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Historical representation in White South African Discourse: Postmodernizing Pamela Jooste's *Frieda And Min.*

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ABSTRACT

This paper uses postmodernism to analyse Pamela Jooste's novel, *Frieda and Min*, to show how she engages in the move towards deconstructing the apartheid history and valorizes the black South African culture. This white South African female writer re-visits the apartheid history in her narrative fiction. The intention here is, probably, to bring into focus the hidden aspects of the South African history in order to authenticate the view that the struggle against apartheid was not only the affair of the black race; white South Africans also participated vigorously in the fight against the apartheid policy. In addition, the author demystifies the white "grand narrative" of culture that nothing good can come from black South Africans. By so doing, Jooste interrogates the writing of history and hinges on the postmodernist view that truth – even historical truth - only can only be relative, not absolute.

Keywords: postmodernism, narrative fiction, apartheid history, historical truth.

Introduction

The death of Nelson Mandela, on the 5th of December 2013, was an important milestone in the drama of South African history. His death, like that of many great historical icons, generated debates in conferences the world over on the role he played in the anti-apartheid struggle, and the way forward for South Africa. One of such talks was held at the International Relations Institute of Cameroon (IRIC) where Prof. Jean Emmanuel Pondi, an expert in International Relations, gave a discourse on the apartheid struggle and Mandela's contribution to it. The Professor overwhelmed the students of this Institute with his mastery of the apartheid history and the personality of Nelson Mandela. However, his discourse was subjective like many who spoke on issues concerning Mandela and the apartheid struggle. He created, in his presentation, the impression that the struggle against apartheid was the affair of blacks because he did not highlight the fact that not all whites supported the apartheid ideology. In fact, there are many liberal white South Africans who fought against the apartheid system and even lost their lives in the struggle.

This paper uses postmodernism to analyze Pamela Jooste's *Frieda and Min* to show how this white South African female novelist is engaged in the postmodernist project of deconstructing the apartheid history and valorizing the black South African culture. Although published in 1999, nine years after the collapse of apartheid, Pamela Jooste re-visits the apartheid history in her novel. From the historico-critical background, the intention here is to project the participation of liberal white South Africans in the fight against apartheid and also to demystify the white "grand narrative" of culture that nothing good can come

from black South Africans. Hence, Jooste interrogates the writing of history and hinges on the postmodernist view that truth – even historical truth - can only be relative, not absolute. This paper is, therefore, centered on the premise that Pamela Jooste's fictional narrative in *Frieda and Min* is a re-presentation of apartheid historical discourse where the author re-writes the history of apartheid by projecting the part that liberal South Africans whites played in its dismemberment and subsequent collapse in 1990 with the release of Nelson Mandela from prison. The ideological underpinning in Jooste's fictional narrative is probably to foreground the part played by liberal whites in the struggle against apartheid.

Theorizing Historical Representation in Postmodernism.

Postmodernism came into literary discourse as a counter-discourse to modernism with prominent proponents such as Richard Rorty, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Martin Heidegger, and Jean-Francois Lyotard. In *The Postmodern Condition,* Jean-Francois Lyotard describes postmodernism as the incredulity towards metanarratives. In addition, Pauline Marie Rosenau gives an elaborate definition of postmodernism when she contends that "Postmodernism challenges global, all-encompassing world views, be they political, religious, or social" and "dismisses them all as logocentric, transcendental totalising meta-narratives that anticipate all questions and provide predetermined answers" (1992, p. 6).This citation shows that post-modernism rejects the traditional, dogmatic and scholastic philosophy of authority and also the idea of universalism. In other words, postmodernist discourse deconstructs concepts in cultural studies such as, representation, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty and the "univocity" of meaning.

One of the discourses of postmodernism is politics of representation be it at the political, socio-cultural or historical levels. Following the concept of representation, modernists believe in the idea of verisimilitude and realism. In other words, modernists believe in the objectivity of representing the real – that is reality can be represented in an objective manner. Simon Thompson says that "[…] modernist philosophy holds that it is possible to represent the real; that is, it is possible to provide a true and accurate description of the nature of reality. Thus, a well-founded scientific theory can provide an exact account of what there is in the world" (2003, p. 145). This explains why modernists are of the opinion that language is a veritable medium through which the world is accurately reflected. Like Ferdinand de Saussure, in his *Courses on General Linguistics* who believes in the superiority of *langue* over *parole*, modernists also hold tenaciously that *langue* can serve as a faithful portraiture of *parole*. Also, the modernist philosophy propagates the idea of correspondence; it believes that a statement is true if it corresponds to a fact.

Contrariwise, proponents of postmodernism oppose the modernist concept of the "grand narrative" of historical representation by arguing that every narrative is 'grand' in its own right and no form of narrative should be used as a canon for judging other narratives. They affirm that it is impossible to give an objective representation of history since the writing of history is not objective. Evidently, this is the argumentative view-point of the postmodernist historian, Keith Jenkins, who argues from the perspective that historians should take cognizance of the subjective nature of the content of the past and acknowledge the different voices in the narration of history. In *Refiguring History* Jenkins notes that "The sifting out of that which is historically significant depends on us, so that what 'the past' means to us is always our task to 'figure out'; what we want our inheritance/history 'to be' is always waiting to be 'read' and written in the future like any other text: the past as history lies before us, not behind us" (2003, p. 30). Jenkins, in other words, is postulating that the representation of the past is ideologically subjective and depends on what the historian wants the reader or public to know.

Apart from Keith Jenkins, many other postmodernists theorists are sceptical about the idea of contemporary historical discourse. In fact, another postmodernist historian who rejects the idea of historical objectivism is Hayden White. His rejection also stems from the belief that history is subjective and there is no possibility of knowing a particular historical truth. So, believing in a particular historical account is circuitously propagating a given grand narrative. It is this lack of trust in the narration of historical accounts that makes him argue that history should also be studied as literature. He claims that since history like literature, is a verbal structure and the historian, first and foremost, is a writer, the tools

that have served literary critics, the tools that compose the linguistic and rhetorical structures of the text, serve the historian as well. In this view, White argues that "If there is an element of the historical in all poetry, there is an element of poetry in every historical account of the world". Consequently, "history has no stipulatable subject matter uniquely its own; it is always written as part of a contest between contending poetic figurations of what the past might consist of" (2007, p. 1727).

In conclusion, postmodernist scholars expostulate that historical narration has been infiltrated by ideological underpinning since the selection of events and the linguistic strategies used in narrating them are the deliberate choices of the historian. Thus, historical representation is a battle-ground for controversies since every historian narrates history from the perspective of his ideological background. Linda Hutcheon brings out the subjectivity in historical narratives when she argues that the narrative strategy of historical events "is imposed upon them, often overtly by the narrating figure". Thus, "The process of making stories out of chronicles, of constructing plots out of sequences, is what postmodern fiction underlines. This does not in any way deny the existence of the past real, but it focuses attention on the act of imposing order on the past, of encoding strategies of meaning-making through representation" (1989, pp. 66-67).

Pamela Jooste's *Frieda and Min*: The Politics of Re-writing History in Literary Form.

Linda Hutcheon argues that in postmodernism "there is an urge to foreground, by means of contradiction, the paradox of the desire for and the suspicion of narrative mastery – and master narratives". In this guise, Hutcheon continues, "Historiography too is no longer considered the objective and disinterested recording of the past; it is more an attempt to comprehend and master it by means of some work […] that, in fact, is precisely what grants a particular meaning to the past" (1989, p. 64). Thus, Hutcheon's argument is hinged on the view that in postmodernist discourse, there is continuous re-writing, re-presentation and re-interpretation of history because she does not conceive the art of historiography as an objective construction of past events but an arena where contradictions and subjectivity from the perspective of the historian reign supreme.

In connection with Hutcheon's view, Pamela Jooste represents the apartheid historical discourse from a different perspective. She textualises this history by projecting the participation of South African whites in dismantling the apartheid system. In fact, Irving Howe notes that "the novel can never quite free itself from the shaping pressures of history: but in some novels, history is more than a mere felt presence, it is an all but completely dominant force" (2001, p. 1542). Evidently, the author is engaged in the deconstructive project of re-writing the apartheid story by showing the role South African white liberals played in the dismemberment of apartheid. Thus, in *Frieda and Min*, Jooste presents white characters who are aggressive against the injustice of the apartheid system and they coalesce with non-white South Africans to fight for its abolition; she also shows white characters who admire the African culture and propagate it. In this light, many white South African writers present similar situations (in their works) of anti-apartheid white characters as could be read in Nadine Gordimer's *July's People*, J.M. Coetzee's *Age of Iron*, Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country*, and Gillian Slovo's *Red Dust*.

Furthermore, Andre Brink further contends that South African writers should open up to new thematic and discursive issues in their works. According to him "History provides one of the most fertile silences to be revisited by South African writers" (1998, p. 22). Brink's statement shows that he supports the view that South African writers should revisit and represent the history of South Africa in their writings. Consequently, *Freida and Min* is among the narratives that depict the situation and politics in South Africa during the apartheid period. The writer goes back to the apartheid story against the backdrop of the new thematic concerns in the post-apartheid era. Being a white South African writer, however, one could infer that the authorial intention of re-presenting the apartheid history in the post-apartheid context is to highlight the role white South Africans played in fighting against the apartheid dispensation. The writer, therefore, re-writes the apartheid story with the objective of debunking and obliterating the view that white South Africans did not participate in the struggle against the apartheid system since most historical books on apartheid do not really articulate this point. Jooste's novel is a clear and succinct demonstration of the

politics de-canonising the grand narrative of institutionalised historiography and of "writing back" in postcolonial discourse and hermeneutics.

Also, Graham Pechey argues that "Writers might in their everyday lives be keen reconcilers, devoted reconstructors-and-developers; their writing has value for us however only insofar as it is no more answerable to those good intentions of the state than it was to the bad ones of the terrorist state of apartheid" (1998, p. 62). Narratologically, the novel, *Frieda and Min*, is a bildungromans that exposes "the terrorist state of apartheid" by showing and representing the atrocities that were committed against anti-apartheid activists during this period. Contextually, therefore, the novel narrates the live of a white female protagonist, Min, from infanthood to adulthood during the apartheid era. In the narrative, Min could be seen as an extended metaphor of liberal whites whose ideas were against the policies of apartheid that were instituted as the dominant ideology in South Africa by white conservatives. The writer shows how she started resisting racism in South Africa from when she was a child and still dependent on her parents to adulthood when she becomes independent. She resists the system during these years even at the peril of her own life. Julia is her mother and she grew up in a family where her late father, Dr. Tom Campbell, was a white liberal who from his actions one could visualize resistance against the apartheid regime and its policies. However, Min's step-father, Mr. Gerald Delaney, is a foil to Dr. Campbell who happens to be her biological father. This is because Mr. Delaney is a conservative white who supports the racial policies of the apartheid regime.

Although Jooste's fictionalism in *Frieda and Min* begins in the post-apartheid era, most of the narrative is a flashback to the apartheid era. In its essence, this novel is postmodernist in form and structure where the events appear in a fragmentary nature with no dominant narrative voice because the events in the text are filtered through the technique of dual-narrative voice. Thus, the events are narrated by two characters who are of the same age group - Frieda, a Jewish young girl, and Min herself. In an interview with Rolf Solberg, Mongane Serote explains that it is wrong and imprudent "for any country to suppress people's cultures" and that "It is important for South Africa to stimulate and promote multiculturalism to its full blossoming as we should also do with its languages" (1986, p. 182). Evidently, the author brings these two characters from different cultural backgrounds to be the major narrators of this story in order to show her opposition against the racial policies of apartheid and projects her multicultural outreach. In other words, the authorial ideological vision is a new South Africa where race shall not be a barrier to national unity, cohesion, and integration. In this view, illustrates that the new South African nation "must overcome the legacy of apartheid, with its gross and inhumane effects of large scale forced removals, inferior education systems and racial division of labour". He further strengthens this view by mentioning that "It is fundamental that the new nationhood, therefore, needs to overcome the social inequalities and the discrimination of the past system" (1999, p. 234). Jooste had already projected this ideological perspective in her novel and a critical examination of the activities and utterances of Frieda and Min shows that racial injustice and repression of the apartheid regime affected all South Africans regardless of their race.

From the historicity of the text, the events in *Frieda and Min* occurred between 1960 and 1998. These two dates are critically symbolic in the historico-political discourse of South Africa. For instance, it was in 1960 that the apartheid regime passed the Unlawful Organisation Act banning all political movements and manifestations in South Africa. Furthermore, in this same year, the Pan-African Congress (P.A.C), which was a faction of the African National Congress (A.N.C) carried out widespread demonstrations in South Africa, especially in the small town of Sharpeville. Sydney H. Wood explains that in 1960, "African discontent" was shown by demonstrations "at Sharpeville against the Pass laws" which controlled the movement about the country of Africans. The demonstrations were marked by "police brutality when the police opened fire on the demonstrators killing and wounding many of them" (1970, p. 314). Following these widespread hostilities, the regime responded with massive arrests and a state of emergency was declared especially where the majority of the populations were non-whites. On the 8th of April 1960, the apartheid government proscribed both the A.N.C and the P.A.C movements. On the other hand, the year 1998 symbolizes the post-apartheid democratic and non-racial era since it comes two years after the first non-racial democratic elections in South Africa where Nelson Mandela became president. By

making the plot of this novel fall within this historical time frame, from 1960-1998, the author concentrates on those very dark periods of apartheid to show how liberal white South Africans navigated through them and fought against the system.

The novel commences in 1998 with Freida as the first narrative voice. Although she is in the post-apartheid era, she takes the reader memory lane, through the technique of heterodiegetic analepsis, to the days of apartheid to talk about her white friend Min and their interaction and relationship as children during the apartheid era. She begins the chapter by philosophizing on the personality and character of her white bosom-friend friend, Min. She comments that "There are things you remember. About people. About the first time you saw them. The time when they were just the same as anyone else and you didn't know how important they were going to be to you. Because we never know at first and by the time you realize you didn't want to forget anything you're already forgetting" (Jooste, 1999, p. 11). As the chapter unfolds, the suspense it broken and it is realized that Frieda is actually alluding to Min. Frieda's opening comments shows that Min has a very receptive personality and she does not build barriers surrounding her as most conservative whites did during the apartheid era especially in their relationship with non-whites. Min's receptive character trait permeates the entire novel as one sees her having very warm and cordial relationship with non-white characters especially blacks.

As the narration unfolds, Frieda testifies concretely about the receptive nature of Min the first time she comes in contact with her. She contends that "All I remember about the first time I saw her (Min) are her feet. Bare feet shoved into African sandals. The one made out of old car tyres with thick, rubbery soles with their tyre tread still on them and any-old-how strips and straps over the top" (Jooste, 1999, p. 11). The action of Min wearing African sandals is symbolic and shows that she is anti-racist and believes that something good could also come from both sides of the racial divide. Ideologically, this action also depicts Min's postmodernist vision where she is for cultural complementarity and not cultural absolutism. Furthermore, Frieda notes that wearing of these sandals are "all the fashion now but they weren't then. We used to call them tyre tackies and only chars and garden boys wore them" (Jooste, 1999, p. 11). So even in the days of apartheid, Min distinguished herself by identifying with blacks and their culture. Through Min's action and behaviour, she was offering a tacit criticism against racial policies in her country that thought that nothing good could come from blacks. In fact, Frieda also comments that "In those days white people never did and certainly not doctors' daughters who attended smart boarding schools like St. Anne's" (Jooste, 1999, p. 11). Since "only chars and garden boys" wore these kinds of sandals, it presupposes that they were sandals of low quality which was unthinkable that whites of the middle class in South Africa at the time could wear. It is, therefore, interesting that being from a white rich middle-class family, she could still see something good in African culture.

Min's mother, Julia, and Frieda's mother, Miriam, have a longstanding and harmonious relationship as friends despite the fact that they are from different racial backgrounds. This explains why Frieda's parents could allow Min to visit them for the summer holiday. Furthermore, Min's biological father, late Dr. Tom Campbell, is also anti-racist and harbours the ideological of multiracialism and interracialism. Through Frieda, it is established that Dr. Tom Campbell, in the days of apartheid, was a medical doctor from Johannesburg. Although a white South African citizen, Dr. Campbell found pleasure and professional satisfaction in working in black native areas. It is said that when Julia got married to him, she thought that they would live in the city where they could enjoy the facilities of city life. Frieda says that she could not believe herself when Dr. Campbell proposed to marry her and "She thought she'd go to Sandton or Illovo or one of those places and live there in the lap of luxury with her new husband. In those days when they were girls together and neighbours this is what she told my mother" (Jooste, 1999, p. 19). Julia's attitude shows that she believes riches bring happiness which is contrary to Dr. Campbell's vision. Frieda says: "All he wanted was to go back where he came from and work with the natives and he told Julia she could take it or leave it because there wasn't going to be any other way" (Jooste, 1999, p. 20). His insistence to work in black native areas is in contravention to the Group Areas Act which was legislated on the 27th of April 1950. This law partitioned the country into different areas, with particular areas allocated to different racial

groups. This law was the foundation upon which political and social separation was constructed. Dr. Campbell, therefore, is presented as a liberal humanist who relates with people not on the basis of their racial affiliation but on the basis of their humanity.

In addition, Min's biological father allows her to attend St. Anne's school which is a racially-mixed school with white and non-white students. This school, in the novel, is a proleptic metaphor of what South Africa should be. Min acknowledges that it is because of their black schoolmaster, Mr. Morefe that they know about science and mathematics. "We have biology classes" she says, "walking with him in the bush and my father does his bit too…. We are lucky to have Mr. Morefe and my father" (Jooste, 1999, p. 58). In this view, Min projects the personality of Mr. Molefe to show that she is anti-racist and appreciates excellence and goodness no matter the racial background of the individual. It is in relation to this that Min presents Mr. Molefe an assiduous and duty-conscious educationist who is prepared at all times to direct the pupils under his tutelage. Mr. Molefe says: 'Ask, look, read, ask me and I will direct you,'… 'If there's something you don't know you have no excuse for not being able to find out about it for yourselves. All you have to do is ask, look, read and ask me' (Jooste, 1999, p. 58). Mr. Molefe's statement shows that he is diligent in his profession as a teacher and cares about the educational welfare of his pupils. It is for this reason that Min authenticates Mr. Molefe's character traits when she remarks that "We are asking him things all the time and he is always there, waiting and ready with all the time in the world to give us an answer" (Jooste, 1999, p. 58).

Min further presents her biological father as an anti-racist when she notes that her father always donates books to the school in order to help the students. She says: "Every month a big box of books, my father's standing order from Adams and Company, West Street, Durban, arrives for us" (Jooste, 1999, p. 58). Dr. Campbell's gesture shows that he wants good education not only for his daughter and the white race in general, but for all South Africans regardless of their racial affiliation. This is an indication that Dr. Campbell does not believe in the superiority of one race over the other. On the other hand, he is for multiculturalism or cultural plurality. This attitude, in the context of apartheid, is a tacit revolt against the Bantu Education Act of 1953 and the Extension of University Education Act of 1959 which enforced the separation of races in all educational establishments. By this law, the apartheid regime created separate universities for whites and non-whites. The political subtext of the law was to continuously put non-whites on the marginal space of development and intellectual activities. This was because conservative South African whites argued that academic and professional training were not fields suitable for Africans. Rather, they should only be given agricultural education.

Moreover, Dr. Campbell is very amicable and accommodative towards blacks. When Justin, Min's brother dies, her parents decide to leave the suburban areas to Pietermaritzburg. What pushes them to leave is the fact that Min's doctor, Dr. Marion Davis, lives in this town. Min says that her father is not very happy leaving the black suburbs although he had found locum tenens to take his place, he still misses his patients and his clinic. "It's me" Min says "who's taken something he loves away from him but there's nothing I can do about it" (Jooste, 1999, p. 127). Dr. Campbell's regret shows his predilection for the natives and his anxiety to always be with them. He also interacts with the natives and even speaks the Zulu language – which is their language. When Julia recruits Patience and Josias as servants in their home, Min says that they reveal that they have never seen a white man like her father. The reason for this is that when they first came, "he addressed them politely in Zulu but they won't talk Zulu back" (Jooste, 1999, p. 128). These blacks are bewildered to see a white man who is so nice to them to the extent of speaking their language.

When Dr. Campbell dies from an accident, Julia gets married to Mr. Gerald Delaney who is a conservative white and a diehard racist. This explains why Min does not admire him. Mr. Delaney's xenophobic attitude is seen in the summer that he and Min's mother see her off to Frieda's house in Johannesburg at Coronation Avenue in order that Min should spend the vacation with them. After they have seen her off and are about to leave Mr. Delaney makes a statement which is interpreted by Min and Frieda's family as being that he does not like Jews. Frieda says:

> My mother waves as if she's afraid of disturbing the air too much and waking the neighbours and Min's mother stands on the pavement for a moment linger and waves back. My father doesn't wave and nor do I and Min doesn't and nor does Mr. Delaney. When Min's mother gets to the bottom of the steps he puts his arms around her and bends towards her as if he's going to kiss her but he doesn't. 'You didn't say they were Jews,' he (Mr. Delaney) says. (Jooste, 1999, p. 28)

This statement, by Mr. Delaney, is very embarrassing because it is made to the hearing of Frieda's parents. With this she laments that "He doesn't even bother to say it softly so we can't hear except even if he whispered it we'd still have heard. When you're Jewish like we are and someone says it the way Mr. Delaney says it they need hardly go to the trouble of opening their mouth at all" (Jooste, 1999, pp. 28-29). From the symbolic interactionist standpoint, Mr. Delaney's comment means that he would not have come to see off Min in Frieda's house if he knew in advance that he was coming to a Jewish family. Consequently, this shows that he dislikes Jews and would not want to have anything to do with them.

Furthermore, Mr. Delaney's racist attitude makes Min to be uncomfortable in Frieda's house. When she gets up in the morning, after her first night with Frieda, she expresses her hatred and distaste for Mr. Delaney.

> I hate Gerald Delaney. If I could, I'd kill him. I'd pull him apart limb from limb. Then I'd fillet him and when it was done I'd put him piece by horrible piece in a big plastic bucket. Then I'd take a walk and keep on walking until I found the mangiest, hungriest township dogs I could find. I'd look for the kinds of dogs Gerald would despise most and a little way away. Then I'd stand and watch them while they ate. (Jooste, 1999, p. 31)

These utterances show Min's dislike for Mr. Gerald Delaney. To begin with, Min does not address him as "Mr. Gerald Delaney" but simply "Gerald Delaney". This appellation shows that Min does not have respect for him. Also, the idea of Min saying that if she had the means she would have slain him "limb by limb" is to show the extreme resentment and indignation Min has against him. She even vows that when she will be independent to pilot her destiny, she will not do what Mr. Delaney has done. The narrator (Min herself) says: "I can bear anything now but only because one day things will be different. My life will be my own and when my turn comes, I'll never do what Gerald did tonight. Not to anyone. Certainly not to people who have offered us nothing but kindness and the hospitality of their house" (Jooste, 1999, p. 33).

Moreover, Jooste criticises the brutality of the apartheid government which is notorious for its suppression of any demonstration against the system. The tendency of the apartheid regime to curtail freedom of movement, demonstration, and free speech were some of the negative trade-marks of the apartheid administration which Pamela Jooste, in a critical realist fashion, represents in her novel. After the Soweto Massacre in 1976, South Africa became worst than a Gestapo or police state and in 1985 a State of Emergency was declared all over the country. This came as a result of the amendment of the Public Safety Act which was adopted by the parliament and also the Internal Security Act. The State of Emergency gave credence to the South African security force to carry out arbitrary arrests and detentions under the pretext of restoring order in the country. In this guise, Bernard Magubane and Ibbo Mandaza give a synoptic view of the political and social climate of South Africa, during this period, which also suite hand in gloves with Jooste's narrative discourse in *Frieda and Min*. They note:

> In South Africa the state intervenes in all aspects of black struggles in its efforts to check the growth of independent political will and power; controls individual Africans through the Pass Laws which insure that every employer has his complement of servile black labor; it uses its laws against "communism," "sabotage," and "terrorism" in order to repress black political activity. Now with the new laws that have been just passed, the suppression of every form of political organization and opposition to apartheid is to be pursued with still greater zeal and intensity. (1988, p. 9)

The above description of the situation of blacks in South Africa during the apartheid era lucidly finds expression in *Frieda and Min* all political manifestations or protests against the apartheid ideology have been banned. Those who attempt to carry out protests marches against the apartheid junta are either arrested, molested, or murdered. Min notes that "There's been a protest march in the township. There's a funny feeling in the air and everyone except my mother seems affected by it. Things are really bad" (Jooste, 1999, p. 132). The assertive statement, "Things are really bad" probably suggests a chaotic situation in the country following this protest march. Also, Min is indirectly valorizing the courageous attitude of the population to stand up against injustice in their society although it is prohibited for the masses to undertake such an activist move. This demonstration leads to the arrest of a fourteen-year-old township boy. Min comments that "The police came at three o'clock in the morning and pulled him (the boy) out of bed. The whole township heard. Those living closest to his house heard the roar of the van, the banging on the door and his mother and grandmother screaming and crying and the police men shouting" (Jooste, 1999, p. 132-133). The attitude of the forces of law and order depicts the extreme abuse of the human rights of citizens in the apartheid state and also shows that even children under the apartheid policy were also vulnerable to arrest and molestation at any time. The event, however, shows Dr Campbell's rebellious character against the apartheid regime because he is part of the delegation that goes to the district magistrate to know the whereabouts of the young township lad who was taken for questioning in relation to the protest march in the township. The narrator comments:

> What the man who's in trouble wants is for the district magistrate to tell him the whereabouts of the boy taken on that night [of the protest demonstration] because he hasn't been heard of for three months. There's been no reason given and he's had no answer to all his enquiries and that's why my father and some others have intervened. (Jooste, 1999, p. 133)

Dr. Campbell's intervention shows that he is against the status quo and wants blacks to be set free from it. It is for this reason that some security agents are sent to his house to interrogate and intimidate him so that he is not part of the delegation. In their interrogation, one of the soldiers tells Dr Campbell that people do not like the idea where white men stir up blacks to demonstrate against the regime because, according to him, 'In the end it sets white people against each other and there's no need for that when a quiet word between educated people will do just as well.' (Jooste, 1999, p. 137) This statement is an indication that the apartheid administration was also aggressive to whites who were not in support of its policies. A case in point is the white South African poet, Dennis Brutus, who was arrested by the apartheid regime and imprisoned in Ruben Island for more than six months. His poem "Letters to Martha" and "Cold" are biographical renditions of his life in prison in apartheid South Africa.

Min's radical attitude against apartheid grows with her and even in her adulthood, when she becomes a medical doctor, she is deeply involved in the politics of her society. She becomes a political activist and militates in banned organisations and movements whose political agenda are contrary to those of the apartheid government. Her radicalism pushes her into confrontation with the police which leads to her incarceration in Pretoria Central prison for nine months. Her bosom-friend, Frieda, is so concerned about her condition in prison. She takes care of Min's son and pays regular visits to her in prison. While in prison, the inmates are not allowed to come in physical contact with their visitors. In fact, in one of the visits, Frieda narrates the hurdles and trauma she traverses in order to visit Min. She comments that: "I sit on one side and Min sits on the other and we speak to each other on a telephone. We aren't allowed to touch. The things I have to show her I hold up pressed against the glass and I give a running commentary" (Jooste, 1999, p. 334). This account of Frieda's visit of Min in prison shows the inhuman treatment of political inmates during the apartheid era. Moreover, even when Min is finally discharged from the cell, this is done with some strings attached to her release. The dialogue between Frieda and the Superintendent of the prison where Min is jailed shows that the apartheid regimes intends to release Min but not without conditions. Frieda declares that "I know what people tell me and what he tells me is that Min's case has been reconsidered and under certain circumstances and conditions she may be released" (Jooste, 1999, p. 336-337). Planning to release Min "under certain circumstances and conditions" shows that the apartheid

regime is still planning to arrest her if she goes against the laws and policies of the apartheid state. According to the superintendent, Frieda says that: "She (Min) must stay in the magisterial district of Johannesburg. She must report to the police station once a week. She may not be a member of any political organization or party. She may not attend public meetings of any kind. She may not make public statements or allow any public statement to be made in her name" (Jooste, 1999, p. 337). The conditions for Min's release show that the apartheid state is not too different from a police state where movements of civilians/citizens are curtailed in order to monitor them not to comments acts against the state.

Finally, in the days of apartheid language was a crucial zone of conflict. In fact, the Soweto massacre of June 1976 was due to the problem of language where the students at Orlando West Junior School, refused the imposition of the Afrikaner language as a medium of instruction in schools. The apartheid police responded cruelly and oppressively to the protest and many students were killed during the demonstration. In *Frieda and Min*, the protagonist, Min, valorizes the black culture in South Africa when she projects the Zulu language. Min's action and vision are against those of the apartheid administration. She endorses the fact that David, her six-year-year-old son, should study Zulu which is an African language. This is evident when Frieda narrates that "At home there's Elizabeth to take care of David and Evalina is still with me and old William comes in twice a week to do odd jobs and look after the garden and at the same time he's teaching David about plants and also a few words of Zulu" (Jooste, 1999, p.329). Even at the end of the novel when preparations are on the way to welcome Min from her release from prison, Frieda notes that "He's (David) been practicing his Zulu greeting on poor William who must have heard it at least a hundred times by now and he's had a flower-pick and every decent flower that was once in the garden has been cut and put in the house" (Jooste, 1999, p. 343). The idea of David learning the Zulu language is a projection of what South Africa should be in the future, that is, a South Africa of accommodation and not of exclusion and it also shows Min's predilection for the African cultural heritage and cosmology. Thus, as a white South African, her action goes counter-current to the policy of apartheid at the time because the apartheid regime came up with policies to marginalize and even obliterate anything black in South Africa. It is in cognizance of this fact that Jean Benjamin argues that "Apartheid language policy and planning functioned to exclude African languages from official status within South Africa" because it "entrenched inequalities and divisions between groups by granting official status to English and Afrikaans to the exclusion of indigenous Black South African languages" (Jooste, 1999, p. 97-98).

Conclusion

In conclusion, therefore, John Tosh postulates that "Social groupings need a record of prior experience, but they also require a picture of the past which serves to explain or justify the present, often at the cost of historical accuracy" (2002, p. 3). Put differently, Tosh is arguing that no group of people should forget their past because their relationship with other groups depends on what they know about them in the past. The goal of this paper has been to analyse the re-writing and re-presentation of history in white South African literary discourse with Pamela Jooste's *Frieda and Min* as the point of reference. It defended the assertion that the struggle against the apartheid policies was a concerted struggle of both whites and non-whites This explains why apart from analyzing the fictional world of the novel, I also went out of the text to explore the concrete history of apartheid to explain concretely how white South Africans participated enormously in the struggle. This stand goes contrary to popular historiography where the participation of whites in the struggle against apartheid has not been adequately articulated and textualised in history books. As seen from the fictional work above and also from concrete historical facts, white South Africans were involved in the apartheid struggle alongside non-whites as well.

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