

## Investigating Onto-cartographies of Memory and Postmemory, and (Trans)raciolinguistics and Practice of Race Theory in Selected Excerpts of Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman*

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### ABSTRACT

This paper is undergirded by two sets of analytic tools: the onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory, and (trans)raciolinguistics and practice of race theory. Employing these types of analytic tools, the paper sets out to answer the following two research questions: (a) what types of geo-narratives can be detected in the onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory in the analysed excerpts of *Call Me Woman* as an autobiographical text?; and (b) what does analysing these excerpts of *Call Me Woman* through (trans)raciolinguistics and practice of race theory reveal about these excerpts of the autobiography? Pertaining to the first research question, the paper has discovered instances of imprecise geo-narratives, and of the problematics of remembering and forgetting that characterize the analysed excerpts of *Call Me Woman*. In addition, it has presented instances of postmemorializing and of intergenerational and transgenerational postmemories employed in the analysed excerpts. As regards the second research question, the paper has argued that there are instances of spatoracial apartheid, of a vindicationist view, and of metaculture, metarace and metalanguage that can be detected in the excerpts of *Call Me Woman* that it has analysed. Moreover, the paper has presented a case for an instance of postmemorially and vicariously deferring to and defying Whiteness in one of the analysed excerpts. In the main, the paper has argued that Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman* is an autobiography of onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory. In this sense, the novelty of this paper lies in its endeavour to analyse autobiography through a dual conceptual perspective of the onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory, and through the lenses of both (trans)raciolinguistics and practice of race theory.

**Key words:** Autobiography, Onto-cartography, Memory, Postmemory, (Trans)raciolinguistics, Practice of Race Theory, Vindicationist View, Whiteness

### INTRODUCTION

As part of its research problem, the current paper argues that Ellen Kuzwayo's autobiographical text, *Call Me Woman*, which is about the autobiographer's (Kuzwayo's) life history in apartheid South Africa, has been investigated and critiqued by a fairly good number of scholars from a motley of theoretical perspectives. A few examples in this regard are: Arosi's (2013) psychobiographical approach; Chambers' (2013) identity formation; Coullie's (1994) feminist and poststructuralist theoretical approach; Dlomo's (2003) Black South African feminist perspective; Marsden's (1994) representation approach; Masemola's (2010) cultural memory mediated through double consciousness and double temporality; and Sarinjeive's (2002) Black feminist theory. It is worth encapsulating and contextualising some of these perspectives for the purpose of this paper. As attested to by its name, psychobiography is the psychology of life stories. It entails appropriating aspects of personality theory to study life stories, autobiographical recollections, and narrative

texts with a view to understanding human experiences and behaviours (McAdams, 2001). McAdams (1988, p. 2) refers to psychobiography as 'the systematic use of psychological (especially personality) theory to transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story.' It is this conception of psychobiography that Arosi (2013) employs in her analysis of Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman*.

Dlomo's (2003) Black South African feminist approach to this autobiographical text comprises a constellation of feminist strands such as liberal feminism, Western feminism (the first and second waves), radical, psychoanalytic, Afro-American (Black) feminism, African feminism, and postcolonial feminism (with the focus on Gayatri Spivak). It is within this melting-pot of perspectives that Dlomo situates her analysis of not only Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman* (1985), but of Bessie Head's *When Rain Clouds Gather* (1967), and *Maru* (1971) as well. As pointed out in the preceding paragraph, Masemola (2010) appropriates cultural memory premised on double consciousness and double

temporality to assay autobiographical *selfing* in Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman* (1985) and in Sindiwe Magona's *Forced to Grow* (1992). The notion of double consciousness is adumbrated by Gilroy (1993) as emanating from the desire to be both European (White) and Black in the Black Atlantic milieu. He avers that it is an antipodal relationship typified by a Manichean dynamic – Black and White. For its part, double temporality refers to framing a text (autobiography or otherwise) in such a way that the present is used as a lens to review the past as a moment through disrupting and irrupting the latter (see Farred, 2004).

Finally, Sarinjeive (2002) employs what she refers to as the major strands of Black feminist theory to investigate 'textual delineations of the self in Kuzwayo's autobiographical, factual *Call Me Woman* and Morrison's third-person, fictional *Beloved*' (p. 37). Her major strands of feminist theory are: Black feminism, womanism and African feminism.

Now, in view of the aforesaid toolkit of theoretical formulations used in analysing *Call Me Woman*, the current paper seeks to analyse the autobiographical text, *Call Me Woman*, by employing two sets of analytic tools. These two sets of analytic tools are the onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory, and (trans)raciolinguistics and practice of race theory, respectively. These analytic tools bring a new and fresh perspective in investigating this autobiography. Onto-cartographies can also simultaneously be deemed as both a theoretical model and a conceptual metaphor. In this context, a theoretical model is viewed as a research tool or as a knowledge mediator (Ziedler, 2013), while a conceptual metaphor needs to be seen as a mapping across domains using language. Mapping is conceptualized as a set of organized symmetry between closely linked ideas and entities (Burke, 2015). Concerning this paper, a metaphorical phrase, onto-cartographies of memory and of postmemory, is employed in analysing Ellen Kuzwayo's autobiography, *Call Me Woman*. Ontology is the metaphysical study of the nature of being, and cartography is the art or science of drawing maps (WordWeb n.d.). The portmanteau, onto-cartography, as used here, is borrowed from Bryant (2014). The latter uses this concept to refer to 'a map of relations between machines that analyses how these assemblages organize the movement, development, and becoming (sic) other machines in a world' (p. 7).

For this paper, on the one hand, the onto-cartography of memory refers to how the self presents its autobiographical details through a combination of miniature geographic or cartographic vignettes and narrations. On the other hand, the onto-cartography of postmemory is about the self that maps its own memory through the memory of the other, or through intergenerational or transgenerational memory. In addition, in the case of *Call Me Woman*, the onto-cartography of postmemory is mediated through photography. It also entails the interplay between photography and autobiographical narration. Thus, the notion of onto-cartography is appropriated to frame the self that presents itself in geo-narratives and that maps itself iconologically in photographs. In this sense, then, onto-cartography is both a framework and a conceptual tool borrowed from Bryant (2014), which is

repurposed for exploring a self's memory and postmemory maps and a self-mapping and self-positioning subject in *Call Me Woman*. Embedded into onto-cartography is the cartography of recollection and remembrance as propounded by Gudmundsdottir (2017).

In this regard, raciolinguistics, on the one hand, simultaneously conceptualizes, theorizes, and analyses race and language. It sees language as a proxy for race and its associated racial stereotypes. Put differently, it is about how discourses of race and language are co-naturalized to negatively construct linguistic practices of racialized groups (Rosa & Flores, 2017; Smith, 2019a, 2019b). Additionally, it is about both *linguaging* and *racing* (Smitherman, 2017). On the other hand, transraciolinguistics calls for linking analyses of race and language in texts to mega hegemonic issues prevalent in socio-political milieus; it also relates to metalinguistic, meta-racial, and metacultural understanding of past experiences with race and language (Smith, 2019b). In this paper, raciolinguistics is used to refer to the interplay of language and race, and how the two concepts are implicated in each other in constructing and representing some of the aspects of the autobiographical text, *Call Me Woman*. For its part, transraciolinguistics is appropriated to highlight metalinguistic, meta-racial, and metacultural instances in certain parts of this text.

PRT conceptualizes race as a consequential practice that is implicated in our thinking and in our doing. It foregrounds a post-White, vindicationist orientation. A vindicationist standpoint conceives of Whites (the hypo-raced) and Blacks (the hyper-raced) as racial groupings that have full and equal humanity. But, in particular, it validates and vindicates Blackness from false notions associated with deficiency philosophy. In this context, a post-White, vindicationist orientation rejects both a normativization of Whiteness and post-racial notions (Croom, 2020; Martin et al., 2019). In this paper, aspects of PRT will be highlighted and analysed in the related parts of *Call Me Woman*.

Given the points highlighted above, the main goal of this paper is to analyse *Call Me Woman* by employing a dual conceptual perspective of the onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory, and by utilizing both (trans)raciolinguistics and practice of race theory. To this end, the paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What types of geo-narratives can be detected in the onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory in the analysed excerpts of *Call Me Woman* as an autobiographical text?
- What does analysing these excerpts of *Call Me Woman* through (trans)raciolinguistics and practice of race theory reveal about these excerpts of the autobiography?

#### **ONTO-CARTOGRAPHIES OF MEMORY: IMPRECISE GEO-NARRATIVES, AND THE PROBLEMATICS OF REMEMBERING AND FORGETTING**

The relationship between narratives and maps has been studied by exploring areas such as story maps, narrative atlases, fictional cartography and geospatial storytelling (Caquard, 2011). In addition, scholars such as Strong (2009) have

investigated memory and mapping through mapping the landscape of memory. In a similar vein, and with specific reference to this paper, Gudmundsdottir (2017) has assayed collective memory/forgetting and examined the cartography of recollection and remembrance in relation to life writing. Specifically, she foregrounds the centrality and the workings of memory in autobiographical texts. In this case, she contends that there is a convergence between memory, narrative and identity in most life writing texts. This is the notion that Brockmeier (2000, p. 52) refers to as 'the orders of memory, identity, and narrative.' He further opines that: 'usually, telling one's life is closely intertwined with autobiographical remembering, the retrospective reconstruction of one's life history' (p. 52). Even though this paper acknowledges the centrality of memory with respect to Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman*, it nonetheless does not valorize memory to the exclusion of its alter egos, remembering and forgetting, and to the point of essentializing it. Both remembering and forgetting are implicated in the workings of memory in given autobiographical writings. This is especially as memory is capable of sifting and decanting that which is to be remembered or forgotten at any given point. To this effect, Gudmundsdottir (2017, p. 12) avers that 'how forgetting forms our memories' and how 'memories [can be] hand-picked and meddled with' is equally critical.

Furthermore, Gudmundsdottir (2017, p. 13) poignantly adumbrates the interstices of the problematics of forgetting, memory, remembering, and the past in terms of autobiographical writing thus:

A forgotten past results in a new self. But long before we recall and write down our memories, oblivion ... has already done half the autobiographer's job.... Here, the view is voiced that forgetting 'shapes' our memories and thereby our selves ... Forgetting relieves us of our past, but also forms our memories, the remains, the traces of that past. Remembering in this instance is made possible by forgetting and makes us able to forge a relationship with that past.

The foregoing musing needs to be noted as this paper tries to vignette the onto-cartography of memory as it relates to Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman*. One instance exemplifying an onto-cartography of memory in *Call Me Woman* is the following:

I have seen it [Soweto] established and develop to its bursting maturity. Over the years I have seen the miseries caused by its appallingly inadequate facilities: very unreliable electrification, for example, and continually bursting water pipes, even during the severe droughts of the 1980s. Its very streets are in a pitiful state, except for the few main tarred arteries which carry the heavy commercial traffic, including police and army vehicles, and which link together the municipal offices. These offices are under the management of a small number of white officials who live in beautiful Johannesburg and have to travel every day to work (Kuzwayo, 1985, p. 6 (*Excerpt 1*))<sup>1</sup>

In the preceding extract, a narrative map of Soweto lynchpinned on memory is adumbrated. At a macro-level and

through a yarn of memory, a short macro-narrative cartography of the birth and growth of Soweto is presented using the past (remembering) as a prism. Instantaneously, and through a temporal truncation, a cryptic micro-narrative cartography of Soweto is proffered comprising the state of water pipes, of streets and of artery roads, and the nature of traffic and the types of vehicles traversing the artery roads. All of this is counterpoised with a sentential cartographic depiction of Johannesburg which is deemed to be better off than Soweto. It is worth highlighting that a narrative cartographic depiction of places in an autobiographical text mediated by the self's memory need not be precise and exact as is the case with classical map cartographers. The latter are aided by cartographic devices such as mapping instruments, GPS devices, Google Maps, Bing Maps, and geo-coordinates<sup>2</sup>, while autobiographers like Ellen Kuzwayo only have their memories and remembrances – which are, at times, countervailed by forgetting – as their primary devices of cartography. So, autobiographical cartography, or narrated cartographic representation conveyed through either an autobiographical voice or an autobiographical self as exemplified by the foregoing extract is imprecise. It can, therefore, be argued that this kind of voice or self tends to engender imprecise geographies or imprecise geo-narratives, especially when compared to classical cartography<sup>3</sup>.

Homing in on the imprecision of geo-narratives of both travel map diaries and film dialogues – and by extension the imprecision of geo-narratives of autobiographical texts such as *Call Me Woman* - in mapping cartographies, Caquard (2011, p. 138) has this to say:

The promises and expectations of [travel map diaries] to systematically locate all forms of narratives – including film dialogues ... imply multiple challenges such as the best ways to achieve cartographic representation of imprecise geographies and vague places in a systematic way ... Indeed, narrative places are often described in general terms such as 'south of the city', and 'near the lake'.

Caquard's (2011, p. 138) assertion as reflected in the preceding quotation dovetails with the following excerpt from *Call Me Woman*:

They owned a large fertile farm through which flowed the Leeuw River. It was approximately 2560 morgen (60,000 acres) judging by the size of the farm my sister and I inherited in 1970. This was about 1400 acres, a quarter of the farm inherited by my grandfather's four children. The farm was situated about 50 miles south of a small village, Tweespruit, about 35 miles west of Ladybrand, 20 miles north of Hobhouse and some 30 miles east of Thaba Nchu. Yes it was a beautifully cultivated farm, with plenty of rich grazing pasture as well as cultivated land which yielded abundant corn and maize in winter and equally abundant wheat in summer... About 25 yards from the homestead, there were two dams irrigating a large orchard which had a variety of fruit trees which yielded plentiful crops (pp. 55-56, my italics (*Excerpt 2*)).

In the foregoing quotation, instances of imprecise autobiographical cartographic representation are italicized. These

are instances of, to borrow Caquard's (2011) postulate, imprecise geo-narratives. These imprecise geo-narratives are, in this case, interlarded with rich landscape descriptions. They serve 'as a means of unearthing the rich imaginative textures of real, lived places' in which "the writing of a particular locale [constitutes] 'read[ing] the place itself'" (Krotz, 2014, p. 135). This is a proclivity on the part of the self to layer its story into its mnemonic textures by drawing attention to the messiness and complexity of a place as an imaginative construct. To this end, such a narrated story or landscape is imbricated not only with a story but also with a self's memory (see Krotz, 2014).

Viewed from another angle, the imprecise geo-narratives as captured in the two aforesaid excerpts from *Call Me Woman* display elements of the fuzziness and the vagueness of what may be referred to as indigenous or vernacular<sup>4</sup> geography (see Caquard, 2011). This geography is mediated by the memory of an autobiographical ontology (*being/self*) that attempts to map and reconstruct spatial entities (*beings*). In doing so, this self tries to map and reconstruct not only its autobiographical cartography but also its ontological cartography. This is a process entailing self-reflexivity: the self constituting itself through ontological autobiographical memory mapping. So, in this context, if maps have, as Krotz (2014, p. 141) contends, 'long served as powerful tools of territorial appropriation', geo-narratives tend to, in the case of *Call Me Woman* as instantiated by the cited excerpts, serve as a powerful device for both onto-spatial mapping and onto-spatial remembering. All this geo-narrative depiction has a deictic aura to it as Krotz (2014, p. 145) puts it: 'But it is when what is remembered is not just another *time* but another *place* - when 'here,' in effect, evokes *somewhere else* - that memory makes mapping the world especially [telling]' (my italics). When this happens, the self not only inscribes itself in its autobiographical space but embeds itself in its autobiographical temporal metaspace as well. It is, thus, the case that in this type of practice 'maps do not represent space but [also] present the self in spatio-temporal terms' (Sotelo-Castro, 2010, p. 594). For this reason, the foregoing excerpt from *Call Me Woman* seems to have a self-mapping, a self-positioning, autobiographical self wrought into it.

Moreover, *Call Me Woman* is an autobiography woven into personal and familial memory stories. One such instance is highlighted by the following:

I was born on 29 June 1914, the only child of Phillip Serasengwe and Emma Mutsi Merafe, born Makgothi. The place of birth was the farm of my maternal grandfather, Jeremiah Makoloi Makgothi, in Thaba Patchoa in the district of Thaba'Nchu in the Orange Free State. My parents named me Ellen Kate. My mother's favourite name was however Cholofelo, which means Hope. Later in life when I met my father and his family, I was introduced by yet another name, unknown to me, Nnoseng, the literal meaning being 'Give me water'. Among my mother's people I was popularly known as Motlalepule, meaning 'The one who arrives on a rainy day'. Ellen Kate Cholofelo Nnoseng Motlalepule are all names I answer to. Please do not ask me why so many. *I can only*

*guess* that both my paternal and maternal grandparents wanted to have a share in giving me a name to make their mark. At one time Mother told me that she gave me the name Cholofelo because I arrived (*I want to believe* she conceived) long after I was expected ... Nnoseng is my father's paternal aunt's name ... When I became aware of myself at the age of *six or seven* years in the early 1920s, I learnt that I was one of four grandchildren of Jeremiah Makoloi and Magdeline Segogoane Makgothi (p. 55, my italics (*Excerpt 3*)).

The foregoing extract demonstrates how the self, a personal life story, and a family life story are interwoven into an autobiographical memory tapestry. This intermingling of the tripartite autobiographical elements leads to a self's familial historiography and a self's genealogical roots being inscribed into its autobiography. This, in turn, results in the self that conjoins its genealogy with its place of origin and with its memory. In this regard, two spatial landmarks (place names), Thaba Patchoa and Thaba'Nchu, are invoked in *memorying* and mapping the self's personal and familial genealogy (see place names mentioned in *Extract 2* as well). Such spatial landmarks or spatial reference points are crucial as they serve to aid and signpost *memorying* events in this particular autobiographical text. This kind of *memorying* functions as an episodic autobiographical memory. The latter, especially episodic memory, is regarded by Shum (1998, p. 424) as a memory located in and as referring to one's own personal pasts. Needless to say that the genre of memory as reflected in this autobiographical text is encoded through the problematic of presence, of absence, and of distance on the one hand, and through the problematic of remembering, of forgetting, and of space on the other hand. That is, the autobiographical self is present in both its act of autobiographical writing and its autobiographical space, while at the same time it is both absent and distant from that writing process and from that space. Additionally, in trying to access its memory, the self oscillates between remembering and forgetting<sup>5</sup>.

Furthermore, in the quoted extract, the self tends to invoke a personal reference system. This is exemplified by the five different personal names that the self attributes to itself as having been bestowed on it through its familial lineage. In this onymic practice, different family members on both parentage sides are key role players, with each one of them staking his/her ownership over the self. Emphasising the notion of personal reference system as it relates particularly to autobiographical memory, Shum (1998, p. 424) aptly avers:

Autobiographical memory is, then, apart from its component events, personally distinctive in the sense that its organization is dependent on the particular collection of reference systems owned by a person; that is, every possible reference system is unique to the individual who possesses it ...

One feature worth pointing out in respect of *Excerpt 3* from *Call Me Woman* is that personal naming as a practice is embedded within and is autochthonous to familial life systems of most African communities (see Mandende et al., 2015; Sebonde, 2020). In this context, the familial personal

naming entails multiple names bestowed to one individual. Such onymic practice is theorized as multi-nominality by Mandende et al. (2015) who contend that it is an index of multiple identities. This seems to be the case with the self as it portrays itself in *Call Me Woman*, particularly if this is viewed against the backcloth of both its paternal and maternal grandparents' bestowing names on it.

### MEMORY, (TRANS)RACIOLINGUISTICS AND PRACTICE OF RACE THEORY: SPATIORACIAL APARTHEID, VINDICATIONIST VIEW, AND METACULTURE, METARACE AND METALANGUAGE

From a raciolinguistic standpoint, there is an overt interplay of race and language in the depiction of Soweto in the first and second parts of *Excerpt 1*. This depiction encapsulates the state of misery and pity that Soweto embodies. Soweto has all the hallmarks of a failed and neglected Black residential area. Its electricity, water and road infrastructure is in a perpetual state of dysfunctionality. The language used to portray the infrastructural neglect of Soweto reflects a racial neglect of the race (Blacks) that inhabits this densely populated area. Here, language tends to become a proxy for race as argued by Rosa and Flores (2017) and Smith (2019a, 2019b). Analogously, Soweto's infrastructural neglect tends to be a proxy for and an embodiment of a racial neglect of Soweto's Blacks as a race. A further instance of the intersection of race and language is exemplified by the second part of this excerpt. This part, which contrasts markedly with the larger Soweto's years-long infrastructural neglect, depicts a well-looked after section of Soweto with tarred main roads that carry commercial and government (police and army) vehicles. This section is also home to municipal offices that are managed by a minority of White officials residing in Johannesburg. The positive depiction of this section of Soweto and the positive description of Johannesburg (at the time an exclusive home to the White race) not only emphasizes an infrastructural discrimination between these two areas and the larger Soweto, but also highlights the spatial and racial discrimination – the spatoracial apartheid – existing between these two areas and the rest of Soweto. In all this, language, through which this depiction is encoded, serves as a conduit if not a proxy for the spatoracial apartheid depicted. Thus, in this depiction, *linguaging* and *racing* intersect in line with Smitherman's (2017) raciolinguistic theorization. Moreover, this linguistic depiction of spatoracial apartheid instantiates a metaracial representation and a metaracial reflection of the past experiences being memorialized by the self in this part of *Call Me Woman*.

*Excerpt 2* evinces elements of practice of race theory (PRT) in the form of a post-White, vindicationist orientation. The entire excerpt positively depicts a large portion of land originally owned by Ellen Kuzwayo's maternal grandparents that has now been passed on to her and to her sister – as part of the four grandchildren - through inheritance. Judging by its provided estimated land measurements, it is large enough a land to have been owned by a Black person and to have been bequeathed to Black grandchildren during

this apartheid era in which land apartheid against Blacks was the order of the day, and in which Blacks in South Africa were legally prohibited to own land by the Natives Land Act of 1913 (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014; Modise & Mtshiselwa, 2013; Sibiya, 2012). Such a privilege, land ownership, was only afforded Whites as the hypo-raced. The Natives Land Act of 1913 was promulgated a year before Ellen Kuzwayo was born (see *Excerpt 3*). The depiction of the ownership of land originally by Ellen Kuzwayo's maternal grandfather, and later by Ellen Kuzwayo and the other grandchildren, and the attendant depiction of this land being put to its agrarian use (cultivation, grazing, irrigation, and farming) has a vindicationist aura to it. More so, this depiction has a post-White, vindicationist orientation in that it highlights how these land-ed Blacks – as the hyper-raced - attach a utilitarian value to the land they own. The last two sentences in *Excerpt 2* exemplify this vindicationist view. This positive depiction of the Blacks referred to in this excerpt tends to validate and vindicate, the paper argues in keeping with Croom's (2020) PRT, these hyper-raced Blacks against racialized notions of deficiencies often attributed to the Blackness to which they belong as a race.

*Excerpt 3* displays instances of metalanguage and metaculture as some of the elements of transraciolinguistics as referenced earlier. This excerpt represents an autobiography-within-an-autobiography scenario. In it, metalanguage, metaculture, and metarace are employed to historicize and memorialize the self's past about its birth and naming. This is embedded in a short genealogical memoir in which personal names of the self's parents and maternal grandparents and all the personal names bestowed on the self are enumerated. A striking feature of these personal names is a *double-linguaging* and a *double-racing* that they bear. In the former case, these personal names bear both English and Setswana<sup>6</sup> names. Invariably, there is an English first name and a Setswana last name. In some instances, an English first name is followed by Setswana middle name(s). In the latter case, this naming practice illustrates how the Blacks as the hyper-raced depicted here tend to assume names of Whites as the hypo-raced. Viewed from a broader canvas, this double-linguaging and double-racing naming practice also reflects a metacultural and metaracial praxis in which Blacks as the hyper-raced simultaneously assumed White, colonial names and Black names as their overall onymic practice during this colonial era. Thus, transraciolinguistically speaking, this double-linguaging and double-racing practice in relation to Black personal naming tends to highlight the racial and cultural hegemony of both Whiteness and colonialism on the onymic system of the Blacks depicted in this part of *Call Me Woman*.

Moreover, the multiple personal names that the self bears provides a metalinguistic and metacultural musings the self has concerning its past naming experiences. For example, personal naming serves a metalinguistic performative function and reflects a metacultural performance. That is, each name the self is given by each party involved embodies a functional meaning each party expects it to communicate in consonance with Setswana as a language. Similarly,

different members across the self's familial spectrum (including members of the community of which the self is a part) bestows the self with a name that it must assume in keeping with the self's sociocultural milieu. So, in this sense, personal naming appears to be a proxy for languaging and a proxy for enculturation, with the self as the familial and community embodiment of this personal naming practice. Elsewhere, Agyekum (2006, p. 209) maintains that personal names serve as 'iconic representations of composite social variables that indexicalise and relate the name to the person.'

### ONTO-CARTOGRAPHIES OF POSTMEMORY: POSTMEMORIALIZING, INTERGENERATIONAL AND TRANSGENERATIONAL POSTMEMORIES, AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Viewed from another perspective, onto-cartography and self-mapping in *Call Me Woman* tends to be imbricated, to some degree, through elements of postmemory<sup>7</sup>. The latter is a process in which the self *metaphorises* its own memory through the memory of the other. Two of its features are intergenerational memory (memory narrated by younger generations) and photography (the use of photographs). In the case of autobiographical writing, and in particular *Call Me Woman*, this involves postmemorial life-writing (Gratton, 2004; also cf. Hirsch, 2008). The following excerpt serves to exemplify instances of postmemory:

*Treasured memories come back to me now of the early lessons in the three 'Rs' which I received there ... I recall the faces of some of my classmates, the playtime games and the meals we shared and often exchanged ... But treasured memories can never replace our fast-fading past. I remember vividly the pretty childish quarrels we often had; some ended with a fight on the sandy river bank not far from the school ... Some very dear moments come back to my mind. I see the faces of the teachers who taught me in those years; and I hear the beautiful tunes we sang in that farm school in the late 1920s ... I recall a particular hymn we often sang at early morning prayers during teacher Valtein's time (pp. 57 & 58, my italics (Excerpt 4)).*

In the preceding excerpt, elements of postmemory are instantiated through intergenerational memory. That is, elements of postmemory are narrated by the self, who at the time of recollecting the postmemorial events depicted in the excerpt, represents a generation younger than that of the individuals whose actions are being postmemorialized. In particular, the self tends to be a conduit of postmemory for its teachers and for their concomitant actions (e.g., the three R lessons, the hymns, and the morning prayers) in which these teachers engaged it and others (its classmates). Thus, in this context, the self seems to be postmemorializing both its teachers (who are of an older generation than that of the self itself) and the school events in which these teachers participated. It purports to have access to its teachers' memories. But, most importantly, it also indulges in postmemory pertaining to its classmates who were its contemporaries. This

type of postmemory runs counter to classical postmemory as it is both generational and contemporaneous. In attempting to access its postmemory, the self finds itself oscillating between its prememory and its paramemory<sup>8</sup> as it invokes both the memories of its teachers and of its contemporaries. In doing so, it tries to access its past and to smuggle back its past memories into its autobiographical present (cf. Gratton, 2004).

Similar elements of intergenerational (and even transgenerational) postmemory, especially, are evinced by Excerpt 5: The bone of contention was that she [Grandmother] felt Grandfather was giving too much space to any white farmer's cart, car or carriage travelling in the opposite direction. She repeatedly told him: '*Jeremiah, you must not go more out of the way for the other traffic than is necessary. You are entitled to your portion of the road as much as they are.*' In a gentle way, Grandpa would reply: '*It is all right, Segogoane, do not worry!*' He was unruffled by her remarks throughout the 30-mile journey (p. 62, my italics (Excerpt 5)).

The type of postmemory encoded in this excerpt is a third-generation postmemory. This type of postmemory is invoked when the self recalls the things said by its grandparents, who are two generations older than it. So, in attempting to recollect what its grandparents said, and in presenting their words in direct quotations, the self does not only provide an archive or a depository of its grandparents' memories, but also tends to showcase their memories both *authentigenically* and *allogenically*<sup>9</sup> (cf. Gratton 2004). Postmemory in this instance becomes part of the self's episodic autobiographical recollection system into which the self's own memory and narrative are interwoven. More significantly, it gets interlaced into the self's autobiographical memory onto-cartography.

As pointed out earlier, postmemory as part of onto-cartography and self-mapping in *Call Me Woman* also tends to be mediated through photography. To this end, Hirsch (2008) argues that the phenomenology of photography is central to conceptualizing postmemory. One needs to add that this is even more so with respect to *Call Me Woman*. Hirsch (2008) further avers that photography promises to serve as an iconic and powerful conduit for transmitting and communicating incidents that cannot be mediated through a conventional narrative medium. Analogously, one can argue that photography lends itself well as an instance of iconology in *Call Me Woman*.

One photograph from *Call Me Woman*, for example, depicts some of the self's family members: Mrs Moses Masisi (seated) holding her eldest daughter on her laps; and four servants, who are standing directly behind her dressed in their traditional attire, and two of whom wearing blankets. The photograph bears the caption: 'Life in Ellen Kuzwayo's family at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Seated is Mrs Moses Masisi, carrying her eldest daughter. Standing behind her, traditionally dressed, are the servants.' Therefore, this photograph represents life in the self's family at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. If this is the case, then this is one photograph whose iconological value has to be briefly contextualized with regard to postmemory. The latter has both a transgenerational and a

genealogical slant to it. A transgenerational postmemory is invoked when the self photographically postmemorializes its family life and links it to past family members (e.g., Mrs Moses Masisi and her eldest daughter) who lived in the late 1800s and in the early 1900s (at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Of these two depicted family members, one is already a mother, while the other is a first descendant. Likewise, the servants as portrayed in the photograph tend to represent two generations – two older servants and two younger ones. In this context, postmemorialization operates transgenerationally vis-à-vis the self who is of a different (younger) generation. This is more so as the self was born in 1914 and had its autobiography published in 1985. Additionally, the photograph in question itself seems to belong, even though not necessarily dated, to an older generation of photogrammetry.

A further instance of transgenerational postmemorialization built into *Call Me Woman* through photography is exemplified by another photograph. Part of the caption of this photograph is: ‘Black women in Bloemfontein protesting against the carrying of passes by women in 1913 ... These nameless, faceless, courageous women staved off the carrying of passes by women for more than forty years.’ In this photograph, which depicts images of many women, the self reminisces about Black women who protested against carrying passes (*dompases*<sup>10</sup>) in Bloemfontein in 1913. This landmark event took place a year before the self was born. Given this temporal aspect, it means this photograph does not only embody the self’s invocation of postmemory but entails the self’s appropriation of prememory as well. The idea of prememorialization is spawned by the fact that the photograph embodies memories of the pass law protest march in Bloemfontein in 1913 that predate the self’s birth. However, the photographic depiction of this protest march enables the self to vicariously be part of this momentous event and, thus, to map the memory of this event into its own autobiographical memory cartography. All of this serves to buttress the view that these two photographs, including the other photographs<sup>11</sup> inserted in this text, constitute the self’s autobiographical onto-cartography mediated through the discourse of memory in *Call Me Woman*.

In line with the view articulated by Hirsch (1997), photographs constitute fragmentary sources and building blocks of postmemory, and tend to bridge the past and the present. Similarly, the two photographs described above serve to mediate the past represented by the individuals in the historical period indicated and the self’s autobiographical present. Actually, the self appears to indulge in transgenerational modes of remembrance that validate the past’s existence to the late-comer (the self) (cf. Gratton, 2004, p. 2). Therefore, here, the self’s nostalgic past tends to commune with the self’s autobiographical present. Accordingly, in this context, photographs act as certifications of the past and present references: they were captured in the past, but they have a perennial and pervasive timeless (iconological) presence for the self and in the self’s autobiographical text.

The genealogical perspective, as alluded to earlier, emerging from the iconological value attached to the use of photography in *Call Me Woman* is particularly demonstrated

by the photograph described first. This photograph depicts two of the self’s family members: Mrs Moses Masisi and her eldest daughter. These are but two family members photographically depicted within the self’s family genealogy. At the same time, these are two family members whose existence is datable to the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Since the self’s own career timeline starts from 29 June 1914 (the self’s date of birth) to 1984 (a year before *Call Me Woman*’s publication year) (see Kuzwayo, 1985, pp. xvii-xix), it therefore does not provide names of family members like Mrs Masisi and her eldest daughter whose existence is traceable to the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For this reason, one can only surmise that these two family members are the earliest generation in the self’s genealogy as represented by the self in its photographic and iconological postmemory. And, here, we have an instance in which ‘photography [serves as a] primary medium of transgenerational transmission’ (Hirsch, (2008, p. 1) of the self’s postmemory.

Another instance of a photographic depiction of the self’s genealogy which simultaneously embodies photographic postmemorialization is provided by yet another photograph. The caption of this photograph is as follows: ‘Wedding photograph of Ellen’s half sister (seated) in Thaba Nchu in 1938. Standing behind her is the groom, Thari, son of Chief Pilane of Saulspoort. Ellen is standing fourth from left and Ellen’s stepfather is seated second from left.’ In all, the photograph depicts fifteen adults (seven males and eight females) and a child. The significance of this photograph lies in its depiction of the other family members in the self’s genealogy. These family members represent a particular generation within the self’s genealogy in that they constitute the half-sisterhood and the stepfatherhood stratum of the self’s familial genealogy. The other family members featuring in the other photographs are, in their sequential order: Jeremiah Makgothi (the self’s maternal grandfather); Emma Tsimatsima (the self’s mother); Ellen (the self) holding her half-sister Maria’s son; Maria Pilane (the self’s half-sister); Elizabeth Makgothi (the self’s aunt); and Blanch Tsimatsima (the self’s aunt). Conspicuous by their absence from the self’s photographic cartography<sup>12</sup> are the self’s father, the self’s husband and the self’s children<sup>13</sup>. This, then, is the way in which the self has, consciously or unconsciously, employed photography to mediate its postmemory. In this way, photographs serve to encode transgenerational postmemory for the self, while, simultaneously, they serve as both iconological (post)memorials woven into the self’s geo-narratives. As such, they should be viewed as constituting the self’s onto-cartographical tapestry alongside the geo-narratives built into *Call Me Woman* as the paper has argued.

#### **POSTMEMORY, (TRANS)RACIOLOGICALS AND PRACTICE OF RACE THEORY: POSTMEMORIALLY AND VICARIOUSLY DEFERRING TO AND DEFYING WHITENESS**

While Excerpt 4 appears to evince no (trans)raciolinguistic and PRT elements, an interplay of the discourses of language and race manifests itself through how the self postmemorializes its past experiences in Excerpt 5. In one part of this

excerpt, the self depicts its maternal grandmother employing a discourse that resists and counters a racial practice in which its maternal grandfather volitionally kowtows and acquiesces to the imposing presence of a White farmer (and his cart) even in a free space such as a road by unnecessarily veering off the road just to make way for a White farmer's cart. The self here appropriates its grandmother – at a postmemory level – as a proxy for employing a resistant and counter discourse to Whiteness in which she (its grandmother) reminds her husband (Jeremiah) of his entitlement to the portion of the road. In doing so, the self seems to reject, in accord with raciolinguistic theory as advocated by Rosa and Flores (2017) and by Smith (2019a) (also see Chaka, 2021), naturalizing normative discourses of race intended to humiliate and dehumanize Blacks such as Jeremiah. Moreover, following the practice of race theory as propounded and espoused by Croom's (2020), the self's resistant and counter discourse has elements of a post-White, vindicationist orientation in that it tends to validate Blackness as represented by the self's grandmother in the excerpt.

In the other part of this *Excerpt 5*, the self depicts, postmemorially so, its grandfather as unmoved and unfazed by its grandmother's remarks. This portrays its grandfather as having acquiesced to and as having resigned himself to the existing racipolitical status quo. This is manifest in his short and terse remark, "It is all right, Segogoane, do not worry!", as postmemorialized by the self. Here, we see the self appropriating its grandfather as a proxy for naturalizing and normalizing a racipolitical practice of giving a more-than-enough space to a White farmer's cart in a public road that under normal circumstances should be a free space. Borrowing from Rosa and Flores' (2017) and Smith's (2019b) view that raciolinguistic ideology inherently entails the normative practice of negatively framing racialized speakers' ways of speaking English, the self appears to portray its grandfather as framing himself in a way that dehumanizes and trivializes him by being unreasonably, racially accommodative.

## CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this paper has been to analyse *Call Me Woman* by utilizing a conceptual perspective of the onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory, and by employing both (trans)raciolinguistics and practice of race theory. To this end, it has sought to investigate the types of geo-narratives that can be detected in the onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory in the analysed excerpts of *Call Me Woman*, and to explore what the (trans)raciolinguistic and practice of race theory analysis of the given excerpts of *Call Me Woman* reveals. In respect of the first part (the first research question), the paper has identified instances of imprecise geo-narratives, and of the problematics of remembering and forgetting that characterize the analysed excerpts of *Call Me Woman* as an autobiographical text. It has also presented instances of postmemorializing and of intergenerational and transgenerational postmemories used in the analysed excerpts. Concerning the second part (the second research question), the paper has argued that there are instances of spatioreacial apartheid, of a vindicationist view, and

of metaculture, metarace and metalanguage in the excerpts of *Call Me Woman* that it has analysed. Additionally, the paper has presented a case for an instance of postmemorially and vicariously deferring to and defying Whiteness in one of the analysed excerpts. In this regard, it has foregrounded a post-White, vindicationist standpoint. Overall, the paper has argued that Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman* is an autobiography of onto-cartographies of both memory and postmemory.

## END NOTES

1. Subsequent references to Ellen Kuzwayo's *Call Me Woman* are through page numbers only.
2. Torrance (n.d.) lists the following as some of the tools used by the cartographer: lighting table; straightedges; stencils; lettering aids; drafting scales; T-squares; protractors; dividers; radar-based surveillance systems; and global positioning system (GPS) receivers.
3. Classical cartography is used here broadly to refer to mainstream western cartographies.
4. The term *vernacular* is used in this case in its non-derogatory sense.
5. See the italicised text in Excerpt 3.
6. Setswana is one of the eleven official South African languages spoken by Batswana.
7. Postmemory is variously referred to as *absent memory*, *belated memory*, *inherited memory* and *prosthetic memory* (see Hirsch 2008, 105). In this regard, Hirsch (2008, p. 106) contends that 'the *post* in *postmemory* signals more than a temporal delay and more than a location in an aftermath' (my italics).
8. Gratton (2004, pp. 4 & 6) characterises prememory as consisting of surreal intuition and paramemory as comprising paranormal phenomena or events.
9. These two terms in their geological sense refer to minerals formed in a given place and to minerals deposited or transported to a given place, respectively. In this paper, these two terms are metaphorically used to refer to the self that forms its own memory in or for itself and the self that transports memories of others (e.g., its grandparents' memories) in its autobiographical text. Also compare Gratton's (2004, p. 4) appropriation of these two terms.
10. The word *dompas* (plural form, and singular form, *dompas*) is a derogatory Afrikaans name Blacks gave to passes (identity documents issued to Blacks only) during the apartheid era. The word *dom* means *stupid* when translated into English. Thus, *dompas* means *stupid pass* or *stupid identity document*.
11. In all, there are 25 photographs inserted in *Call Me Woman* (1985). They are inserted between page 106 and page 107, and they are not paginated. NB: The analysed photographs have not been provided due to copyright issues.
12. This strictly refers to a collection of photographs as inserted in the self's autobiography, *Call Me Woman*.
13. Even though this is the case, the current paper's interest is only in those family members depicted in the photographs inserted in the autobiographical text.



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