SUMMARY

Post colonialism is a vexed theoretical term, on which there is little agreement among its advocates on its meanings or referents. Employed in a wide range of cultural and literary disciplines, the term has become so diffuse and heterogeneous that it defies definition as to whether it refers primarily to texts and discursive practices, the construction of subjectivities and identities, or concrete historical processes. Now the question is how are the lives of the people after independence? Are they satisfied with being independent or have felt the nostalgic years of Whiteman rule? Did they get demands meet from the local leadership? If not, what is wrong? Who will take the blame factor for all the mess? For now the above-stated questions are very pressing ones for everyone who claims to be living in a free Africa. Africans must take time to recognize where they have failed, people were freed from the yoke of colonialism only to fall under other yokes: one-party states, military powers, dictatorial powers. There's nothing but a fancy-dress parade and the blare of the trumpets, a few reforms at the top, a flag waving, and down there at the bottom an undivided mass, still living in the Middle Ages, endlessly marking time.

The feminist movement that has emerged in post-colonial Africa is basically heterosexual, prenatal and concerned with women’s rights, political and economic issues. The African feminist approach differs structurally from the Western forms principally because African and much third world feminism owes its origins to different dynamics than those that generated Western feminism. African women’s resistance to Western hegemony and its foreign legacy within African culture have also shaped the post-colonial movement. The African variant of feminism has grown out of a history of female integration within largely masculine and agrarian-based societies with strong cultural heritages. The newly emerging African feminism has also been as a result of women’s responses to political leaders who
have attempted to limit political participation by women. This resistance has pushed women towards greater boldness in addressing the economic, legal and political elements that determine and affect gender and status in societies that have distinct cultural traditions and historical experiences.

The works of Bessie Head and Buchi Emecheta provide an exploration of the abuse and mistreatment of black African people and subjugation of women in pre-democratic societies. The racist policies written in this era of Southern African history, acquired a peculiar importance in shaping and informing international understanding of the racial politics and inequality in this era. Racial inequality caused the stereotyping and labeling of black African writers in numerous ways. It was extremely difficult for black African writers to voice their views and experiences of living in a society riddled with oppression, prejudice and unequal economic and educational opportunities. The works of Bessie Head and Buchi Emecheta provide an exploration of the abuse and mistreatment of black African people and subjugation of women in pre-democratic societies, as evident in the texts. Buchi Emecheta and Bessie Head’s works present incidents of life experiences in Southern Africa, from two contrasting view points. They both examine the tensions that exist between white colored and African people who were forced to subsist in racially oppressive systems. A careful reading and scrutiny of the novels of Buchi Emecheta and Bessie Head allows the reader to gain knowledge of, and experience the lives lived by these authors, and the significant impact their experiences have on their writings. Furthermore, one can actually observe the extent to which society affected writers and impacted on the creation of their texts

In the novels of Bessie Head and Buchi Emecheta, the narrative voice is able or willing to articulate the speaking subject's relationship to madness, and the influence of the slave narrative in shaping that relationship. In the wake of perennial loneliness, mental turmoil, adversity and suffering, Bessie Head and
Buchi Emecheta turn inwards, in order to demonstrate how the human soul is able to rise above the parochial boundaries of its individuality and fixed identity, and accept mankind. Their spirit is exiled from their physical body so they she is able to understand the workings of human society. Buchi Emecheta and Bessie Head proceeds from an acute awareness of her condition of multiple marginality and colonization occasioned by such social totalities as race, culture, patriarchy, class, God and religion. As they investigate and make an informed appraisal of these positions, they find them problematic and provisional. In fact, none of the notions they examined in the spiritual journey is a categorical imperative or a transcendental paradigm for defining and understanding identity.

Head's and Buchi’s protagonists have their inner being disturbed and shattered by different causes: difficulty of adaptation, racial and class prejudices, traumatic memories, repressed feelings and unconventional philosophical or religious beliefs. The aim of Head’s and Buchi’s protagonists is to lessen their inner alienation and find a satisfactory peace of mind. Head and Buchi explore the question of alienation and mental balance from several angles because their writings are somewhat fictionalized versions of their problems. A good mental balance brings the characters to a healthier and happier existence. Head’s and Buchi’s work represents a society that is in absolute quest for peace and harmony. She has done this by mustering people from diverse cultural backgrounds and making them work together, by eliminating from society those who promote prejudice and to compel her characters to turn down power if they have to acquire it by stepping on others.

It is imperative to emphasize that even though Head and Buchi has projected a society in which human relationship is good and people feel for each other, work with each other in a society in which sex, race and skin color are not used as the standard for human competence or judgment, all these remain a figment of the imagination. The history of the post-independent African state is that of
monumental democratic and developmental failures. At this juncture, it is important to clarify the concept of a democratic development state so that it can be applied to the African context.