

Social Stratification As A Catalyst For Xenophobia In Kenneth Maswabi's Poems

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyse selected poems from the anthology, Collection of Poems by Kenneth Maswabi (2020), that deal with social stratification as a source of xenophobia. Postcolonial theory is selected and adopted for the purpose of analysis of the texts under study. The purpose of applying postcolonial theory is to appropriately contextualize the text while analyzing it from a postcolonial standpoint. To address the impact of xenophobia and its link to social stratification, three poems were chosen, studied, and analysed. The study took into account South Africa's historical context and linked it to contemporary developments in the country. David Mário Matsinhe's concept of citizenship is adopted from postcolonial theory. Matsinhe's concept of citizenship has been chosen because he contends that the struggle for citizenship and survival in South Africa, as well as anti-immigrant sentiments, has revitalized group interactions in postcolonial Africa, often with fatal repercussions. Hence, the historical antecedents have sparked xenophobic assaults in South Africa since they refer to the country's colonial past. This demonstrates that during colonialism's repression, people learned to build resistance to any type of foreign incursion, particularly from African immigrants. As a result of these attitudes, a schism developed between citizens and immigrants. Based on the findings of the study, xenophobia caused social stratification, as proven by the analysis of the chosen poems.

Keywords: Xenophobia; Maswabi; Catalyst; African Poetry; South Africa; social stratification

INTRODUCTION

The issue of xenophobia is explored in this study, utilizing social stratification as a trigger through the examination of selected Maswabi's poems. The concept of xenophobia has already been explored concerning citizenship politics in previous literary studies on xenophobia; however, this research examines xenophobia in Kenneth Maswabi's poetry, which conveys a similar message but from a social perspective. It has been demonstrated via the analysis of the poems that social stratification is a xenophobic trigger.

The term "xenophobia" refers to a dread of outsiders that has persisted throughout human history. Immigrants, on the other hand, have always risked trespassing into well-organized communities to meet individuals of different races and nationalities. According to Crowder (2014), xenophobia is defined as a strong dislike of foreigners among natives. He describes it as being made up of multiple unexamined prejudices rather than considered cohesive points of view, as an

example. Xenophobia, he claims, may be traced back to a basic fear of the unknown. In short, the word "xenophobia" will be used throughout this study to describe the level of hatred Africans face as immigrants in South Africa. This degree of animosity might lead to violent attacks and the loss of life (Abdullah et al., 2020; Rubenstein, 1995; Landau, 2013; & Plaut, 1995).

According to Bhatia (2009), unreasonable and excessive anxiety is the root cause of xenophobia and frequently results in major issues, including assaulting the victims. He approaches the issue of the source of xenophobia differently than the current study, which approaches it from the perspective of social stratification. Saayman (2016) sees xenophobia as a hangover that left South Africans still bitter about the ugly experience of apartheid. She opines that the anger and frustration gave birth to the current xenophobic attacks currently being witnessed in the country. Reynolds, et al. (1987) assert that xenophobia occurs as a psychological state of hostility or fear towards outsiders. Based on this definition by Reynold and Vine, the current study concentrates on how a situation could have an impact on the psyche of an individual over time. Unlike the present study, Reynold et al. align the causes of xenophobia from the angle of psychology, not paying attention to the experiences they had during the colonial period, which could be a major factor.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of citizenship, as conceived by Matsinhe (2009, p. 6), will be used in this study. In this regard, the study focuses on the conceptualization of postcolonial studies and the explanations it provides in the context of the concepts investigated. The conceptual framework aids the reader in understanding xenophobia from a sociopolitical perspective. Consequently, readers start to see citizenship and politics as triggers for xenophobia in the poems chosen for this study. According to Abdullah et al. (2021, p. 115), literary theories support the active role of literary thinkers in pursuing new avenues of inquiry and acknowledging the fluidity of literary meaning. It is believed that thinking about literature goes beyond logical analysis to explore individual meanings and reactions through literary and scientific modes of thought.

The relevance of postcolonial theory to this study cannot be over emphasised. It provides information, helps the reader gain understanding, and clarifies the important aspects of a study that they are aware of, value, and desire to tie to other aspects and factors that have an influence on the research (Ravitch & Riggan, 2016, p. 35). Explaining postcolonial theory and postcolonialism, Padgate (2021), citing Tyson (2020), & Bressler (2011), traces its historical antecedents, claiming that the concerns and notions may be traced back to anti-colonial movements and intellectual investigations in the 1950s. However, the phrases "postcolonial" and "postcolonialism" did not exist in academic circles until the mid-1980s. He claims it was not until the mid-1990s that the notion of postcolonialism became a prominent area of study. He goes on to explain how postcolonial criticism seeks to understand the socio-cultural, political, and psychological activities of both colonialist and anticolonialist doctrines in literary texts, as well as to criticise such texts for perpetuating colonisers' dominance. In most African countries, such as South Africa, the colonial experience persists for years after the colonial period has ended. Its influence is still felt as it impacts the country's peaceful coexistence. Using postcolonial literary theory, the relationship between the two notions, postcolonial and post-apartheid, is established.

Similarly, the use of postcolonial theory in this study demonstrates the effectiveness of literary theory in text analysis and how it inspires critical thinking. They made the case that

thinking about literature becomes dynamic, expressive, personal, and transcends logic and factual facts. This exemplifies how literary theory helps with text understanding and how the adopted theory, that is, postcolonial theory, explains the issue under review. In the case of South Africa, the postcolonial theory aids readers in understanding historical events and in being able to comprehend the present by contrasting the two situations.

Mambrol (2018) examines postcolonialism as a critical investigation of the Third World nations' histories, cultures, literatures, and forms of discourse in a work titled *Trauma Studies: Literary Theory and Criticism*. He claims that the study of colonization, which has roots in the Renaissance, decolonization, which involves reclaiming and rebuilding local cultures, and the neo-colonizing process are all a part of postcolonialism, the legacy of late capitalism and postmodernism, when multinational corporations rule the world. In addition, he contends that postcolonialism investigates the metaphysical, ethical, and political issues surrounding cultural identity, including gender, nationality, race, ethnicity, subjectivity, language, and power, concentrating on the constant power struggles between cultures and the intersection of cultures that lead to multiculturalism and polyvalency of culture. The colonialists' way of thinking has been molded by and is affected by this consequence of colonialism. The colonizer's unfavorable responses years after the colonial experience are not surprising. This experience has brought about the social upheavals going on in South Africa. The locals in the country look down on immigrants, no matter their level of education or sophistication. No wonder the immigrants are referred to as "Makwerekwere," a derogatory neologism for foreigners (Matsinhe, 2003).

Postcolonial literature, according to Graham et al. (2012), is useful for considering the distinctive ways that writing from the global periphery records the world-dynamics systems and quantum superpositions. Postcolonial theory is important because it connects Africa's postcolonial history to the recent xenophobic attacks in South Africa, building on the previous contribution. The concept also provides context for understanding South Africa's past and what led to the present xenophobic climate there. According to Nayar (2008) research works from Africa, Asia, South America, and other formerly colonized nations can be presented, analyzed, and discussed within the context of postcolonial literature. He goes on to define postcolonial literature as literature that questions, challenges, and subverts Euro-American representations and ideas. That assumption is the foundation of the current investigation. The postcolonial theory provides a framework for analyzing South African history and an explanation for the socioeconomic disparities that fuel xenophobia in the nation.

Looking at the text under study, it is pertinent to align with the colonial antecedents in South Africa. In *Literary Criticism from Plato to the Present: An Introduction*, Habib (2012) argues that postcolonial literary theory is concerned with the economic, cultural, and psychological ramifications of imperialism and emancipation from colonial authority since postcolonial theory is based on the history of imperialism. The significance of colonial theory to this study is that it gives context for understanding the ongoing conflict in South Africa. At first, during the colonial times, then during apartheid, and finally, during the current xenophobic period. According to Young (2016, p. 11), postcolonial criticism has a number of objectives: first and foremost, it seeks to reexamine colonialism's history from the perspective of the colonised; second, it seeks to determine the economic, political, and cultural impact of colonialism on both colonized peoples and colonizing powers; third, it seeks to analyze the process of decolonization; and, finally, it seeks to participate in the goals of political liberation, which include equal access to material resources. The relevance of postcolonial theory to this study cannot be emphasised enough because it traces the struggle for power that has been going on in South Africa from the colonial period to date. It

is against this backdrop that this study is based. According to Thamarana (2015), the term "postcolonialism" refers to the representation of race, ethnicity, culture, and human identity in the modern era, especially after several colonised nations won independence. It has been associated with imperialism from the period of colonialism until the twenty-first century. This has significantly given the background to the current study, as it is based on the conflict that has been going on in South Africa between the locals and the immigrants, which has created room for social stratification. Invariably, immigrants are termed low-class no matter their status in society. That is why they are being referred to as "Makwerekwere" as it carries a negative connotation (Mbowa, 2020). Ning (1998) claims that the emergence of postcolonial literature and postcolonial criticism in western academic institutions has significantly altered the western world's literary and cultural map. The cultural reconstruction of former colonies has its own set of challenges that are unique from those of their previous metropolises. He emphasises that postcolonial discourse, which includes literature and criticism, should not be mistaken for a Third World viewpoint. Those postcolonial cultural critics should not be considered ambassadors for their former colonies. The current study could be seen via the lens of colonialism within this context. The theory offers the research a framework within which to explain the country's social stratification.

The postcolonial theory has been used as a basis for this research because it provides the framework for the study. The South African situation cannot be studied in isolation without tracing it to postcolonialism. Therefore, Matsinhe's idea of citizenship has been adopted by the researcher because of its relevance to the study. In a discussion of citizenship in South Africa, Matsinhe (2009, p. 6) claims that the battle over citizenship and means of survival and self-preservation, as well as the anti-immigrant emotions that drive them, have enlivened group relations in postcolonial Africa, often with disastrous results. He proposes that the politics of native citizenship and citizenship-based discrimination on the African continent be addressed to position South African xenophobia in a continental framework and to dispel the misconception that xenophobia is solely a South African concern.

While exploring the link between postcolonialism and citizenship, Matsinhe (2009) feels that the colonial and postcolonial backgrounds in the polemic of citizenship add a psychological twist to the conundrum. According to him, post-colonial theorists, especially Du Bois (1990) & Fanon (1990), have shown that individuals who have been subjected to group shame for generations tend to harbour intense self-hatred and participate in self-destructive behaviours, not always through physical self-injury. Although this is frequently the case, it is typically done by projecting their group's or individual's shame onto other comparable groups or individuals. He believes that violence is frequently directed at people who resemble "me" or "us." Self-colonization is symptomatic of internalized group shame by outsiders who, for decades, were non-citizens but have just ascended to the status of citizens in the established-outsider figuration under discussion in this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In South African literature, there is a sizable body of work about xenophobia. In contrast to the current research, which focuses on the same issues, the present study focuses on the work that has been done on Maswabi's poetry.

The text under study focuses on the poetry of Maswabi from a postcolonial angle. There is a study on Maswabi, which is described as a "poet of elegant emotion" by (Mahakul, 2018). This study focuses on the aesthetic aspect of the poet's literary persistence. On the other hand, Mahakul (2018) opines that the result of Maswabi's creative abilities and perseverance when it comes to dealing with modern subjects. He compared him to a risk-taking individual who utilizes poetry to investigate and provide solutions to difficult issues. He also describes Maswabi as a passionate and emotional person when confronted with a difficult situation. However, the present study takes a different approach by highlighting the social class created over the years as a result of apartheid policy, which is an extension of colonialism. The study discusses the class distinction that has made black South Africans retaliate to some extent on black African immigrants.

In a study on Maswabi's poetry, Manga (2016) describes Maswabi as a poet who is constantly aiming to promote peaceful coexistence through his exceedingly simple yet powerful poems, with the author stating that Maswabi is "always trying to promote peaceful coexistence." Despite the fact that his excitement has stayed in control of him for a lengthy period of time, he has said that it should be emulated by everyone, including himself. An unwavering commitment to whatever causes he chooses is recognized, as is his readiness to be forthright in expressing his own beliefs and thoughts on the subject matter at hand. This study is limited to how the poet has been able to promote peaceful coexistence among the people. The present study has been able to show the impact of colonialism on the current issue of xenophobia going on in the country, which creates division among black Africans.

Literary critics have begun to investigate the trend of xenophobia in African literature as it has attracted widespread attention and public concern. Frosini (2015) also described Maswabi as a prospective poet, one who is committed to bringing about the required changes in his society via the use of poetry. Maswabi's dedication to bringing about necessary changes in his society is also noted. Furthermore, he is identified as a poet of conscience who, by acting as a moral compass in his society, continues to fulfil his role as a writer in that community. This study did not widen its scope to include the issue of xenophobia as is done in the current study.

In a similar study, Osibodu, (2020) describes Maswabi's poetry as something beautiful that paints the picture of a big tree. "The Big African Tree," he notes, is a poem in which he explores the significance of trees in African communities and how they are used to signify peace and togetherness among people living on the African continent. He claims that the poet is attempting to emphasise the unity of Africans despite the apparent distinctions among the individuals in his poem. The image painted by the poet is one of togetherness in the midst of variety. This study, too, limits itself to African unity. Unlike the present study, it does not look at the cause of the issue of xenophobia as is done by the present study.

Furthermore, another critic, Gayen (2019) studies Maswabi's work, which he describes as "a competent poet who utilises poetry to fight for his cause as a social critic." Moreover, he has been regarded as a "powerful poet who employs words to plead for his stance as a social critic." Through his work, he has been preoccupied with political events that have occurred in his immediate surroundings, which has resulted in his work being preoccupied with social and political events that have occurred in his society. Gayen (2019) concentrated on South Africa's sociopolitical issues but did not address the sources and effects of xenophobia on the country's black immigrants.

Similarly, Paul (2020) describes Maswabi as a brilliant poet who has offered the world of poetry a masterpiece to read, which was much needed at the time. As a result, she believes that the world has grown more sensitive to a variety of issues and that his poetry is an urgent endeavour to

bring people together in his part of the world. Paul (2020) did not address the issue of xenophobia. It does, however, address the aesthetic aspect of Maswabi's work, which tries to unify the Africans under one umbrella.

DISCUSSION

In examining the concept of citizenship, Matsinhe (2009, p. 15) depicts the South African situation as an act of producing dynamics, arguing that, while apartheid is no longer in effect, it has left its impression on South Africa's psychological makeup. As a result, the study's conclusion places post-apartheid anti-foreigner attitudes and actions in the shadows of apartheid, notably the anti-African tendency of Makwerekwere's ideology. In the same vein, this study tries to show the link between apartheid and the present xenophobic situation, highlighting the gap it created between citizens and foreigners, which gives room for social stratification.

Looking at xenophobia from the perspective of social stratification, Matsinhe (2003:6) observed that certain communities were separated into two segments, one termed the village and the other the estate when it came to social stratification. The village group had been there for decades, whilst the estate group had only been there for around two decades. The division between the two groups has nothing to do with race. The philosophy and behaviour that drive the gap, on the other hand, are remarkably similar to racist doctrines and actions. There were no discernible variations between the two groups in terms of skin colour, race, employment, economy, customs, nationality, training, or language. In reality, members of both groups worked in the same facilities. The only difference was that one was older and had been around for decades, whilst the other was younger. This has created a significant divide between the two groups since social stratification is a significant factor.

According to Matsinhe (2011, p.300), understanding what it implies to be a South African in Africa, as well as the social practices that go along with it, is required to understand the South African social unconscious and the social habits that go along with it, which underpin the current anti-African attitude. Matsinhe (2003, P.6), citing Adedeji (1996), notes that South Africa has always positioned itself aside from Africa, considering itself "a Western enclave," similar to previous white settler nations intent on eradicating or subjugating the indigenous people. This implied that as soon as the Federation of South Africa was established in 1910, citizenship and nationality were "whites only" classifications. According to colonial texts, "it is no exaggeration to state that the majority of South Africans feel an almost bodily repulsion towards anything that puts a native or a person of colour on their level." "South African" and "whiteness" became synonyms in the collective consciousness, but "blackness" represented "evil, sin, wretchedness, death, war, and starvation." Such a social unconscious enabled the colonised to idealize themselves in the picture of the colonizers, a dream that created strong roots in the philosophy of South African separatism, which, among other things, lends credence to the false idea that South Africans have fair skin colouration compared to Africans from the rest of the region. South African hegemony is a "dominant, arrogant" political dialogue, according to which "South Africa is somehow more similar to a Southern European or Latin American country given its magnitude of industrial growth, and now progressively democratic state," was first highlighted by Mamdani (2018) & Neocosmos (2008). He continues to explain how their mindset predates the end of apartheid. The insights of Lazarus (2004, p. 298) on this subject are extremely enlightening. He says that to most whites in South Africa, "South Africa was not actually in Africa at all," he says, recalling

the attitude of the white elite of which he was a member. It was a "European" civilisation that happened to be placed at the foot of the "dark continent" by chance and inconveniently, albeit excruciatingly. This mentality, according to Lazarus, characterised not only the top players' forces but also, strangely, anti-apartheid groups and researchers.

In a poem, "Mob Justice In South Africa," from the anthology, *Collection of Poems* by Kenneth Maswabi (2020), the issue of social stratification has played a significant role in discriminating against immigrants because of their status. In the poem's first stanza, the speaker strongly condemns the mob's senseless conduct in carrying out the atrocities. He claims there is no excuse for such antics since they are united to inflict unjustified violence on innocent people. He describes such acts as barbarous and illogical since they are incapable of sparing the lives of their fellow humans based on a flimsy excuse. The perpetrators of the heinous act see themselves as superior to their victims, even though they have the same skin colour. Here, postcolonial theory is used to explain the relationship that existed between the locals and colonialists during the colonial period and, by extension, the apartheid period. The presence of the immigrants reminds the locals of the harsh treatment they received in the past. Therefore, they look down on the African immigrants in their surroundings, which gave rise to xenophobia over time. Because of the presence of Europeans in the country and the level of achievement the country has attained, they tend to look down on immigrants, especially those of African descent, with disdain. Since most Africans see South Africa as an economically viable nation, they go to look for greener pastures. This has no doubt created a superiority complex in the minds of the attackers, thus the xenophobic attacks. The speaker describes the conduct as cruel and inhuman in a harsh tone. He says:

There is no justice in the mob
But a court full of delusional beings
Overtaken by their false beliefs
And their state of emotional blackout
And an imbecilic murderous rage
Culminating in barbaric acts

(Maswabi 2020, p. 508)

After seeing the brutal treatment of other people, the speaker adopts a harsh tone in the preceding stanza to demonstrate how emotional he has gotten as a consequence of his experiences. It is indeed frightening to see people attack and murder others who look and act like them without any provocation or justification. However, even in the event that the perpetrators themselves are unable to describe their genuine motivation for the assaults, they are likely to feel uneasy and think that the existence of those people poses a danger to them. It is self-evident that their anxiety is the root cause of their emotions of uncertainty and fear. It is impossible for their psyches to tolerate persons who they regard to be outsiders to their world. The term "false belief" used by the poet alludes to the misconception that the culprits are superior to the victims of their atrocities.

Following this, the speaker goes on to describe the xenophobic attack as cruel, pointing out that they are acting as judges in their own case while maiming their victims. He refers to them as "bloodthirsty" individuals who are "hungry for blood." In this poem, he compares them to cannibals on the search for blood, and he paints a picture of how terrible they are by describing their actions. From a socio-economic standpoint, the attackers believe that the immigrants are from economically weaker nations. That is why they invaded the country, and that is why they attacked their victims in order to exterminate them. As a result, xenophobia flourishes in the context of class disparity. People with dark hearts, according to the poet, are responsible for their deeds, which are carried out in broad daylight with no regard for caution or control. We may observe how the poet expresses himself in the following lines:

There is no justice in the mob
But streets full of moronic judges
Overpowered by their evil hearts
Putting on their long robes of xenophobia
And their vicious appetite for blood
Justice is murdered on the streets

(Maswabi 2020, p. 508)

The speaker speaks in a plain and succinct way, while the adversaries are seen as being harsh and unfair. According to the opinions held by Churchill (1996), this incident has been characterised as symbolic of black people living in discriminating and unequal societies, such as those seen in South Africa. This kind of mob action is characterised by the fact that it entails the involvement of a significant number of individuals. From a social standpoint, the culprits have a sneering attitude toward their victims. It is for this reason that delegatory names such as "Makwerekwere" are used (Matsinhe, 2011).

In the third stanza, the poet goes on to condemn xenophobic assaults, referring to them as a group of killers and criminals who have the ulterior motive of stealing and sexually assaulting their victims as part of a larger conspiracy. As a result, he feels that such activities are illegal and have nothing to do with patriotism, contrary to what their proponents claim. The uneasiness and lack of trust that they have in their victims cause them to have feelings of envy and anger toward them when they think about it. Given the fact that they are driven by contempt and a lack of trust in their victims, it is easy to draw comparisons between such ideas and attitudes and those associated with a sense of superiority, given the fact that they think they are more powerful than their victims. Following that, he conveys his ideas in the following lines:

There is no justice in the mob
But a gang of killers and murderers
Bandits, rapists, and thieves
Masquerading as patriotic beings
Brandishing their diabolical hearts
And portraying their sadistic fantasies
In a public arena full of stupefied bystanders

(Maswabi 2020, p. 508)

A harsh denunciation of those who practise "mob justice" concludes the poem, and in doing so, the speaker characterised these individuals as cowards for taking advantage of the fact that they are in their own country to carry out these heinous acts. Their presence at home gives them the feeling that they have a competitive advantage over their victims, which is true in certain cases. Using the following words to explain why he considers them barbarians for coercing his fellow people into making sacrifices in order to send their victims away:

There is no justice in the mob
But a headless procession
Overcome by evil spirits
In a demonic match of the year
Pitting citizens against foreigners
With the obvious home ground advantage
Culminating in barbaric human sacrifices
The spilling of innocent blood inevitable
Betraying the so-called mob justice

(Maswabi 2020, p. 508)

Human depravity and humanity are explored in this poem, which serves as a constant reminder of man's inhumanity to man throughout the poem. Despite his best efforts, the speaker could not prevent his displeasure with their behaviour from spilling out. In order to justify their

treatment of their victims, the perpetrators believe they are socially superior to them; as a result, they treat them with contempt. Matsinhe (2009) underlines how the struggle for citizenship and means of survival and self-preservation, as well as anti-immigrant sentiments that promote intolerance and prejudice, have energized group interactions in postcolonial Africa, often with disastrous repercussions.

"Xenophobia in South Africa" is another poem from the *Collection of Poems by Kenneth Maswabi* (2020), in which Maswabi expresses his displeasure with xenophobic perpetrators in South African society via the medium of poetry. He bemoans the lack of affection that South Africans have for their fellow Africans, calling it savage and evil on their part. Aside from that, the poem is a scathing condemnation of the South African people for permitting such a terrible crime to continue unabated without exerting any effort to stop it. The poem is also a caustic criticism of the South African people for allowing such a horrendous crime to continue uninterrupted without making any attempt to put a stop to it, among other things. According to him, it is a breach of the spirit of brotherhood instilled by Nelson Mandela and his teachings of nonviolence.

The impact of postcolonialism in South Africa is so noticeable that Matsinhe (2009) calls it "extremely questionable," stating that "one's skin color and dress sense seem to serve as the foundation for appraising one's legal position inside South Africa." He goes on to describe how a student was recently detained when the authorities concluded, after just a cursory examination, that his physique was not light-skinned enough to be South African. He explains how they may proclaim someone "too dark" to be a South African just by looking at them, and asks why no one has ever been or will ever be deported from South Africa for being "too White."

Maswabi's poetry is filled with disgust and rage aimed against the South African people for their demonstration of hatred, and the poet expresses himself via it. Following that, Maswabi expresses his dissatisfaction once again in the following lines:

The black plague of xenophobia
Slithering across South Africa
Is an abomination to the African gods
Betraying the Spirit of Africa
As espoused by Nelson Mandela
And captured by the South African anthem

(Maswabi 2020, p. 1071)

According to the speaker, South Africans have betrayed their fellow Africans and the tradition of love entrusted to them by their forefathers, which has caused them great frustration. He used imagery to illustrate the brutality and cruelty that xenophobic victims have suffered, as well as his displeasure with the reality that nothing is being done to ameliorate their suffering. What becomes especially disturbing in the poem is people's inordinate willingness to just see the massacre of human beings while doing nothing to stop it from happening. The speaker presents to the reader a harrowing image of the deaths and brutality associated with the degeneration of humanity in the face of oppression inflicted on its victims by the xenophobic onslaught in South Africa, which the speaker describes as "horrific." He finds it disturbing that the act of tyranny has grown to be accepted by the majority of the population. As a consequence, he is outspoken in his condemnation of the people's callous behaviour. It is possible that the root reason for xenophobic violence is linked to the way in which the victims' homelands look down on them since they are from impoverished African nations. Therefore, xenophobic violence against European immigrants, for example, is not aimed at them since they are viewed as being of a higher status than they are.

Ironically, the spirit of Pan-Africanism has been extinguished. As a result, when they assault their fellow Africans, the homelands fail to uphold their responsibilities as brothers' keepers.

In the second stanza of the poem, the speaker offers a plea to his ancestors, pleading with them to restore peace to his beloved country, South Africa, which has been decimated by incessant conflict. In this stanza, the speaker seems helpless in the face of an onslaught of violence. In contrast to other people, he seems to be unable to fathom the motivations behind the deaths and suffering that people inflict on one another. Xenophobic violence cannot be divorced from the fact that African immigrants are looked down upon in South Africa, with other nationals being excluded from their ranks. Due to the negative impression that the perpetrators have of African immigrants, it is apparent that they are the targets of xenophobic attacks.

The third stanza continues to express the speaker's frustration with the people he believes to be Africans like himself and who, as a result, should be sympathetic of the situation of those who have been victimised. He likens the menace of xenophobia to a disease that infiltrates Africa's heart like a sharp knife, piercing the victim's heart and enabling blood to pour out. As a poet and presumably a victim of the dastardly act, he writes about the experiences and frustrations he encounters as a consequence of the humiliation fellow humans are forced to endure on account of nationalism. He is perplexed as to why only Africans are being targeted by the attack, when they are meant to be basking in the spirit of African brotherhood. He explains it in the following lines:

The black plague of xenophobia
Ploughing into the heart of Africa
With a sharp knife of hatred
Pouring innocent blood
Breaking the sacred accord of the gods
Betraying the Spirit of Nonviolence
As espoused by Mahatma Gandhi
And captured by the Truth and Reconciliation commission

(Maswabi 2020, p. 1071)

In stanza four, the speaker goes on to paint the situation as a dark plague of xenophobia that must be eradicated. The difficulties, he argues, are washing up on the African continent's beaches, destroying the fruits of the continent's labour, revealing the wounds of Apartheid, and breaking the hatred mentality. In doing so, the South African Football Association undermines the concept of sportsmanship, which has been championed by Africans on the quiet streets of South African cities and has been appreciated by them.

In the final stanza, the speaker urges South Africans to avoid violence, especially xenophobic violence, which he believes is not of African origin. He serves as a reminder to them of the difficulties their forefathers faced during the struggle to eliminate apartheid. His message also reminds people of the hope and promise that the "new South Africa" has, the rainbow nation envisioned by Nelson Mandela after the horrific apartheid government was brought to a close. He makes the following declaration:

South Africans!!
Xenophobia is un-African
A betrayal of the South African Heroes
Who found refuge in foreign lands
And were emboldened to come back home
And eradicate Apartheid forever
Ushering in the new South Africa
"The Rainbow nation"
"Rainbow" symbolizing peace

(Maswabi 2020, p. 1071)

The senseless attacks on innocent people, astounded by the poet, are an indication that he, too, does not understand the reasons why the South Africans carry out the attacks. According to him, the xenophobic attack is alien to them since none of their forefathers had done something similar to that. Xenophobics are undoubtedly concerned about their environment, and they do not want strangers to take over their country. There is no doubt they are anxious about the people around them, which may be caused by the colonial experience they had, since most of them have been nurturing this feeling for a long time, probably throughout their entire life. Because the perpetrators believe they are superior to their victims, they engage in this kind of behaviour out of a sense of contempt and lack of regard for the perceived inferior people.

Maswabi's "Humanity's Tears," another poem, condemns the brutal killings of xenophobic victims that have taken place in South Africa. He demonstrates unambiguously that violence is always aimed at the wrong people, as does the fact that it does not help to improve the situation. The speaker asserts clearly that South Africans, and especially those who engage in xenophobic violence, have lost their sense of humanity as a result of the impunity with which they attack their fellow humans. He emphasises how, as a result of their xenophobic attitude, they have no sympathy for individuals who are like them. This happens because they are anxious about what happened during the apartheid regime. They treat their victims with contempt and want to evict them from their country because they are under the impression that they are more economically advantageous than they are. Another startling aspect of their impunity is that other nationals who are believed to be superior to them do not fall prey to their actions. In a series of repetitions, he communicates his concern for the individuals who have been subjected to xenophobic attacks, as well as for the xenophobes themselves, the whole South African populace, and the entire continent of Africa. In the following lines, you can see how this is expressed:

I cry for you
When your anger is left to recklessly roam the streets
and your venom is used to slaughter the innocent
I cry for you
When you disembowel your fellow human beings
With your bare hands
I cry for you
When you ignite the fire of xenophobia
And watch it consume my people
I cry for you
When you embrace your evil schemes
And gather together to kill others

(Maswabi 2020, p. 262)

The deliberate repetition of the phrase "I cry for you" at the beginning of almost every sentence of the poem is intended to emphasise the message Maswabi is attempting to convey to his readers, as well as to demonstrate how emotional he is and how strongly he despises the xenophobic attacks currently taking place in South Africa. In trying to paint a mental picture in the minds of his readers of how terrible and callous xenophobes are in carrying out their attacks without showing mercy, even though they have so much in common with their victims, he tries to remind them that, first and foremost, they are all human beings and Africans. Unfortunately, the sense of superiority they have toward people who have moved to a supposedly better climate in order to find a means of survival has gotten the better of some of them. Because of this sensation, an unskilled labourer believes that a university professor or a medical practitioner has taken over his or her position. He also condemns people who witnessed the atrocities but did nothing to stop them:

I cry for every life lost
I cry for the children left behind
I cry even more
For those who are keeping quiet
As the fire of xenophobia burns
I cry for South Africa
I cry for Africa
I cry for planet earth
I cry for myself
I cry humanity's tears

(Maswabi 2020, p. 262)

It is the sorry state the victims of xenophobia found themselves in in South Africa as a result of the xenophobic attacks that Maswabi tries to bring to people's attention with the hope that it will create awareness and create sympathy for the victims. He hopes that raising awareness will make people understand that the African immigrants' presence in the country is no less human than them. Most of them are there because they believe South Africa has a better system than the ones obtainable in their countries. The deliberate attacks on defenseless people in the name of xenophobia without any provocation could better be viewed from a sociological perspective. It is worthy of note that the xenophobes themselves do not know the actual reason they carry out the attack; they just do not want to see strangers around them because they feel threatened by their presence. The postcolonial theory on which this study is based discusses the occurrence of anxieties, defences, and unreasonable fears the perpetrators have as a result of the bad experiences they had during the colonial and apartheid periods, in which they try to avoid the recurrence of the ugly experience.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Maswabi is seen as a pan-Africanist who preaches peace in his poetry; he confronts the socio-political instability that leads to social stratification, which in turn breeds xenophobia. As a result, he uses poetry to comment on the social imbalance in his community, highlighting the harmful effects of xenophobia as well as the painful circumstances to which they have been subjected. This article looked at the sociological influence of xenophobia. As a result, the postcolonial literary theory utilized in the study helps to understand why locals and immigrants are so hateful and distrustful of each other. As previously stated, the study based its argument on David Mário Matsinhe's postulation on the concept of citizenship. From a social standpoint, the current study also identifies the causes of xenophobia. As a result, the study indicates that xenophobia is caused by social stratification as well as political and economic reasons.

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