
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Racism and gender disparity in Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* (1946) and Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Weep Not, Child* (1964)

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| ABSTRACT

No writer operates in a vacuum, and there is a close relationship between literature and society. African writers had no other issues to focus on apart from the issues of racism, economic class, leadership, traditional African values, and some post-colonial issues which were predominant in their society. The work will use postcolonial, Marxist and sociological theories and methods in the analysis. There is a denial of rights and subjugation. Finally, since literature and society are interwoven, there is a reaction of protest from the writers as a means of protest literature.

| KEYWORDS

Racism; Gender Disparity; Mine Boy and Weep not, Child

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 11 December 2022

PUBLISHED: 14 December 2022

DOI: 10.32996/ijaas.2022.1.1.1

1. Introduction

The most common idea about texts is that they are cultural products of different beliefs, values, and ways of talking in a certain society at a certain time. (Moon,1995). This means that people write texts to construct a nation's character, the people's behavior, and the role of women or men in society. Some texts for constructing ideas usually border on issues of ethnic studies and gender. Ethnic studies, postcolonial criticism, and gender studies constitute the theory of race, gender and hegemony. Some of these (race, gender and hegemony) have been delved into by individuals such as W. E. B. Dubois, Aime Cesaire, Frantz Fanon, Chinua Achebe, Simone de Beauvoir, Luce Irigaray, Helene Cixous, and Julia Kristeva just to mention a few (Brewton, 2016). Arena (2016) asserts that contemporary elite regimes rely on authoritarian and ideological forms to control other races. Vargas &Stainback (2016) argue that racial-based experiences are shaped not only by racial classifications of the individual but also by external racial attributions placed on the individuals by others. This means that individuals play a major role in ensuring racial discrimination and how power is exerted over a particular race. Feliciano (2016) also adds that for race based discrimination to be successful, people must group individuals into racial categories sanctioned by appearance.

We are talking about people who have white or other colored or black skin in this case. These discriminations have led to important contributions from people like W.E.B. Dubois and African and African-American writers like AmeCesaire, Frantz Fanon, and Chinua Achebe. This way of thinking encourages ethnic literary traditions while criticizing how the majority culture sees ethnicity. Many authors from all across the globe have written on gender problems. Gender theory studies all topics of gender, sexual categories, and identities. This idea focuses on women's rights in contemporary society and women's identity and portrayal in media and culture (Brewton, 2016). It also concerns male movements that seek to correct the vilifications of the man by women writers. Many writers have written texts indicating either the woman's fair or unfair treatment. In an African society

that is severely patriarchal gives no room for the African woman to be assertive. Such images of the disadvantaged African woman are worth exploring in texts. The discussion will first concentrate on gender issues in *Weep not, child* and *Mine Boy*. In terms of race and hegemony, focus will be on how the locations of the blacks are racially based, the nature of work done by the white and black men, how blacks are maltreated by the whites, ownership of land and businesses, laws specially made for the black man and the perception that the black man needs to be conquered and ruled.

2. Theoretical Framework

In terms of literature, postcolonialism covers a wide range of topics. The idea is concerned with the literature of both colonized and colonial nations. According to McEwan (2009), many individuals have used the term "postcolonialism." According to Saada (2014), the term has been used to describe a wide range of cultural, economic, and political problems in areas where European colonialism has occurred (as cited in Saada, 2014). According to Saada, "postcolonialism" refers to a broad spectrum of relationships between conquerors and colonized people. In a similar spirit, Thamarana (2015) claims that postcolonialism, which is linked to imperialism, symbolizes concerns about ethnicity, culture, and human identity in the contemporary age, mostly after the independence of many conquered nations. Meanwhile, according to Javed (2016), postcolonial literature is "work that investigates the many crises and ramifications of a nation's decolonization." According to Brians (2006), postcolonial literature is literature created by civilizations that have been colonized before. However, Brians has pointed out that the term should include works created before colonization and written after independence. According to Brians, the term "postcolonial" may lead some people to believe colonialism has ended. However, the reality is that, despite their technical independence, most countries are still culturally and economically subordinate to wealthy industrial states through various forms of neocolonization. Despite the fact that postcolonial theory focuses mostly on the last half-century, everyone has been colonized in some fashion, especially countries like England, which Romans and Normans have conquered. When reading postcolonial literature, it's easy to see how prevalent the issue of othering is. According to Tyson (2015), othering is defined by those in positions of authority considering themselves superior, civilized, the center of the world, and a model of mankind.

In contrast to the previous, Tyson noted that colonized people are usually categorized as different, inferior, and devoid of human characteristics. In addition to focusing on the process of otherness, postcolonial theory may be utilized to detect patterns of hybridity and ambivalence in literary works. Given the aforementioned, the theory focuses on identifying colonial sentiments in literature, how colonisers exploit people with less political power and how oppressed people strive to restore their lost identities by fighting forms of persecution.

Marxism is a critical philosophy based on Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' writings. The Communist Manifesto (1848), in which Marx and Engels declare that the history of all existing civilizations is the history of class struggle, encapsulates the basic principles of Marxism. (Duiker and Spielgovel 428, qtd.) Marxism is an anti-capitalist and anti-feudal doctrine that proposes communism or socialism as the ideal state. According to the idea, every human civilization has two opposing classes: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, who comprise the elites/haves and the have-nots. The Marxist doctrine strives to eradicate this duality in human society by advocating for a classless society ruled by intellectuals, a society founded on equality and shared wealth, a society free of exploitation and oppression via proletarian revolution, and an egalitarian and utopian society. "Marxist criticism is not only a 'sociology of literature,' concerned with how novels are published and whether they address the working class," writes Terry Eagleton, a leading literary critic. Its goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the literary work by focusing on its forms, styles, and meanings. But it also requires understanding those forms, styles, and meanings as products of a certain historical context (3).

3. Apartheid and Racism Fiction

South African Literature in English has come a long way since its beginnings in the early 20th century. As part of the body of works in the continuum of world literature, South African Literature has echoed its society's history and socio-political temper. Apartheid has produced a large body of writings that have become a canon of African literature. The study of South African literature is inextricably linked with the apartheid experience. In the genre of fiction, which this work is situated, the apartheid experience and race dynamics can be traced to the earliest English works by South Africans. Peter Abrahams is one of these earliest writers whose works are canonized as apartheid fiction. His internationally renowned novel, *Mine Boy* (1946), is acknowledged as a masterpiece of the apartheid experience in South Africa. Some of the writers that dominated the South African literary space during the apartheid period include J. M. Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer, Andre Brink, Albie Sachs, and Njabulo Ndebele.

Johan Geertsema says that apartheid-era South African literature fetishized victimization and black pain, leading to a stereotype that people thought was true about people who were black. People in South Africa didn't read very much because of the apartheid era, so there aren't many literary works there, especially in the fiction category, Nadine Gordimer, André Brink, Mary

Benson, Richard Rive, Bessie Head, Peter Abrahams, Dan Jacobs, C. J. Driver, and J. M. Coetzee were some of the authors whose works were banned in South Africa. In prison on Robben Island, Rive, Alex La Guma, Dennis Brutus, BreytenBreytenbach, D. M. Zwelonke, and BreytenBreytenbach were some writers who did political and literary work. Anti-apartheid writers like Rive and Abrahams, Black and mixed-race writers like La Guma, Arthur Nortje and Lewis Nkosi, and white South Africans like Breytenbach, Brink, and Athol Fugard, were exiled or went into self-exile to escape political oppression. South African authors like Olive Schreiner and Sol Plaatje spoke out against racial segregation and discriminatory economic policies that were already in place before the South African National Party made them official before the apartheid regime was put into place and became law. Though anti-apartheid literature is multifaceted, Schoenberg and Trudeau (2) say there are two main traditions: a white, liberal tradition started by Schreiner, which was carried on by Alan Paton, George Orwell, and J.D. Coetzee; and a more radical, protest tradition that started in the Black townships and led to the fiction of Abrahams, Rive, and La Guma.

4. The construction of gender in Weep not, child and Mine Boy

The discussion on gender will be based on female characters in the two novels and how they relate to the male characters. Notably, the major female characters will be the focus of the discussion. Writers like Chinua Achebe present women as below men in the social strata. This is because in his novels such as *Things Fall Apart*, women are relegated to the background and even equated to children by the patriarchal society. In *Maru* and *The Collector of Treasures*, Head shows that the African society is steeped in patriarchy where women are seen as incapable of taking care of themselves. They are considered as subservient to the men folk. Therefore, Dikeledi in *The Collector of Treasures* is forced by a male dominated society to marry a man not because of love but because of expediency. In *Maru*, Margaret Cadmore is seen by Seth, Morafi and Pete as an easy prey to be shoved away from the village of Dilepe just because she is a woman. Ghanaian writers like Ama Ata Aidoo and AmmaDarko have tried to construct gender in their novels.

5. Boys should first be sent to school instead of girls

In *Weep not, child*, WaThiong'o parades the following female characters: Nyokabi, Njeri, Lucia, Juliana and Mwihaki. Nyokabi is the first wife of Ngotho and the mother of Njorege. It is through her efforts that Njorege finally goes to school. Together with Njeri, they maintained the home which was well known for being a place of peace (pg.9). Despite the women being very industrious, they lived in toil and sweat (pg. 4) because of their gender. The narrator further describes women as fickle and very jealous. These women were subjected to various levels of beatings by their husbands, including Ngotho. The decision to send Njorege to school instead of his sisters in the family is solely based on his gender because; "Ngotho was proud that his son would start learning. When anybody now asked him whether he had taken any of his sons to school, he would proudly say, 'Yes!' It made him feel almost equal to Jacobo" (. 10).

From the above extract, it is clear that Ngotho is pleased that his male son is about to begin learning. Ngotho is also proud of Boro because he sits with big folks as they prepare for the strike. Nyokabi was also pleased also to have a son in school. Nothing is said about the sisters of Njorege and Boro as if they are non-existent. Njorege prays to God not to allow Mwihaki to beat him in class, possibly because he feels his ego will be destroyed if a woman should surpass him in an examination. Mwihaki also accepts second place and is pleased that Njorege came first in their examination. This is mainly because of her gender.

6. Women are considered not fit to advise a man

In the fight against white supremacy, the men decided to leave out the women because they were considered as weak. As men trooped to the compound of Ngotho and listened to speeches from the men Kori and Boro brought from the city, and Kiarie, the decision to embark on the strike was made. Despite pleas from Nyokabi that Ngotho should abandon the idea, he beats her arguing that;

"I must be a man in my own house

I shall do whatever I like. I have never taken orders from a woman"

Juliana, the wife of Jacobo, also experiences the same fate of the obstinate nature of a husband who only listens to the wife's voice until it is too late. As a result, readers might assume that Jacobo and Ngotho are unwilling to listen to their spouses mostly due to their gender. Howlands refuses to listen to his wife's recommendation to go to England until things return to normal. He vows that he will not succumb to the Mau Mau or his wife. These guys died prematurely due to not listening to their wives' advice. Their inability to listen to women's advice derives from the fact that they are women and are seen as inferior to males.

7. Women who are economically competent have climbed above patriarchal structures

Women are portrayed differently in *Mine Boy*. Abrahams depicts Leah as an assertive woman who rubs shoulders with the men because of her strength of character and economic status. Leah creates a sanctuary for Xuma and other blacks in Malay Camp in the novel. Leah is described as tall and big, with that smooth yellowness of the Basuto women. A strong woman...and those eyes can see right through a man (pg. 3). She is virtually taking care of Daddy, Ma Plank, Dladla, Joseph, Lena, Drunk Liz, Maisy, and Eliza. Leah promises to make Xuma powerful since she is a powerful woman at Malay Camp if only he will become her head-man.

When Lena and Drunk Liz are fighting and the crowd becomes boisterous, Leah can control the situation and even dares anyone who wants to talk to fight her. The people obey her because of her strength and economic power. Despite her position as a female, she controls men such as Daddy, Johannes, Xuma, Joseph and Dladla. She can rally the people around her such that they work to protect her. Leah decides to do all of this for the people because she considers them to be her people once she is in the city with them. Her ability to control the men, women and a police informant is because she has money. Leah tells Xuma that to have money is to have power. Leah is fearless and when Fox finally catches her, she boldly walks away with him with her head thrown back. Her shoulders were squared. She walked with easy, confident strength. Leah explains to Fox that these others were doing what I told them. I want you to leave them (pg. 166).

It can be said that in Weep not, child the females are dominated by the males. However, their doting nature makes them the sole survivors of racial discrimination and hegemony. On the other hand, in Mine Boy, a woman is seen as the head of a patriarchal system.

8. Race and Hegemony

WaThiong'o and Abrahams explore issues of racism and hegemony in their books Weep not, child and Mine Boy respectively. According to the WordWeb racism is "the prejudice that members of one race are intrinsically superior to members of other races". Hegemony is "the dominance or leadership of one social group or nation over others" (WordWeb).

9. Ownership and usage of land is race and power based

Racism is glaring in the attitude of Howlands towards Ngotho and his race. To begin, the white race represented by Howlands confiscated the lands from Ngotho and his people because they considered themselves better than the black race. The social strata is made up of the whites at the top, followed by coloured people like the Indians and the blacks are below. The offspring of the union between a white man and a black woman were also considered to be below the black race. As a result of this prejudice, the white settlers like Mr.Howlands chose the fertile lands in Kipanga. The land occupied by the Black people was red, rough and sickly, while the white settlers' land was green and not lacerated into small strips (pg. 5). Ownership of businesses and wealth was race based. The Indians owned many shops in Kipanga and most black people worked there.

10. Black workers were treated unfairly

The Indians regarded the black youths they hired as second-class citizens. The white settlers wanted to shop at the Indian stores as well. The Indians had such a terror of Europeans that if you (a Black guy) went to purchase anything in a store and a white man saw you, the Indian would stop selling to you and begin serving him, shivering all over (5). The Indian store owner planned to constantly owe Ngotho a month's wages to keep him in slavery. This shows that the white man thought the Indian was inferior to him, and the Indian thought the black man was inferior to him.

11. The White race considers the Black race as a race to be conquered

Mr.Howlands considers East Africa as a big trace of wild country to conquer (pg. 28). It is this racist attitude that controls every action of Mr.Howlands. He feels he owns the land he forcefully took away from a black family and would do everything to protect it. This is how Mr. Howlands felt when he went through it all. Only he could control this wildness that no one else had to deal with (pg. 29). A quote from the text shows that the white race thinks the black race is a wild race that needs to be conquered and ruled by the whites. It can be asserted that the white race has created the impression that they are superior. This is because, in the novel, Njorege thinks that his father and Mr.Howlands are not friends. After all, the white man is so high. As far as Mr.Howlands was concerned, the blacks were just labourers who do not have the right to agitate for their rights. The white man seemed to be impervious to the actions of the Government or black men. This is because he considers himself to be superior to the black man. Njeri attests to the fact that the white race oppresses the black race. The attempt of the Mau Mau to regain their lost land ignited fury in Mr.Howlands such that, he accepted the position of District Officer. To Mr.Howlands, who were black men and Mau Mau anyway, he asked for the thousandth time? Mere savages! (pg. 72).Mr.Howlands, considered Jacobo as a savage and he despised him. He only tolerated Jacobo because he would use him and he will set these people fighting amongst themselves instead of fighting with the white men (pg. 72). The white race symbolised by Mr.Howlands feels sorry for the lives of the blacks only when it comes to the issue of loss of labour. They do not care if the blacks destroy one another. Ngotho is the leader of the blacks in Kipanga and Howlands intends to bring him to a submissive humiliation. This means that the white race aims to make the black man submissive because they consider themselves to be superior.

12. The Human Heart

It has humanitarian meanings but is not naive from Xuma's mountain view. People in the state have a lot of power over what black people can and can't do because Eliza left Johannesburg. As a result, the meeting that awakens Xuma and leads the city to socialism must be both Marxist and liberal.

Paddy, or "Red," is an Irish mining foreman and Xuma's boss. Because of Xuma's friendship with him, Paddy helps people from different races work together in a socialist way. It also implies that British colonial adventures made a connection. Fictitious stories about white socialists working with African trade unions, such as the story of Max Gordon, a Trotskyist in charge of the Joint Committee of African Trade Unions (JCATU). Low-wage black workers got a raise in 1938 thanks to a victory by Gordon. This victory was noticed worldwide and rekindled the fire of African-American trade unions. It wasn't until Max Gordon came on the Rand that black trade unions were formed that really helped their people and ran on business-like trade union lines, Abrahams says in his book *Tell Freedom*. Abrahams' love for Gordon and his use of Red as a way for Xuma to enter both class and individual consciousness hides the fact that whites play a paternalistic role in black politics. So, the city's future isn't shown as black or white in the book's aspirations. Xuma and Red had a "aha" moment on a hilltop overlooking Johannesburg, which meant that the city had been reframed in a non-racial, proletarian way. Infuriated by Red's claim that he knows Xuma, Red asks: "How can you? You say you understand, but how can you?" There is something that Xuma said You're white, right? You don't have a pass with you at all. You don't know what it's like to be stopped by a cop on the street. You can go anywhere you want to go. People who say "Get out!" don't know how it feels. "Only white people."

To be a man with freedom inside your heart, Red tells Xuma: "When you understand that, you will be free inside." Only people who are free on the inside can help other people get free. When he says these words, they show how the book has a lot of Marxist and humanist themes. A well-developed sense will lead him away from a race-based identity and toward class mobilization. It is also said that if you want to have class action, you must have freedom to do it. He must see beyond the categorical in order to be free as a person.

In the beginning, be a man and think like a man. Then, became a black guy. It would seem that people are without color. Thoughts were racing in his head as he walked through the quiet streets of town. People were just people, not groups. People don't come in black and white. In the vision, he was taken away. "Man an individual is a strong person who is free and happy, but colorless."

On the second day of not having money, he wakes up to find out that he is broke and can't cross the line between "white" and "black." He thinks about "the places white people go." As far as he is concerned, he still thinks of himself as white. When Abrahams came up with a way to change Xuma's humanism, he used mining space to do it. When he takes this space, he can show that he is both a member of an oppressed group and a person. When he gets to work, he learns that Johannes and his white boss, Chris, both died in the mine when a beam fell. When management won't take responsibility for the disaster, he and Red organize a strike so that everyone can show that they are all together. Because of the didacticism of the story, it is clear. It is clear that Paddy and Xuma dragged Johannes and Chris' bodies to the ground, and Paddy is willing to stand up for the black workers against white management. In this example, the person who gave the grin was kind. Finally, he'd worked it all out. Start by taking on the form of a human, and you can do this at the start. A black or white man comes first, then another man. Xuma's response to the police officers is more interesting for us because he runs away:

"Do not run, Zuma!" Paddy's voice swept over him. However, his feet were pounding behind him, and he felt compelled to flee, so he bolted. After a time, no one followed him. He persisted in fleeing.... 'Zuma, don't run away!' Paddy continued to shout at him. All around him, the streets were desolate. On the planet, he was the sole one. He was rushing from one empty street to the next."

Xuma's escape isn't only cowardly; it allows him to complete his inward journey toward politicised awareness. Xuma's city walks have resulted in increased self-awareness and enlightenment. It's now or never for him to realize his dreams. He isn't escaping the state but fleeing a future when the state's obligations will be questioned. His choice to return to the police station signifies a complete awakening in terms of both class and individual consciousness, and it is the culmination of months of roaming across the city:

I had to go. The Red One's coming has been announced. He will do time in prison for the sake of our people, despite the fact that he is not a black guy. What makes you think I'm not going to show up? I have a lot of things I'd want to express as well. I'd want to express how I, and other African-Americans, feel.

It will be in a holding cell where Xuma will speak. If prison is the most powerful tool in the state's toolbox for controlling space, Xuma's choice to stay in prison challenges this power. The need for movement as a way to raise awareness has been met and even exceeded.

13. Maltreatments and arrest of blacks are based on race and hegemony

Finally, how the white military officers molested Teacher Isaka, Njorege, Mucutha and others is racial in nature. Teacher Isaka was shot because of his race. Njorege was also forcefully taken away from his school –Siriana Secondary School- mainly because of his race and connection to Ngotho. His experience at the House of Pain suggests racist tendencies and the control of a race by

another. Clearly, only blacks were targeted in the onslaught against the Mau Mau. As such women were also abducted and tortured. Ngotho, divorced from his land was beaten and he was mortally wounded. Due to the unfair treatments meted out to the blacks, Boro murdered Mr. Howlands. Boro says that Jacobo betrayed black people when he said that Mr. Howlands did not do what he said he did. As a group, you killed many sons of the land. You raped our girls. They continued because the white man thought they were better than the black man and had every right to rule them. Issues of racism and hegemony are very pronounced in *Mine Boy* by Peter Abrahams. The title of the novel indicates issues of racism and hegemony. This is because a fully grown man who is attached to a white miner is usually referred to as a boy. This designation is only possible because of the black man's race and the white man's ability to dominate the black man.

14. Where the blacks stay is based on their race

To begin, racism and hegemony can be seen in the environment where blacks live. In the novel, the blacks live at Malay Camp, Vrededorp and Hoopvlei. At Malay Camp, all the houses look the same. The streets are narrow, without street lights and dirty. The houses have been haphazardly constructed. The pavements are sandy and muddy. Children and groups of men linger on the streets. The men gamble and the children look for dirty edibles. Prostitutes and pimps also stay on the streets. The white men want to get the natives and coloureds out of Malay Camp and Vrededorp so they created a new settlement at Hoopvlei. To determine where someone should stay because of their skin colour is a racist idea. This contrasts with the locations where white people stay. Xuma considers the city of gold to be a beautiful place. The whites live in flats. Xuma was perplexed by the beauty of Paddy's home. It had carpets on the floor, books, radio and beautiful things everywhere. The whites have made the environment where they stay comfortable while neglecting the environments of the blacks who form a greater percentage of the mine workforce. The black miners were kept in compounds while their families lived in undesirable conditions.

15. Roles played at the mines are based on race and hegemony

Second, race and hegemony shape the character of black workers' tasks in the mines. Xuma is warned by Leah that the mines are dangerous and that if he continues to use them, he will cough and spit blood, get weak, and die (pg. 5). The mines employ Joseph, Johannes, and the vast majority of black workers. The black miners are forced to labor in ways beyond their abilities. When Xuma is given command of fifty miners, he divides them into four groups, each with four white men. The black guys hauled sand, dug holes, and propped up the mines to keep them from collapsing. This work was done in shifts without consideration for their health. The blacks are referred to as a body of marching men (pg. 34) and rested for only thirty minutes during their shift. To make them accessible, they were kept at a compound at Langlaate. The white men from the farms, the land of Portuguese and Rhodesia fetched these men. Johannes worked under a white man named Chris and Xuma worked under Paddy called the red one. The black men were maltreated by some of the white men especially when they challenged the white men. The order of the white man to Xuma that he should push the loaded truck up the steep incline indicates how the white men usually exert power on the black man. The narrator describes the black men as the eyes of these men were like the eyes of the sheep that did not know where to run when the dog barked (pg. 41). This means that the white men were superior to the blacks and that is why Xuma really feels free, when he is underground in the mines where the whites even respect him because they depended on him. Nana, tells Xuma that are we not all sheep that talk (pg. 43) expressing the fact that the white man gives orders to the black man who has no option but to obey. The differences in the race of the blacks and whites are so glaring that the narrator attests to the fact that blacks and whites cannot be friends but can only work together. The blacks were told to go back into the mine when a part of it collapsed and killed Chris and Johannes. Paddy and Xuma stood up to protest. Xuma explained that they are not cattle to throw away their lives despite having a black skin. When Paddy supported the blacks against the whites, a white man advised him to join them (the white men) so that they show these kaffirs where they belong. The word kaffirs according to the WordWeb is an offensive and insulting term for any Black African. All these treatments meted out to the blacks due to the race they belong to. Hence if a white man supports the blacks against the whites, that person is also punished.

16. Maltreatments and arrests of blacks are based on their race

The white policemen enjoy attacking the blacks even when there is no need to. Xuma was attacked by a white policeman the first day he went to the city with Joseph. It looked like a normal activity of the whites. The white policeman was therefore filled with surprise when Xuma fought back. The white manager also became shocked when it was obvious that the blacks were not ready to work unless the repairs were made. Though their pleas were right, the whites called the police on them blatantly showing their racial tendencies and the unwarranted show of power over another race. Lena was jailed because of public disturbance. However, some whites were seen boxing on the street and disturbing the public. The arrest of the Skokiaan Queens is also based on race and hegemony. These were women like Leah who sold liquor described as illicit. The Fox, a white policeman enjoyed the liquor brewed by these women when he was not keen on arresting them.

Leah asked Ma Plank not to waste money on lawyers only because there was no freedom for the black once it was a white man who jailed her. At the trial of Leah, a young man told bystanders that white people sold beer and other drinks but were not jailed. The Skokiaan Queens made drinks for the blacks and people patronized their services mainly because black people by law

were not to drink alcohol. The colour bar further worsened the situation of the black man. Blacks were required to carry a pass. They are stopped on the street by a policeman who questions them and only allows them to move when satisfied. Some places were captioned white people only. They had eating houses meant for whites and blacks. The ones for the blacks were poorly managed, crowded and dirty. Those for the whites were bigger and available on almost every city street. The white man cared very little for the life of the black man. The black man was condemned and judged because of his skin colour. The white man was not ready to see a black man as a man first before considering his skin.

17. Walking, Working, Consciousness

Malay Camp: Xuma walks from there into the dark city on his first day in Johannesburg. He is going to work in the mines. Johannes, the alcoholic colored miner, comes back to be with him.:

"And again they walked in silence for a long time. Up the empty streets and down the empty streets with tall sleeping buildings on either side and goods and clothes in shop windows. But not a car anywhere and not a person anywhere. The city of gold sleeping and they were the only two waking, walking things in it. Johannes thought it was like a dead place, and I do not like dead places". (16)

He thought it was beautiful like this, peaceful and lovely. Their reactions to seeing the city still asleep could reflect their different views of the industrial system, which they both thought was bad. Johannes makes a connection between the glitz and glamour of downtown Johannesburg and the people who work hard to keep it running. When the men went from their camp to the city, they showed how white places where people buy things and show off their possessions are linked to places where people work. As a result, the inner city has been spread out and is now only a symbol of wealth from somewhere else. In shops, the items and clothes on display show the physical wealth that the miner's work generates but from which he is not allowed to take. Due to the deathly reality of the mine, the city of gold is shown to be hungry and destructive, making it a "dead place."

The empty streets bore little similarity to the mines for Xuma, who is still unfamiliar with the city's operations. "I enjoy it," he continues, "but I despise it when it's bustling and people are present, like on Saturday." Xuma's mentality is still closed off to the masses who share his destiny, and he has little grasp of the societal forces that regulate his motions.

The marching motion of migrant hostel residents to and from the mines exemplifies capital's power over the bodies of its workers: 'In front of the long column marched an induna, a mine policeman, whose task it was to ensure order among the lads.' Others marched 10 yards on each side of the column, surrounding it on both sides. All of the indunas had knob-kerries and assegais. The passage is about how money moves between the country and the city in terms of people and money. In the country, the homestead and the farm don't get along, which makes it hard for the city to make things. It is through the migrant labor system that these guys are both physically and socially linked to each other. When they move in a controlled way, they look a lot like when they move from their farms and reserves to the city. The assegais and knobkerries of the indunas show that there is an overarching ideology in which space is used as a political tool. It is in the panopticon of the hostel that migrants are kept and watched after they arrive in the city. Even though Xuma doesn't live in the hostel, he is just as much a victim of the capitalist system as the migrants who are marching through the city. He is enslaved by a system that has limited his living options outside the city.

Michael Wade says: "He fought tooth and nail." Xuma was amazed at his first day working in the mines and how meaningless his work seemed. This shows that he is not connected to the means of production. Following the loaded truck and checked to see whether the dump had become any larger, as well as checking to see if the sand from the soil had shrunk. It was the same anyway. "Every time it's the same." "There hasn't been a single alteration."

Xuma's panicked, frenzied actions, in contrast to the immovable mine waste, depict his individuality trapped behind rigid work surroundings. Mine employment is a step toward his urbanization, but he still characterizes it as a person. Xuma hasn't yet learned about class consciousness, which is needed to change power relationships. If the mine-space is in a state of stasis, he will become more aware as he walks through Johannesburg's streets. Xuma has a hard time getting along with his schoolteacher, Eliza, so three months after he moves to the city, he wanders around the frigid streets. It's bad for Eliza because she's adopting white ideas, which is like Fanon's condemnation of black psychosocial slavery. People who say "black man" are psychologically different from "white man" do so because they have a dependency complex that comes from "white gaze." Despite being oppressed, the 'Negro' strives to be white by adopting the white culture, language, and values. The Negro encodes her identity as white in order to get acceptance from the 'White Master,' since black and white cannot have a reciprocal connection. Eliza's yearning to be white reflects the state's power, and Xuma's promenade demonstrates how the personal and political are intertwined under its discriminatory regime:

As he got closer to the city center, the crowd thinned. There were more white individuals today, and they were distinct from the previous generation. They didn't walk or look like his people and didn't seem to be there. He moved to the side to allow them to pass and recognized their voices, yet they were strangers.... He didn't care since they weren't his kind.

For the first time in the book, Xuma declares his allegiance to Malay Camp's black residents, dubbed "his people." On the other hand, the whites are like ghosts moving across the metropolis. Whites look unreal and are characterized by Xuma's non-recognition, which is a reverse of black negation.

Xuma's journey through the city is to say the least, "subversive," but it's not the only thing. The idea of "tactical walkers," as proposed by Michel de Certeau, is that they move in ways that open up new places, shut down others, and fight against authoritarian spatial domination strategies. A poem that takes a long time to write can change how things look in a space, even if they are "panoptic." It isn't bothered by them, or in agreement with them. Cities are prone to administrative tactics that try to make a situation more predictable by cutting down on the number of variables in the situation. On the other hand, city walkers use techniques that make the space less predictable and tidy by accident. Xuma's walking could be seen as a tactical reworking of city space, an accidental move that causes a misinterpretation of the state's organizational goals. A lot of time is wasted by him. He takes unnecessary breaks, travels through the city in ways that defy official maps, and steps aside in mockery rather than submission. To show both how Fanon's "settler town" and "native town" were divided by Manichaean division, Xuma and Eliza go on a tour of the white suburbs of Johannesburg. They also show that the black movement broke down these categories.

"The streets grew broader and there were no people on them. On the side-walk was beautifully tended grass. And trees grew on the side-walk. The houses had big bay windows and through the windows they could see white people eating and drinking". (16)

The vacant streets represent white leisure and private property. The act of walking marks Xuma and Eliza as members of a class that has been denied access to bourgeois suburbia for economic and political reasons. Simultaneously, using a distinct cartography, their walking narrative reconfigures the city's divided sections. The black walkers' attention is drawn to white activities. The two activities of moving and seeing stress on the black subject's agency, while the whites are deemed seen objects, safe but stationary within their homes.

He turns and looks. When Xuma and Eliza arrive at a hill with a great view of the city, he turns and looks. Everywhere he looked was below him. The city, Malay Camp, Vrededorp and the mining wastes were all below him. In that way, it looked like he was bigger than it. This event must happen to make Xuma from a body that can only work in a certain way to one that can see and define itself. When he's on the hill, he can read the text of Johannesburg in ways that go beyond its ground-level splits, which he can see from there.

There are social and material inequities in this rhizomorphic intertwining of space. Xuma can confine the hilltop city inside his own referential matrix, making him 'greater' than it. Xuma is more than his race or class, even as his identity becomes more oriented on the miseries of the black working class.

18. Conclusion

This work has examined *Ngugi's Weep not, Child* and Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* against the background of racism, gender disparity, and aesthetics. The selection of this issue is predicated upon the idea that other critics have sufficiently explored the text(text) as an apartheid material. However, the role(s) played by the police in the materialisation of apartheid as well as the role of the police as an agency of the bourgeois class is seldom studied. This work has therefore adopted the theoretical/critical frameworks of Marxism, post colonial and sociological to examine the texts as a presentation of the "authorities" as exploitative oppressors and as tools in the hands of the oppressive superstructure and elites in apartheid South Africa. And the perception of both authors as regards to gender.

The discussion revealed that as African writers, Abrahams and Ngugi are committed to probing into the structures of gender, race and aesthetics. They do this by proving that the female characters are discriminated against because of their gender. The chief protagonist in the *Mine Boy*; Xuma proves that race and hegemony are based on an individual's skin color. The black man is discriminated against because of his race. Their skin colour empowers the white race to exert power over the blacks even though they are the majority. The racial discrimination spans from housing for blacks and whites, specific job descriptions for whites and blacks, separate restaurants for blacks and whites, special laws for blacks to special economic ventures for blacks. They excel at showing the role played by whites and blacks in constructing gender and race ideologies. The two texts, on the whole border on gender, race and hegemony issues in African society.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

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