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AUTOBIOGRAPHY, IDENTITY, AND THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF VIOLENCE IN NELSON MANDELA'S *LONG WALK TO FREEDOM*

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Abstract

From the vantage positions of the blacks, the South African Apartheid State was created on the principle of violence towards them. In fact, the system of apartheid was sustained and nourished through a brutal use of force against this majority by perniciously suppressing and negating their humanity. In addition to this state sanctioned violence, there is also the black-on-black violence that had resulted to numerous loss of lives. In fact the story of this black-on-black violence occupies a central space in Nelson Mandela's autobiography *Long Walk to Freedom*. This paper, therefore, looks at how violence is used as a narrative trope in Nelson Mandela's autobiography. The paper focuses on how Mandela uses the trajectory of violence to construct his identity on the one hand and the identity of his opponents especially members of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) on the other.

Keywords: Identity, Violence, ANC, IFP, PAC, Nelson Mandela

Introduction

Within the power politics of modernity, law and order are important bedrocks for sustaining social norms and maintaining political authority. In fact, modernity is cogently obsessed with order and its enforcement within social spaces inhabited by people. Stated more simply, the ultimate teleology of an ideal political state is the maintenance of law and order within its territory. Yet there is something ominously catastrophic and dangerous about the organising ability of order because its enforcement often entails terror and brutality. As Terry Eagleton notes "the urge to order is itself latently anarchic" because "[T]he very force which is intended to subdue chaos is secretly in love with it" (2005:12). This is why most of the time the enforcement of order comes singly or in combination, through the direct use of force, threat of force, and/or coercion by the power or powers controlling the instruments of terror such as the military and the police. In fact, "routinised violence" is one of the key characteristics "of the modernizing state" (Broch-Due 2005:1). Closely connected with the use of "official" violence to enforce order or its semblance in most societies is the use of "unofficial" violence by civil groups and organisations to subdue and dominate their opponents. It is important to clarify that "official" here means the violence that ensues when people resist the tyranny of the state for instance, and the state on its part mobilizes the instruments of violence at its disposal to deal with the situation. This violence is considered "legitimate" (Keane 2004: 9-10) because it is sanctioned by the laws of the enforcing state.

Conversely, there is also another form of violence that is different from this. This is the violence of the people, by the people, on the people themselves. This violence is "unofficial" because it is the fury of the civil populace on itself. Even though there are times when the hands of the state may be visible in perpetuating this kind of violence, most of the time it is planned, coordinated, and executed by civilian groups and organisations that are competing for political power, economic supremacy, or a combination of both. This kind of violence on the other hand is considered "illegitimate" (Keane 2004: 9-10) because it has no locus standi in the laws of the state.

Illegitimate violence is arguably more rampant in societies that have just emerged or are about to emerge from colonialism, totalitarianism, or dictatorship. A good illustration of this was South Africa on the eve of the demise of apartheid and the conduct of multiparty as well as multiracial election that saw the African National Congress (ANC) forming the first multiracial government in the country's history. In fact during this period there was "widespread political intolerance" (Minnar 1994: 390) between different competing organisations that consequently degenerated into black-on-black violence.

This article therefore examines how Mandela tactfully uses violence as a narrative trope to construct a positive identity for himself as well as his party the African National Congress (ANC). Furthermore, the article also looks at how Mandela narratively projects the image of his opponents, especially Inkatha Freedom Party (IPF) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) members as violent and aggressive in stark contrast to the urbane, peaceful and civilise disposition of the ANC and its members. The paper suggests that through a paratactic display of the two contrasting images, Mandela was able to create a sharp contrast between himself, the ANC and those that do not identify with his chosen ideology such as the IFP and the PAC.

Violence and the Modern Political State

David Michael Levin (2001: 20) has noted that "the modern self . . . is a self-moved by the will to dominate". This urge to dominate is perhaps at the root of the violence that persistently bedevils and beleaguers modern nations despite their claim to being civilisationally more refined than their predecessors. In these societies what the philosopher Slovaj ŽiŽek (2008) calls "subjective violence" holds sway, destroying persons and communities through the actions of "evil individuals, disciplined repressive apparatuses" and "fanatical crowds" (2008:10) that are always ready to unleash terror at the slightest provocation. In fact, the "death-dealing will" (Eagleton 2005:108) of the actors in most political conflicts across the globe has resulted in the loss of innumerable lives of mostly innocent people that have little to gain in the political power-game of the elites.

To say that the foundation of the modern political state was built on violence may appear shocking to most supporters of liberal democracy. However, there are reasons to suggest that democracy, especially the variety practiced in many third-world countries, is organically intertwined with violence. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to suggest that the path of the history of human development that progresses from the early stage of human civilisation to the modern period is littered with violence in form of conflicts and upheavals. In this regard, there is an observable link between human progress and violence, and the modern period in spite of its significant technological and scientific achievements, is not shielded from the threatening force of violence. In this regard, the modern period has had to manage intractable conflicts in different parts of the world. The formation of the United Nations and the numerous Peace Keeping Forces/Missions under its supervision is a clear testimony to the presence of intractable conflicts in this modern period. As Neal Curtis elegantly puts it, "violence is the persistence of that which modernity is charged with overcoming" (2006: ix). He further suggests that "despite modernity's idealization as pacific progress, it is inextricably tied to . . . political revolution and the wars that issued from it" (2006: ix).

Earl Conteh-Morgan (2004:1), on the other hand, avers that the march of human history is closely connected with "violent conflicts" between groups competing for political and economic power. Unarguably, a vital contributory factor to the commonplaceness of violence in modern societies is the ego-logical disposition of the so called modern self. In fact, the modern person is an "ego-logical subject"[2] (Levin: 20) that is moved by the will to dominate both his and her environment and co-inhabitants. Connected to this is the contention that the average modern person is a self-centered, conscious personality that is ready to withdraw into the comfort zone of his or her race, ethnicity, nationality, or organisation with a view to exploit primordial kinship for the purpose of dominating the perceived 'other'. This is the import of Carolyn Nordstrom's (2004:61) observation that more often than not in conflicts involving different political interests, "Violence is employed to create political acquiescence" as well as to institute "hierarchies of domination and submission based on the control of force". In line with this observation, Vicenzo Ruggiero avers that "Political violence . . . is an attempt to give hostile out-bursts an organizational structure and a rational, calculable trend, so that uncoordinated hostility is slowly turned into military action . . . towards a predictable end" (2006:105).

This much could be seen in *Long Walk to Freedom* (1994) where organised violence is unleashed on opposing political groups from amongst the black liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC), the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). In fact, during the transition to multiracial democracy in South Africa, each of these groups had employed violence as a tool of domination, coercion, submission and/or annihilation. Violence was also a tool employed for asserting a unique group and individual identity within these competing political groups. For instance, we can see how Mandela uses the concept of violence as a differentiating marker between the ANC and the IFP in his narrative. In this regard, he shows how the IFP was quick to use force of arms against the ANC thereby subtly constructing a contrasting image of a violent IFP as opposed to a meek and peaceful ANC. This is the sense in which Vigdis Broch-Due (2005) argues that "violence" is central to people's "quest for identity, not only as a matter of categorical grouping but as a process of identification and differentiation" (2005:17, original italics). Viewed in this light, violence is an important instrument for group cleavages as well as for exclusion of the perceived moral, political, economic, and social 'other' especially in the struggle for political control of nations. It is reasonable to infer from this brief review that violence is an integral part of the modern political state. It is therefore not surprising that the story of the use of violence in South Africa forms a substantial part of the political autobiography of Nelson Mandela.

Identity and phenomenology of Violence in *Long Walk to Freedom*

It is worth reiterating that within the social habitus of apartheid, political violence was a recurring phenomenon that foregrounds the everyday reality of existence especially for the black Africans. Indeed the social environment created by apartheid was organized around the dehumanization of the non-whites, especially the black majority, through the use of extreme force and violence. As Isma'ila A. Tsiga (2010: 260) notes "the sardonic . . . environment" engendered by apartheid was a fertile ground for violence to thrive. He equally notes that "the tragedy of South Africa is that it pushes everyone into a vicious roundabout . . . 'a dance of death' in which there is no creation, but only destruction" (2010: 39). As a matter of fact this scenario of 'dance of death' was replayed over and over in the South African politscape during the period of transition to multiracial democracy. As this apartheid nation transitioned towards multiracial democracy, violence became rampant especially in the townships of KwaZulu Natal region. On a very broad level, the autobiography of Nelson Mandela is the story of this horrendous violence encoded in a mixture of melancholy, lamentation, and optimism. For example, the narrative renders a detailed account of the brutality of the IFP against the ANC during this period of transition. Curiously, the narrative at the same time is mute on the atrocities committed by the ANC thereby subtly constructing a Manichean opposition between the two organisations. As might be expected the negativity of IFP was textually encoded in the discursive matrix of the narrative through the lexicalization of violence as its acquired organisational trait. Conversely, the gentility of the ANC is packaged in the textual imagery of an organisation that is peaceful, kind, respectful, civilized, and morally upright. Without a doubt a sharp contrast between the two organisations is the intended desire of this textual strategy. At this point it is important to look at how Mandela uses the trope of violence to textually write the negativity of Inkatha Freedom Party while at the same time constructing the image of an ANC that is noblesse oblige.

The 'Evils' of Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)

Even though Mandela cuts the figure of the personality that moves and binds the South African nation, he nonetheless displays a certain amount of bias in his autobiography in discussing the violence that engulfs South Africa during the dying days of apartheid. To be sure, Mandela in his text does not merely re-present the political turmoil of the period but reshapes and re-creates it in the way he wants. In fact, the wintry tone of Mandela's narrative in his discussion of the IFP and the PAC is a counterpoint to the autumnal tone used in talking about the ANC. For instance, Mandela's passionate commitment to the ANC had blinded him to the realities of the violence that plagues South Africa at the time. Presumably, in every violence there is action and reaction from the feuding parties. In simple terms, in most violent confrontations there is blurring of the line between victim and victimizer because the two more often than not exchange places. Put in the perspective of South Africa at the time, it is my contention that there is a wave of reciprocal antagonism in the violence that suffocated the political environment. However, Mandela chose to focus only on the atrocities of the IFP while maintaining a studied silence on the barbarity of the ANC. In fact, reading through the text one gets the impression that it seldom matters to Mandela that the ANC too is adequately involved in this violence. A compelling observation is that Mandela has tarried too long with the fascination that the ANC is an epitome of

peace and an emblem of civility. Indeed, it is easy enough to observe that within the hierarchic moral structure of Mandela's narrative, the ANC and its members are approvingly pristine whereas members of the IFP and the PAC are childish, skittish, diffident, brutal and mean. Centrally important in this observation is that Mandela always think of the IFP and the PAC in an adversarial light and hence hardly sees any good in these organisations.

More importantly, the illocutionary domain that surrounds violence and violent acts in Mandela's text provides a platform for articulating personal and group identity for him and his organisation the ANC. On this view, Mandela's rendering of the brutality of the Inkatha Freedom Party for instance is in tune with his sentiment and ideology of non-collaboration with the South African apartheid regime. Thus to Mandela and the ANC any 'perceived' or 'real' collaborator with the apartheid regime from among the black community is considered a traitor to the cause of liberation. This was why Mandela was disenchanted with the conduct of Chief Buthelezi who the ANC views as a saboteur because he "opposed the armed struggle" and has "campaigned against international sanctions" (*Long Walk* 1994: 574). In this regard it was of no importance that Chief Buthelezi might have his reasons for rejecting both the sanctions as well as the armed struggle spearheaded by the ANC at the time. He simply must toe the line of the ANC, otherwise he is a traitor and a legitimate target of at the least verbal attack.

Certainly, in Mandela's autobiography violence is a "phonic and existential" (Bello-Kano 2000: 70) presence that finds expression in the graphic re-presentation of its brutality. In this regard Mandela vividly catalogues the results of violent clashes especially between the Inkatha Freedom Party and the ANC. He does this by showing the Inkatha Freedom Party as the guilty group in the conflict. In several places in the text the brutality of Inkatha Freedom Party is presented in shocking detail. For instance, Mandela details the barbarity of the IFP in the following: "In the meantime, Natal became a killing ground. Heavily armed Inkatha supporters had in effect *declared war on ANC strongholds* across the Natal Midlands region around Pietermaritzburg. *Entire villages were set alight, dozens of people were killed, hundreds were wounded, and thousands became refugees"* (*Long Walk* 1994: 576, my emphasis).

Elsewhere in the text he rolls out statistics of the dead to support his claim of Inkatha Freedom Party's infringements on the ANC:

> Violence in Natal worsened. Inkatha supporters were blocking our efforts to campaign in Natal. *Fifteen ANC election workers were shot and hacked to death* after putting up ANC posters . . . On March 28, thousands of Inkatha members, brandishing knobkerries, marched through Johannesburg to a rally in the center of town. At the same time, an armed Inkatha group attempted to enter Shell House, the ANC headquarters, but were repulsed by armed guards. Shots by unidentified gunmen were also fired in the city center, and *altogether fifty-three people died.* (1994: 616, my emphasis)

Mandela also shows that the brutality of Inkatha Freedom Party did not spare women and children: "On the night of June 17, 1992, a heavily armed force of Inkatha members secretly raided the Vaal township of Boipatong and *killed forty-six people. Most of the dead were women and children*. It was the fourth *mass killing of ANC people* that week" (1994: 603, my emphasis). Note how in the above passages the casualty on the part of the IFP is totally rendered invisible. The focus is only on the loss on the part of the ANC, no more, no less. This strategy portrays the ANC as a passive receiver of the violence unleashed by the IFP. However this is far from the truth because as Gurr (quoted in Gebrewold 2009: 81) notes, in all conflicts "Violence inspires counter-violence by those against whom it is directed." Proceeding from that, it is easy to infer that the ANC too is actively involved in the violence described by Mandela because commonsense dictates that they would at least try to defend themselves against the attacks directed at them. However this is not shown in the text because it will contradict the image of the ANC as a peaceful organisation that Mandela was trying to portray.

At yet another level, Inkatha Freedom Party is discursively ordered either as embodiment of sabotage or irremediable collaborationist of the apartheid regime with the specific intentions of derailing the peace process as well as undermining the achievements of the ANC. For instance, Mandela laments that:

> Of all the issues that hindered the peace process, none was more devastating and frustrating than the escalation of violence in the country . . . . It was becoming more and more clear to me that there was connivance on the part of the security forces. *Many of the incidents indicated to me that the police, rather than quelling violence were fomenting it*. I was told of the police confiscating weapons one day in one area, and then Inkatha forces

> attacking people with those stolen weapons the next day. *We heard stories of the police escorting Inkatha members to meetings and on their attack.* (1994: 587, my emphasis)

Mandela further supports his claims of police collaboration in the attacks launched by the IFP on members of especially the ANC by declaring that:

> In July of 1990, the ANC received information that hostel dwellers belonging to the Inkatha Freedom Party were planning a major attack on ANC members in Sebokeng Township in the Vaal Triangle on July 22 . . . We asked the police to prevent armed Inkatha members from entering the township to attend an Inkatha rally.
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> On July 22, *busload of armed Inkatha members, escorted by police vehicles, entered Sebokeng in broad day light.* A rally was held, after which the *armed men went on a rampage, murdering approximately thirty people in a dreadful and grisly attack.* (1994: 587-588, my emphasis)

Again and again, we see how Mandela tries to create an endophoric relation between the IFP and violence in his narrative through copious references to body counts and statistics of lives lost.

At this point, it is important to take apart Mandela's claims that the ANC is a peaceful organisation because this will pave the way for a thorough understanding of the whole lexicon of his attitudes toward the IFP. My contention is that his studied silence on the atrocities of the ANC can be attributed to the desire to create a positive identity for himself. There is certainly a scale of moral values in operation in Mandela's narrative and one can track a continuum between the sublimity of the ANC and the bestiality of especially the IFP. Indeed, measured on an ascending moral scale of values that Mandela subtly employed in his narrative, the ANC and its members are placed at the top whereas the IFP and its members are made to occupy the lowest rung because of the bestiality and brutality ascribed to them. In short, Mandela cleverly uses the trope of innocence to absolve the ANC and its members of complicity in the political terrorism of South Africa. Hence, like a sponge, the image of the peaceful ANC portrayed in the narrative absorbs all the atrocities committed by it in a single sweep.

Equally important is the observation that in Mandela's text there is a noticeable coupling of violence and virtue. In this sense, violence conjures up virtue and vice versa. In this narrative, for instance, one cannot simply see the graphic and intimidating violence of the IFP without also imagining the pristine innocence of the ANC. Additionally, Mandela's narrative is charged with metaphors and similes that signify the essential moral difference between himself and his comrades in the ANC on the one hand with Buthelezi and the members of his IFP on the other. Thus a paratactic display of the ANC and the IFP is very evident. In this regard, whereas the ANC and by extension Mandela's comrades are described with affection and veneration, there is nothing but disdain for his opponents such as Chief Mongosuthu Buthelezi and members of his IFP. For instance, whereas the ANC and its members are portrayed as multiracial, peaceful, civilised, rational, reasonable and civil, the Inkatha Freedom Party and its followers on the other hand are seen as mono-racial, irredentist, violent, barbaric, irrational, unreasonable and disordered. This premise in turn is used to legitimize the demonization of its members. For example, Mandela castigates Inkatha Freedom Party's Buthelezi as a renegade member as well as a betrayer of the ANC: "As a young man, he . . . joined the ANC Youth League. I saw him as one of the movement's upcoming young leaders. He had become chief minister of the KwaZulu homeland with the tacit support of the ANC, and even the launching of Inkatha as a Zulu cultural organization was unopposed by the organization. But over the years, Chief Buthelezi drifted away from the ANC" (1994: 575).

Elsewhere in the text Chief Buthelezi is shown collaborating with the extremist and secessionist white right-wing parties with the intention of scuttling the talks leading to multiracial democracy: "The Record of Understanding prompted Inkatha to announce its withdrawal from all negotiations involving the government and the ANC. The agreement infuriated Chief Buthelezi, who severed relations with the NP and formed an alliance with a group of discredited homeland leaders and white right-wing parties solely concerned with obtaining an Afrikaner homeland" (1994: 606). Here we are made to see the image of a selfish Buthelezi ready to form an alliance with the hitherto oppressors of the black Africans simply to spite the ANC.

As demonstrated in the foregoing examples, Mandela constantly inveighs against the violent attitudes of the IFP and its members. In fact, the IFP is portrayed as an index of violence and a byword for destruction. They are equally portrayed as a symbol of "chaos, dystopia and anomie" (Bello-Kano 2000: 71). However, it is my contention that as far as political violence in South Africa during this period was concerned, the ANC and the IFP are recto and verso of each other. In this regard, it is fair to suggest that there is a "horrified intimacy" (Eagleton 2005: 58) between the ANC and the IFP especially in terms of their disruptive violent practices. This is in spite of the fact that the responses of the

ANC in all the attacks mentioned are deliberately muted or suppressed in the text. In fact, when Mandela's narrative is demystified we will begin to see where and why he omits important details about the political violence in South Africa. Specifically, we will notice how he conveniently and surreptitiously ignores the response of the members of the ANC in all the attacks he describes in his narrative. Indeed one of the observable blind spots of *Long Walk to Freedom* is that the fault of the ANC as an organisation is hardly acknowledged in its narrative design. Whereas the faults and 'sins' of the IFP are made very glaring, the misdeeds of the ANC are conveniently ignored, left out or covered. In fact, in Mandela's narrative the barbarism and cruelty of the ANC and its members is, to quote Derrida, "placed in parenthesis, suspended, and suppressed for essential reasons" (quoted in Norris 2002: 29, original italics). Nevertheless, the attempts to conceal the atrocities of the ANC in Mandela's narrative is not entirely successful because at the level of practical reasoning, one can infer from the examples given that the interactions between the ANC and the IFP are reduced to no more than a brutal exchange of blood and tears. More significantly, the image of the unruly IFP portrayed in the text also conjures or summons the equally wild and barbarous image of the ANC. Even so, Mandela chooses not to see the violence of the ANC whereas he is quick to point out the barbarity of the IFP. Thus as we have seen in the preceding examples, the brutality of the IFP is shown reflexively through the deictic and extended references made to it by Mandela in his narrative. However, this is not to suggest that the violence described in the text did not happen. Far from it, it is only to indicate how in Mandela's narrative preference is given to the violent activities of the IFP while keeping mute on the expected response of the ANC. The narrative thus is full of absences and silences. This is the canny observation made by Philip Holden that Mandela's autobiography is full of "gaps and inconsistencies" (2008: 192) in its framing of events. Holden also suggests that *Long Walk to Freedom* contains "parallelism of exclusion and inclusion" (2008: 157).

Without a doubt, both the ANC and the IFP were guilty in the violence that bedeviled South Africa before the 1994 multiracial elections. For instance, Thomas A. Moriarty (2003) has noted that the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has in its report found both organisations guilty of participating as well as spreading violence during this period. For example, the TRC accuses Chief Mongosuthu Buthelezi of the IFP of "sponsoring hit squads" (Moriarty 2003: 177). It equally condemned Umkhonto wa Sizwe (MK), the armed wing of the ANC for targeting and "killing more civilians than security force members" in spite of MK's claims to the contrary. The Commission also accused the ANC of condoning the killing of perceived "government collaborators and members of the IFP" especially in the "late 1980s and early 1990s" (2003: 177).

At this point, it is important to note that the sustained description of the violent attitudes of the IFP on the one hand and the contrasting peaceful disposition of the ANC on the other is part of the identity construction strategy deployed by Mandela in his text. Mandela's narrative therefore is an attempt to create Manichean divide between the ANC and the IFP with the intention of othering the latter. Viewed this way, the 'other' in Mandela's text becomes a trope for projecting a larger and positive self-identity. In this regard, the 'other' as portrayed by Mandela is no more than a "serviceable double" (Napier 2007: 72) for articulating a preferred positive image. We see the continuation of this strategy also in Mandela's discussion about the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), an organisation that breaks away from the ANC as a result of ideological and tactical differences.

The 'Irredentism' of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)

In *Long Walk to Freedom* Mandela also employs rhetoric of disgust to describe the appalling attitude of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). In this regard the PAC is variously traduced, disparaged and anathematised. From the start the PAC is portrayed as a steadfastly exclusivist organisation that rejects the multiracialism of the ANC. It is an emblem of backwardness; a marker of human degeneration and a negative counterpoint to the urbanity and civility of the ANC. In the eyes of Mandela the PAC and its members are, to borrow a phrase from Godimer (2003: 28), "a litany of faults and inadequacies" in the same manner in which the natives are portrayed in colonialist discourse. For example, he bemoans the fact that: "[T]he Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) launched itself as an Africanist organization that expressly rejected the multiracialism of the ANC . . . They disavowed communism in all its forms and considered whites and Indians "foreign minorities' or "aliens" who had no place in South Africa. South Africa was for Africans, and no one else" (*Long Walk*, 1994: 227).

Elsewhere in the text, members of the PAC are portrayed as selfish, unreasonable, puerile and vindictive: "Many of those who cast their lot with the PAC did so out of personal grudges or disappointments and were not thinking of the advancement of the struggle, but of their own feelings of jealousy or revenge" (*Long Walk*, 1994: 228). Further, in a tone full of resentment Mandela declares that, "I found the views and the behaviour of the PAC immature" (1994: 228).

Mandela severally accuses the PAC with sabotaging the strategy of the ANC in the liberation struggle: "While we welcomed anyone brought into the struggle by the PAC, the role of the organization was almost always that of a spoiler. They divide people at a critical moment, and that was hard to forget. They would ask people to go to work when we called a general strike, and made misleading statements to counter any announcement we would make" (1994: 229).

The PAC is also accused of advancing racial exclusiveness just like the then ruling Afrikaner dominated National Party (NP). In this regard they are portrayed as a racist organisation in contrast to the ANC's open door policy of accepting all races in its fold. Paradoxically, Mandela admits that this racialism of the PAC was what helps in bolstering its popularity amongst the militant black Africans who are dissatisfied with the reconciliatory attitude of the ANC. Thus for most black Africans the PAC embodies their aspirations for reclaiming the South African nation. The PAC was regarded by many black Africans as a nationalist organisation to the core. Mandela observes with regret that, "Our non-racialism would have been less of a problem had it not been for the formation of the explicitly nationalistic and anti-white PAC" (1994: 303). He equally notes that the PAC was also seen by many leaders in Africa as an organisation that truly represents the interests of the black South Africans better than the ANC. In fact, during his tour of African countries to solicit for help in the armed struggle of the ANC, Mandela was shocked to find out that the PAC and its leader Robert Sobukwe were by far more popular and acceptable than both Mandela and the ANC. He admits that: "In the rest of Africa, most African leaders could understand the views of the PAC better than those of the ANC" (1994: 303). Similarly, Mandela also attests to the popularity of Robert Sobukwe the PAC leader in most African countries he visited. For example, he narrates that during his tour of Africa they touched down at Tunis and while there they "met with the minister of defense, who bore a striking resemblance to Chief Luthuli. But I'm afraid that is where the similarity ended, for when I was explaining to him the situation in our country with PAC leaders such as Robert Sobukwe in jail, he interrupted me and said, 'When that chap returns, he will finish you!'"(1994: 297).

To a certain extent one can sense a tinge of jealousy in the castigation of the PAC by Mandela. It would not be off the mark to say that Mandela and the ANC were intimidated by the popularity of the PAC. There is indeed a turf war going on between the two organisations during this period. In this regard both the ANC and the PAC were competing for the leadership of the black liberation movement. What was particularly disturbing for Mandela was the fact that the PAC offered the black Africans a diametrical alternative to the ANC. In this regard the PAC was more practical and sensitive to the needs of the black Africans during this period. Mandela admits that the PAC speaks in an idiom that the black Africans can easily understand: "The PAC echoed the axioms and slogans of that time: Africa for Africans and a United States of Africa" (1994: 228). Thus the militant lingo of the PAC was an emphatic contrast to the social and racial homogenisation policy of the ANC. This further enhances the standing of the PAC within the black African community in South Africa. More significantly, the PAC was the first organisation that condemned as well as resisted the tyranny of the apartheid regime during the Sharpeville massacre. In this regard Mandela interestingly salutes the valor of the lay members of the PAC even though he castigates the selfishness of its leadership:

> In spite of the amateurishness and opportunism of their leaders, the PAC rank and file displayed great courage and fortitude in their demonstrations at Sharpeville and Langa. In just one day, they had moved to the front lines of the struggle, and Robert Sobukwe was being hailed inside and outside the country as the savior of the liberation movement. We in the ANC had to make rapid adjustments to this new situation, and we did so. (1994:238)

Elsewhere in the text Mandela links the popularity of the PAC to their actions during the Sharpeville massacre: "Among Africans, the PAC had captured the spotlight at Sharpeville in a way that far exceeded their influence as an organization" (1994: 295). It is perhaps unsurprising that Mandela maligns the PAC in his narrative. From the vantage position of Mandela and the ANC the PAC is an irritant organisation that threatens, challenges and undermines their grand narrative. For instance, unlike the IFP that consists of predominantly the Zulu ethnic group, the PAC like the ANC is a multicultural and multiethnic political organisation. It also most of the time challenges the hegemony of the ANC within the politics of black liberation movement.

Thomas A. Moriarty (2003) has outlined two types of conflict that may result in political competition of the type we see in South Africa during the period of transition to multiracial democracy. In this regard, he declares that under such circumstances a conflict between opposing political groups can be either "violent" or "rhetorical" (2003: 3). He goes on to say that "violent conflict" usually occurs when the two opposing groups have different "political realities".

In other words, when two opposing groups with divergent political teleology cross paths, the resultant clash between them will be violent. Conversely, where the two groups share the same "political realities" the conflict between them will be mostly at the level of ideas only. Put another way, their conflict will be purely "rhetorical" with hardly any physical attacks on one another. In fact, this observation made by Moriarty aptly captures the spirit of the conflicts we see between the ANC and the IFP on the one hand and that between the ANC and the PAC on the other as presented in *Long Walk to Freedom*. For instance, because the ANC and the PAC share the same political reality the conflict between them was most of the time limited to ideology.[3] In other words the conflict between them was mostly rhetorical in nature. The reverse was surely the case if we examine the conflict between the ANC and the IFP. Because these two competing groups have "dissimilar political realities" (Moriarty 2003: p.3) their conflict was violent in nature often characterized by huge loss of lives.

Lahcen E. Ezzaher (2003) has noted that in the discursive reconstruction of events and people, "There is no such a thing as an accurate and risk free representation" and at all times "Representation of people and culture is charged with prejudice, ideology, and mystification" (2003:102). This much can be gleaned from Mandela's autobiography where a "demonizing rhetoric" (Curtis 2006: 56) is textually deployed to objectify especially the PAC. For example, in this story, to borrow a phrase from Michael Shortland, "Text and image put into circulation" (quoted in Bello-Kano 2005:71) the monstrosity of the barbarism of especially the IFP and to a lesser degree the PAC while conveniently concealing or downplaying the expected response of the ANC. This studied silence on the violence of the ANC is a clear indication of Mandela's politics of victimhood. Consequently, the ANC is presented as a passive receiver of the violence that beleaguers South Africa during its transition to multiracial democracy.

It is my contention that in Mandela's text violence becomes the lens through which the objectification of the 'other' is achieved. Thus Mandela's gaze does not find any trace of civility and sublimity in neither the PAC nor the IFP. In this regard, the IFP and the PAC are described as devoid of any sense or sign of maturity or refinement in their conducts. Whereas members of the ANC are seen as disciplined, courageous, and dedicated, the members of the IFP and the PAC are portrayed as irresponsible, undisciplined, selfish and blood-thirsty.

Conclusion

The argument with which this essay started was that Mandela uses violence as a tropological vehicle to encode his story of political and moral difference. This in turn underscores the particularly dialectical nature of his discourse. In fact, Mandela displays a remarkable power of generating and manipulating images in his narrative. He does this through an antipodal collocation of disclosure, evasion, erasure and concealment, as the case may be. Similarly, a poignant aspect of his narrative is that the image of the "other" encoded in his autobiography, in this case the IFP and PAC, are in tune with his chosen ideology of negating the political and moral "other". For example, it is fairly easy to observe that within the teleological progression of his narrative, Mandela announces the innocence of the ANC with grandiose aplomb. Even more, Mandela's narrative is organised around a "rhetoric of civilization and barbarism, culture and anarchy" (Gilbert 2004: 172). In short, in Mandela's text "viciousness" is equated with "otherness" (Gilbert 2004: 172) and the degree of otherness on the other hand is measured according to the way in which the perceived 'other's' behaviour deviated from or is "discordant with the putative norm" (Deane 200: 12) of the author-narrator. Additionally, a familiar topos in Mandela's narrative is the frequent use of the rhetoric of demonisation and Manichaean binarisms. In this regard, whereas the ANC is variously portrayed as an epitome of "decency, civility, and cultivation", the IFP and the PAC are portrayed as barbaric, wicked, uncultured and "a constant source of unease" (Eagleton 2001: 33). However as Keane (2004) notes, "Civility and barbarity are not contradictory opposites. They lie side by side on a down-spiralling continuum of violence" (2004: 67). In this sense, one can only be more or less civil or more or less barbaric. Moreover, the most reasonable observation of the reality of violence in *Long Walk to Freedom* is that it involves all the contending parties because in every violent action there is always a more or less equal reaction. In this sense, as might be expected in South Africa at the time, violence will presumably begets violence. When this observation is taken together with the apparent silence about the atrocities of the ANC, it can be inferred that there is an ideology at work in Mandela's narrative. For instance, his attempts to associate his opponents with violence, destruction, disruption, and sabotage are an encrypted strategy of demonisation and objectification.

What is useful and illuminating in this observation is that it is through this process that Mandela creates the impugned binary of "good" as represented by the ANC versus "evil" represented notably by the IFP. Moreover, we have seen how Mandela puts a negative evaluative accent on the activities of the IFP and the PAC while at the same time ignoring the atrocities of the ANC. Indeed, a more adequate and equilibrated response to the problems of violence in the text would have been to give sedulous attention to the atrocities of both parties in the conflict. In an

important sense, the interlocking stories of the ANC, the IFP, and the PAC reveal that contrary to Mandela's strenuous attempts to exonerate the ANC in this orgy of violence, both organisations are guilty in the conflict. Along the lines drawn here then, an important sidelight to this observation is that there is reciprocal balance of terror especially between the activities of the ANC and the IFP. Even more fundamentally, the notable reality of the violence described in Mandela's autobiography is that it gives lie to his claims of innocence ascribed to the ANC. Proceeding from that, I want to argue that Mandela's autobiography is not a factual representation of events as they had happened but a reshaping and re-presentation of them in tune with the ideological beliefs of the author-narrator. The point will bear repeating that in spite of the ring of realism in Mandela's narrative, it will be manifestly wrong to assume that it is a factual rendition of events as they had happened in real life. In short, the narrative remains a story that in the process of its encoding involves the danger of the failure of memory, selection, shaping, and organisation of events according to the ideological beliefs of the author-narrator. Viewed in this sense, then, Mandela's autobiography is a literary artifice.

As mentioned earlier, Mandela's tactical and rhetorical recourse to the use of the trope of violence to construct his identity in the text is an important illustration of his attempts to demonise the "other" in this case the IFP and the PAC. Along these lines, if we take an inventory of the process of objectification in Mandela's narrative, we will begin to see how he uses affective verbs and adjectives to describe his friends in the ANC. For instance, Chief Albert Luthuli an ANC leader is described as "a man of patience and fortitude" (1994: 144). Another ANC leader Oliver Tambo is of "even tempered objectivity" (1994: 148) and has "wisdom and calmness" (1994: 245). Govan Mbeki another friend in the ANC is described as "serious, thoughtful, and soft-spoken" (1994: 186). In the same vein Walter Sisulu is "strong, reasonable, practical and dedicated" (1994: 95). Conversely, he uses negative qualifiers to describe his opponents in the IFP and the PAC. For example, Mandela describes Stephen Tefu a member of the PAC he met in prison as "a difficult fellow: dyspeptic, argumentative, overbearing", a person that "would fight everyone" including "his friends" (1994: 336). Similarly, the layered and ironic treatment of Chief Buthelezi of the IFP mentioned earlier is a good illustration of the othering process at work in Mandela's narrative.

By way of conclusion, it is my contention that Mandela's attempt to elide the atrocities of the ANC in his autobiography is a deliberate textual strategy of his identity creation project. Yet another strategy employed by Mandela is the use of rhetoric of demonisation to describe the activities of the IFP and the PAC. In this regard, whereas the ANC is portrayed as an emblem of civility and tolerance, the two organisations are portrayed as violent and irredentist respectively. Consequently, the positive image of the ANC is textually contrasted with the negative images of the IFP and the PAC. In the final analysis a positive image of the ANC translates into a favourable image for Mandela since he was its leader and flag-bearer.

Endnotes

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[2] An "ego-logical subject", according to Levin (2001) is a self that has an "essentially anthropocentric vision of reason: reason as instrumental, pragmatic, practical" (4). The implication of this is that the ego-logical subject is fundamentally a self-centered entity motivated by passion and will to conquer and subdue the non-self. This desire to dominate is at the root of most conflicts in the world.

[3] Even though Mandela did not mention that there was violence between the ANC and the PAC in his autobiography, there is evidence to suggest that that was hardly the case. For instance, Richard A. Wilson has noted that the establishment of an "armed 'anti-crime'" squads called the "Special Defense Units (DSUs)" by the ANC from the "1980s" fuelled violence across South Africa after the liberalization of the political space in 1990. Wilson notes that after "the unbanning" of the ANC and other political organizations in 1990 the "SDUs unleashed a random campaign of violence against the state security forces and the IFP, and against other anti-apartheid organizations (for example, the PAC which is well established in Sharpeville)." He further notes that "Between May and October 1992, Sharpeville SDUs were held responsible for 36 murders, 84 robberies and 21 rapes

in the small township alone" (p. 177). See Richard A. Wilson, *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimizing the Post-Apartheid State*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 2001.

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