that identified them as Hereros and shaped their ways of living. According to Kandemiri and Smit (2016), "Social groups in the whole of Africa have specific traditional practices fashioned to their beliefs and ways of

life” (p. 262) and Hereros are no exceptional. So whatever practices they performed, that was their way of perceiving and appreciating life. The Hereros have the holy fire as one of the significant components that form part of their daily lives. In *Mama Namibia* (2013), Jahohora and the rest of her relatives before they could move from their village, Tate (Jahohora’s father) had to consult the holy fire for guidance as the Germans’ presence was threatening their lives in their original land where their villages had prospered.

Tate nods. “It’s not safe for us to stay here. If the soldiers come, they won’t care that we are peaceful.” Tate turns to the holy fire and asks the ancestors what we should do. He pauses, listening to their answer. Then he faces us again. “The ancestors say we must leave this village and go to Okavaka Mountains,” he tells us. “We will be safe there until this ends. We will be far from the Germans, so they won’t mistake us for the warriors.” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 93)

The Hereros’ lives literary rely on the transmissions that they receive from their ancestors who are contacted through the holy fire. The holy fire thus becomes overtly sanctified as it has meaning to the lives of the Hereros. Since it has been established that the holy fire (also known as the *Okuruuo*) is consecrated, not anyone ordinary can just go to the holy fire as observed by Park (2014) that, “Okuruuo is a sacred place of the Herero, and therefore not a place for anyone to come and act in whatever manner they want” (p. 106). Hence Tate being the only one responsible for consulting the ancestors and giving feedback to the family on what the ancestors would have instructed. Like in this case, the ancestors have instructed that the whole village should escape to Okavaka Mountains as a sanctuary from the threats of the Germans. Though the ancestors had instructed the Hereros to seek refuge elsewhere away from their village, but that again stimulated challenges and the loss of grip of the same ancestors. Unfortunately, the presence of the Germans brought with it the displacement of the Hereros as well as the extinguishing of their holy fires. The extinguishing of the holy fires could be equated to the

metaphorical cutting of the umbilical cord that reciprocates between the Hereros and their supreme God. Also, the displacement may be described as a form supplanting of the Hereros from their land that is regarded as material, stripping them of their right to own land, again impacting their correlation with the indigenous lands which associated with immaterialities. For that, Kandemiri and Mlambo (2019) proclaim that, “Land ownership is very important as it extrapolates on the idea and sense of place of attachment” (p. 126). Hence, the displacement of the Hereros has created more challenges as their attachment to land is infected, and some of the cultural traditions such as lighting and venerating the holy fire, are all adulterated.

Moreover, Jahohora had naturally learned about the significance of the holy fire as it formed part of the Hereros’ lives as she had witnessed her father upholding the fire and at the same time consulting the ancestors through the holy fire. Thus, she instinctively comprehended and embraced the meaning attached to their culture of having a holy fire. That time she lost her family after the Hereros were ambushed by the German soldiers, of course, her thoughts may be judged as that of a child but reading between the lines brings about another dimension that an individual or even a group of people are unquestionably delineated by the beliefs that occupy the spaces enveloping their lives. Though Jahohora is all by herself, she still has an attachment and belief to the holy fire and the ancestors as evidence in *Mama Namibia* that:

And what about my ancestors? They send me the kudu, but I didn’t thank them. I had no holy fire. They will think I’ve forgotten them? I don’t need any more bad luck. How will they know where to find me tomorrow and the next tomorrow? They knew I was on the mountain with Tate and the others. But if Tate didn’t come back to the fire, he couldn’t tell them what had happened. I feel very, very sad. I’ve lost my family and my ancestors. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 164)

Thus, Jahohora in her thoughts, discloses the attributes that shape her: she is a true Herero as illustrated by her acknowledgment of the presence of her ancestors and remembering that the only way they can be contacted is through the holy fire. She takes into account that, even the food she gets should be a gift from the ancestors, hence the kudu that directed her to a bush with berries and a water hole. Sadly, at this point in time, she could not possibly have access to the holy fire as a result of her and the rest of the Hereros' predicament. Besides, even if she had the chance to light up the fire, she would not be able to link with the ancestors by virtue of not being the right candidate to perform such an act. Park (2014, p. 106) discerns that, "Only the family priest is allowed to access the place and do the necessary acts" instantly disqualifying Jahohora, as she is neither a 'family priest'.

To add on, the significance of the holy fire is also noted in the dilemma in which Hereros might find themselves in if they decide to disown their own culture and ways of dealing with life matters. It is believed that, the Hereros that lived as neighbours to the Germans had probably invalidated the holy fire as well as the ancestors and as such, faced the curse of killing their cattle even if the cattle were not affected by the cattle sickness that had broken out "But the Herero who live near the Germans had to kill all their cattle. Even if they weren't sick" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 23). Tate further remarks on the impact of disowning own ancestors and embracing other people's cultures as illustrated from the text:

Tate is sitting by the holy fire. I hear him talking with his brothers.

"They forgot the ancestors," Tate says shaking his head. "They followed the way of the white people. Now they have no cattle." (Serebrov, 2013, p. 23)

The Hereros who disregarded their ancestors, had abandoned the holy fire and as such, they became more vulnerable to different forms of calamities, hence losing material wealth in form of their cattle. The ancestors had ceased to be part of those Hereros that abandoned them and

for that could not offer protection anymore. Tate could, in a peculiar way, interpret the dilemma of the Hereros as he is aware of how their culture functions and could enlighten on issues that are either optimistic or pessimistic. This echoes Kandemiri and Smit's (2016) observation that, "All societies are unique in their particular ways of embracing certain cultural ideologies that set boundaries which distinguish the normal from the abnormal, good from evil, wrong from right" (p. 263). Hence, Tate being able to see that the abnormality in losing cattle of the Hereros was as a result of shunning their own culture and embracing that of the white man.

In *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), the switching of some Hereros from their traditional religion to Christianity also signifies the impact of the presence and the hidden agendas of the Germans. These groups of people are convinced to shun their culture, and it can be argued that, there is a high possibility of their minds having been tampered with. The culture of the Hereros believed that, if they had faced drought, they would seek for their ancestors' divine intervention, but as they have adopted Christianity, the ancestors are no longer in a position to help them as illustrated in *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* that:

The unbelievers consulted the sorcerer who told them that as long as some people worshiped the God of the white man, the rain would not come. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 57)

Arguably, shunning one's religion may result in serious calamities such as failure to receive rains. It becomes inevitable that, the adoption of another's religion creates instability in social settings and affects the identity of groups. Herero people are known to be wealthy people who normally have large herds of cattle and would never starve as they have sufficient supplies of milk and meat for food. However, the presence of Christianity transformed the Hereros at Otjimbingwe into severe circumstances of impoverishment as evidenced from the text:

Mbakondja was disturbed by the screaming conditions of poverty, helplessness and drunkenness. The proud Herero and Damara people had been converted to Christianity

at the expense of their cultures and traditions. There was no sign of restiveness.
(Tjingaete, 2017, p. 83)

The life of the indigenous people at Otjimbingwe malformed as a result of them shifting away from traditional approaches to life by imitating that of the white people. Their religion allowed them to consult their ancestors through the holy fire but with Christianity all that was repulsed. They literary became an ordinary people; a people who are lost and who lack composition. *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* reveals the devastated status of Otjimbingwe that resulted from people losing their cultural footing.

Otjimbingwe used to be the epicentre of indigenous intellectualism and traditional base of the Herero chieftaincy and the capital of early civilisation. With his sojourn there, Mbakondja hoped to draw inspiration from that history. Unfortunately, the place seemed to have been overcome by new sophistications. It was no longer a capital of the OvaHerero, but a melting pot of diverse traditions and culture. It had become a catch-point for modernism at the expense of hard-core tradition... Tradition was slowly losing its grip on the community. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 86)

For some, the developments at Otjimbingwe may be described as modernity but it can still be argued that the modernity is evolving pessimistically as it is essentially perpetuating the collapse of another people's culture and tradition.

The issue of names is also central to the discussion pertaining the discounting of religion, culture and tradition. Deluzain (1996) observes that, "Despite their universality, there is a great deal of difference from one culture to another in how names are given" (para. 2). Herero traditional names usually would have meaning attached to them as Arthur (2016) alleges that, "Traditional African names often have unique stories behind them. From the day or time, a baby is born to the circumstances surrounding the birth, several factors influence the names

parents choose for their children” (p. 1). In *Mama Namibia*, the issue of names is also highlighted where prevailing events become the key inspiration in naming their Herero babies as exhibited in the conversation between Jahohora and her mother:

I think about my name. Jahohora means “our home is getting weaker.”

“I don’t like my name,” I tell Mama. “It’s sad.”

“My name is sad, too,” Mama saya. “Tutejuva means ‘we die day by day’.”

“Why do we have sad names?” I ask her.

“Our names tell about the days when we were born. I was born when the Witboois were fighting the Herero. Many people died.”

“What about my name?”

Mama is quiet. Her eyes close. I think she is sleeping. But then she opens her eyes and speaks.” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 10)

This dialogue gives light to the motive behind the names given to Herero people and at the same time echoing Arthur’s (2016) remark that, “Among several ethnic groups, picking out names can be influenced by positive or negative circumstances the family finds themselves in around the time a child is born” (p. 1). This implies that the names, though they may appear as single words, they infer meaning as they carry a people’s history as Arthur (2016) asserts that, “Often, such names are complete sentences” (p. 1). And through those names, the history would live and reach many generations to come. Mama goes further to explain the meanings behind Jahohora and her cousin, Tuaekua Ehi’s names:

“Your name is like Tuaekua Ehi’s name. when she was born, the white people began taking more and more Herero land. Her name means ‘our land was taken away.’ And when you were born, white people took the land where our cattle grazed...” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 10)

It becomes evident that the Herero names are no ordinary names, they carry, and are capable of holding and conveying a people's history, as well as aspects pertaining to identity. Thus, interference with the traditional and cultural way of naming these indigenous people becomes problematic. Giving Herero people names that are not consistent with their life is indeed a gross violation of the culture and traditions of the Hereros as identity may also be encoded in names as Seeman (1980) states that, "Identity, though complex, can be encoded in a name" (p. 129). Assigning new and odd names, would mean the erasure of their history, that is, important and major events that are embedded in those names.

Close to the end of *Mama Namibia* (2013), Jahohora is accorded a new name by the Jurgens (the German missionaries) that had adopted her. The new name brought with it a new identity. The dialogue between the Nama girl Marthe, and Jahohora reflects on the powers that are vested in those domineering other people's lives. Marthe tells Jahohora that, "Frau Jurgen will give you a new name. A Christian name" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 288). The following dialogue shows how Jahohora's traditional name is simply taken over by another name from another culture:

"Penee." I open my eyes. Marthe is bending over me. "Penee," she says again, "you need to get up and eat."

I sit. "Why are you calling me Penee?" I ask.

"That's your new name."

I shake my head. "My name is Jahohora."

She smiles. "Frau Jurgen gave you a new name. A Christian name. It's Petronella..."

"I don't want a new name. I like Jahohora. It's the name Tjikuume gave me." (Serebrov, 2013, p. 289)

In as much as Jahohora tries to deny the new name, the system overpowers her and she is left with no option but to just accept the name. And in *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*:

Joshua's real name was Uapandera until he was converted to Christianity. He adopted the new name after he was baptised. The name Uapandera in this context stood for **devotion**. Ironically, he did not appear fully devoted to Christianity. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 42)

Joshua acquired the name after converting to Christianity, another people's religion, shunning his own Herero ways of committing to God. As for Jahohora, the name Petronella was foisted on her. Had it been that the Germans had never appeared in these Hereros' lives, gradual changes were arguably inevitable but, with the advent of foreigners with hidden agendas, almost all spheres of life for the subjugated, suffered manipulation. This concurs with Snoek (2017, para. 3) who notes that:

Global upheavals in times of colonisation, when powerful nations sent explorers and armadas to claim foreign lands led to many indigenous people lose their "identities." These people faced severe identity conflicts and rapid social changes due to epidemics, forced relocation, colonisation and genocides.

In essence, all the philosophies resultant in the naming using traditional names became obsolete when indigenous people like the Hereros converted to Christianity or were forced to embrace foreign names which were 'meaningless' in their lives. The strategy of replacing names was purposely done as the aggressors knew that those indigenous names had value in them. Their mission was to destroy and discount the culture and tradition of naming as well as taking land at the same time. In *The Scattering*, the understanding is that, "The missionaries always gave the children new names because the Otjiherero names were too difficult for their German tongues" (Kubuitsile, 216, p. 18), hence the character Johannes, popularly known as Ruhapo. That may not readily be accepted as an excuse of failing to pronounce the Herero names, that

act was a form of both imposing and dominating over the Hereros by using subtle but effective diplomacies such as overriding indigenous names and replacing them with foreign ones.

For all the Hereros and Namas who survived the perils of the Omaheke Desert, majority of them were captured by the German soldiers and agencies with the help of the missionaries into concentration camps (Zimmerer, 2008) which turned out to be the death camps, where the worst conditions were experienced by the prisoners. Other than the atrocious conditions they got exposed to, they also lost their identity, as their indigenous names were replaced by a new form of identification, which wapers a metal disc that they had to keep always round their necks, as illustrated in Image 7 below:

Image 7: At Shark Island



Retrieved from <https://www.google.com.na/search?biw=1332&bih=598&tbn>

In *Parts Unknown* (2018), Mordegai rebelliously removed the metal identification when he was scheming his escape from the camp. That metal disk, as the one in Image 7 above, had taken over his indigenous and novel identification and reduced him to a mere object that carries a label.

After setting down his crate, he [Mordegai] hung back and made sure he was the last man, with only a guard or two behind him. He had taken off the metal identification

disk he had to wear on a thong around his neck. When he walked past the train, he threw the disk against a nearby ox wagon, as hard as he could. (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 14)

The removal and throwing away of the disk could be figuratively alluding to his anticipated freedom. Removing it and flinging it away resembles his detachment from it, as well as irrelevance of any other physiognomies attached to the disk. Ironically, Siegfried encounters the same disk, picks and slips it into his pocket, “the first keepsake of his African adventure” (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 18). Siegfried did not know what that disk was for.

In another scene in *Parts Unknown*, Siegfried also witnessed Hereros in a camp whose identity and personality had been disconnected. The Hereros languished under the brutality of the Germans in the camps. This is evidence from the scene where it states that:

He [Siegfried] made good time, and it was just after ten when he reached the last hill up the fort, past the stinking concentration camp – at least fifty round domed hovels arranged in a square, surrounded by a dense hedge of interlaced thorn branches. He had always been told the Hereros were a proud people, even haughty. They didn’t look like that now – they all were broken and subdued. They all wore something around their necks, he noticed a shiny disk. (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 195)

The lives of the Hereros in the camp is set in boundaries and being controlled within those boundaries which may be interpreted as that of transfigured identities. The Hereros do not have access to freedom and even the freedom to their identity as a result of the prisoners’ disks around their necks.

In *Mama Namibia* (2013), Jahohora encounters a man and a woman who were just wandering in the desert, of which the man was a fugitive who had escaped from the death camp. He was

Herero, but the metal disk around his neck gave him a different identification. That metal disk was conspicuous and as such it was foregrounded than any other feature on that man.

Voices wake me. I lie very still, listening. It's a Herero man and woman. They're close to me. But they don't see me. I quietly roll over so I can see them. Both of them are very skinny. The man has something shiny around his neck. It catches the sunlight and makes it brighter. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 195)

The metal disk had stripped the man of his identity and its expression round his neck made him more vulnerable in that, once he is seen by the Germans soldiers, they would definitely and positively identify him as a fugitive that escaped from one of the death camps. He also knew that, the metal disk was a threat to his life and was not willing to go back to the camp as illustrated in the novel, "I escaped from there once," the man says. "If they catch me again, they'll have to kill me. I'm not going back to the camp" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 195).

This Herero man in *Mama Namibia* (2013) as well as Mordegai in *Parts Unknown* (2018), had their identities transfigured into that of men without authority, as they were chattels hence curators of disputed freedom. Moreover, the loss of identity stimulated black invisibility, which was actually the intention of the Germans as precisely asserted by the extermination order; they wanted to successfully annihilate the whole nation.

4.2.2.3 Violation of revered places

When the Germans came to German South West Africa, they left no stone unturned in their endeavour to dislodge the indigenous people. Their actions were iniquitous and their motives heinous and unjust. They went to the extent of overstepping into the graves of the already interred Hereros. Hereros, like most African cultural groups, entomb their dead in their indigenous lands as Biwul (2014) states that:

Africans bury their dead according to their cultural traditional rituals. While some variations in the observances of cultural methodology of burial rituals and ceremonies exist, it is a general phenomenon among African peoples to bury the dead in their ancestral land. (p. 18)

Thus, the Hereros had the graves of their ancestors in their villages and stayed close to them. Their lives were hinged on the tightly held communal belief amongst them that their ancestors lived as part of their everyday lives and that they had power over the living. Also, violation or neglect of the graves holding the remains of these ancestors was taboo and a sign of contempt. Hideously, the Germans had the audacity to tamper with those graves, lacking the wiriest filament of respect of other people's valued customs. In *The Scattering*, the conversation between Tjipuka and Ruhapo confirms the Germans violating one of the Hereros' traditions:

'I need to go,' Ruhapo said as he pulled on his trousers. 'There's trouble.

It's Zürn. Zürn and his soldiers.'

Tjipuka sat up, awake now. Zürn was the head of the German contingent in Okahandja. 'What has he done?'

'They have disturbed the graves. A boy saw them taking the skulls.'

'Of the dead?' Tjipuka asked. How could that be. No one would desecrate the graves of the dead. (Kubuitsile, 2016, pp. 24-25)

The digging of the graves and exhuming the remains of the dead Herero is thus abominable since that interference had a direct and negative impact on the Hereros. The established link with their ancestors has been intruded, creating a vacuum between the Hereros and their ancestors. Violation of the graves resulted in the ancestors roaming as the exhumed heads were exported to Germany for 'scientific research,' evident from the text that, 'They sell them [the skulls] in Germany ... for a lot of money' (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 25). The actions of the Germans

may possibly appropriate the category of indifference. Their vile treatment of the Hereros connotes inhumane traits that are prejudiced to racial differences.

The disinterment of the skulls, other than creating unwarranted friction between the Hereros and their ancestors, it also enraged the Hereros as the graves of their ancestors was a sensitive issue in their lives. From the text, Ruhapo is infuriated noted in his tone as he spoke to Tjipuka:

‘To come to Okahandja, to dig up our ancestors ... it’s too much now. They push us and push us, but it’s too much now.’ He was breathing hard; Tjipuka could see his anger was bubbling at the surface. She hoped he would calm down before he got to the other men. (Kubuitsile, 2013, p. 25)

This violation of the graves is also alluded to in *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017) where the inhabitants of Otjimbingwe had turned to neglecting graves:

This [Otjimbingwe] was not the traditional village that Mbakondja had expected to find. Two large brick houses had been built which housed officers of the German Empire. The cemetery which is normally a sacred place in the African culture had been neglected to the extent of looking like a grazing field of the for the goats, donkeys and cattle. It was amazing to think the least. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 87)

Neglecting the graves is another sign indicating how the Hereros were slowly but essentially moving away from that which defines and identifies them. Neglecting the graves of their ancestors could be interpreted as abandoning and discounting that cultural idiosyncrasy attributed to Hereros, yet the ancestors are claimed to be part of the Hereros’ everyday life. Thus, the disregarding of the graves goes against the grainline of African identity as Mulambuzi (1997) explains it that:

Ancestors are believed to remain in close contact with their living relatives. As regards their dwelling place, they are thought to live in the vicinity of their graves in which

their bodies were buried. Hence, a clan or family's burial grounds is always treated with special respect and importance. (p. 1)

If the cemetery has been ignored to the extent of appearing like a grazing patch then the whole idea of respecting the ancestors becomes invalidated as the ancestors would also in turn ignore the living as Saccaggi (2012) points out that, “The good will of the ancestors is gained through dedication, and neglect can result in misfortune” (p. 77). Thus, the calamity faced by the Hereros under the perilous hands of the Germans could possibly be radiating from discounting their ancestors.

The Germans deliberately permitted the development of a settlement like Otjimbingwe as they knew that the activities taking place in that civilisation would see the death of a people's culture and that is precisely what befell the Hereros; they forgot about who they were. This squarely communicates Gewalt's (1998) observation that:

Herero were deported from their former areas of residence and allocated to those settlers and businesses demanding labour. Ancestor worship and the maintenance of Okuroo (holy fire) were prohibited. All forms of leadership, with the exception of the Christian evangelists, were prohibited. (p. 137)

The environment in which they found themselves was crafty as the Hereros were blindly led to their demise. All aspects pertaining to their culture, tradition and identity were prohibited but Christianity, hence neglecting the ‘graves in the cemetery’ and forgetting totally about the holy fire. In *Mama Namibia* (2013), though not Herero, Yaakov comprehends the importance of tradition and accordingly remarks that:

The purpose of tradition. It ties us irrevocably to the past and to our ancestors. But at the same time, it reaches forward, connecting us to the future and to our descendants –

so long as they remember and honour the traditions. It's a cycle that holds us together as a people. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 66)

The Hereros were thus slowly abandoning their culture which is a major drive in their history as commented by Peters (2007, p. 1) that, "Indigenous people's relationship with their traditional lands and territories is said to form a core part of their identity and spirituality and to be deeply rooted in their culture and history." So, this relationship of the Hereros and their land and territories is what the Germans tactfully dismantled and leaving the Hereros prone to destruction.

Other than digging and neglecting of the graves instigated by the German potencies, the Germans also poisoned water sources which the researcher finds justly unethical. A water source is a revered place as humans, domestic animals as well as wild creatures all have their lives sustained by water sources. Poisoning of the water source is a form of environmental degradation observed by the numbers of animals and people who perished after consuming the poisoned water. In *The Scattering* (2016), the poisoning of water sources is delineated during the mass exodus into the Omaheke Desert. The account confirms the catastrophic nature of tampering with revered places such as waterholes.

After two days they [the Hereros] reached a waterhole... 'Wait,' Kahaka yelled to the people who ran for the water. Some had already drunk from the well. 'Wait, let the animals drink first.' The people protested. 'No, you must wait. We must make sure the water is safe'. Tjipuka was not sure who had warned Kahaka, but within minutes they could see something was wrong. They couldn't stop more cattle from pushing to the water, driven by thirst. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 49)

It is without doubt that the water source was contaminated by Germans in their bid to destroy a nation as evidenced from history proper that "Von Trotha poisoned water holes for more than

100 miles and ordered his men to bayonet anyone who tried to escape” (Lowenstein, 2004, para. 8). This is further reinforced by Katjavivi (2019) that, “The shocking accounts include the way German soldiers drove the Herero into the desert and then poisoned the waterholes...” (para, 4). Further reading of this scene in *The Scattering* brings to life the event that happened over a century ago, complimenting history proper which addresses the ‘what’ question by elaborating on the ‘what it was like’ to borrow from Bortolotti (2015).

The cattle drank their fill and moved off to search for bits of dried grass in the sand. The people looked at the water but did not touch it. Then the cattle began to moan. Soon they were crying filling the air with their painful calls. They fell to the ground, legs thrashing. Saliva poured from their mouths. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 49)

The expiring of the poisoned animals revealed yet another layer of fear amongst the Hereros for that had not drank and an even elevated one for those that had drank the contaminated water; they then knew death was certain. *The Scattering* further gives a detailed enlightenment on what happened the people who had consumed the poisoned water:

The people watched as the cattle died, one by one. The few people who had drunk the water before Kahaka stopped them began to hold their stomachs and moan too. They rolled on the ground, vomiting. Nothing helped. Within two hours all the cattle, goats, and sheep were dead. Seven people – four women, one man, one man and two children - lay dead as well. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 49).

This water-hole was not the only one poisoned as history proper talks about ‘poisoning water-holes’ (plural), therefore, unrecorded and un-narrated incidences of deaths of similar or even grander magnitudes could have occurred. Scores and scores of people perished after falling victim of poisoned water-holes. That subtracted the population of the Hereros, thereby fulfilling the agendas of von Trotha’s extermination order.

Violation of the Hereros' revered places through the digging of the graves by the Germans; neglecting of graves by Hereros resulting from mental indoctrination by the Germans; and the poisoning of the water-holes by the Germans, all sum up to total conquest of the Hereros. Thus, Kandemiri and Mlambo (2019) comment that, the consequences of colonialism radiated into numerous losses that engendered subjugation and humiliation of the black people, black invisibility, as well as loss of cultural footing. In other words, the Hereros under the jurisdiction of the Germans were relegated to the level of mere objects.

4.3 Retaining of indigenous knowledge systems

The use of indigenous knowledge (IK) became a critical point of survival when the Hereros' lives suddenly changed with the infiltration of the Germans. Of the selected novels for this study, the use of IK is more prevalent in *Mama Namibia* (2013) and exhibited through the character Jahohora. Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) perform a critical role in making human beings able to sustain themselves in the face of adversity. Jahohora learnt orally from his father about IK, "Tate takes Mama and me into his secret healing garden to show us a special plant that is medicine for the milk cows" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 20). This becomes a tutorial that she later applies to save herself from being captured and taken to the death camps.

Jahohora's intricate knowledge of her surrounding environment confirms the intersection between humans and the environment, and with that she survives in the desert hence echoing Maunganidze's (2016) claim that, "Because human identity is regarded as an extension of the environment, there is an element of inseparability between people and the natural world" (p. 2). Jahohora is able to hunt by trapping small creatures for food, she digs the ground for tubers (unkis), as well as moving from one berry bush to the other for survival. It is because she is knowledgeable of the area and alert of the edible odds and ends that she comes across. Thus, she confirms Mapara's (2009) definition of IKS that it is "a body of knowledge, or bodies of

knowledge of the indigenous people of particular geographical areas that they have survived on for a very long time” (p. 140). She had to survive and she survived.

Jahohora saves the life of Ikuaterua who was almost on the verge of passing away. She is just a wanderer in the desert but with the knowledge and help of her surroundings, she manages to resuscitate Ikuaterua who was so emaciated that “a small breeze could blow him over” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 188). She takes care of him until the man recovers, though not fully as indicated from the novel that, “At last, the man is able to sit up and drink without me holding the water pouch for him. He talks softly. His voice is just a whisper” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 189). It is through the collaborative effort of the environment and Jahohora’s knowledge of that environment that Ikuaterua recovers.

Another part which relates to IKS is the ability of Jahohora to correlate with her environment basing on the knowledge she is familiar with to survive. After Ikuaterua had recovered and before he left Jahohora, he had warned her that, “They [German soldiers] would come...And what they do to Herero girls is very bad. They just kill the men, but they force the girls and the women to lie with them. then they kill them” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 190). The fear of being a victim and prey of the German soldiers is what prompted Jahohora to take a drastic measure of poisoning herself in order to survive. She recalls the plant and had to walk in the veld to look for it. She finds one and says “I tear a leaf off. It stings my hands. It must be the right plant” (Serebrov, 2013, p. 202). The idea of her remembering the deadly plant in a way glorifies the African way of instruction, that is orally, which is though disregarded by some of the western dogmas that believe in teaching through the classroom. Thus, Nkondo (2012) argues that, the western perception of African indigenous knowledge as mere repetition of practices without any theory to explain them is a depiction of western cultural and intellectual arrogance. Nonetheless, the non-theoretical and oral practices are those that are actually inspiring the surviving characters in the novel *Mama Namibia* (2013).

Jahohora applies the poisonous plant all over her body and is aware of the effects that plant would have on her, but she felt that was the only way to go. This she chooses as a protective mechanism against being captured and being abused.

The plant might make me sick, but it could protect me. I pick more leaves and rub them all over my body. I feel like I am on fire. I look down at my arms and legs. They're covered with little bumps – like lots and lots of bug bites. I don't want to put the leaves on my face, but I have to. I gently rub them on my neck and then on my cheeks, my chin and my forehead. I'm careful not to let them touch my eyes. When I'm done, I itch so badly that I want to scratch my skin off. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 202)

After developing the sores, Jahohora survives from being captured into the concentration camps. Interestingly, the IKS as presented in the narrative *Mama Namibia* were not documented and proven scientifically, but were potently passed on from generation to generation orally (Kandemiri, 2019). Jahohora in a way, illustrates how IKS function in societies, and her branch is one that deals with medicines. Concurring, Mapara (2009) observes that indigenous knowledge systems manifest themselves through different dimensions and among these are agriculture, medicine, security, botany, zoology, craft skills and linguistics. Jahohora uses a poisonous plant to create a personal sanctuary which indeed became a fortification as she developed wounds that were exactly what she wanted.

The pain makes me sleep a lot ... Tiny little maggots have crawled inside the sores, making them worse than they were before ... it hurts to touch anything. And when I stand, the earth moves as if I'm turning in circles. I almost fall. I grab the tree again to steady myself. I pick up a broken branch to use as a walking stick and walk – very, very slowly - toward a waterhole. (Serebrov, 2013, pp. 202-203)

Though Jahohora was already undernourished, and applying the poisonous plant further worsened her condition, she fell sick and at the same time an effective defensive mechanism was now in place. The agencies of the German soldiers visited Jahohora's water-hole and when they see her but do not get close to her. Her self-inflicted wounds had deterred the men from doing anything on her. She was fortified by wounds. Thus, indigenous knowledge saved Jahohora despite the adversity brought about by the war. Indigenous knowledge can essentially provide solutions to the existing problems of that time (Risiro et al., 2013).

4.4 Chapter summary

This chapter's thrust was on the second objective which was set to investigate the ways in which the survivors adapted to the sudden change of their lives upon the inception and during the conflict, as presented in the selected novels. The chapter established that, a number of strategies were devised and these depended mainly on the form of challenge being encountered at any given time. Thus, attention given to displacement which resulted in homelessness and disruption of social setting. Also, the use of indigenous knowledge also played a role as it formed part of survival. The next chapter (Chapter 5) deliberates on the third objective of this study as its focal point of analysis.

CHAPTER 5: FORMS OF RESILIENCE EXHIBITED AS MEANS OF SURVIVAL

5.1 Introduction

Despite the tormenting times and the immense deaths that the Hereros and Namas were experiencing as a result of the presence of the Germans, some of them survived the traumatic conditions and managed to build some form of resilience. The Germans created a cruel situation that was extreme and that touched the lowest points of human perversity. The extermination order in its capacity also incited the German soldiers to lose that strand which enumerates humans from other forms of creation by developing and perpetrating barbarism on fellow humans. This chapter deliberates on the third objective of this study that was set to examine the forms of resilience that the survivors adopted as means of coping and surviving under the less-than-favourable conditions as presented in the selected narratives of genocide.

5.2 Delineation of resilience in the selected texts

The selected novels: *Parts Unknown* (2018), *The Lie of the Land* (2017), *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017), *The Scattering* (2016), and *Mama Namibia* (2013), illustrate concrete situations. It is through the narrations of these selected novels that emotional enchantments and realistic descriptions provide a clearer picture of what transpired during the 1904-1908 epoch. By virtue of being different, all the characters reacted differently to the brutalities lashed on the indigenous people by the German soldiers. The indigenous characters' exposure to callousness resulted in varying degrees of trauma and arrays of resilience. The following subsections embark on exploring the different forms of resilience and survival means as exhibited by the characters in the selected texts.

5.2.1 Characters' resilience and survival as presented in *Parts Unknown* (2018)

Resilience and survival tactics are central peculiarities confirmed in *Parts Unknown* (2018). Mordegai's decision and successful escape from the death camp is an indication of resilience

prevailing. He knew that escaping was just taking chances and once caught, it would mean an amplified tougher life or even death. At the same time, staying at the death camp would have seen Mordegai slowly and defenselessly watching death encroaching him. So either ways, risk remained highly and likely. The escape scene is petrifying as one would prejudge and pre-conclude the death of Mordegai. Again, the escape course he takes is equally perilous but he still nurtures and endures the idea of escaping as illustrated from *Parts Unknown*:

He peered over the edge of the roof. He planned his moves, said a quick prayer to his ancestors and swung his legs down. It all had to happen in one movement. He let go with his hands and crashed down on top of the sitting man, who barked out a grunt. Mordegai gave a step, another and off he jumped. His feet hit the ground and momentum toppled him backward. (Van den Berg, 2018, p. 27)

In the eyes of the Germans, Mordegai appears a villain yet the colonial structures and undercurrents that are in place resulted in the criminalisation of Mordegai and the rest of the indigenous people. His deprived freedom is what drives him to be a fugitive and even the risking of his life by jumping off a moving locomotive. The impact on touching the ground could have marked the end of Mordegai's life but he survives and instead suffers a blackout:

His feet [Mordegai's] hit the ground and momentum toppled him backward. The fall knocked the brain out of him, and the impact on his head made him blackout. When his thoughts took shape again, he struggled to remember where he was... (Van den Berg, 2018, p. 27)

The drive in him to live on helps in generating resilience, a conception matching Ledesma's (2014) observation that survival is one of the concepts including recovery and thriving that are bracketed with resilience and describe the stage at which a person may be during or after facing the difficulty. Mordegai's body and mind could also have sensed the danger hence the blackout

was short-lived. If it had prolonged, then it would have been easy for the German soldiers on the train to capture or even kill him. However, it could be the work of both the supernatural (as Mordegai had done a short prayer to his ancestors for protection before he jumped off the train) and the environment that provided him with cover. This is evident from *Parts Unknown* after the blackout that, “When his thoughts took shape again, he struggled to remember where he was...He rolled over, got onto all fours and scrambled away, looking for shelter” (Van Den Berk, 2018, p. 27). The crawling away could be described as a skill for survival. The German soldiers did not track down Mordegai with the exception of Siegfried, who out of his mercy allowed Mordegai to live on by neither capturing nor shooting him.

Adding on, Mordegai adapted and relied on the untamed environment for survival. It was a tough time in the veld, but a relationship could be noticed as the environment supported Mordegai with food as illustrated from the text that:

He lived off the veld, eating roots, field cucumbers and camel thorn pods, grasshoppers, ants and larvae. He dug the riverbeds for water. Once he found a stray cow and managed to drink a few squirts of milk. (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 88)

It may be commented at this point in time that it is evident that a relationship exists between human beings and the environment. Even with the harshest conditions that the environment might be, a human being can always find gratitude from even the minutest that the environment may provide. It is the little that the environment provided that sustained Mordegai. The environment also provided materials that Mordegai had to craft primitive but effective tools that he used for hunting game that was provided again by the environment. This is shown in *Parts Unknown* where it reads that:

He set about finding a suitable stick and sharpened it by scrapping the sides of the tip against a level stone. Armed with the stick, he took up a position above a ledge with

telltale rock-rabbit droppings, and waited with his spear raised. A snout animal appeared below him. He kept dead still. The rest of the animal emerged, about as long as his forearm. Mordegai stabbed hard and fast, then lifted the wriggling, frantically trilling animal. He carried the rodent to flat ground and finished it off with a rock. (Van Den Berg, 2018, pp. 89-81)

Mordegai's adaptation to the environment can also be likened to a skill acquired for survival further reinforcing the existence between humans and the environment, which is in itself the concept of ecocriticism. Thus, Mordegai's acclimatisation confirms Sahu's (2014) observation that the relationship between man and nature is not just interdependent but also interrelated. The interdependency and interrelatedness between man and

Nature is further seen in *Parts Unknown* when Mordegai demonstrates the skills of being resourceful. He makes sure that whatever the environment provides must not be wasted. Other than just enjoying the meat from the game that he hunted, the other byproducts were skillfully crafted into other material objects that he used in order to survive in the wild. This is evident from the text that:

He made himself a bow, using a flexible stick and the rock-rabbit's gut that he squeezed empty and twisted into a string. He made arrows from sticks which he used to kill a guinea fowl. This fed him for a few days and provided feathers to fletch his arrows. He wet the rock-rabbit skin, rubbed fat into it and beat it with stones until it became pliable. He used this to make better shoes. (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 91)

Thus, with the new tools created, hunting of small animals would be much easier for him, hence the availability of food for nourishing his body. Also observed is the element of enhancement when Mordegai fashions his own shoes, a quality that echoes Fletcher and Sarkar (2011) that self enhancement is one of the factors linked to resilience (§ 2.2.1 *Trauma and Resilience Theory*).

The 'shoes' would protect his feet and would make walking easier in the wild, which may imply that Mordegai looks forward to living on. That can also further be linked to yet another quality of resilience referred to as 'hardiness' again from Fletcher and Sarkar (2011). This hardiness is a factor that involves that commitment to finding meaningful purpose in life. Mordegai understands that he has a right to live a free life hence escaping and taking greatest care of himself (by fashioning shoes) even in the absence of almost everything that normally sustains life.

In the scene when Pitzer is doing his experiments on the Hoachnamib villagers, a form of resilience is observed when a mother being experimented on fights Pitzer after he had wacked her baby. The woman could not just allow Pitzer to hurt her child and had to apply instant justice, as illustrated in the text that, "The next moment a blow struck him [Pitzer] on his side of his face. The mother's palm crushed his nose and her fingers whipped into his eye, sending his pince-nez flying" (Van Den Berg, 2018, pp. 145-146). The woman had to revenge on behalf of her defenseless child from the physical attack by Pitzer. That reaction she had is a form of resilience that was stimulated by the cruelty wielded on her child and escaped afterwards to save her life and that of her child.

Then for Alvaus LuiPERT, he instilled resistance and resilience to his fellow villagers and he lived and practised his word. He was a school master by profession and a natural leader in his community. He mobilised the Hoachnamib villagers to revolt against the German police and all the villagers tested positive to resilience. He even confronted the police officers that they found on duty and said to them:

We may not have a Goethe or Bach, but this country did not spring into existence the moment you set foot here. The Nama have a long history. Every time your people plant a flag here, it is on our land. (Van Den Berg, 2018, p. 160)

Alvaus's words are full of protest, resentment and a trait of bitterness that is easily noticed in his tone. The bitterness is instigated by the behaviour of Germans as they expand their colonial territories by displacing other people. They just claim ownership to land even on that land that already had its inhabitants. Alvaus rebels against this German system as a result of rejecting their methodology that is fond of bringing suffering on other people. Taormina's (2015) explanation on resilience is that, it also involves recoiling. Instead of being subdued as a result of the most dehumanising act of being measured whilst being completely naked by Pitzer, Alvaus returns and sought revenge. He chose not to be depreciated by that act, but instead had to make Pitzer taste his own medicine. Thus, Alvaus may be described as a strong character who fights for what rightfully belongs to him.

Moreover, the Hoachnamib village people yearn to live, could be described as a denotation of resilience, thus they abandon the village after they attacked the police officers that were at the police post. They knew the Germans would react to that act by slaughtering them and with that they vacated the village. Their life was at danger as the villagers did not have adequate ammunition that would match the sophisticated artillery that the Germans had. It could be argued that running away from the village is a sign of cowardliness yet on the other hand it may also be viewed as a form of resilience; they treasured the importance to live on and to spare their lives, running away becomes a form of resilience and a skill for survival.

In *Parts Unknown*, the different characters reveal variety forms of resilience and survival skills, all determined by the type of adversity encountered. The varying responses in *Parts Unknown* echo Ledesma's (2014) observation regarding individual variations in response to adversity. Notable is that, all the adversities that the characters are encountering are emanating from the intrusion of the Germans in their expansion for German colonial territories.

5.2.2 Representation of resilience and survival in *The Lie of the Land* (2017)

In *The Lie of the Land*, Sam's occasional exposure and experiences of witnessing the defenceless Hereros being hanged by the German soldiers created a layer of resilience as the scenes were crude and cruel. In order to survive he had to control his frame of mind lest he got affected mentally as illustrated from the text that:

As the days went by, we pushed further into the Otjiherero territory. We passed more burnt villages and witnessed more hangings. I shouldn't have slept at all but in war you tend to grow a hard shell round your feelings. Otherwise you lose your senses. (Utley, 2017, p. 47)

The burning of the villages and the lynching of the Hereros was traumatising and since it was now more of an unending succession of such events, Sam had to safeguard his sanity that it would not sadly morph into insanity. He knew the meaning of life and witnessing all the killings was in itself a violation of the right to live to all the victims. Thus, Sam's character leans on hardness, a quality of resilience that Fletcher and Sarkar (2011) describe as that which involves being committed to finding meaningful purpose in life. Hence Sam's hardness becomes a fulcrum for survival.

A sharp contrast in character is observed in David if compared with Sam. Initially, David had his own discernment of the war against the Hereros based mainly on the information that they had heard back in their home in German. He says:

'We have heard stories back in Germany how they cut off the private parts of our wounded men while they were still alive. They are totally uncivilised...' He grinned mirthlessly. 'We shall civilise them.' And he clutched his rifle until the knuckles of his hand turned white. (Utley, 2017, p. 29)

According to Sam, David seemed to be unaware of what the war was, neither an idea of what the African landscape entailed nor what the Herero enemy was like. Thus, the certainty that David had misled him as stated from the text that:

He knew little of where they were going and who they were going to fight. I doubt if he even knew much about the place. He certainly stared with open mouth at the dry, rocky country through which we were slowly ascending. (Utley, 2017, p. 28)

Reality snapped when David witnessed the unleashing of trauma and the lynching of the immobilised Hereros by the German soldiers and the experience brewed a true character of who David was. It was after von Trotha had ordered and had an unarmed group of Hereros, made up of old people and sick people hanged. The incident impacted on Sam as he could not comprehend the rationale behind the lynching of such people and terrified David. Sam narrates that:

As we rode on, David joined me. He was looking distinctly green. I turned round and saw all their bodies, men and women, swinging from the thorn tree. One or two of them were still kicking. I found myself that no children had been captured. (Utley, 2017, p. 46)

It was war but David was traumatised by the killing as observed in his dialogue with Sam as they moved away from the place where the Hereros had been massacred hence looked 'distinctly green'. Besides the trauma being visible from the outside, his words when he engaged in the dialogue with Sam did not match what he was going through from the inside. David revealed his distrustful character on the 'enemy' and thus pretended to be resilient by justifying the General's order. This is illustrated in the following:

'Is this what you expected from the war?'

David licked his dry lips.

‘These people have killed innocent German farmers,’ he muttered.

‘Really? They didn’t look capable of killing anyone.’

‘The General did the right thing,’ he said and rode off. (Utley, 2017, p. 47)

In another incident, Sam exhibits a sturdier character whereas David suffered from what they both had witnessed. They had encountered a dead Herero soldier close to a German soldier who was still alive but critically wounded. Sam leaned down to help the German soldier, unfortunately the soldier dies in Sam’s hands and David’s reaction somehow pointed his vulnerability in that war, he lacked resilience. This is illustrated in the text that:

I [Sam] looked down to see how badly he [the German soldier] was wounded. At that moment, he dropped his hands and I gasped. He had been holding in his entrails and now they spilled out with a gush of dark red blood to the dust. He looked at me once with a look of bewilderment, coughed and with a horrid gargle, died in my arms. David was being violently sick over a bush. He had found the ‘fun’ he was looking for. (Utley, 2017, p. 71)

The scene was gruesome and a resilient character like Sam could survive, whereas weak characters like David would retch instead. The contrary reactions displayed by David and Sam to the same situation reverberates Ledesma’s (2014) assertion that individuals’ reaction to traumatic experiences varies from individual to individual. David’s retching could be likened to his inability to withstand the inevitable irregularities associated with the war. David’s reaction deems him unfit for the war though he persisted in being part of the war. However, due to the perpetual lynching of the Hereros, it appears David acquired a form of resilience that the researcher personally does not interpret as resilience but a form of mental derailment. David’s actions are being driven by a convincing level of psychosis resultant of the numerous grisly murders of people including the innocent ones. Thus, echoing Lemaire’s (2011)

observation that trauma can possibly transform and damage the victim's mental capabilities. This is evident from the text where David is now enjoying the lynching and it is in the same scene that Sam saves Leah from being executed:

‘Good day,’ he [David] said, smiling a welcome. ‘You [Sam] are just in time’

‘In time for what?’

‘For the execution of these Herero.’ He seemed to have overcome his

earlier doubts and was enjoying this far too much. He had made his choice. (Utley,

2017, p. 85)

David's new attitude may not possibly be qualified as resilience if weighed against Cloete and Mlambo's (2014) clarification that resilience entails an individual's positive adaptation to adversity. David is actually the opposite as he adapts to his adversity negatively.

Some survival tactics are also exhibited when Sam and Leah elope and break away from the army troops. They had to scavenge for food in the wild as a means of survival. Just like Mordegai in *Parts Unknown* (2018), they relied on the kindness of the environment for sustenance as illustrated from *The Lie of the Land* that, “Having no chance of collecting supplies in camp, we lived off the land” (Utley, 2017, p. 92). Leah seemed to be more conversant with the environment and would know how to look for both food and water in the wilderness as evidenced from the text that:

Leah had a gift of knowing where we might find water, enough for us and the horse. As for food, she found enough roots and berries to keep us going. At times I longed for a hot meal but a fire would have sent a signal to everyone for miles around. (Utley, 2017, p. 92)

This scene further reinforces the relationship that exists between human beings and the environment, confirming Sahu's (2014) observation on the interrelatedness between man and nature. Also, as a skill for survival, Leah and Sam had to do away with hot meals as setting up a fire would deliberately sell them out to their pursuers. Sam had a gun but could not risk shooting game as the discharge of the gun would alert either the Germans or the Namas. They had to eat a snake at one point and with providence they saw ostrich eggs that were guarded by a huge ostrich. They had to be skillful in order to be able to snatch just one egg as the ostrich is known to be "dangerous" (p. 94). They tactfully tricked the ostrich and filched one egg in a more hilarious way as illustrated in Chapter 10 of *The Lie of the Land* (2017, pp. 94-95). Thus, dexterity became a means of survival for both of them.

Leah tactfully opened the ostrich egg and after eating the contents, they switched the egg shell into a water container as Sam says, "From there we had her egg and my water bottle. She fashioned a kind of sling out of twisted roots and a stopper from a pebble and slung the egg over her shoulder." (Utley, 2017, pp. 95-96). Just as Mordegai in *Parts Unknown* (2018), Leah fashioned, though primitive, a useful water container using the unsophisticated materials, all provided by the environment.

As a means of survival, again Sam tricks some sentries at a military post they came across in their aimless wander in the wild with Leah. Sam lied in order to source food and water from the camp and was successful. He pretended to have got lost as he was being interrogated and said:

'I am a civilian attached to the staff of General von Trotha,' I began in my best High German. 'Unfortunately I became separated from the column I was with when we were attacked by a band of Hottentot rebels. As a result, I got lost in this unfriendly land. But

God has seen to protect me and has led me to you. I require food, water and directions so that I can again be on my way to join our gallant troops.’ (Utley, 2017, p. 100)

Sam used deceit as a means to survive. He endangered his life by going to a sentry point of which he could have been shot. The troops at the sentry had even doubted him as one of them had questioned Sam that, “How do I know that you are not a deserter?” (Utley, 2017, p. 100). The incongruity in that question turned out to be the truth, but Sam persevered in what he wanted, he had to take as he says “the Prussian way” and he triumphed by fraudulence.

Another configuration of resilience is seen in Sam as he embarks on his quest in search for Leah who had been captured as a prisoner of war and taken to one of the ‘death’ camps. Sam finds himself right at the boundary between the German territory on the northern side of Orange River and the British territory on the southern part of the river. His love for Leah had him remain on the northern part in order to persist with his search. He could have crossed to the British side and instantly be free of the raging war in the German territory. The Orange River became a significant feature in his interpretation of life hence he states that, “I scraped off the dirt and dust and then lay on the bank, drying myself in the sun, contemplating how I was on the junction of two worlds in more ways than one” (Utley, 2017, p. 115). Crossing the river could have gained him instant freedom as he was a British agent yet he could not afford abandoning Leah hence he chose to remain on the Northern part of the river in order to search for Leah.

The search was not easy as Sam had little to no knowledge of the land and had to rely on the directions he got from strangers he encountered. The idea of not giving up illustrates contours related to resilience. Also, the necklet he had received from Leah had kept Sam determined in his quest as illustrated from the text, “It was the thought of Leah that kept me going and I was constantly fingering the shell on my necklace to remind me of my goal” (Utley, 2017, p. 120).

Thus, resilience and determination had successfully directed Sam to where Leah was. Sam could have given up particularly that time he got to the Orange River, thus his resilience rewarded him accordingly as he managed to reunite with Leah. Thus he says:

I was so elated, it was difficult for me to keep a straight face. I had found her. After all my travels and troubles, I had actually found her. I could barely believe it. Now I was free to think that I could achieve anything. All I had to do was to find a way to get her out of the island. (Utley, 2017, p. 143)

Though the reunion was successful, it was sealed by a tragic end with the death of Leah, bringing yet another traumatic episode in the life of Sam. However, in the process of consoling Sam, the *strandloper* instilled the spirit of resilience in Sam to assist him in accepting the loss of Leah and the unborn baby that she was carrying. Thus the *strandloper* says to Sam:

‘It is over.’ He tapped me on the knee. “When we leave someone, we do not look back. You must do the same. Neither of them can come back’

I wasn’t sure I had heard correctly.

‘I am sorry? Neither of them? What do you mean?’

He frowned. ‘You didn’t know?’

‘Know what?’

‘She was with child. The women here say that it died with her. I am very

Sorry, please.’ (Utley, 2017, p. 171)

Sam could not readily accept the death of Leah and instead took with him the *strandloper*’s advice as they left Walvis Bay for Europe which assisted in building a form of resilience that would allow Sam to live on. Thus he says, “Bearing in mind the *strandloper*’s words, I did not

look back” (Utley, 2017, p. 179). When Sam gets to London, it was raining and the rain may be interpreted as symbolic of cooling and cleansing Sam of all the troubles and griefs he had experience in German South West Africa, hence purifying and making him a new person altogether.

The resilience exhibited by the characters in *The Lie of the Land* (2017) reveal uneven patterns of responses to adversities. Each character had a peculiar way of responding to any form challenge just as revealed with the characters in *Parts Unknown* (2018).

5.2.3 Instances of resilience and survival in *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017)

In *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*, varying forms of resilience from person to person are illustrated and all the forms are determined by the way individuals react to adversities. The Hereros were always being forced to migrate randomly by the infiltration of the Germans. The continual relocating resulted in loss of material wealth, chief among them that of land and the immaterial that of leaving behind the graves of their ancestors, hence cutting the links. This is verified in the text, “More than half of their livestock had perished during years of migration and displacement” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 44). The loss of large stocks of cattle resulted in some Hereros to fight Germans to regain what was lawfully theirs. Moreover, the Germans meant to destroy a nation and as such did all sorts of mischief and crimes against the Hereros as stated in the text that, “Since the arrival of the General, the Schutztruppe had been on the rampage, burning down villages, confiscating large stock of cattle, confiscating lands and raping women” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 52). Thus, with these crimes, the Hereros had to build some forms of resilience as the actions of the Germans were suffocating and traumatising, hence, created complications in the lives of the Hereros.

With these adversities that sprouted as a result of the presence of the Germans, a trait of resilience in the character Mbakondja is perceived. Mbakondja feels there is need to fight the Germans to stop them from terrorising the Hereros. This is elucidated when Mbakondja converses to Kanangombe that, “We cannot remain fugitives forever in the land of our own birth” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 73). The spirit of fighting for what is technically theirs attests the presence of resilience. Thus, the resilience in Mbakondja could be paralleled to Fletcher and Sarkar’s (2011) hardiness, a factor linked to resilience that entails being committed to finding meaningful purpose in life. So, Mbakondja’s drive to fight the Germans is anchored in his understanding of the significance of life. With the presence of the Germans, land is taken, cattle being confiscated, women raped as well as the killing of the Hereros. This would in turn result in the Hereros being extinct, hence Mbakondja is keen to fight as he has an understanding of the meaning of life.

As for other characters such as Kovita, they are a bit sceptic about fighting the Germans. They fear instant defeat as the German army is well equipped with war artillery compared to the Herero army’s. Thus, it would be futile to engage war with such a strong army as the Hereros would just perish. This is evident from the text when Kovita says, “Listen Mbakondja, the white man is exploiting the power of modern weapons that we don’t have” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 74). Kovita is trying to annul Mbakondja’s idea of fighting the Germans which could be interpreted as a sign of despondency on the part of Kovita. Fighting the Germans is seen as something insurmountable and as such, Kovita further justifies his reasons for not even attempting to fight the Germans, evident from the text:

He [the white man] is also using the Bible to control the minds of our people. The Bible has become a belly of the beast in which the soul is detained. The soul of the people you want to convert in support of the insurrection is inside that belly. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 74)

Of course, it is a challenge to inculcate consciousness in the minds of people whose minds have already been tampered with. The white man had used the bible as a powerful stratagem to instigate inferiority and docility to the Hereros and Namas literary implying that the white man now restricted the indigenous people. This observation echoes Woodson's (1933) popular quote that, "When you control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his actions" (p. xiii). Hence Kovita tactlessly refuting Mbakondja's idea to rise against the Germans. Nonetheless, Mbakondja turned a blind eye on all the criticism as he knew his thoughts were in the right track as Hereros and Namas needed to reclaim what is justly theirs that had been lost to the Germans. Even the issue of the Bible being an influential tool in the passivity of the indigenous people, Mbakondja still feels all that can be challenged by rebelling against such an oppressive system. He believes soundly that, whatever scheme the Germans might use to destroy a people's tradition and all other sorts of identity, however, there is the mental space that cannot possibly be reached hence Mbakondja being able to think about rebelling against the Germans. This is evidenced from the text when Mbakondja says that, "You can destroy tradition's physical presence but never its mental space" (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 86), which is resilience insignia.

Also, Mbakondja, sees it his duty to inculcate consciousness and awaken the people in his community on the rationale behind fighting the Germans. Majority of the community members had their minds contaminated by the presence of the Germans' transformations on the local indigenous people and majority had even accepted their new life as normal and could not see anything flawed in it. This is illustrated from the text that:

The residents of Otjimbingwe were mainly commoners who lived from day to day. They had developed unity over the long years of German repression. Their mutual solidarity sometimes stemmed from a feeling of despair, displacement, depression and

dispossession. Mbakondja stirred in them a new hope to fight back. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 91)

The lives of the common people in the community had largely been distorted and eclipsed by the overpowering force of the Germans and that changed life in particular, is what Mbakondja tried to stimulate in them the need to restore it. The quality exhibited by Mbakondja of transmitting consciousness to the community could be designated as a form of resilience. In order for the Hereros and Namas to live on in the community, they needed to rise and defend what was legally theirs, that is, getting their land and freedom that had been appropriated by the Germans.

The whole notion of recruiting men and establishing an army, all point at the resilience in Mbakondja. Other than that, he also, with the help of other men in the army, procure munitions thus, “Kaherero, Hendrik, Kanangombe, Kashe and Mbakondja formed a small contingency to Okanguvi to meet Robert Lewis [the gun smuggler]” Tjingaete, 2017, p. 127). Enough guns for Mbakondja’s army would foster their courage to confront and face the well-equipped Germany army. Moreover, the tone in Mbakondja’s voice when he meets Robert Lewis also signals resilience in Mbakondja as giving up fighting the Germans is not on his agenda list, as presented in the text, “My men dream about the freshness of the land. They want to reclaim the beautiful valleys, plains and mountains that are today stained with the blood of our people everywhere” (Tjingaete, p. 133). Gallantry and willpower are discernible propensities in Mbakondja’s immediate above utterance hence, resilience radiating.

Not only is the resilience observed in Mbakondja and his army. Other characters like Tjikuu who may appear fragile and vulnerable but are capable of transferring words that are bursting with resilience. The frustrations of such vulnerable characters as Tjikuu, ooze from the

unrefined behaviour of the Germans that is dehumanising to the Hereros and the Namas. Thus, Tjikuu says to Mbakondja and the other soldiers:

I have told many of you before that you must listen to the weeping graves of our ancestors. Their wrath will haunt the settlers until our grazing lands are restored to us. I may not be there to witness it. But it does not matter anymore. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 133)

Accordingly, the resilience is communicated through the word of mouth and encourages Mbakondja and his army to fight for what is justifiably theirs. The drive to fight is supported by the ancestors as they are weeping in their graves for the loss of material wealth that has been confiscated by the Germans, leaving the Herero people in despondency. The resilience in Tjikuu is illustrated in her choice of earnest words that arm the army with valour and motivation to fight and restore what was unjustly grabbed away from them. Her words are stacked and crammed with resilience noted once more where she says:

Fight on. Fight on...until every piece of land is restored to us. Fight on son of Mbangane. I say fight on. Be vigilant like an eagle; be vengeful like a wounded tiger; be firm like a rock. Fight on. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 134)

Tjikuu's diction and use of figures of speech altogether reflect and radiate the intense resilience in her. The qualities associated with 'an eagle, a wounded tiger and a firm rock' all insinuate qualities concomitant to resilience. Though Tjikuu does not go to the battlefield, her words are a direct confront of the Germans and also a form of subsidy in supporting Mbakondja's army. It may be commented that, Tjikuu's disposition could be described as what Fletcher and Sarkar (2011) refer to as hardiness in the context of resilience as she is to some extent controlled by her comprehension of what entails life.

What is more, on two specific occasions, nature seems to exhibit some form of resilience as if to disqualify the German soldiers' overall egotism towards the Hereros and Namas. Firstly, when the Germans pursued Mbakondja's army that had camped at the Waterberg Mountains with the intention to destroy people, the Germans encounter a troop of baboons that stopped them from going to Mbakondja's camp site. This is evident from the text:

The apes refused to vacate the territory which resulted in a nerve wracking stand-off. They howled aggressively to demonstrate their displeasure with the presence of the intruders. It was an amusing scene for the German soldiers who felt unwanted and betrayed by the apes (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 212).

This scene could be construed to denote that perhaps nature is not gratified with what the Germans are doing and had to show signs for the Germans for them to interpret and learn that their actions were going against the grain of the human-nature relationship. Thus, bringing to the fore the concept of ecocriticism which is discussed in depth in this study (§ 2.2.2 *Ecocriticism*). Moreover, in the second incident, nature is observed as still aggressive on the German soldiers evident from the text that, "Suddenly, a swam of bats descended upon the soldiers. The Germans were baffled by the unspoken grudge their presence invoked from nature. Bats in many societies represent evil" (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 212). The irony of this immediate quotation is that the Germans did not know that their undertakings, that is, displacing, hounding and killing the Hereros and Namas was horrendous, hence failing to recognise the metaphorical denotations presented around nature's reactions. Thus, through obliviousness on the way nature retorted, the German soldier in particular, Von Frinkenstein expressed his discomfort that, "Africa is a curse" (Tjingaete, 20147, p. 212). By looking beyond the ordinary representation of nature in these two incidences, it is a form of resilience being exhibited.

Lastly, towards the end of *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors*, despite being severely injured, Mbakondja showed traits of resilience through his determination to keep moving towards the direction of Botswana. This is evident from the text that, “Mbakondja was suffering from dehydration. The persistent bleeding had sapped his energy. He stopped occasionally to stuff some herbs into his wound” (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 222). Mbakondja did not just accept that he would just die hence stuffing medicine on several occasion. Also, the way he dodged the vultures that were following and circling him could be described as both a form of resilience and a survival tactic as illustrated from the text:

He crept forward on his stomach until he reached a ditch that protected him from the vultures and heat from the sun. he eased himself into the ditch to the displeasure of the vultures that retreated far up in the sky, to find other victims. They would return. (Tjingaete, 2017, p. 226)

In essence, Mbakondja understood the significance of life and with that he had to look for a place to prevent the vultures from waiting for him to die, a trait best matching Ledesma’ (2014) survival concept associated with resilience. Thus, Mbakondja and the other characters’ resilience saw the Hereros rising up against the German soldiers even though they were defeated.

5.2.4 Conceiving resilience and survival in *The Scattering* (2016)

In Kubuitsile’s (2016) *The Scattering*, the characters react differently to the traumatic experiences instigated by the presence and conducts of the Germans. Nonetheless, resilience is dynamic and varies from one individual to the other since human beings are diverse. Thus, with the characters in *The Scattering*, some would just succumb to the pressures of the traumas whilst others would exhibit resilience and live to fight for what is duly theirs.

The character, Ruhapo, flaunts resilience gestures right at the beginning of the tale by insisting on confronting the Germans than scampering away from them. He believes that the enemy needs to be driven out of their lives as much about the Hereros' lives had been muddled. This is evidenced from the text when Ruhapo reacts to his wife Tjipuka who had suggested that they leave their village and escape to Botswana:

I will fight my battles as I always have. Must we let the Germans take all that the Herero own, while we run away to the British like cowards? Have they not taken enough? I would rather die, my blood watering this land, this land of the Herero, our land, than let them anything else. I will never run, Tjipuka. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 33)

Tjipuka had thought it as a noble idea that they escaped the traumas stimulated by the Germans by absconding to the neighbouring British territory. Ruhapo interprets his wife's proposition as a form of cowardice and therefore would not allow the Germans to transplant the Hereros from their indigenous lands. His defiance could be described as a form of resilience that fits squarely into Fletcher and Sarkar's (2011) 'hardiness factor' which entails finding meaningful purpose in life. The hardiness factor drives Ruhapo to consider fighting the Germans in order for the Hereros to recoup their 'normal' life.

When the Hereros' villages were attacked by the Germans, the surviving villagers scattered all over, wandering in all directions escaping the conflagration of the German soldiers. In the undomesticated space is where the Hereros had to acclimatise to the unfamiliar life of adapting to the environment as a means of survival. This is verified from the text that, "They ate tubers they dug from the hard, sun-dried ground. The cattle were giving no milk as they were too thirsty and starving" (Kubuitsile, 2016, pp. 48-49). The Hereros would feed on anything that would keep them alive and as such would not choose from eating that was counted as uncommon in their land as illustrated in the text that:

Ruhapo had killed a puff adder that lay still on a warm rock and eaten it for breakfast one morning. You could survive if you had a gun, as he did. And if you had water or know where to find it. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 61).

In other Herero camps, the eating of anything they came across and thought would serve the purpose of food was also common. Food was scarce and the Hereros wanted to survive and that prompted them to hunt for anything and eating anything. This is apparent from *The Scattering*:

That evening they were lucky. Kahaka and the other men had caught a big lizard, a monitor as long as a leg. Though it was not food they would have considered eating eat before, they were thankful for the meat now. (Kubuitsile, p. 115)

Accordingly, eating the uncommonly edible creatures of the wild assisted the Hereros in continuing with their lives. They understood the meaning of being alive and had to make sure that they sustained it, though the sustaining was nourished by weird forms of food. As a way of conserving their lives the Hereros thus adapted by building resilience that saw them eating anything that came their way as choices were tightly restricted.

To add on, resilience is also exhibited in Tjipuka and Novengi who manage to escape when Kahaka's group was tricked and driven into the camp. Notches of resilience are visible in the courage and determination in Tjipuka observed when she says, "It's a trick, we need to run. Hold my hand. Do not let go. Whatever happens – do not let go" (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 117). Escaping may thus be described as a means of survival tactic.

The escape of Tjipuka and Novengi just as that of Mordegai in *Parts Unknown* (2018), could best be described as extraordinarily performed as they had turned their backs to the Germans who were armed with guns. The urge to live on entreated them to flee as more torment and death were eminent in the camp. This is as illustrated from the text:

They turned back and Tjipuka ran as fast as she could, pulling and sometimes dragging Novengi behind her. She ran into the darkness. They ran and ran, back into the desert. They ran and ran until the moon told Tjipuka they could stop. Then she pulled Novengi into a circle of bushes and held her tightly, rocking her in her arms until the sun rose. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 117).

The escaping may be viewed at the same time as a combination of a sign of resilience and a survival tactic. However, for these two characters, Tjipuka appeared much resilient and stronger compared to Novengi. The trauma that Novengi goes through made her derail mentally and Tjipuka had to provide pure support in order to keep Novengi streaming a stated in the text

The Scattering:

Novengi was lost to her completely. She mumbled words. Sometimes she asked where Kahaka was or Maveipi. Tjipuka told her what had happened, that Kahaka was dead, killed by the Germans. But she told her only once. To tell her again would be cruel. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 118)

The loss of a child and husband had brutally devastated Novengi to the extent of being driven into psychosis and this was parallel to the misery in the desert as they tried to survive. Conversely, they had to eat whatever was available as a way of surviving and Tjipuka had to prepare the food as the text elucidates that:

There was still a bit of meat on the carcasses - one looked to have died maybe a day before. Tjipuka made a small fire and cooked the meat though it was already covered with flies. She wiped away the small worms it was full of. She cooked it hard and fed pieces to Saul and Novengi. She ate what was left when they were finished, and was happy when it did not make any of them sick. (Kubuitsile, 2016, pp. 118-119)

Life in the wild was neither auspicious but it was by far much superior to that in the camps. Tjipuka and Novengi relied profoundly on the environment, further reinforcing the organic relationship between human beings and the environment. More so, though the situation was not sincerely favourable for humans' existing, nature was generous to keep Tjipuka and Novengi alive. It is through the infolding hardship that they had to devise means of surviving and with that resilience was also built as illustrated from the text:

Since then, they'd nothing. Water was a constant search. She learned that if you woke very early, the leaves of the plants though they didn't look wet, had a thin layer of moisture. She taught Novengi how to move around and lick the moisture before the sun stole it away. It was nothing to quench their constant thirst, but it allowed them to live another day. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 119)

Nature nurtured the two with the petite that it provided and that permitted Tjipuka and Novengi to live another day. Thus, nature seems to be protective of the two hence providing little but just enough to keep alive. The two had run away from the Germans and were literally adopted by nature as it took care of them for water and sustenance. They regained little of their strength from being dependable on what the environment was providing, again that increased their skills of getting the different food which all relate to resilience. This is as from *The Scattering*:

They ate anything. Mostly insects and small lizards Novengi had a skill at catching. They found tubers they knew were edible. They ate the melons the Bushmen had taught them about. They found more of the spikey, bitter fruits and roasted them for themselves. Slowly they regained their strength. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 123)

So, as a means of survival, Tjipuka and Novengi became connoisseurs of the wild territory they had taken as both home and sanctuary. Therefore, Tjipuka and Novengi's acquired skills and adaptation conform to Ledesma's (2014) reference to survival and recovery in relation to

resilience. It is through resilience that they continue to survive despite the less-than-favourable conditions.

Resilience is also observed in one of the scenes in which Tjipuka fights back one of the Herero men that had rebelled against their fellow folks and now were working under the German soldiers as agencies. Tjipuka's retribution is a tactic for survival as the agency had shown moves of intentions to rape her as explicit from the text that:

He moved closer to her [Tjipuka]. Slowly. He reached out his hand and ran it gently over her cheek, down her neck, down to her breast. Tjipuka stood still. He grabbed her breast in his hand and smiled at her. With one quick move, she brought her knee up hard into his groin and he fell to the ground. He moaned there while she looked down at him. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 127)

Tjipuka's reaction to the Herero man could be related to a form of battle against the system. Her resistance from being raped could imply her struggle against a system that meant to destroy her. Fighting and defeating the Herero man could suggest Tjipuka's triumph over the despotic system. However, she is overpowered and hauled to the holding camps where the prisoners are later taken to the death camps and face brutality as illustrated from the text that, "He brought down his leather sjambok on her back. She did not scream. She lay still" (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 160). It was the interaction with the environment that assisted in the healing of Tjipuka from the flogging as indicated from the text that:

On the second day Tjipuka began recovering. An old man in the group found a plant in the bush he said would help. He boiled it with some of the little water he had, and dabbed the tea onto Tjipuka's wounds. He had her drink some of the liquid too. She slept that night. In the morning she was lucid and able to walk, with help. He did the same the night when they stopped. By the third day of the treatment, the wounds had

stopped leaking and were scabbing over and she could walk on her own. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 160)

From the above immediate quotation, there is indigenous knowledge working where the interaction between human beings and the environment is vibrant. The old man knew of a wild plant and how to benefit from it at the right time, hence saving Tjipuka from the sores that she had developed from the flogging. Thus, the concept of ecology that entails the relationship between living organisms and their natural environment is brought to the fore (Buell, 1995; Kumar, 2016; Sahu, 2014). Interestingly, the effectiveness of the concoction made from the plant worked both from outside when it was dapped on the wounds and from inside when Tjipuka was instructed to drink a portion of the concoction and within three days, drastic improvement is noticed as she recovers. Consequently, the use of indigenous knowledge becomes a survival skill.

In another incident, Tjipuka's first attempt to abscond from Ludwig Schmeller, the German man who had bought her also shows traits of resistance. Though she had enough food and a proper shelter, Tjipuka felt her freedom was circumscribed and that she preferred to stay in the wild to being under Ludwig's roof and control. She gets caught in that first attempt to escape and is reprimanded through corporal punishment as stated from the text that, "She lay on the concrete floor of the shop without a word. She felt the first blow as it hit her back, but her mind closed" (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 210). The ability to close her mind is a sign of resilience as it allowed her to go through the excruciating punishment as if nothing was happening and she survived. The text further states that:

She neither screamed nor fought it. He hit her once and then twice. Then he stopped. She set up and watched him. He sat on the chair, his arms limp at his sides, the sjambok

fallen to the floor. She feared she might be sick – the pain on her back pulsed like a burning fire – but she held herself firm. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 210)

The absence of screaming or crying does not necessarily mean that the punishment was ineffective but rather, Tjipuka displayed a characteristic associated with resilience. She endured the lashing but managed to hold herself firm, designating her as a survivor. Moreover, Ludwig became more abusive and even raped Tjipuka, but for the reason of Tjipuka's status that of being a chattel to Ludwig she had to endure and just cling to the idea that she was alive as illustrated from *The Scattering* that:

He [Ludwig] would enter her room [Tjipuka's room] without knocking, asserting who owned it, who owned everything. He would get undressed and get into bed without a word. He would enter her until he was satisfied, and then he would dress and disappear. There was no kindness. It was a physical release, nothing more. (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 211)

Tjipuka was defenceless and her vulnerability was as a result of her being a Herero in the hands of Germans. Moreover, the raping may also be interpreted as a form of displacement from one's power. As a survival tactic, she quietly endures the raping as she had nowhere to escape to. What mattered most was that she was alive though the life she lived was heartrending. As if the suffering she experienced with Ludwig was not enough, when she finally reunites with Ruhapo in the Botswana territory, Tjipuka's suffering is further advanced. Ruhapo did not allow himself to listen to what Tjipuka went through, but instead blamed her for the circumstances she finds herself. Ruhapo spits vile at Tjipuka as illustrated from the text that:

You [Tjipuka] are a whore! A German whore. I saw what some women did. They gave themselves to those animals so that they could avoid the suffering. But did I ever think

my own wife could be one of them? I thought you had no choice, that you were forced.

I see that was never the case... (Kubuitsile, 2016, p. 281)

Tjipuka did not expect Ruhapo to treat her as he did, and as such, she just delivered her 'blue eyed' baby and as a survival tactic had to disappear to avoid the now 'obnoxious' Ruhapo. Tjipuka had been traumatised, thus injured both physically and psychologically echoing Lemaire's (2011) observation regarding trauma (§ 2.2.1 *Trauma and Resilience Theory*) and in order for her to keep on, she decided to leave Ruhapo and escape into the wilderness for consolation. Thus, escaping becomes a survival tactic as typical in Tjipuka.

The system was not just cruel to Herero women only, but targeted any gender regardless of age. In another incident but in the camps, the character Tjirwe resists from being traumatised and instead had to stand in defence and prevented the German soldier Kurtis from brutalising an old Nama man where Tjirwe retells his ordeal and says:

He is mean. He beat an old man to death, a Nama man. He was old and sick and couldn't lift the sleeper. But Kurtis didn't care. He beat him and laughed as the old man begged for his life. I couldn't take any more. I lifted a piece of iron and knocked him off his horse. I beat him on the head. He was bleeding, but he didn't die. They wanted to shoot me, but another soldier stepped in. I heard him say to the soldiers that Kurtis deserved it. (Kubuitsile, 2016, pp. 183-184).

The resilience in Tjirwe is similar to that of the young mother in *Parts Unknown* who had to fight Pitzer for whacking her defenceless baby. Tjirwe's resilience is visible as he risks his own life in fighting for the defenceless old Nama man who had been brutally murdered by Kurtis. The scene itself is marred with injustices particularly on the part of the indigenous people under the autocracy of the Germans. The irony of this scene is that, even the other German soldiers

could see the tyranny in Kurtis and as such, Tjirwe's action is justified, hence his life spared or else he could have been shot instantly.

5.2.5 Resilience and survival as represented in *Mama Namibia* (2013)

In *Mama Namibia* (2013), resilience is observed in some of the characters and in particular Jahohora as she withstands the strains of the conflict from all directions. The disappearance of her family stimulated an even tougher life as she was left alone and her vulnerability to the German soldiers created yet another grander obstruction that proved life insurmountable. Despite these overwhelming hostilities, Jahohora seems to have defied a predetermined destiny of all Hereros as she survives in the desert and further survives to tell the Herero Nama account of what transpired during the 1904-1908 point.

Being left alone, Jahohora naturally blends with the wilderness as it was the only embracing company by far better than the company of the German soldiers. Loneliness is what she endured and she instinctively found comfort in the surrounding environment in the absence of living human beings. Aping the natural rhythm of nature provided her with that reassuring of the importance of life as illustrated from *Mama Namibia*, "I hear the wild dogs barking in the distance. I bark back. I hear the hyenas cry. I try to make the same sound. I laugh at myself. It keeps me from being lonely" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 163). This in itself is the manifestation of resilience exhibited by Jahohora. She undergoes traumatic events of witnessing the deaths of so many people at once and yet she still finds the strength to imitate the wild animals and still affords to laugh at herself. The laughing part may be described as therapeutic as she honestly confesses that it helped in containing loneliness. This concurs with Bonanno (2008) who asserts that actions such as laughing actually reduce negative emotions and increase social support and contact though there is restricted social contact for Jahohora.

Jahohora's life is transformed into that of scavenging as she rummages and moves from one place to another. The idea of communality has been muddled by the presence of the Germans alongside the extermination order. For Jahohora to keep on surviving, she had to improvise anything that she encountered and what she felt may be useful as illustrated in the text that:

I go into a hut that's not burned as badly as the others. I dig in the ashes, looking for anything I can use. I find a sharp cutting stone and two fire-starting rocks...I put the cutting stone in the pouch with the fire rocks. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 164)

The badly burnt huts are symbolic of the devastated lives of the Hereros while the hut that is not badly burnt is emblematic of Jahohora; she is ruined but still standing. Also, the idea of digging in the ashes and picking some things is representative of Jahohora trying to pick up her shattered life and keeping it in the pouch. It is the resilience in her that she keeps the paraphernalia based on the hope of living further than that day, that is survival concurring with Ledesma (2014) who highlights survival as one of the concepts associated with resilience (§2.2.1 *Trauma and Resilience Theory*).

Not only does Jahohora stay in one place, she roams from one wrecked village to the other as she is driven by the impulse to continue living. Her character best suits what Fletcher and Sarkar (2011) refer to as hardiness, a factor linked to resilience that involves the commitment to finding meaningful purpose in life. The desire to live on is what shapes Jahohora into a character that is malleable even under the extreme and compelling conditions. She adjusts and adapts accordingly, hence making life appear unsophisticated. This is evidenced from *Mama Namibia* where Jahohora says:

I go from one village to the next, finding nothing but bones and ashes. The nights are colder and the water scarcer. I shiver as I walk in the darkness. I wish I could start a fire so I could get warm. And to cook the small birds and rabbits I kill with my little

spear. But a fire might bring the soldiers. I have seen what they do to Herero...I must eat my meat uncooked (Serebrov, 2013, p. 164)

When push comes to shove, Jahohora would do anything to keep holding on to her flailed and fractured life, as she sees nothing in it but the will to live on hence she says, "I'm so hungry I become like a vulture, using my sharp stone to cut pieces of spoiled meat from the dead cows and goats along the path" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 165). Her choices are restricted and with that she just eats even the putrid flesh from decomposing animal carcasses since it is only what is available. Surviving becomes the only goal she aims for and under circumstances of this nature the fetid smell would not interfere, thus Jahohora exhibiting resilience traits.

The conditions that Jahohora is exposed to would have two possible outcomes, to continue suffering or to die. As already mentioned that Jahohora's choice of food is restricted, there came instances where the rancid meat became unavailable implying the upping of the levels of suffering and increasing the chances of dying from starvation. This is confirmed from the text when she states that, "And when there is no meat on the carcasses, I chew on the bones. At least it feels like eating something" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 165). Thus, the chewing of the bones deceived Jahohora's stomach and at the same time registered satisfaction in her mind that the stomach had received something. It could be interpreted to be directly linked to the issue of resilience as there is a collaboration of the body and mind in keeping Jahohora alive.

Humans when exposed to different environments, they tend to adjust accordingly, for some it is just adapting positively and for some it is the exact opposite. Death itself is not something that can be readily accepted, whether it is repeating on a daily basis or a rate faster than usual, it can never be assented, implying that death cannot be readily accepted. On many occasions Jahohora is exposed to traumatising incidences and she usually handles the situations with great

caution which under normal circumstances might not be possible. From *Mama Namibia* Jahohora reveals some unique character born out of the conditions she is exposed to:

I trip over something. I put my hands down to break my fall. They touch the face with no life. Once, I would have screamed. Not now. I have seen too many bodies to be frightened by death. It is my life. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 166)

The natural fear of a dead human being is what has been stripped off Jahohora as she has been traumatised all the times she has been subjected to many dead bodies resultant of the genocide. This has essentially sculpted her into a tough young person with a robust and enduring character which are all traits associated with resilience. Moreover, the ability to control some of the reactions that are reflexive or instinctive, depict a level of resilience that has been spawned by the environment in which Jahohora finds herself. Besides, ‘screaming’ could have easily sold her out to the enemy, hence controlling it is a sign to resilience.

Also, the ability to think and react quickly to any situation saves Jahohora on numerous occasions from being spotted by the German soldiers. She even devices and successfully pretends to be one of the dead bodies as a way of deceiving the soldiers who amenably are the paramount threat to her life as illustrated from the *Mama Namibia*:

There are no hiding places. So I lie among the bodies. If the soldiers come, maybe they’ll think I’m dead...I lie still as death, even though I feel his pee [German soldier] trickling down on me. It makes me sick. (Serebrov, 2013, pp. 169-170)

The discharge from the soldier could have provoked Jahohora to spring from where she lay, but she remained calm and still. She knew that any other form of reaction beyond pretending to be dead would cost her life, for that she endured.

Jahohora witnesses some gruesome scenes yet all this was just for the feeding of her eyes as she could not do anything about it. Again it is through these endless murders and brutalities that she develops an even sturdier form of resilience. One of the remarkable scenes she witnesses is that of the soldiers raping and killing afterwards, as stated in the text:

I hear several soldiers walking nearby...He (one of the German soldiers) bend over a young Herero woman...One by one the soldiers lie on the woman. When the last one is done, they smile at each other. One of them picks up his boom stick. It has a spear on it. He pushes the spear into the woman's belly. The soldiers laugh as they go back to their camp. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 170)

In this scene, though Jahohora manages to tactfully hold and control her emotions, that alone essentially saves her from being a victim just as the other Herero woman raped and bayoneted. Jahohora derives her courage and resilience from exceedingly much exposure to scenes such as the one in the above immediate quotation. Such traumatic scenes bring about injury echoing Walsh's (2007) observation and Lemaire's (2011) comment on traumatic experiences being responsible for damaging and injuring the victim both physically and psychologically (§ 2.2.1 *Trauma and Resilience Theory*). Under such circumstances Jahohora has only one choice, that is to be calmed and save her own life.

The specked identity associated with the German soldiers, that of mistreating and traumatising the Hereros by some means further reinforces the resilience in characters such as Jahohora who often eye-witness the brutalities. To digress slightly, the traumatising behaviour being portrayed by the Germans in a way interrogates the questions associated with the agendas and justifications of white people and their coming to Africa to 'civilise' Africa and Africans and again whose behaviour then best takes the description of barbarism.

The brutal life that Jahohora experiences has taught both her body and soul to survive by accepting the 'little or no food' mode of life ever since she lost her family and living in solitude. It is the resilience built from the exposure to insufficiency that keeps her fighting to keep alive, of which it is a difficult situation to just readily accept even if it has been going on for some time as evidenced from the text:

My belly isn't full. I want to eat all the food. But I bundle up most of it. I must keep it for tomorrow and the next tomorrow and the next tomorrow. I don't know when I will find more food. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 172)

The conditions force Jahohora to mature mentally and yet she is only a child. She has to think about tomorrow and with that she eats sparingly the food that was left for her by the skinny German soldier. Though the stomach does not feel filled up, her future without food is what controls and limits her from eating up everything. That idea of eating sparingly is all driven by the concept of survival as identified by Ledesma (2014) hence Jahohora being prudent with the little food she has and this also reflects on her as a survival tactic.

Taking further the thread of survival tactics, Jahohora realises that solitude is likely to drive her insane and to prevent that from happening, she resorts to singing as a way of reminding herself that she is still alive. This is evident from *Mama Namibia* when Jahohora says, "I quietly sing the praise songs Tjikuu and Mama taught me. Singing helps me stay awake. But it makes me sad" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 173). The singing is reflective and has sentimental attachment to the people that Jahohora cherish and miss at the same time, hence the singing bringing that melancholic notion. The issue of having monologues has become a norm and a part of her life to ease the lonesomeness that she has since adopted. This is observed in yet another incident where she says:

I go back to my little hut on the hill. It's very quiet. Too quiet. I talk softly to myself and sing songs. It breaks the quiet, but not the loneliness. It's hard to sleep. I think about the women. About my family. About home. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 187)

Not only does she sing to herself, she has also developed a tendency of talking to herself and the monologue is tainted with traits that show resilience as the text illustrates, "I want to lie down. Right here. With the sun burning me. But I know I can't. not yet. If I do, I may never wake up. I have to get water before it's too late" (Serebrov, 2013, p. 176). Talking to herself is a sign of reassuring herself that she is there and a reminder that she still has life ahead of her, considering the risky life she is living.

When the rain season arrives, life changes for the better for Jahohora as food availability improves significantly. Gratitude is a trait observed in her illuminating from one side of her life that is satisfied. Nonetheless, the other side is as dull as loneliness remains a critical concern and out of that, resilience is discernible as she does not show any signs of giving up on her life and devices a way of fighting loneliness as evidenced from *Mama Namibia*:

I have everything I need. Except my family. When I get lonely, I talk to myself. I tell the stories Mama and Tjiku told me. I must remember them. Someday I will tell them to my children... Who will be the fate of my children? (Serebrov, 2013, p. 180)

The impulse to talk to herself brings a form of therapy to Jahohora's dull side and encourages her to soldier on. Also, the shift of seasons from a harsh dry and unforgiving environment to a rainy and supportive environment that provides food, could be interpreted as nature rewarding Jahohora for being resilient during the past times again illustrative of the natural co-existence between humans and the environment. Jahohora relies highly on the environment and still finds meaning and importance of her life even under the punishing conditions instigated by the

Germans. Thus, through the interaction with the environment, Jahohora develops survival tactics as *Mama Namibia* verifies:

As soon as the sun wakes, I check my traps. The first two are empty. The last one has a rabbit. It's a skinny rabbit. I use my cutting stone to sharpen a branch into a new little spear to kill the rabbit. I'm sorry I have to kill it. I've seen too much death. But I need its meat so I can live. (Serebrov, 2013, p. 179)

Besides the food being available in the veld, Jahohora practices caution as a means to survive by avoiding anything that attracts her to the German soldiers. She avoids putting up a fire as it easily sells her away instantly and she becomes vigilant every time she visits a waterhole. Though lonely, being prudent in her situation is a scheme for survival that is affiliated to resilience as her toughness exudes through her character. This is as *Mama Namibia* illustrates:

Even though I have seen no one for a long, long time, I always stop before I reach a new water hole. This time, I quietly climb a tree so I can look over the area. I see a small trail of smoke, my heart beats loudly. I hear voices. They are using Herero words! I look closely. A Herero man and woman sit by the fire. Don't they know how dangerous that is. Even when I know I'm alone in the veld, I eat my meat raw. A fire would show soldiers where I am. (Serebrov, 2013, pp. 180-181)

Jahohora resorts to eating raw meat as means of surviving as her body needs nourishment (though not the best of it at this moment in time) and cooking the meat would mean lighting up a fire which was precisely hazardous. Hence, she sees the way the Herero man and woman are perilously exposing themselves. Jahohora does not give up on life despite the gross violation of her chance to live, instead, she struggles through the sufferings and at the same time develops through it which is a resilience motif. Thus, the life that Jahohora has taken up that is shaped by resilience, echoes Ungar's (2011, p. 2) allegations that, "Not only can a person bounce back from substantial adversity, but he or she can actually grow through their

challenging experiences.” In this case Jahohora is literary resilient as she is developing and surviving through her tribulation.

5.3 Chapter summary

This chapter deliberated on the third objective of the study that was set to examine the forms of resilience that the survivors adopted as means of coping and surviving under the less-than-favourable conditions. The chapter, through the analysis of the selected texts, revealed that survivors exhibited diverse configurations of resilience and varying survival tactics. The Germans created a cruel situation as illustrated in the selected texts and some of the characters had to rely on the environment in order to survive thereby reiterating the relationship that exists between human beings and the environment. The next chapter (Chapter Six) focuses on conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 focuses firstly on the conclusions of the study by revisiting the objectives and the title of the study. The conclusions are drawn from the study's analyses (§ *chapters 3, 4 and 5*) of this study. The conclusions would reveal whether the previously set research objectives (§ *1.4 Objectives of the study*) have been fulfilled either magnificently or unsuccessfully after anatomising the selected texts. The recommendations are based on the overall study's findings as well as gaps budding throughout the process of carrying out this study. Also considered in this chapter are the limitations and delimitations of the study as well as the section on the researcher's reflection on the study. This is then followed by the recommendations and lastly is the chapter's summary.

6.2 Revisiting the research objectives: A conclusion

The research was set to establish whether the research objectives were accomplished through the analysis of *Parts Unknown* by Van Den Berg (2018); *The Lie of the Land* by Utley (2017); *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* by Tjingaete (2017); *The Scattering* by Kubuitsile (2016); and *Mama Namibia* by Serebrov (2013). The study was engrossed in exploring the literary archives of conflict, the decoloniality of materialities and resilience in selected genocidal fiction in Namibia. The genocide in question occurred over a century and some decades of years ago yet it remains an area unheeded as if nothing happened.

Recently some scholars and in particular (Dyck, 2014; Kossler, 2015; Thornley, 2013; Van Mil, 2011; Burke & Oltermann, 2017; Kluessien & Ramos, 2017) (§ *2.3.3 The period 1904-1908 in Namibian history*) penned scholarly works on the 1904-1908 Conflict but their efforts seem not to have extended to a wider spectrum and not much profile-raising as the genocide has little or no recognition amongst other world genocides. The study established that the 1904-1908 Conflict remains unspecified to many.

The research objectives remained the same as initially stated at the beginning of the study and they guided the study to the end. The research objectives were to: firstly, explore the literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict as presented in the selected literary archives of conflict; Secondly, investigate the ways in which the survivors adapted to the sudden change of their lives upon the inception and during the conflict as presented in the selected novels; Lastly to examine the forms of resilience that the survivors adopted as means of coping and survival tactics. The following subsections take each of the research objectives and weigh it along the analyses in an effort to establish the successfulness or miscarriage of the exploration in satiating the research objectives.

6.2.1 Magnifying the first research objective

- To explore the literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict as presented in the selected literary archives of conflict.

The selected five novels are all reconstructions of the period in question built on historical truth. The selected authors in their novels, use words and historical imagination to reconstruct mental ideas and pictures of what was really thought and what really happened through imagined characters. In other words, the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 history through fictional works in a way is a restoration that has been accomplished.

The pragmatic disposition of the 1904-1908 Conflict discernibly emerges without ambiguity as the authors of the selected five texts under study, consulted empirical data to provide a footing from which their fictional works budded. Even the use of real names of places and people as examples, increases the pragmatic disposition of the fictional works. Moreover, the descriptions of scenes, though varying from text to text, all solicit believability as the texts are verbal representations of the images (§ 2.3.3 *The period 1904-1908 in Namibian history*) such

as that of the hanging of the Hereros in history proper. Thus, the reconstruction of the history in this case is effectual, as the illustration of the history of the lynching is credible and in actual fact, it amplifies and enhances meaning to the historical truth. Accordingly, the pragmatic disposition of these selected novels under study, is promising and certain as the imaginary may naturally be transmuted into reality. Hence, the thin boundary between fiction and history proper performs the role of dividing the two yet they intermittently blend into each other.

Also, the direct or indirect incorporation of the extermination order which essentially existed and is related to the evidence in history proper, further authenticates the fictional works in their endeavour to reconstructing the history. Thus, these collections of representatives and developments about the extermination order in the selected texts illustrate what the conditions were like even if it occurred over a century and some decades of years ago. With that, the fictional works respond imaginatively to what it was like as Bortolotti (2015) asserts (§ 2.3.4 *Significance of the historical novel*) which further substantiate historical fictional writing into works that are conclusive, as in the case with the extermination order and how it is integrated in the selected novels under study. Thus, through the analysis, layers of reality are exhibited in reconstructing meaning through fiction.

The researcher put to the test the purposefully selected art forms namely: variation, version, rewriting, borrowing, inheriting, homage, travesty, as well as intertextuality in exploring the literary reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict. All the selected novels responded positively to the employment of these art forms though in different ways considering the different backgrounds and the motivations of the authors. The selected novels conjure literature's nearness to recreate some critical arguments that are still unsolved even in present day Namibia about the general well-being of the people with the conundrums still concomitant to a nation's past. Through the employment of the selected art forms, it became clear how the history was reconstructed in the selected five novels.

Thus, regarding the first objective of this study, the researcher affirms that the study fulfilled this objective as evidenced from the findings that the authors employed numerous ways in the reconstruction of the 1904-1908 Conflict through fictional works. The selected historical novels reiterate the same event though from various slants yet several incidences emergent in the novels coincide. Through this study, it was discovered that there seem to be a thin line between the imaginative compositions and the historical credibility.

6.2.2 Illuminating on the second objective

- To investigate the ways in which the survivors adapted to the sudden change of their lives upon the inception and during the conflict as presented in the selected novels.

Through the analyses (§ *Chapter 4*) the survivors had varying ways of adapting to the sudden change in their lives as evident from the selected texts. The presence of the Germans brought with it a miserable overhaul to the indigenous people's lives. A number of stratagems were devised, and these varied on the form of adversity being confronted at any given time.

It is evident from the selected texts that the appearance of the Germans brought with it the supplanting of the local indigenous people to pave way for the settlers. The displacement resulted in disconcerting almost, if not all, domains of the Herero people's living arrangements ranging from homelessness to violation of sacred places. These undertakings prompted by the attendance of the Germans, were dehumanising and undervalued the Herero way of life underneath the minimum point of human recognition. The displacement came devoid of warning and that led to the rushed and unplanned uprooting of the Hereros from their homes and lands of original settlements. Successively with that dislodgment, the Hereros had to adapt to the abrupt shift from how they customarily would live as they suddenly found themselves

wanting of home, social set ups meddled, religion, culture and tradition invaded, as well as sacred places pried on. Life had to go on, and they had to adapt as a means of surviving.

The presence of the Germans pushed the Hereros into instantaneous destitution as they were forced to move out of their homes and eventually into the menacing Omaheke Desert. The motivation behind transplanting the Hereros gyrated around issues pertaining to materialities, particularly the land, that the Germans also had interests in their expansion of their colonies. The only way the Germans could get the land was by imposing and driving the Hereros away. This was done in an unforgiving manner as the Germans proved to be vicious and unrelenting as already established that the Germans had as narrated in the selected texts.

6.2.3 Irradiating the third objective

- To examine the forms of resilience that the survivors adopted as means of coping and survival tactics as presented in the selected narratives of genocide.

The analysis of the selected texts, disclosed that survivors displayed varied patterns of resilience as well as varying survival tactics. The Germans fashioned a hostile condition as illustrated in the selected texts and some of the characters had to rely on the environment for survival thereby resonating the relationship that exists between human beings and the environment.

Despite the agonies and the deaths experienced by Hereros and Namas as a result of the presence of the Germans, some survived the traumatic conditions and managed to build some form of resilience. The Germans created a cruel situation that was severe which marked the lowest points of human intransigence as exhibited in the selected texts. The extermination order's intentions, also aggravated the German soldiers to lose that aspect which identifies

humans from other forms of creation as they developed and perpetrated barbarism on fellow humans.

The selected novels: *Parts Unknown* (2018); *The Lie of the Land* (2017); *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* (2017); *The Scattering* (2016); and *Mama Namibia* (2013), illustrate concrete situations. It is through the accounts of these selected novels that emotional enchantments and realistic descriptions provide a well-defined picture of what occurred during the 1904-1908 period. By virtue of being different, all the characters reacted differently to the brutalities lashed on the indigenous people by the German soldiers (§ 5.2.1 to 5.2.5 in Chapter 5). The indigenous characters' exposure to callousness resulted in the varying degrees of trauma and arrays of resilience.

Escaping from the jaws of the Germans is one of the signs of resilience flaunted by some of the characters and also, the ability of the characters to adapt to whatever environment they landed in. Besides, their tolerance in the wild, hence eating and living on tubers, insects, wild fruits, reptiles and other funny creatures and at times nothing at all, reveals the resilience in the characters. Revenging and fighting back emerged as forms of resilience in some of the texts. Additionally, the spirit of conscientising and mobilisation of fellow Hereros and Namas by some characters to rebel and to fight against the Germans also surfaced as forms of resilience. Moreover, the presence of the quality of 'hardness' (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2011) in many of the characters from the selected texts heralds the certainty of resilience. Lastly, embarking on different quests as indicated by some characters also point at the existence of resilience on the part of the characters involved.

6.3 Thesis title and the findings

The thesis title 'Literary archives of conflict, the decoloniality of materialities and resilience in selected narratives of genocide in Namibia' prompted the carrying out of this study. The

analyses in chapters 3, 4 and 5 reveal the form of coloniality that took place during the 1904-1908 epoch. This study may therefore be read as a form of decoloniality as it draws its main purpose from exposing through literary works how ‘civilisation’ in German South West Africa was executed.

The findings of the study also reveal Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s (2013) three concepts in which decoloniality is premised (§2.3.6 *Decoloniality of materialities*) that they are all prevalent in the selected and analysed novels. The first one being the concept of coloniality of power, the Hereros and Namas had their power superseded by that brought by the Germans. This included that the Germans took land and forced the indigenous people to provide labour on that land. Secondly is the concept of coloniality of knowledge, where the rationale of the coming of the Germans to South West Africa was to ‘civilise’ Africans as being uncivilised was one of the series of lacks and a catalogue of deficits (Escobar, 2012) found amongst Africans (§ 2.3.6 *Decoloniality of materialities*). Hence their presence is justifiable from the coloniser’s perspective. Lastly is the concept of coloniality of being where the locals or the indigenous people of German South West Africa were relegated below the lowest rung of the social ladder as observed in the treatment as slaves in the death camps and the idea of experimenting on them.

This study makes known the situated experiences of material life, the constitution of the object world and concomitantly its shaping of human experience. Thus, during the 1904-1908 Conflict, victims were stripped of their materialities (for example physical resources such as the land) and the study sought to explore the decoloniality of materialities as represented in the selected historical novels. The selected five novels, which are fictional historical novels, provided an exposition from a literary perspective of approximately the nature of the conflict and how conflict survivors endured and survived during the 1904-1908 period.

As an overall comment and taking into consideration the discussions on each of the objectives, the researcher concludes that, the study successfully reflects on the 1904-1908 Conflict and that the contemporary glitches are rooted and routed in the 1904-1908 genocide. Also, in view of the fact that, the study merged two isolated elements ‘fact’ and ‘fiction’ and the results proved feasible reinforcing the idea of ‘faction’, an already existing concept that points at the merging of fact and fiction.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to the analysis of the 1904-1908 Conflict, the decoloniality of materialities and the forms of resilience of the conflict survivors as represented in the selected five historical novels. Other limitations are those that come with the historical novel that it is based upon the reconstruction of memory which has been researched by the authors, based on historical and oral sources, hence the level of reliability is challenged by possible distortions and selectivity. In addition, this study was based in the grey area between truth and invention. Nonetheless, the historical novel engages historical fact as a podium for its composition.

Also, the researcher encountered some limitations on sourcing the information of what inspired the authors of the selected texts to write their respective texts. Two of the authors, David Jasper Utley and Zirk Van Den Berg responded through the email, whereas it was impossible with the other three. However, the researcher located some information that is available for public consumption.

Lastly on limitations, the researcher’s laptop crashed at the time when Chapter 5 of this study was under construction. Only the first four chapters could be recovered and the researcher had to start all over on writing Chapter 5. The writing continued and was completed despite the limitations.

6.5 Delimitations of the study

This study was confined only to conflict, decoloniality of materialities and the resilience of the 1904-1908 Conflict survivors as represented in the selected five historical novels. To add on, the study was framed only by the Trauma and Resilience Theory, Ecocriticism as well as New Historicism and had its analyses within the restrictions of these theories' paradigms.

6.6 Researcher's reflection on the study

Undertaking a PhD course is to a certain extent a daunting expedition but gratifying when accomplished. The notion of attempting to tread on unknown paths became a challenge as all was about searching for the unknown and every encounter at every stage, was all about discovery and learning new things.

First of all, my first exposure to the 1904-1908 Conflict was in 2016 when I read Kubuitsile's (2016) *The Scattering* and then *Mama Namibia* by Serebrov (2013). I was hearing about the genocide for the first time and learnt that it was not as popular as other 'recognised' genocides worldwide. I searched to verify if any studies were available that spoke to the idea that now hovered in my mind regarding the genocide from a fictional perspective. At that time, there was none, hence I put aside the idea and waited for the right time. I also discovered that, much is written on the history of Namibia's liberation struggle: be it scholarly work, fiction and non-fiction yet that part regarding the genocide is lacking, also evidenced by the selected five novels for this study, one novel is authored by a Namibian. Reading and following newspaper publications (§ 2.3.8 *Public discourse – Newspapers and the 1904-1908 Conflict*) it made sense that the genocide did not just end when it occurred, its presence formed the present day Namibia. Reading the selected novels and the newspaper publications, it all justifies contemporary meanings to why Namibians are still peddling on an event way back in history.

When the right time came, I embarked on a journey of fusing horizons, that is interlocking fiction and non-fiction, hence this study. Another challenge was on finding the most appropriate theories to frame the study and I ended up being satisfied by the paradigms of three theories. Firstly, Trauma and Resilience Theory which became the main theory as it gives shape to structures of feelings and how people react to adversities. Secondly, Ecocriticism also formed part of the theoretical framework as it deals with the relationship that exists between human beings and the environment. The genocide involved people who were in an environment, hence the theory selected. Lastly, New Historicism which undertakes that a fictional work is the consequence of the time, place, and circumstances of its composition, which is exactly what constitute the selected five novels, hence being selected for this study as they talk about the same story.

Reading through the selected novels, they provide multiple voices of the genocide and bestial brutality by humans on other humans. Thus, each text enhances the levels of the reservoir of representations. The characters share the feelings of devastation at the loss of the loved ones as the genocide was an indiscriminate form of killing. The themes of trauma and resilience, journey motif, death, love and hate become universalised symbols as they are common in the selected texts. The genocide becomes a common point of germination for the selected novels and the novels are all a sublimation of the atrocities performed in the 1904-1908 epoch.

The selected novels are engaging and capable of instilling sensitivity to inequality which may provoke critical thinking skills. Also, weighing the fictional works against the empirical history, there seems to be a thin line between the two horizons hence the fictional works could be described as articulate historical stories. The selected novels have the power to trace experiences and mentalities of the 1904-1908 Conflict, bringing historically remote events closer to now.

Through the analyses (§ Chapters 3, 4 & 5) of the selected novels, the three set research objectives were satisfied. And through the analyses, I learnt that people are heterogeneous even if they are exposed to the same adversity, they do not respond in the same way, what is universal is the ability to react to the adversity.

I admit at this point that it was not easy to carry out the research devoid of being severely shaken by the genocide account as I experienced inner turmoil. All the five novels: *Parts Unknown* by Van Den Berg (2018); *The Lie of the Land* by Utley (2017); *The Weeping Graves of Our Ancestors* by Tjingaete (2017); *The Scattering* by Kubuitsile (2016); and *Mama Namibia* by Serebrov (2013) are a vision of reality translated by the imagination. The study taught me a number of lessons, perseverance is the best partner when studying, the rest can always occupy other available spaces.

6.7 Recommendations

The study explored ‘Literary archives of conflict, the decoloniality of materialities and resilience in selected narratives of genocide in Namibia.’ Three compatible theories, the main one being Trauma and Resilience supported by Ecocriticism and New Historicism formed the theoretical framework and provided the paradigm for both the literature review and the analyses of the selected texts. The study therefore suggests the following recommendations:

- For future studies, one may consider other theoretical frameworks in the analysis of the same novels to further enhance the understanding of the five texts.
- Future researchers may also consider carrying out a study on the Herero names used in the novels contextually and how those names play a role in bringing better comprehension in the reading of the novels.

- To the University of Namibia, there may be need to consider introducing genocidal studies at a grandeur scale at the institute and not as a module or a topic in another module. Understanding why the 1904-1908 genocide occurred might also assist in understanding the forms of violence in the present day as well as strategise on how to prevent the recurrence of such an event in the future. Also, the genocide happened and therefore it must not be forgotten; it must not be treated as a past event but must be comprehended as an existing issue. “One’s past defines one’s identity” (Bentley, 1997, p. 851). If ignored, it becomes a lost world.
- To the film industry in Namibia, there may be need to come up with a film that re-enacts the 1904-1908 genocide just as in the multiple movies available for the Rwandan genocide as an example. With a movie, widespread realisation of the atrocities committed to Hereros and Namas may be increased considering that a few people are aware of this genocide and that it was a prelude to the Holocaust.
- To the National Heritage Council of Namibia, there may be need for setting up a memorial that stands in for every victim of the genocide as the memorial in Swakopmund was erected in memory of the victims of the genocide that perished in the concentration camps.

6.8 Chapter summary

This last chapter focused on the conclusions of the study by revisiting the objectives and the title of the study. The conclusions were drawn from the study’s analyses of chapter 2, 3 and 4. Also considered in this chapter were the limitations and delimitations of the study as well as the section on the researcher’s reflection on the study. The recommendations were based on

the overall study's findings as well as the gaps that budded throughout the process of carrying out the study.

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