

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN  
JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL HISTORY TEXTBOOKS IN  
MALAWI**

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## DECLARATION

I, Annie Fatsireni Chiponda (student number 208524964) hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and that it has not previously been submitted for a degree at any other institution of higher learning. Furthermore, all sources used in this study have been acknowledged accordingly by means of complete references. As evidence of originality, refer to Appendix L which is the Turnitin anti-plagiarism certificate for this work.

Signature:

Date: 20 December 2013

As the student's supervisor, I, Johan Wassermann, hereby approve the submission of the thesis for examination.

Signature:

Date: 20 December 2013

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my late mother, Linley Machewere, for her inspiration and determination despite her poverty and amidst the discouraging remarks from the society in which we lived for investing in a girl's education. I always remember and appreciate how you laboured for my education. May your soul rest in peace.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi. It seeks to explore how women are portrayed and establishes reasons for the portrayal of women in particular ways in these textbooks. The visual and verbal text of three history textbooks used at junior secondary level in Malawi was analysed.

The study is guided by the critical paradigm and the qualitative feminist approach to research using documentary or secondary data studies design. It uses feminist theory to analyse and understand the portrayal of women in the textbooks studied. Specifically the study uses a bricolage of six feminist theories namely liberal, radical, Marxist, socialist, black and African feminisms. Three methods of textual analysis were used to analyse the textbooks and these are content analysis, visual semiotic analysis, and open coding.

It was concluded in this study that women are oppressed in their portrayal in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi and that their oppression manifested through marginalisation, stereotyping, silencing and limited representation as exceptional historical characters. Furthermore, it was found that Malawian women were under-represented despite the fact that the textbooks were produced in their own country. Malawian women comprised a negligible population of the women contained in the textbooks studied which portrays them as being non-existent in history. This finding is not supported by literature and therefore I would argue that it adds a new dimension to the existing literature on the portrayal of women in history textbooks.

Among other factors such as race, Capitalism and the African culture, it was concluded that patriarchal beliefs were the major reason for the oppression of women in these textbooks. Therefore, unless patriarchy is uprooted in the minds of people, the oppression of women in society in all its manifestations, which permeates history textbooks, will largely remain the same as evidenced by the corroboration of findings between this study and previous studies conducted in history textbooks.

This study makes a significant contribution to history textbook research and feminist research in textbooks. It carries on the tradition of researching women in textbooks which was started by Catherine de Pisan in the first century AD. Unlike previous studies which only revealed under-representation of women, this study documents the frequency in which the few women mentioned in the text were referred. My study therefore enhances the debate on the under-representation of women both in history textbooks and textbooks of other subjects by highlighting less frequent mentioning of women as a form of marginalisation.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFROL	African News Agency
AU	African Union
CLAIM	Christian Literature Association in Malawi
GAC	Gender Appropriate Curriculum
JCE	Junior Certificate of Education
MCP	Malawi Congress Party
MIE	Malawi Institute of Education
MSCE	Malawi School Certificate of Education
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
NAC	Nyasaland African Congress
NGP	National Gender Policy
NSO	National Statistical Office
PASOK	Panhellenic Socialist Movement (in Greek Panellinio Sosialistiko Kinima)
PIF	Policy and Investment Framework
PSLC	Primary School Leaving Certificate
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCING AND CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY

### 1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I provide an overview of my study in which I analysed the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. I first explain the background and context of the study in which I highlight some contextual information about Malawi and describe my position as a researcher which is inter-twined with my biography, rationale and motivation of the study. I also explain the process of textbook production and inclusion of women in textbooks in my country. The background as explained is necessary in order to provide the context in which the study was conducted. Furthermore, I highlight the statement of the research problem, purpose and focus, the research questions that guided the study, the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study and the important concepts used. Lastly, I briefly outline the research design and methodology of my study as well as the organisation of the thesis.

### 1.2 Background and context of the study

Malawi is a land-locked country located in Sub-Saharan Africa, south of the equator, in the south-eastern region of the continent. It is bordered by Tanzania to the north and northeast, Mozambique to the east, south and southwest and Zambia to the west and northwest. It is a small country, 901 kilometres in length with a width ranging from 80 to 161 kilometres. The country has a total area of 118,484 square kilometres which comprises both the land area and Lake Malawi, the third largest lake in Africa. Lake Malawi is 475 kilometres long and runs along the eastern border with Mozambique (Information Please Database, 2008; National Statistical Office (NSO) of Malawi & ORC Macro, 2005).

Malawi is one of the most densely populated countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and, according to the Population and Housing Census of 2008, the country has a population of 13.6 million. Women make up 51% of the population, a larger

percentage than men (National Statistical Office (NSO) of Malawi, 2009a). The majority of the inhabitants live in rural areas where they depend on subsistence farming (African News Agency (AFROL), 2008; National Statistical Office (NSO) of Malawi, 2009b). The farming practiced is based on rain-fed agriculture with tobacco as its main cash crop. Most of the people who live in rural areas are women and they live under very poor conditions. For example, 52.4% of Malawians are categorised as living below the poverty line and 25% are described as very poor (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2007). Women constitute a large percentage of the poor as they are the ones who are based in rural areas and depend on subsistence farming for survival (African News Agency (AFROL), 2008). Economically, Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world.

The country was formerly known as Nyasaland during the period of British colonial rule between 1891 and 1964. Its name was changed from Nyasaland to Malawi when it became independent in July 1964. For a period of 30 years since its independence Malawi was under a one-party dictatorship. This was only replaced by a multiparty democracy in 1994. The textbooks that I studied were produced under the multiparty democracy. The production of the textbooks was instigated in response to the curriculum that was produced during the same period. As a democratic country Malawi has a liberal constitution which recognises many human rights including women's rights. The constitution also emphasises gender equality, women's empowerment and non-discrimination based on gender.

The current education system in Malawi has its roots in the pre-colonial period when missionaries introduced schools to the country. Formal education in Malawi was introduced by Scottish Missionaries in 1875 when they opened the first school at Cape Maclear in the Mangochi district (Lamba, 1982). Thereafter, other missionaries began arriving with the purpose of opening mission stations and schools. From its initial inception period through to the 1930s, only primary school education was offered. Secondary school education began in 1940 with the establishment of the Blantyre Secondary School which was followed by the opening of the Zomba Catholic Secondary School in 1942 (Banda, 1982). When Malawi became independent, the government took full control of education and set up a new structure upon which the current system is based.

The education system in Malawi is structured on three levels namely, primary, secondary and tertiary (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2007). The primary level runs for eight years from standards one to eight. At the end of the eight years, pupils sit for a national examination, the Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC) examination (Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, 2000a). Success in this examination qualifies learners to pursue secondary education which lasts four years. The secondary school education level is divided into two, the junior level comprising forms one and two, and the senior covering forms three and four (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2007). After the first two years of secondary education, pupils write a national examination known as the Junior Certificate of Education (JCE) examination. Similarly, after completing forms three and four, students sit for the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) examination which, if successful, qualifies learners to go onto university and other tertiary education institutions.

The school curriculum that is offered in Malawi was developed by the Ministry of Education through its curriculum development centre, the Malawi Institute of Education (MIE). The secondary school curriculum offers a wide range of subjects including history. History is included because the Malawian government realises the importance of the subject to its citizens. Among other reasons, the subject is deemed important in the development of patriotism, moral values, tolerance and intellectual skills which are viewed as essential for grooming responsible future citizens of the nation (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001; Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, 1998b). It is the textbooks that are used to teach these ideas at junior secondary school level that I felt compelled to study.

The history curriculum is composed of two syllabi, the junior secondary and the senior. The current history curriculum was developed between 1997 and 2001. The junior secondary school history syllabus was published by the Ministry of Education in December 1998 and introduced in the schools in January 1999. Subsequently, the senior syllabus, was published in February 2001 and implementation began in the same year (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2001; Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, 1998a). In this research I studied the history

textbooks that were produced to implement the junior secondary school history syllabus.

### **1.3 My position and biographical information as a researcher**

The researcher's position in a study is very important as it influences the way she looks at the phenomenon under investigation. It also assists the reader of the research "to better understand how the individual researcher might have arrived at a particular interpretation of the data" (Merriam, 2009, p. 217). Patton (2002) and Merriam (2009) describe the researcher's position as the process whereby the researcher critically reflects and examines herself concerning her own biases, values, dispositions and assumptions on the phenomenon being studied. Therefore, researchers are required to declare or explain upfront their dispositions, biases and assumptions concerning the inquiry to be undertaken (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002).

I have an interest in issues affecting women, and therefore, as a woman researching women, I cannot claim to be neutral or disinterested in the phenomenon being researched. I have my own assumptions which I carry into the research that were shaped by the context as outlined above and that are likely to influence my interpretation and discussion of the findings. Furthermore, in this research I am influenced by feminist theory which views society as being replete with social injustices which oppress women. Feminists aim at abolishing the injustices and emancipate women from their oppression. In feminist research it is not possible for the researcher to be neutral because she is part of what is being researched (Abbott, Wallace, & Tyler, 2005; Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007). As a researcher, therefore I cannot be regarded as neutral. Generally, feminist researchers abhor the principle of neutrality in research because their work is political in nature and aims at bringing about social change (Abbott et al., 2005; Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007). Therefore, in this research, I do not claim to be neutral because I am an interested party in what I am studying.

In addition to declaring my predispositions and biases, I feel it is equally essential that I highlight my background as this also has a major influence on my position and consequently the study. My name is Annie Fatsireni Chiponda (née Bulala) and I am a Malawian by nationality. I belong to the 'Yao' ethnic group which is the most

dominant group of people in the southern region of Malawi. I was born on the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 1967 in Mangochi, a district in the south-eastern region of Malawi and grew up in a rural village known as Michesi. I was raised by my mother as my parents divorced when I and my four siblings were very young. In Malawi, there are two types of marriage traditions namely patrilineal and matrilineal (Segal, 2008). Since my parents belonged to an ethnic group which follows the matrilineal tradition of marriage, we had to stay with our mother after the divorce. The difference between the two is that in the patrilineal tradition children belong to the father while in matrilineal culture children belong to their mother. Growing up with my mother helped me to appreciate the capability of women and I began to passionately challenge negative stereotypes held about females in Malawian society.

For our livelihood, my mother depended on subsistence farming and a small scale business of buying and selling fish from Lake Malawi which enabled her to feed our family and pay school fees for our education. According to Hirschmann (1984) most women in Malawi who lived in rural areas at that time survived on subsistence farming and petty businesses to earn their income. However, in my home village, it was uncommon for women to indulge in business as this activity was associated with men. As a single parent, my mother had no choice but to combine subsistence farming with business to sustain her family. I therefore grew up in a poor family typical of rural life and female headed households in Malawi. Generally a large percentage of women in rural areas lived under poor economic conditions because of their over-reliance on subsistence farming and the condition for female headed households was worse (Hirschmann, 1984). Despite this, my mother managed to send us all to school which involved buying school uniforms and stationery and by the standards of village life, we were not considered as very poor because of my mothers' hard work and involvement in business. I found my mother's self-reliance contradictory to the prevailing cultural belief held by most people in my village, and in Malawi as a whole, that women are dependent on men for their survival as she raised five children and also took care of her own mother. Her hardworking spirit inspired me to work hard at school for I realised from a young age that women are capable despite negative stereotypes about females that prevailed in my society then and which still continue today.

I was born three years after Malawi attained its independence under Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda who ruled Malawi from 1964 to mid 1994. This implies that I grew up and pursued my education from primary to university level during the period of Dr. Banda's presidency. I consider Banda's regime as the time when the situation or condition of women in Malawi was dire compared to the present democratic period. Women were marginalised socially, economically and politically although Banda claimed to be the "Nkhoswe Number One" of all women whom he called his *mbumba*. The concepts *nkhoswe* and *mbumba* are derived from the matrilineal tradition to which Banda belonged and they refer to members of the same localised kin-group from the mother's side (Segal, 2008). In a matrilineal society, all males or men are regarded as 'nkhoswe' literally meaning patron or guardian of the female members from their mother's side. The women in this relationship are known as *mbumba* or the "sorority" (Semu, 2002, p. 89). Therefore as a Chewa belonging to the matrilineal society, Banda equated his relationship with the women as that of *nkhoswe* and *mbumba*. Due to his repeated reference to women as his *mbumba* in political rallies and functions, women became popularly known as *mbumba za* (of) *Kamuzu*. Despite being *Nkhoswe* Number One of his *mbumba*, Banda did very little to uplift the status of women.

According to Hirschmann's (1984) study, no policies were put in place under Banda to advance the status of women. For instance, economically, there were few opportunities for credit facilities or loans for women unless she was married and her husband consented to bear witness by signing the documents. Due to this discriminatory nature of the credit system, single women, like my mother, could not access loans and consequently, my mother struggled alone in her petty business. I remember her complaining one day that despite her poverty she could not get a loan because she had no husband and took that opportunity to advise me and my sisters to maintain our marriages in future and work hard at school so that we should not fall victim of circumstances. Politically, there were only a few women in the National Assembly as not many were elected due to lack of or little education and cultural beliefs. Although Banda had the prerogative to nominate Members of Parliament, only a few women were nominated which was purely for his political gain (Semu, 2002). Consequently women lacked the political platform to fight for their rights. In terms of education, little was done to encourage parents to send their daughters to



school as they preferred to educate boys. Throughout his presidency, there was only one government secondary school for girls, Lilongwe Girls' Secondary School. In co-education secondary schools the in-take for girls was one third that of boys (Chiponda, 2009). It was therefore difficult for girls to complete their education which was also frustrated by cultural beliefs.

Although I became educated, it was not easy then for a girl to complete her education in Malawi and particularly in my home village, not only because of lack of political will, but also due to cultural beliefs, the prevalence of teenage pregnancies and early marriages. In my village not many families of the original inhabitants of the area sent their daughters to school. The belief in the village was that girls do not need to become educated because they would get married and be supported by their husbands. Another belief was that it was a waste of money to send girls to school because even if they were educated, they would not be able to help their parents because they would be under the control of their husbands. People also believed that girls could not complete an education because they would be impregnated and drop out of school and marry. It was common belief that educated women cannot get married and also cannot bear children. I remember my mother being ridiculed in our presence for sending her daughters to school. I did not like such mockery because I believed it was possible for girls to complete an education because some of my teachers were women which was proof that they finished their education and gained employment. Consequently I decided that as long as my mother continued to pay for my education, I would work hard and prove society wrong. To meet my goal, I always studied my notes during the day whenever I returned from school for it was not possible to study at night using a paraffin lamp.

Despite the discouraging remarks from society, my mother did not relinquish sending us to school because she herself managed to finish primary school and for some years worked as a primary school teacher and therefore knew the importance of education. This was unlike most people in our village, particularly women, who were illiterate and did not comprehend the value of education. It was possible for my mother to attain some education because she grew up in another district where her parents lived prior to the death of her father. Other girls who attended school in our area with me were those children of immigrants who came to work in the fisheries'

company that was based in our village. Some of these girls managed to be selected to go to secondary school which motivated me to believe that if I worked hard, I too could achieve it. However, none of the 'local' girls who were born and bred in my village, including my two sisters, finished primary school education due to early marriages and pregnancies which simply fulfilled societal prophecies or stereotypes about girls in relation to education.

My admiration for those few immigrant girls who were selected for secondary school, and my determination to prove society wrong in its belief concerning girls' failure to complete education, motivated me to work hard at school. I was also encouraged by my mother to be diligent in order to anticipate a more prosperous future. My concern regarding the shame that my mother suffered due to the dropout from school of my two sisters, further fuelled this determination. Consequently, I was selected to attend secondary school in 1982 and completed my secondary education in 1986 before I proceeded to university in the same year where I completed my five year Bachelor of Education degree programme in 1991. I succeeded in completing my education because I distanced myself from the male sex who tried their best to deliberately derail me and frustrate the efforts of my mother. I remember a certain man from our village came to visit me at the boarding secondary school where I was attending pretending to be my brother but he was not allowed to see me because of the strict rules of the school. I was angry with him and wrote a letter to my mother explaining the story. She confronted the man and told him never to repeat that behaviour which was common in my village among men and boys.

When I completed my university education, I began working as a secondary school teacher and later married and bore three children. As soon as I began working, I assumed the responsibility of assisting my mother and my siblings and most importantly, I built a decent house for my mother. Unfortunately she died before she could reap the fruits of her hard work through my education. I finally achieved my goal which calls to question some of the negative stereotypes prevalent in society about girls and education. I have been happily married for 19 years, but unfortunately my husband died three years ago during the course of my PhD programme. I like to believe that my success in education and my achievements in life have to some extent managed to change the attitude of some people in my

village towards girls' education and women. Following my example, there are some girls in my home village who recently successfully completed secondary education and are working in different capacities such as primary school teachers, police officers and nurses. The policy of free primary education which was introduced by the new democratic government in 1994 also played a role because it removed the burden of paying school fees which disadvantaged girls under the Banda government as parents preferred to pay school fees for boys rather than girls.

Furthermore, since my own introduction to the workplace, I have developed an interest in helping women to improve their status. I remember when the new democratic government came to power and repealed the policy of expelling girls from school who became pregnant; I took the initiative of encouraging these women and girls who dropped out of school to return to school. I also encouraged women who were working but with low qualifications to enrol for distance education to upgrade themselves. For those women who were not educated at all, I encouraged them to start small scale businesses and I always used the example of how business helped my mother to earn an income and pay fees for her children. My aim was to help the women to be self-reliant either through securing employment or managing small scale businesses. From my and my mother's experiences, I have come to believe that women are capable but what they lack is exposure and encouragement. For instance some of the women and girls that I encouraged to return to school are now working and are self-dependent and those I encouraged to start small businesses are also earning an income.

Besides my family and background, my academic experience in the learning of history from primary to university education also shaped the researcher in me and to a great extent influenced my choice of the phenomenon under study (i.e. the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks). Beginning with primary school history, where I learnt very little about women as most of the content was about the achievements of men, I became interested in those issues regarding women. However, the little I learnt about women was mostly negative and whenever the teachers, who were mostly male taught us, they used to emphasise those negative aspects and the boys in class including the teacher would laugh at us girls. I recall the topic on Ancient Rome which I learnt when I was in grade 8. A woman,

Agrippina, was mentioned as the wife of Emperor Claudius who organised the assassination of her husband in order to have her son from her first husband, Nero, become the next emperor. The day we learnt about Agrippina and her murder plot, all the girls in class were nicknamed Agrippinas, we were labelled bad people and boys uttered bad comments to us. The achievements of emperors Claudius and Nero were emphasised, but their persecution of Christians was ignored. Similarly, when we learnt about the history of Islam, particularly the marriage of Khadija to Muhammad, the emphasis was on a 40 year old woman marrying a young man of 25, and girls were mocked in class for this. This was despite the fact that the majority of the boys in the class were Muslims who respected Muhammad as their prophet. In my culture, a woman is supposed to be younger than a man when she marries and if the opposite happens which is very rare, the couple, especially the woman, become a laughing stock in society. Such an experience made me bitter and spurred me on to read more to find women who contributed positively in society but this proved to be an unsuccessful task. When I tried to argue with the boys that women made a positive contribution to history, they challenged me to produce evidence which I was not able to do. Nevertheless, this experience encouraged my quest to discover influential women in history and finally I decided to major in history at university with the same aim in mind.

In secondary school, the mockery ended because I was in a girls' only school. However, the theme of women viewed in a negative light in history still continued in the subject. Fortunately the teachers who taught history in our school were all female teachers. I vividly remember the story of the Tsarina, Alexandra Feodorovna, wife of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia who was also described as a bad woman and was accused of influencing her husband to ill-treat his people. Stories of this nature, which in hindsight were almost always about women that were not African or Malawian, disturbed me and led to my determination to understand why women were frequently depicted in this way.

Another issue that puzzled me was that almost all the women I encountered in my history courses in primary and secondary school were portrayed as either wives or mothers. For example, Agrippina, wife of Emperor Claudius; Khadija, wife of Muhammad; the Tsarina, Alexandra Feodorovna wife of Tsar Nicholas II; Mary,

Mother of Jesus and so forth. I started to consider whether marriage and motherhood were the only contributions of women in history until one day I asked the teacher but she failed to give me a convincing answer. So this realisation also encouraged my research to discover if there was any evidence of women achievers.

My unanswered questions urged me to pursue history at university and I developed an interest in it with a passion towards issues of women. When I studied towards my Master's Degree in Education at Virginia Tech in the United States of America (USA), I found myself enrolled at a course outside the College of Education in the history of women. The course was entitled 'African-American Women in the USA since the colonial period'. I also embarked on another course on women in history with the University of Malawi and the title was 'Feminist Theory and African History'. From these courses I discovered that women have not necessarily been negative influences in history and that they have contributed immensely to society beyond being mere wives and mothers. However, the producers of historical knowledge, who were then mostly men, chose to highlight the achievements of women in a particular way and ignored their important contributions. This is because, as Kamlongera (2008, p. 471) citing Rai (2000) argues, "feminist frameworks warn us that men do not always have women's interests at heart." These courses further increased my interest in issues of women in history. My biography as outlined in this section as well as the context of Malawi shaped my position as a researcher. I began to identify myself with issues of women in society and history textbooks which unknowingly laid a foundation in me to take a feminist stance towards life and in my research endeavours.

#### **1.4 Rationale and motivation**

In light of the above the rationale and motivation of my study was born. Due to my long interaction with history textbooks from primary school to university in my quest to better understand women in history, and later, through using textbooks in my lessons when I became a teacher, I decided to study the women through textbook analysis. My study is a continuation of the habit I developed from primary school, namely reading history textbooks to find answers to questions on issues of women. I therefore decided to attempt to understand how women are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi and to establish explanations for

their particular portrayal. Such an inquiry would also address my unanswered questions about the issues of women in Malawi because textbooks mirror the society they serve (Apple, 1991).

Furthermore, during the time I attended school, the political situation was not favourable to women as there were no policies to advance the status of women including their representation in textbooks. However, since Malawi became a democracy in 1994, a range of policies have been adopted to ensure the inclusion of women in educational materials including textbooks. This motivated me to examine history textbooks produced during the democratic era in Malawi in order to find out how women are portrayed in such textbooks. In the following section therefore, I explain the process of textbook production in Malawi and the policies adopted in an attempt to include women in the textbooks.

### **1.5 Textbook production and women and textbooks in Malawi**

Textbooks production in Malawi is controlled by the government through the Ministry of Education. The latter controls the content, production, quality and availability of textbooks in schools. In terms of the production of textbooks, the Ministry of Education is responsible for publishing primary school textbooks by utilising its own employees in collaboration with the MIE (Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, 2000a). However, the responsibility for publishing secondary school textbooks is left in the hands of private sector publishers who are guided by the curriculum provided by the government. There are a number of private publishers active in Malawi and the most prominent ones are: Maneno; Jhango-Heinemann; Dzuka; Christian Literature Association in Malawi (CLAIM); Moni, MacMillan; Chancellor College and Longman (Dzimadzi & Kunje, 2002). These publishers commission individuals or teams of writers (preferably local) to write the books and the commissioning publishers concerned simply edit the drafts or manuscripts (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2006). The history textbooks I used in this study were published by Longman Malawi and CLAIM.

With regard to authorship of the textbooks, government policy stipulates that any commercial publisher that develops manuscripts and provides publishing services is the author of the secondary school textbook (Ministry of Education Science and

Technology, 2006). However, other publishers include names of individual writers as authors. This explains why two of the books I used in this study have Longman as both publisher and author while one indicated the name of the individual writer as author alongside the publisher. When the books have been produced by the publishers, they go through an evaluation procedure conducted by the Ministry of Education before they are approved for use in the schools. The textbooks that I analysed in this study were all approved by the Ministry of Education. The approved textbooks are announced to the schools and made available in various bookshops. Unlike in primary school where the policy allows one core textbook option for each subject (as the textbooks are produced by one author, the MoEST), secondary schools are provided with several options of approved textbooks from different publishers from which to choose (Ministry of Education Science and Technology, 2006). This means that several textbook titles for each subject can be approved for use in secondary schools and individual schools have the liberty to purchase and use any title from the list of approved texts. By the time I started my PhD programme, there were three history textbooks for the junior level that had been approved for use in the schools.

Since the early 1990s, the Malawian government has, through the influence of international bodies, shown interest and commitment to ensuring what was called gender sensitivity in school curricula and textbooks. The aim was to include women as they are a social group in contrast to men that has been missing or not reflected in the curricula materials. Government commitment included signing international agreements, developing policies and installing programmes to ensure gender sensitivity in school curricula and textbooks. It is through such initiatives that women are supposed to be included in textbooks alongside men to render the materials gender sensitive.

The call to include women in the curricula and textbooks began prior to the 1990s with the influence of the United Nations (UN) World Conferences on Women particularly the third women's conference held in 1985 in Nairobi, Kenya. The Action Plan of this conference, known as the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, made recommendations that were aimed to improve the status of women in many areas of development including the field of education. One

of the strategies in the Action Plan concerning education which pertains to this study recommended the examination and review of school curricula, textbooks and other educational materials in public and private schools in order to eliminate all discriminatory gender stereotyping in education (Chiponda, 2009). Furthermore, educational institutions were urged to expand their curricula to include studies on women's contributions in society to all aspects of development. Therefore as a member of the UN, Malawi showed its commitment to the recommendations by signing the Action Plan.

Engagement with these recommendations in Malawi began in the early 1990s when the government began to initiate programmes and policies to ensure gender sensitivity in the school curriculum and textbooks and other instructional materials. In 1992 the Malawian government, through the Ministry of Education, established a Gender Appropriate Curriculum (GAC) unit at the MIE. The unit was established to ensure the integration of gender sensitivity in the primary and secondary school curriculum and textbooks as well as other instructional materials (Maluwa-Banda, 2003). The unit was mandated to ensure that the content in the textbooks contained words, statements, examples and illustrations that were neutral and included more positive female and male images. Furthermore, the unit was required to provide training to curriculum developers, school textbook writers, publishers and editors to make their work gender sensitive (Maluwa-Banda, 2003). The three textbooks I studied were produced eight years after the GAC had been established at the MIE in the years 2000 and 2001. This means the writers of the textbooks, as well as the publishers and editors, were supposed to have undergone training in writing gender sensitive textbooks which the GAC was mandated to be offering to producers of curricula materials. Considering government's mandate to the GAC, textbooks produced after the establishment of the unit are supposed to include or portray women in a gender sensitive manner.

Furthermore, at policy level, the Government of Malawi showed its commitment to gender sensitivity by including clauses on the issue in some of its policy documents such as the Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) on education and the National Gender Policy (NGP). The PIF is the country's policy document on education which emphasises reviewing school curricula in order to make them more gender sensitive



(Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, 2000b). With the PIF's emphasis on gender sensitive curricula, the textbooks produced to implement such a curriculum are supposed to feature women. The NGP "whose overall goal ... is to mainstream gender in the national development process to enhance the participation of men and women ... for sustainable and equitable development" includes the development and use of gender responsive curriculum and educational materials as one of its objectives and strategies (Ministry of Gender Child Welfare and Community Services, 2000, p. 5). The objective and the strategy reads: "to promote the use of gender responsive curriculum and educational materials at all levels" and "encourage the continued mainstreaming of gender in all curricula" (Ministry of Gender Child Welfare and Community Services, 2000, p. 8). This objective and strategy of the NGP if implemented would entail inclusion or portrayal of women in the curriculum and school textbooks. This therefore shows that the Malawian Government has attempted to adopt policies that would ensure inclusion of women in textbooks if implemented. Malawi also continues to show its commitment to ensuring gender sensitivity in textbooks by signing international commitments at a continental level. As a member of the African Union (AU) Malawi ratified the Second Decade of Education for Africa 2006-2015 Plan of Action drawn up by African countries for the development of education in their countries. Section 25 of this plan, among other gender equality measures proposed, emphasised ensuring gender sensitivity in teaching and learning materials which include textbooks (The African Union, 2000). The Government's adoption of this measure would, if implemented, result in the inclusion of women in school textbooks.

From this background, it is noted that government has tried to show its obligation to ensuring gender sensitivity in the curriculum by adopting policies, signing international commitments and establishing the GAC unit at MIE. If implemented, it is through such initiatives that women should be included in the curriculum and school textbooks. Since the textbooks are evaluated by the Ministry of Education for gender sensitivity before they are approved for use in schools, it could be argued that the approved textbooks are likely to include women in an equitable manner. Therefore, the fact that the history textbooks used in this study were approved by government as gender sensitive materials would imply a sensitive inclusion of women in the text.

It is the women included in these textbooks that I am interested in studying to find out how they are portrayed.

### **1.6 Statement of the research problem**

As previously noted, the Government of Malawi has since the 1990s adopted policies, signed International commitments and established the GAC unit in an attempt to ensure gender sensitivity in school curricula and textbooks. These initiatives would presuppose the sensitive inclusion of women alongside men in the textbooks. Furthermore, the fact that the Government approves the textbooks upon satisfying set criteria which among other aspects include gender sensitivity suggests the possibility of the inclusion of women in the textbooks. Consequently, as approved textbooks, the history textbooks used in this study would be expected to contain women portrayed in a sensitive manner. However, in my experience, no study has been conducted in Malawi to investigate the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks. This study therefore aims at investigating how women are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi and attempts to establish an explanation for their particular portrayal.

### **1.7 Purpose and focus**

The purpose of my the study is therefore to explore the way in which women are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi and establish reasons for their particular portrayal. More specifically the focus of this study is to determine how women are portrayed in the verbal text (written content) and the visual images and suggest reasons why women as historical characters are portrayed the way they are. What must be emphasised at the outset is that the purpose and focus of my study is on women and not a gender analysis whereby women are studied in relation to men.

### **1.8 Research questions**

My study was guided by the following key research questions:

- How are women portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi?

- Why are women portrayed in the way they are in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi?

In addition to the key research questions, the following sub-questions were used to provide specific direction to the inquiry:

- How are women portrayed in the visual images in junior secondary history textbooks used in Malawi?
- How are women portrayed in the verbal text (written content) in junior secondary history textbooks used in Malawi?
- Why are women portrayed in a particular manner or way in the visual images and verbal text in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi?

### **1.9 Theoretical and conceptual framework**

In order to better understand how women are portrayed in the junior secondary school history textbooks under study and establish reasons for their particular portrayal, feminist theory was used as a theoretical lens. Feminism is a theory which purports that women in society are oppressed and aims at bringing social justice to women by emancipating them from injustices (Mannathoko, 1992; Nfah-Abbenyi, 2005; Ryan, 2001; Weedon, 1987; Weiner, 1994). As there are many types of feminisms, I utilised ideas of liberal, radical, Marxist, socialist, black and African feminist theories to create a bricolage-like theoretical and conceptual framework for analysing, interpreting and discussing the findings. These theories are explained in detail in chapter three.

A number of concepts have been used in this study which may have different meanings in different contexts. Such concepts include patriarchy, gender, gender sensitivity, stereotyping and so forth. Though these concepts have been explained where they appear in the text, Creswell (2009) argues for the inclusion, early on in a thesis, in a section on clarification of terms as this provides the researcher and readers with an opportunity to be specific about the terms used in the study. It is for this reason that I explain the meanings of some of the important concepts used in my study.

The following explanations are essential in order to understand the key concepts used in the study:

Patriarchy – male domination or power over women which manifests itself in many aspects of life, for example, the belief that men are superior and leaders while women are inferior and followers (Bryson, 1999; Lerner, 1993).

Feminism – is both a theory and political movement which argues that women are oppressed and advocates for change and social justice for women (Mannathoko, 1992; Weedon, 1987).

Oppression – refers to deep and enormous injustices that some groups of people (e.g. women) suffer due to assumptions and attitudes that others hold against them (Young, 2000)

Sex - is a biological difference between women and men that is fixed and mostly unchangeable across cultures (Mannathoko, 1992; Mkuchu, 2004).

Gender – is different from sex and it refers to socially and culturally constructed characteristics, behaviours, roles, duties and responsibilities that are ascribed to women and men and the relationship between them. Therefore as a relational concept, gender includes both men and women (Mannathoko, 1992; Mkuchu, 2004).

Stereotyping – is the tendency of assigning specific roles, behaviours, traits or characteristics to a specific group of people (e.g. women) with the assumption that the attributes apply to all people in that group (Blumenfeld & Raymond, 2000; Mkuchu, 2004).

Gender sensitivity – is taking into consideration the interests and needs of both women and men (Maluwa-Banda, 2003)

### **1.10 Research design and methodology**

In order to answer the research questions, the study was planned and conducted systematically following a clearly defined process. The process of the study involved making choices on the research paradigm, research approach and design, and sample as well as data collection and analysis methods. I briefly describe these aspects of my research design and methodology below in order to show the route I followed to arrive at the answers to my research questions.

### **1.10.1 Research paradigm**

This study was guided by the critical paradigm because its beliefs about reality, the nature of knowledge and how the researcher discovers what she wants to know were found useful and necessary in providing direction for the conducting of my research. Researchers in the critical paradigm believe that reality is socially constructed by political, economic and cultural forces in society and that knowledge is always subjective in nature (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Furthermore, advocates of the critical paradigm view the world as being unequal in terms of power relations with some people holding more power than others either because of their race, sex or class which leads to the oppression of the less powerful. The critical paradigm therefore aims at subverting power relations and bringing social justice to the oppressed (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2009; University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010). These beliefs guided me in the choice of my research approach, methods of data analysis and theoretical framework for my study. For instance, the belief that reality is socially constructed and that knowledge is subjective guided me to choose the qualitative research approach and methods of data analysis that would unpack versions of reality about women that were hidden in the textbooks due to their subjective nature as a body of knowledge. This paradigm also guided me to choose feminist theory to underpin the study. In the critical paradigm women are recognised as one of the social groups that is oppressed in society and consequently, it is by means of feminist theory that the oppression of women in society can be explained and change in their social conditions can take place. I explain more about the critical paradigm and its impact or influence on my study in chapter 4 section 4.2.

### **1.10.2 Research approach and design**

I used a qualitative approach to research in order to understand how women are portrayed in the textbooks studied. This is because among other reasons, qualitative research allows for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Henning, van Rensburg, & Smit, 2009). However, because the study is underpinned by feminist theory, I blended the qualitative approach with some principles of feminist research methodology. I therefore describe the approach to research used in my study as qualitative feminist research. The qualitative feminist research approach provided not

only a deeper understanding of how women are portrayed in the textbooks but also offered insights that could influence change in the portrayal of women in future history textbooks in Malawi. I elaborate on this approach in chapter 4 section 4.3.

However, as there are many types of qualitative research designs, I specifically used the documentary or secondary data analysis design in this study. This type of qualitative research uses already existing data, such as census data or documents and textbooks, that were previously produced by someone else (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Hence it is suitable for my study as I analysed textbooks that were already produced by the publishers. Since each of the qualitative designs has their own procedures for conducting research (Fouche, 2009), the use of documentary analysis design provided me with appropriate methods for analysing the textbooks that helped to answer the research questions and understand the phenomenon under study. I explain the documentary analysis design in detail in chapter 4, section 4.3.1.

### **1.10.3 Research sample**

A sample is a small portion of the target population that a researcher selects to study (Christensen, Johnson & Turner, 2011; Cohen, et al 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2007b; Sarantakos, 2005). This study employed a sample of three history textbooks that are used at junior secondary school level in Malawi. These textbooks are:

- Chiunguzeni, G. (2000) *New junior secondary history course 1 & 2* Blantyre Christian Literature Association in Malawi (CLAIM).
- Longman Malawi, (2000). *Strides in history 1*. Blantyre, Longman.
- Longman Malawi, (2001). *Strides in history 2*. Blantyre, Longman.

In this thesis, I use alphabetical letters A to C to refer to these textbooks for ease of reference and for ethical reasons to avoid being biased when reporting the findings. As such, the *New junior secondary history course 1 & 2* is referred to as Textbook A, *Strides in history 1* is Textbook B and *Strides in history 2* is known as Textbook C. I purposively selected these textbooks for their relevance to my topic because they are the textbooks that are used at junior secondary school level in Malawi. Furthermore, I used convenience sampling in the selection of the number of

textbooks because there were only three textbooks available that had been published for the junior level.

However, my sampling did not halt only at selecting the three textbooks. I also purposively selected specific areas within the text on which I focused the analysis. I also selected all the visual images containing people and the entire verbal or written text. I included both the visual and verbal text because I wanted to have a holistic picture of the portrayal of women since visuals and words according to LaSpina (1998) work together in partnership to create text. A detailed explanation about the sample and sampling techniques used is given in chapter 4, section 4.4.

#### **1.10.4 Data generation and collection**

Mason (2002) argues that the term data generation is more applicable to qualitative research than data collection because the data does not just lie idly somewhere waiting to be collected. Instead the researcher generates the data through engagement with people or documents. However, because of the nature of my study, I argue that data for this study was both generated and collected. As a study which is based on the analysis of textbooks, the data for the study is the textbooks themselves. This data was generated by the authors and publishers of the textbooks; therefore I collected the already existing data in the form of textbooks which involved simply buying and borrowing the textbooks. I bought one textbook from Feg's Distributors and Bookshop in Zomba, Malawi on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2010 and borrowed two textbooks from my place of work in the Department of Teaching and Curriculum Studies at Chancellor College. These two textbooks were not available in the bookshop which is why I opted for borrowing from my institutional work place. I explain the issues related to data generation and collection in detail in chapter four, section 4.5 and subsections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2.

#### **1.10.5 Data analysis methods**

Three methods of documentary analysis were used to analyse the data. These are content analysis, visual semiotics and open coding. I systematically divided the analysis into two parts - the visual images and the verbal text. The visual images were subjected to visual content analysis and visual semiotics. The data consisting of all the visual images of people in the textbooks was analysed through visual

content analysis while the data of visual images which only featured women were analysed using visual semiotics. The verbal text was analysed using verbal content analysis and open coding. A detailed explanation of how the analysis was conducted is given in chapter 4 section 4.6.

### **1.11 Organisation of the thesis**

This study is organised into eight chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which gives an overview of the whole study. In this chapter I described the background and context to my study, my position and biographical information as a researcher, rationale and motivation of the study and the process of textbook production and inclusion of women in textbooks in Malawi. I then highlight the statement of the research problem, purpose and focus of my study and state the research questions. I also point out the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study by mentioning the theories used and explaining some important concepts used in the study. Furthermore, I outline the research design and methodology of the study which includes research paradigm, research approach and design, research sample, data collection and generation and data analysis. Finally I outline how the thesis is organised and conclude the chapter with a brief summary.

In chapter two I present a review of the literature related to the topic. This review consists of literature on the nature of textbooks, the role of history textbooks, women in textbooks, and women in history textbooks. I continue with the review of literature in chapter three where my emphasis is on theoretical literature. In this chapter I explain feminism as the overarching theory of the study and the six feminisms employed in a bircolage-like manner, namely radical, liberal, socialist, Marxist, black and African feminist perspectives. Chapter four is where I explain how the study was designed and conducted. I elaborate on the critical paradigm used to guide the direction of the study and describe the qualitative feminist approach to the inquiry, the documentary or secondary data analysis design used as well as the research sample. I also explain how data was collected and the data analysis methods used. Finally I elucidate how ethical issues and trustworthiness were ensured in the process of the research.



Chapters five and six deal with the analysis of the findings. In chapter five, I specifically present findings of the analysis of the visual images and in chapter six I cover findings of the analysis of the verbal text. It is in chapter seven where I discuss the findings from both the visual images and the verbal text in relation to the literature. Finally in chapter eight, I conclude the study by highlighting the major findings and their implications for policy, practice and further research.

### **1.12 Conclusion**

In this chapter I gave an overview of the study. I explained the background information about Malawi, my position and biographical information as a researcher and the process of textbook production and inclusion of women in the textbooks in Malawi. I also highlighted the rationale and motivation for the study, research problem, purpose and focus and research questions as well as the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. Finally I gave a summary of the research design and methodology of the study and outlined the organisation of the thesis. In the next chapter, I review literature related to the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

# REVIEWING LITERATURE ON THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN TEXTBOOKS

### 2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I review the literature in order to locate and ground my study and also to find a basis for interpreting and discussing the eventual findings in relation to other studies. A literature review is an integral part of any research process for it lays the foundation for good research inquiry and endeavours (Fouche & Delport, 2005). I conducted a review of literature because such an exercise is essential as it helps to select a topic without duplicating what others have already done, refines the research problem and frames the sub-questions that guide data generation and establishes justification or significance of the study (Creswell, 2009; Delport & Fouche, 2005b; Fouche & Delport, 2005; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Whisker, 2005). Furthermore, a literature review is important because it enables the researcher to locate the study within the broader literature in the field of interest, builds conceptual and theoretical frameworks, finds direction about the methodology that can be used in a new study and interprets results of the study (Creswell, 2009; Delport & Fouche, 2005a; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Punch, 2009). It could therefore be argued that research done without a literature review would be groundless as it lacks authority and its results would also be baseless and insignificant. Simply put, it may not be possible to do research without any review of literature (Henning, van Rensburg, & Smit, 2009).

A literature review involves the critical reading and examination of existing literature encompassing a researcher's area of interest. However, this does not mean reading everything that has been written in one's field of study (Whisker, 2005), but means concentrating on literature which is most centrally and directly relevant to the topic and research questions under study and investigation (Punch, 2009). It is based on this that only literature relevant to my topic and research questions and accessible through the university where I am studying was reviewed in this study. The relevant

literature comprises both research literature and theoretical literature. According to Punch (2009), research literature concentrates on reports of findings from empirical research and is guided by the research questions while theoretical literature deals with relevant concepts, theories and theoretical contexts and discursive and analytical literature that contain ideas and information relevant to the research topic. In other words, reviewing research literature implies reviewing evidence about a topic or question while reviewing theoretical literature means reviewing the thinking about the topic or question under study. Hence the review in this way relates the previous research and theory to the problem under investigation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Both research and theoretical literature need to be covered in a thesis or dissertation but it depends on one's judgment whether to present both reviews together in one chapter or separate them into two (Punch, 2009). In this thesis, I chose to present the review separately in two chapters for stylistic purposes and to avoid having a long literature review chapter which to me appears cumbersome. I also wanted to maintain my focus on the review and demonstrate my mastery of the relevant literature as this is a requirement at higher degrees level particularly at doctoral level.

In this chapter, I focus on research literature. The relevant research literature was identified by substantively screening the research questions (Punch, 2009) which resulted in the identification of five key concepts or issues on which to centre the review. These are the nature of textbooks; history textbooks; women in textbooks and women in history textbooks. These main issues feature frequently in both the topic and research questions. I therefore, organise the review in this chapter into four sections categorised according to the key issues which formed the basis of my search for the relevant literature. This approach is purposively or deliberately employed in order to provide structure in the presentation of the review (Punch, 2009).

In the first section I review literature on the nature of textbooks. Such a review is essential because the politics, culture, economics and ideologies that surround textbook production and publishing have, to some extent, an impact on the presentation, inclusion and exclusion of women and other social groups. Thus, the review in this section paints a picture of what textbooks are in general, how they are

produced, what knowledge they contain and whose knowledge they represent which in turn will provide a background for understanding the way women are portrayed. In the second section I review literature on the role of history textbooks. This is essential, not only because the study deals with history textbooks, but also because the role that textbooks serve in society also determines what is included and excluded in the subject matter. Thus, an understanding of the role of history textbooks will enable the reader to appreciate how the issue of women is handled in history textbooks. In the third section, I examine literature on women in textbooks in general. This is important because it gives an overview or picture of how women are generally represented in textbooks before the reader interacts with the specific literature in the field of study. Finally in the fourth section I specifically review literature on women in history textbooks. This is the core of the review as my study dealt with the portrayal of women in history textbooks in Malawi. Greater attention is therefore afforded to the literature in this section than the other three.

According to Henning (2009), a literature review can be written in several ways for example thematically or chronologically depending on one's purpose statement. I therefore present the review in this chapter thematically. Among other scholars, Punch (2009) supports the use of themes in the presentation of a literature review and argues that the thematic approach helps in providing structure to the review. Thus, under each of the four sections in this review, I discuss the main issues or themes and show their links to the topic whilst advancing my argument.

## **2.2 The nature of textbooks**

As previously mentioned, in order to appreciate how women are portrayed in textbooks including history textbooks, it was essential to initially understand the nature of textbooks. This is because despite their obvious characteristics as educational media, textbooks tend to be complex in nature as they are influenced by many conflicting pressures in the process of their production which have an impact on what is included and or excluded from the subject matter/text (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Crawford, 2004; Foster & Crawford, 2006). In this section therefore, I explain the nature of textbooks by examining the initial process of their production from the selection of subject matter to be included through publication to marketing and the impact that this process may have on the portrayal of women. As argued by

Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, p. 1), textbooks by their nature are not only educational materials, but they are “the results of political, economic and cultural activities, battles and compromises.”

### **2.2.1 Textbooks as educational materials**

The most obvious issue about the nature of textbooks is that they are important instructional materials in education. It is argued that a textbook is a product of a particular state for use in its education system (Altbach, 1991). Thus textbooks serve a critical role in achieving the curriculum goals of many nations as they are vehicles through which legitimate knowledge in the curriculum infiltrates the schools (Apple, 1991; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Foster & Crawford, 2006). This explains why, for example, in most American schools, the curriculum is not defined by courses of study or programs, but by particular subject specific textbooks (Apple, 1991; Crawford, 2004). Regarding classroom instruction, textbooks dominate what learners learn and teachers rely on them to plan their lessons and organise the subject matter (Apple, 1991; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Graham Down, 1988). For most learners, textbooks provide their first exposure to books and reading and they are their most readily accessible literature (Graham Down, 1988) and trusted source of information (Kalmus, 2004). Furthermore, elementary and secondary school learners spend a large percentage of their time interacting with textbooks whenever they are in the classroom and at home doing their homework assignments (Apple, 1991). Textbooks therefore, are virtual icons of education despite some criticisms levelled against them (Altbach, 1991).

I would therefore argue that since learners spend much of their educational time using textbooks, both at school and at home, there is a strong possibility of their acquiring knowledge in which women are either included or excluded from the textbooks. Whatever the case may be, such knowledge will adhere to the minds of the learners as the truth since textbooks are regarded as authoritative and accurate in nature and they signify through their content and form, particular constructions of reality (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Nicholls, 2006b; Olson, 1989). However, this should not mislead us into thinking that everything that is contained in the textbooks is absorbed wholesale or learnt as it is by the learners (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Crawford, 2004; Pingel, 2006, 2010). As Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, p.

14) argue, "... we cannot assume that what is in the text is actually taught. Nor can we assume that what is taught is actually learned." Teachers continuously transform text material as they present it in the lessons and, learners too, because they have their own gendered perspective, either accept, reject or reinterpret the knowledge (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Crawford, 2004; Pingel, 2006, 2010). Regardless of this, learners will still acquire a certain perspective, for example, about women due to the influence of the textbook. However, there is more to textbooks than their being mere educational materials as their production is embedded with controversies which make them highly political in nature as explained in the proceeding section.

### **2.2.2 The political nature of textbooks**

Despite the ubiquitous character of textbooks, it is one of the subjects about which people know the least (Apple, 1991). There is more to the nature of textbooks than being mere classroom resources. Many issues or controversies revolve around their production which Apple and Christian-Smith (1991, p. 1) call "the politics of the textbook". As argued by Apple and Christian-Smith (1991), Crawford (2004) and Foster and Crawford (2006), textbook production is a contentious political activity which, among other issues, involves selection of knowledge from the wider spectrum to be included in the text. The question of "whose knowledge gets selected for inclusion in the textbook and why?" becomes a major political issue. Apple and Christian-Smith (1991) indirectly respond to this question by arguing that what is selected or considered as 'official' or 'legitimate' knowledge to be included in the textbook, is a product of complex power relations and struggles among different competing social groups based for example on race, class, gender, religion and so forth. Resulting from such conflict or struggles eventually is knowledge of the powerful or dominant group that is included in the textbook (Apple, 1991; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). For instance, there has been a continued struggle in the United States of America (USA) by women, people of colour and others to have their history included in the curriculum (hence textbooks) but because such groups are politically, economically and socially powerless, their knowledge is reduced to a mere mentioning (Apple, 1991). Thus textbooks tend to be discriminatory by nature as they largely represent knowledge of the dominant groups (Regueiro, 2000; Sleeter & Grant, 1991). It becomes apparent therefore that knowledge of the powerful or ruling class is what dominates the textbooks while perspectives of the

less powerful are incorporated under the umbrella of the discourse of dominant groups (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991).

Based on the above, I would argue that the portrayal of women in textbooks would depend on whether they have 'power' or not in a specific society. If women are less powerful in a society, which is often the case, then the inclusion of their historical experiences and how they are portrayed would be dependent on the interest of the dominant group who might either incorporate the women in passing through mere mentioning in the textbooks or completely exclude them. Besides power relations, women may also be included or excluded from the textbooks due to the ideological values of the society or nation.

### **2.2.3 The ideological nature of textbooks**

Textbooks are powerful ideological tools in society. They signify particular constructions of reality and reflect the values and aspirations of the society (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Foster & Crawford, 2006). Thus textbooks contain and transmit the knowledge, culture, beliefs and values or, ideologies in general, that a government recognises as legitimate and truthful (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991) and worthy of transmitting from one generation to another (Crawford, 2004). For instance in her study of Afrikaans language textbooks used during the Apartheid period in South Africa, Engelbrecht (2006) noted that the textbooks reflected the Apartheid ideology of Afrikaner white supremacy. This was evidenced by the fact that examples, naming, reading passages and religious customs in the textbooks all reflected one group, the Afrikaners. Since cultural ideologies of society are kept in the form of an organised body of knowledge through the textbooks, the latter canonises the social norms of the society. Considering this role of textbooks, it could be argued that the inclusion or portrayal of women in textbooks will depend on whether or not society values women's experiences as legitimate and truthful knowledge worthy of recording and including in the text. Furthermore, if gender is one of the ideological values or beliefs of a society, then women are likely to be portrayed in textbooks since the latter, according to Foster and Crawford (2006), are cultural artefacts which embody a wide range of issues associated with ideology, politics and values. However, the opposite would be true if gender equality is not valued in a society.

Due to their ideological nature, textbooks offer a narrow perspective of knowledge to learners as well as teachers (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Sleeter & Grant, 1991). For instance, issues of class, gender and racial bias tend to be common in textbooks which have their roots in the conception stage of the textbooks (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). Before textbooks are produced, debates over what is included involve selection of knowledge from a wide spectrum body of knowledge and finally what goes into the textbook is somebody's view of what constitutes legitimate knowledge (Apple, 1991; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Sleeter & Grant, 1991). This results in predisposing the learners to think and act in a specific way without considering other perspectives, possibilities, interpretations, alternatives and actions (Sleeter & Grant, 1991). The learners therefore tend to regard what is contained in the textbook as an indisputable fact. As Kalmus (2004) citing van Dijk (1998) argues, "... ideological influence is generally facilitated if recipients have no alternative opinions because they lack relevant social and political knowledge." In this way textbooks serve to legitimise and perpetuate existing social relations and the status quo of the dominant group (Apple, 1991; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Sleeter & Grant, 1991). Since textbooks are not progressive and contain a lot of bias, including gender bias, inclusion of subject matter about women might not be guaranteed or if it happens, the portrayal of women may not be equal to men. Whether the knowledge dealing with issues concerning women is included or not in these non-progressive textbooks, there is a high possibility of learners accepting that particular information as undisputable as there are no multiple perspectives. Besides, the cultural benefit to society as transmitters of ideologies, textbooks are also beneficial to the publishers economically.

#### **2.2.4 The economic nature of textbooks**

Another characteristic of textbooks which impacts on what is included in the text is its economic nature. This is historical in nature since publishing began in the fifth century when textbooks, although produced for academic purposes, were primarily considered as pieces of merchandise to make money for the publishers (Apple, 1991). For this reason, publishers aimed at making a profit, printed only those titles that satisfied their buyers and could sell in large quantities. The present situation is similar but more complex because the publishing industry has grown and become



more competitive and electronic based. Since the textbook industry is a lucrative business, competition in the market is very stiff and politically volatile (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Crawford, 2004; Foster & Crawford, 2006). Therefore, what is included in the textbook is something that the publisher will be able to sell in the competitive market (Apple, 1991; Foster & Crawford, 2006). In the production of textbooks, publishers tend to be cautious of the subject matter in order to attract and satisfy consumers (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). The economic motive of the publishers therefore, will have an effect on, for example, the inclusion and portrayal of women in the textbooks. Depending on the publishers' assessment of their customers, women could either be portrayed or not in the textbooks because their aim is to make a profit from their publications. For instance, if the women's issues do not appeal to the buyers, then publishers are likely to exclude or include them partially in the textbooks.

Furthermore, textbook adoption policies exert pressure on the publishers. For instance, most states in the USA have textbook adoption committees that choose which texts to be purchased by the schools. Due to the desire to make profit, publishers devote their effort to guarantee a place on the list of approved texts by complying to the textbook adoption policies (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). Thus the economic benefit will dictate what publishers include and exclude in textbooks in order to ensure a place on the list of approved texts. There the place of women in the textbook will be dependent upon whether the textbook adoption policies factored in inclusion of women as one of the criteria or not. Hence textbooks look the way they do and contain perspectives of some groups and not others because the publishing industry is in business and is profit-driven (Apple, 1991; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991).

The personnel in the publishing industry is another aspect worthy of consideration with regard to what legitimate knowledge is included in the textbook. Women outnumber men in employment within the publishing industry as a whole but, there is gender stereotyping in the division of labour (Apple, 1991). Men occupy higher editorial and decision-making positions while the majority of women are assigned to lower ranks as secretaries, publicists, advertising managers and assistants. Although Apple's observation was carried out some time ago, his argument still holds because

generally women occupy lower positions than men in the employment sector in most countries, particularly in Malawi. Although there have been some women who have been promoted to higher editorial positions in the past few years, generally women are not as powerful in such positions as men to exert influence over goals and policies of publishing. This implies that most editorial decisions regarding legitimate knowledge to include in the textbooks as official knowledge are made by a male majority who perpetuate patriarchal relations within the firm itself (Apple, 1991). As such the probability of portraying women in the textbooks whose producers are a male majority is very slim.

I therefore argue, based on this review of literature, that the portrayal of women in textbooks is determined by the politics that revolve around the production of the texts. The publishers have to respond to many conflicting and competing demands from the education sector, society and the market which may either have a positive or negative impact on the portrayal of women. Eventually what is presented as a textbook is a result of social, economic and political pressures emerging from competing forces (Rosser, 2006).

### **2.3 The role of history textbooks in education and society**

Unlike the preceding section, where I interrogated literature on the nature of textbooks, in this section I review literature specifically on the role of history textbooks in education and society. As previously alluded to, this review was deemed necessary because the parameters within which history textbooks operate in society have an influence on what is included and excluded in the subject matter. This implies that depending on the role history textbooks play, women can either be incorporated or not. The literature reviewed in the proceeding paragraphs show that history textbooks serve educational, ideological, political, cultural and economic purposes (Crawford, 2004, 2006; Foster & Crawford, 2006; Nicholls, 2006b; Vickers, 2006).

#### **2.3.1 History textbooks as instructional material**

History textbooks play a vital role in education and their use to support students' learning of the past is an almost universally accepted practice (Bourdillon, 1992; Foster & Crawford, 2006). They are widely used in the classroom to illustrate

historical information, concepts and skills, hence facilitating learning. As such, schools and teachers rely on history textbooks to meet the requirements of the curriculum (Ornstein, 1994). Furthermore, history textbooks act as a means through which cultural knowledge of the past and government ideologies contained in the curriculum are transmitted to students (Foster & Crawford, 2006). In this way, history textbooks represent that which the state deems essential for the learners in order to influence the students' knowledge and perception of their past and environment (Bourdillon, 1992). This may explain why Thornton (2006, p. 15) refers to history textbooks "as repositories of legitimated historical knowledge", Sleeter & Grant (1991) depict them as the major conveyors of the curriculum while Nicholls (2006a) describes history textbooks as gatekeepers of historical knowledge organised and presented in a particular way. In short history textbooks are a simplified version of a nation's legitimated past used in curriculum implementation.

Given the important role of history textbooks as custodians of legitimated historical knowledge and delivery systems of such knowledge, inclusion of women and how they are to be portrayed will depend on whether or not the state regards women's historical experiences as legitimated knowledge necessary for learners to know. If for instance the nation considers women's contribution in the past as valuable knowledge for learners to know and to be passed on from one generation to another, then women's portrayal in history textbooks would be guaranteed and the opposite might be true if such knowledge is not valued.

### **2.3.2 History textbooks as ideological artefacts**

History textbooks also serve an important ideological role. They act as vehicles through which government ideas and values are passed on to the society from generation to generation (Foster & Crawford, 2006). As such they seek to instil in the youth a shared set of values or a national ideology in an incontrovertible manner (Foster & Crawford, 2006; Vickers, 2006). Thus history textbooks as ideological tools aim at shaping learners to view the world through the lens of their governments' ideology. To cite two examples, when Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997, existing history textbooks experienced revision to conform to Chinese principles and during the communist regime in China, history textbooks in use were then deliberately distorted to suit the ideological dogma of Leninism (Foster & Crawford,

2006). Similarly in Greece during the socialist government of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), some history textbooks were withdrawn from circulation because of their ideological contradiction to the Greek national past (Repoussi, 2008). For instance, as indicated by Repoussi (2008, p. 103), two history textbooks by Leften Stavrianos, *History of the human race* and *History of the modern Greek state* were withdrawn “following intense reactions of national and religious content.” In addition, a history textbook by B. Kremmydas, *Later and contemporary history* was abandoned in 1991 because of its “ideological one-sidedness” and was replaced by another which placed greater emphasis on Greek history (Repoussi, 2008, p. 103). Furthermore, in South Africa, history textbooks used during the Apartheid period were laden with the ideology of Afrikaner superiority (Engelbrecht, 2006, 2008). It was noted that “during the Apartheid era, only positive aspects of the Afrikaners’ past were portrayed in South African [history] textbooks” (Engelbrecht, 2006, p. 1) and that blacks were omitted as they were regarded as obstacles to Afrikaner prosperity (Engelbrecht, 2008). The ideological role was also observed in history textbooks produced after Apartheid whereby the new textbooks revealed a role reversal from the dominance of Afrikaner nationalist views to African nationalist history as there was more representation of blacks than whites in the text (Engelbrecht, 2008). The textbooks reflected a shift in ideological orientation. This is contained in history textbooks which are selected stories that governments want to reveal about themselves and how they wish to be seen by others depending on their ideology (Crawford, 2004; 2006; Foster & Crawford, 2006).

It could therefore be implied that the ideological nature of history textbooks determines the inclusion of women and their portrayal in textbooks. Depending on government’s ideology, women’s history can either be included or not which would entail the portrayal of women or not. For instance, if government ideology is to propagate gender equality, then women’s past experiences would be featured in history textbooks. Consequently women would be portrayed equally with men.

“No matter how neutral history textbooks may appear” (Foster & Crawford, 2006 p. 1), they are discriminatory and biased in nature as they represent the cultural, ideological and political knowledge of dominant groups. Governments select which past history they want to tell and this selection of a national past is an intensely

political and ideological process. During the selection process, one group's historical knowledge is approved while other groups are disregarded (Foster & Crawford, 2006). The argument follows therefore that the politics involved in the selection of which cultural group's knowledge to include could affect the inclusion of women's issues in history textbooks. They can either be selected for inclusion or not depending on government's political and ideological motives. Related to the ideological role, history textbooks also serve as political instruments or tools of governments as will be explained in the next section.

### **2.3.3 History textbooks as political tools**

History textbooks are also political in nature. Governments use them to propagate their political agendas and ideologies (Pingel, 2010). This explains why in most countries official knowledge in history textbooks is controlled by government (Crawford, 2004; Foster & Crawford, 2006). As such, history textbooks also have a latent potential of being abused by governments. Pingel (2010) noted that history textbooks have been manipulated to glorify and justify the existence of certain political parties or ideologies at the expense of others. To cite two examples, in India, social studies textbooks are biased against Christians and Muslims as opposed to the dominant religious group of Hindus; and in Pakistan, the different regimes tried to rewrite the national history to suit their political agendas (Foster & Crawford, 2006). Similarly in Greece, history textbooks are exclusively dominated by Greek national history in order to celebrate the glorious past of the country and its people and any deviation from the norm is rejected by some politicians, political parties or groups, the Greek Church and other stakeholders (Repoussi, 2008). It could therefore be argued that depending on the political motive of a government, history textbooks could either contain women's history or not. If, for example, a government wishes to glorify women's past political activities, then women certainly would be included in history textbooks. The opposite could be true if a government agenda is not pro-women.

### **2.3.4 History textbooks as economic commodities**

History textbooks as any other textbooks serve an economic purpose for the publishers (Crawford, 2004; Foster & Crawford, 2006). Besides the educational motive, they are also produced for economic benefits since textbook commerce is a

lucrative business (Crawford, 2004; Foster & Crawford, 2006). For instance in the USA, the textbook industry is a multi-billion dollar business (Crawford, 2004; Foster & Crawford, 2006). According to Crawford (2004) and Foster and Crawford (2006), the economics of textbook publishing exert considerable influence on which content of history is to be included, its scope and how it should be presented and how the authors write the textbooks within designated guidelines of economic constraints. By implication therefore, information not deemed attractive to consumers is excluded. Consequently, it can be argued that depending on the response of the buyers to issues of women, publishers can incorporate or exclude women in history textbooks. The publisher's sole aim is to produce a product that is accessible to a particular audience to ensure maximum profit (Crawford, 2004; Foster & Crawford, 2006).

Thus, the role that history textbooks serve as educational, ideological, political and economic tools determines what is included and excluded from the text. Women's experiences therefore, depending on the existing circumstances, could either be incorporated in history textbooks or not. This background review of the nature of textbooks in general and the role of history textbooks set the stage for interrogating literature on how women are portrayed in both textbooks in general and in history textbooks in particular and will be discussed in the next sections.

#### **2.4 The portrayal of women in textbooks**

The review in this section focuses on literature of studies on textbooks of different subjects other than history and how they portray women. I reviewed literature largely on results of empirical research because a review of literature is often excellent when priority is placed on primary studies (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). According to the literature reviewed, most of the studies conducted on textbook analysis where portrayal of women is discussed are gender analysis studies. From the review, a number of themes emerged which pertained to the portrayal of women namely representation of women, misrepresentation of women, roles and activities in which women are portrayed, character traits and power and status. The review in this section therefore centres on these emerging themes from the literature.

### **2.4.1 Representation of women in textbooks**

The representation of women in textbooks is the major recurrent theme in almost all the literature reviewed on women in textbooks. Most studies reviewed showed a similar trend in the way women are represented in textbooks both in the visual images and verbal text (Elgar, 2004; Hanson, 1999; Hardin, Dodd, & Lauffer, 2006; Higgins & Shoar-Ghaffari, 1991; Lee & Collins, 2009; Mayer, 1989; Regueiro, 2000; Sleeter & Grant, 1991; Zagumny & Pulsipher, 2008). Initially the visual images, in their content analysis study of 10 Australian English-language textbooks, Lee and Collins (2009) noted that of the total number of pictures (489), 94 depicted women while 278 showed men. There were also more males than females in pictures which depicted both men and women together. Similarly, Regueiro (2000), in her study of a Spanish music textbook, reported 23 illustrations of women musicians as opposed to 103 illustrations of male musicians. In another context, Elgar (2004) in her analysis of science textbooks for lower secondary schools in Brunei observed similar differences in the illustrations of women and men. She divided the illustrations into photographs and drawings and noted that photographs portraying men only were more than four times those depicting women only and that there were six drawings showing males for every drawing illustrating a women (Elgar, 2004).

Furthermore, Hardin, Dodd and Lauffer (2006) in their analysis of eight sports journalism textbooks used in the USA revealed that 81% of the images in the textbooks were of men. This implies that only 19% of the images were of women. A similar pattern in the numbers of images of women and men as well as visual images showing women and men only was noted by Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari (1991) in their study of Iranian textbooks, Mayer (1989) in human geography textbooks used in USA and Hanson (1999) in her analysis of basic public speaking texts also used in the USA. Although they do not explicitly provide the statistical figures, all agree that images of women and visual images showing women in the textbooks they studied were less than those of men.

A similar pattern in the representation of women in textbooks was revealed in studies conducted in Africa. In their study of four O-Level English textbooks used in Zimbabwe, Dudu, Gonye, Mareva and Sibanda (2008) reported that three of the textbooks represented women in the pictures by percentages of 35.7, 37 and 45.8

while only one revealed 60% representation of women. In another African context, Barton and Sakwa (2012) revealed that women comprised only 20.7% of the people depicted in the illustrations while men made up 79.3%. Furthermore, McKinney (2005) who analysed South African primary school textbooks, which comprised Grade 1 Reading Schemes and Grade 7 Language and Natural Science textbooks, revealed a lower representation of women in the textbooks especially in Grade 1 Reading Schemes and Grade 7 Language textbooks. Dudu et al (2008) concluded in their literature review that although there is a limited body of research literature on the representation of women in textbooks in Africa, all agree that women are generally under-represented in their portrayal.

Therefore, based on these studies, it could be concluded that women are generally under-represented in their portrayal in the visual images in textbooks analysed regardless of the subject and geographical context. However, as the sample textbooks represented different contexts and subjects, over-generalisation of all textbooks would not be acceptable as textbooks by nature are tools of particular nations where they are meant to serve with their own different ideologies and interests.

The representation of women in the verbal text in the textbooks follows a similar pattern where they are also portrayed in fewer numbers than men. Most literature reviewed indicated fewer numbers of women included and mentioned as well as marginal inclusion of women in the verbal text in the textbooks (Barton & Sakwa, 2012; Elgar, 2004; Hanson, 1999; Hardin et al., 2006; Higgins & Shoar-Ghaffari, 1991; Lee & Collins, 2009; Mayer, 1989; Regueiro, 2000; Zagumny & Pulsipher, 2008). Barton and Sakwa (2012) found that women comprised only 35.7% of the appearances of people in the verbal text while men made up 64.3%. Similarly, in their study of the Australian English-language textbooks Lee and Collins (2009) noted lower ratios of female to male characters included in the textbooks as well as the female and male characters mentioned in the text. Specifically they reported an average ratio of 1:1.35 of women to men included in the text and the ratio of female to male characters mentioned in the text was 1:1.40. However, these ratios were not uniform in all textbooks as there were some variations. Regueiro's (2000) study of a single Spanish music textbook revealed a larger gap in terms of numbers of women



and men mentioned in the text than Lee and Collins' (2009) study of three English-language textbooks. Regueiro reported that only five women musicians were mentioned in the text in contrast to 84 men in the Spanish music textbook she analysed. Similarly Elgar (2004), in the three science textbooks she studied, indicated that out of a total of 11 people mentioned in the text, nine were men which imply that only two were women.

Furthermore, Higgins and Shoar-Gaffari (1991) who studied Persian language elementary textbooks used in Iran during the Pahlavi and Islamic Republican eras observed male dominance in the verbal text in the textbooks for both periods. Their study revealed that men maintained a representation of 85% in the lessons contained in the textbooks of both eras. Although the authors are silent on the percentage representation of women, it is implied that women comprised the remaining 15% of the people represented in the lessons in the textbooks used during the two periods. This is despite the change in government in Iran from the rule of the Pahlavi to the Islamic Republican. In their comprehensive study of eight sports journalism textbooks used in the USA, Hardin, Dodd and Lauffer (2006) reported that 89% of references in all the textbooks comprised men while only 11% were of women; 89% of people referred to as sports' journalists were men while 11% were women; and, 88% of the athletes referred to were men in contrast to 12% of women.

Although they do not provide statistical figures, other scholars such as Hanson (1999), Mayer (1989) and Zagumny and Pulsipher (2008) also acknowledge the under-representation of women in the verbal text in their textbook analyses. For instance, Zagumny and Pulsipher in their analysis of 18 geography textbooks used in the USA (2008, p. 417) noted that women were "for the most part simply excluded from the written text" and where they were included, they were "consistently relegated to marginal spaces." Mayer (1989) concluded that most of the nine human geography textbooks (also used in the USA) she studied did not explicitly represent women in the text. Due to the limited representation of women in selected basic public speaking textbooks that she studied, Hanson (1999, p. 16) concluded that "the student reading the text would probably come away with the impression that public speaking is something that men do more often than women."

I would argue based on the literature presented in this section that women are generally under-represented in their portrayal in textbooks of different subjects. However, generalisation of these findings should be avoided as the textbooks studied were meant to achieve the different motives of their governments. The results of studies of textbook analyses from other countries may be different depending on the values of a particular nation.

#### **2.4.2 Misrepresentation of women in textbooks**

Some of the literature reviewed revealed women being represented in an unrealistic way (Mayer, 1989; Regueiro, 2000; Zagumny & Pulsipher, 2008). In their study, Zagumny and Pulsipher (2008) noted that in the rare cases when women were included in the text, it was invariably American women who were depicted as being more privileged than women from other parts of the world. The occasional instances when women from outside America were mentioned, “they were often referred to as benighted and miserable, or at best passive and decorative” (Zagumny & Pulsipher, 2008, p. 417). In addition these authors noted that where women were shown in the visual images, they were depicted either as inert showpieces or engaged in menial labour such as working in a factory, doing agricultural work and picking cotton; and “as mere quaint ornaments in the landscape” who were shown carrying heavy loads (Zagumny & Pulsipher, 2008, p. 417). In a related study on human geography textbooks, Mayer (1989) noted that the textbooks she studied did not explicitly represent women as farmers despite their role in food production and one of the textbooks overtly illustrated the wheat farmer as a man and not a woman. It was also noted by Regueiro (2000) in her Spanish music textbook that eight illustrations portrayed women as objects of desire by men whereby the physical characteristics of their bodies were exhibited for men’s contemplation. Based on this review therefore, it could be argued that women are misrepresented in their portrayal in some textbooks.

#### **2.4.3 Roles and activities in which women are portrayed in textbooks**

The theme on roles and activities of women was recurrent in all the literature reviewed. Despite the differences in geographical contexts and variation in the textbooks studied, a general consensus among most studies is their portrayal of women in the traditional, reproductive and domestic feminine roles (Elgar, 2004;

Hardin et al., 2006; Higgins & Shoar-Ghaffari, 1991; Lee & Collins, 2009; Mayer, 1989; Ozdogru, Aksoy, Erdogan, & Gok, 2004; Regueiro, 2000; Zagumny & Pulsipher, 2008). To begin with reproductive and domestic roles and activities, in their content analysis study of gender bias in Turkish elementary school textbooks of Turkish and Life Sciences, Ozdogru, Aksoy, Erdogan and Gok (2004) reported that women were shown working in the fields and were seen basically in home settings taking care of children and doing shopping in public markets. Furthermore, women were portrayed in roles as housewife, child-raising, mother responsible for house matters such as kitchen work and in supportive roles for the family (Ozdogru et al., 2004). Similarly, studies by Elgar (2004), Hardin et al. (2006), Higgins and Shoar-Gaffari (1991) Lee and Collins (2009), Mayer (1989) and Regueiro (2000) portray women in a child-care role, nurturer, instructor or counsellor, agricultural worker and as mothers, wives, sisters and daughters. This review shows clearly that women are portrayed in stereotypical feminine reproductive and domestic roles and activities. According to Regueiro (2000), this sort of portrayal confirms a patriarchal definition of women's roles and activities in society.

In addition, where women were portrayed in productive roles working outside the home environment, some literature reviewed showed that they were mostly portrayed as teachers, nurses, health workers, typists, fashion designers, salespersons and doing menial work such as cotton picking and factory work (Higgins & Shoar-Ghaffari, 1991; Lee & Collins, 2009; Mayer, 1989; Ozdogru et al., 2004). Regueiro (2000) noted that of the varied musical activities included in the music textbook she studied, women were mostly portrayed as singers, using instruments of low technology and performing music from the Western tradition. All these roles and activities are traditionally associated with women which imply that women are mostly portrayed in stereotypical traditional feminine roles and activities despite working outside the home or in the public sphere.

However, in a few instances the literature depicted women in non-traditional productive roles and activities. For instance in their study, Ozdogru, Aksoy, Erdogan and Gok (2004) revealed the presence of one woman who was portrayed as a pharmacist in the visual images. Mayer (1989) also noted only one woman who was included among the 16 illustrated biographical sketches of geographers and other

social scientists in one of the nine textbooks she studied. In addition Lee and Collins (2009, p. 360) noted in their study “occasional portrayals of women as astronaut, boxer, weight-lifter, film maker and manager.” These roles and activities are traditionally considered as masculine. It could therefore be concluded that although the cases are few, women are also portrayed in stereotypically masculine roles and activities in some textbooks.

Based on this review, it could be argued that women are mostly portrayed stereotypically in traditional, reproductive and domestic roles in textbooks. Some literature attributed this sort of portrayal to patriarchal definitions of roles and activities of women in society (Regueiro, 2000), to the reality of the work in which women are primarily involved across the globe (Zagumny & Pulsipher, 2008) and to outdated stereotypes about women in general (Hardin et al., 2006). However, there are few occasions where women are portrayed in stereotypical masculine roles and activities. Lee and Collins (2009) explain this as a reflection of the current social situation which suggests equal opportunities given to women and men.

#### **2.4.4 Character traits with which women are portrayed in textbooks**

Some of the literature reviewed made reference to character characteristics in which women were portrayed in the textbooks. Ozdogru et al (2004) concluded that in both textbooks they analysed but more especially in life studies which had richer content, women were portrayed with traditional Turkish female attributes or traits of hardworking, loving, caring and child-raising. Unlike these authors, Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari (1991) noted that women in both eras of their study were portrayed with both stereotypically feminine and masculine traits. However, only one characteristic, the stereotypically masculine trait of rationality was mentioned in reference to women. The scholars did not specify the other traits, both feminine and masculine, but merely concluded that women were portrayed with characteristics that are stereotypically considered masculine and feminine.

As with Ozdogru et al (2004), Lee and Collins (2009) found that women were portrayed only in stereotypically feminine traits of caring and comforting. This was illustrated in a poster in which a female worker was shown “touching and comforting a depressed mother who [was] holding her child” (Lee & Collins, 2009, p. 362).

However, Regueiro's (2000) study revealed that women were depicted as being sensitive and emotional (evidenced by crying and feeling love) in two illustrations and as assertive (indicated by affirming and protesting) in seven. Furthermore, in some songs included in the music textbook, women were portrayed as irrational, dishonest and unstable (Regueiro, 2000). One of Regueiro's (2000) findings contradicts that of Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari's (1991) where the latter found women in the textbooks they studied portrayed as rational while the former noted that women were depicted as irrational. This contradiction could be explained in terms of cultural differences of the geographical contexts (Spain and Iran) of the textbooks which would determine the particular portrayal of women.

It could therefore be concluded that based on this review, women are portrayed with both stereotypically feminine and masculine characteristics. However, judging from the studies reviewed, women generally tend to be portrayed more with stereotypical feminine traits than masculine characteristics which according to Regueiro's (2000) and Ozdogru et al's conclusion (2004) fit with a patriarchal perception of the behaviour of women.

#### **2.4.5 Power and status of women in textbooks**

Another theme that featured prominently in the literature reviewed on women in textbooks other than history texts was the issue of power and the status of women. Generally studies that analysed status and power positions of women and men in the textbooks revealed that women were portrayed with less or no power and status at all (Hanson, 1999; Hardin et al., 2006; Higgins & Shoar-Ghaffari, 1991; Lee & Collins, 2009; Regueiro, 2000). For instance Hanson (1999) noted in her study that 16 of the 17 textbooks analysed pictured men in more powerful positions than women while Lee and Collins (2009) noted that of the six pictures of villains and heroes depicted in one of the textbooks studied, five were of men. This implies that in both studies only one picture depicted women in a position of power out of the total number of the pictures included. In contrast, Hardin et al (2006) observed that all the photographs in the textbooks they studied did not depict any woman in a leadership position in sports. However, they noted that some reference to women as sports leaders was made in the verbal text. Hardin et al (2006) indicated that 96% of references to sports' leaders in the text were of men which imply that only 4% of the

references were of women. Similarly, Regueiro (2000) noted that the status of women was lower than of men in the textbook she analysed. For instance, women unlike men were not represented as conductors on any occasion, no woman was represented as a music teacher and no woman was mentioned with regard to music technology (Regueiro, 2000). Furthermore, women were generally represented as amateurs than as professionals in music unlike men who were shown as professionals rather than amateurs.

It could be concluded from this review that women are portrayed with very little power and of low status in relation to men in most textbooks of various subjects across geographical contexts. Hence it could be argued that women tend to be marginalised in textbooks. This situation concurs with a patriarchal definition of leadership where women are regarded as followers and men as leaders (Regueiro, 2000).

In this section I reviewed literature on how women are portrayed in textbooks of various subjects from different geographical contexts. The review was structured into five themes which recurred in the literature. These themes are representation of women, misrepresentation of women, roles and activities in which women are portrayed, character traits and power and status. Based on the literature reviewed, it could be argued that women in textbooks are under-represented, misrepresented, marginalised, mostly relegated to feminine stereotypical roles and character traits and depicted in positions of less power and low status. Although some studies were not explicit on the underlying reasons for this sort of portrayal of women, others like Hardin et al (2006), Higgins and Shoar-Gaffari (1991) Ozdogru et al (2004), Regueiro (2000) and Zagumny and Pulsipher (2008) attributed the situation to ideological, cultural and political values and realities of the contexts in which the textbooks were produced.

## **2.5 The portrayal of women in history textbooks**

In this section, I review literature that deals with the portrayal of women in history textbooks. The review is organised into five major themes that emerged from the literature. These are a brief historical background of the evolution of history textbook

analysis for the portrayal of women, representation of women, roles and activities of women, misrepresentation of women and character traits of women.

### **2.5.1 Evolution of history textbook analysis for the portrayal of women**

The history of textbook analysis studies on the portrayal of women in history textbooks dates back to the Renaissance period (Commeyras & Alvermann, 1996). During this period, between the late 14<sup>th</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, Christine de Pisan (or Christine de Pizan), the first professional woman writer in Western history re-read male authored texts about women in which she noted differences in the portrayal of men and women. Resulting from this, and based on her knowledge of the positioning of women in society, de Pisan began to criticize what male authors wrote about women in her works. In one of her books, *the City of Ladies* published in 1405, she defended the capabilities and virtues of women against misogynist writings of the time by rewriting the narratives of more than 120 famous women who lived between the time of the ancient poet Sappho and Queen Isabella of Bavaria (Commeyras & Alvermann, 1996; Spongberg, 2002). This enlightened historians who came to realise that the conceptualisation of history excluded women.

In the mid-1950s in Europe, concern over bias and prejudice in history textbooks moved the issue of history textbook analysis for gender issues a step further. The biases in question in history textbooks included gender biases. The Council of Europe therefore in 1953 conducted a study which was aimed at eradicating bias and prejudice in all forms and encouraged honesty and fairness in history textbooks (Osler, 1994). The study, which involved an analysis of 900 of the 2 000 history textbooks used in schools in Western Europe at that time, found the prevalence of unconscious impartiality in the textbooks. It was therefore recommended that teachers and textbooks authors were compelled to address the problem through proper use of language and vocabulary (Osler, 1994). The eradication of biases in history textbooks also meant dealing with gender as one of the biases.

History textbook analysis for gender issues gathered momentum in the 1960s and 1970s due to the activities of the Women's Movement in the Western World (Lewis, 1981; Robinson, 1997). The Women's Movement had a fundamental impact not only on the establishment of women's history but also on its attention to issues of sexism

in schools and the way in which women were portrayed in textbooks (Lewis, 1981; Robinson, 1997; Scott, 1992; Vogel, 1989). In the case of history textbooks, “it was concluded that women were remarkable chiefly by their absence. More or less the same was true of scholarly writing” (Lewis, 1981, p. 55). This development spawned studies on gender issues in history textbooks in America and Europe which later spread to other parts of the world (Chick, 2006). Such studies have continued to the present day. Therefore, my study as reported in this thesis is a continuation of the tradition which can be traced to the renaissance period, survived through the centuries and gathered momentum from the mid twentieth century through the influence of the Women’s Movement. Currently, because of the contentious nature of history textbooks, textbook analysis studies and gender issues and other concerns are very common. Such studies have revealed how women have been portrayed in history textbooks from different countries as will be shown in the proceeding sections.

### **2.5.2 Representation of women in history textbooks**

According to the literature reviewed differences were noted in the way women were represented in relation to men in history textbooks. A general trend showed that in the literature reviewed, women are not represented as much as compared to men in both content and illustrations and in some cases they are omitted or excluded (Cains & Inglis, 1989; Chick, 2006; Fardon & Schoeman, 2010; Fournier & Wineburg, 1997; Frederickson, 2004; O’Kelly, 1983; Osler, 1994; Schocker & Woysner, 2013; Schoeman, 2009a; Schrader & Wotipka, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 1991; Su, 2007). This under-representation or omission according to Tetreault (1982) is attributed to the fact that the conceptualisation of history itself in the first place, excluded women. However, some scholars advance other reasons in addition to Tereault’s explanation which will be illustrated in the course of the review.

O’Kelly (1983), in her content analysis study of gender role images as depicted in fine art works produced in the Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and Modern periods found in three Western history textbooks revealed under-representation of women. She noted that women represented 30% of the subjects in the works of art she studied while men constituted 70%. Furthermore, males made up 60 % of portraits studied. This therefore implies that women were represented in only 40 % of the



portraits analysed. However, O'Kelly (1983) pointed out that though women were under-represented and made relatively invisible in fine art works, the actual gender ratios had never been skewed to this degree in Western societies. In her attempt to explain this cultural invisibility of women in fine art works O'Kelly suggested four reasons. She argued that the situation might have been due to adherence to artistic standards which emphasised the male body or male occupations and roles, social standards which considered it improper to paint women, social mentality of viewing women as less interesting to paint than men and to the fact that almost all the fine art works studied were produced by men who perhaps painted the world the way males saw and experienced it.

Findings from other studies conducted in Europe by Cains and Inglis (1989) and Osler (1994) produced similar results. In their content analysis study of ten popular history textbooks for primary schools used in Central Scotland, whose aim was to identify the types of history emphasised in the textbooks with particular attention placed on the approach taken by authors to the history of women, Cains and Inglis (1989) noted the scanty representation of women in the text. Specifically the study revealed that of the 10 textbooks analysed, only three paid special attention to women's history and only one showed a marked emphasis on the history of women. This implies that most textbooks omitted women and for those that included the history of women, the representation, in both the content and illustrations, was marginal in relation to men whose history dominated the textbooks. Despite the fact that Osler's (1994) study was conducted a decade after O'Kelly's (1983), women were still under-represented in the images in the history textbooks she studied. Osler analysed 36 history textbooks used in England at Key Stage 3 (for pupils aged 11-14). In her analysis of the images, which she divided into two groups, photographs and modern sketches and reconstructions, she concluded that women were under-represented in both categories. For instance, in every textbook, the number of photographs of women was less than those of men although there were variations between the texts. According to her conclusion, the best balanced textbook had almost twice as many photographs of men as of women and the least equitable texts contained a ratio of 26:1 of men and women respectively (Osler, 1994). Similarly in the modern sketches and reconstructions, two textbooks had a ratio of 6:1 of men

and women representation, in one textbook, the proportion was 40:1 and over half of the textbooks did not include any illustrations of women (Osler, 1994).

In their explanation of the under-representation and invisibility of women, both Cains and Inglis (1989) and Osler (1994) attribute the anomaly to early historiographers who did not consider important topics related to issues of women in their selection of subject matter of history to write about and in topics which related to women their role was downplayed. For instance, Cains and Inglis (1989) noted that economic activities of women were almost ignored in nine of the ten textbooks analysed in the sense that four of the nine had no information on economic activities of women while five described women's contribution in between one and four sentences in each of the textbooks. Both Cains and Inglis (1989) and Osler (1994) deny the lack of sources as an excuse for the under-representation of women and attribute it to negligence on the part of writers and publishers perhaps due to the influence of the male dominated society in which they live. According to the two studies, some sources on women, particularly in terms of recent history, are available but they question the ingenuity of publishers in their research for information to include in the textbooks. To support her claim, Osler argues that the modern sketches and reconstructions which publishers have the liberty to produce to reconstruct the past still excluded and under-represented women in the history textbooks she studied. Judging from the views of these authors, I would argue that the under-representation of women in history textbooks is a complex problem which could not be explained by one single factor.

Despite their geographical differences, the many studies conducted in America show similar results to those conducted in Europe by O'Kelly (1983), Cains and Inglis (1989) and Osler (1994) in terms of under-representation of women. For instance in their study of 47 textbooks of reading and language arts, science, mathematics and social studies used in American schools from grade one to eight, Sleeter and Grant (1991) reported that in social studies textbooks, women were represented in fewer pictures than men. Specifically, women were depicted in 512 pictures while 855 pictures featured men. A study by Fournier and Wineburg (1997) revealed interesting results about how children depict the gender of historical figures when they were asked to draw pictures representing pilgrims, Western settlers and Hippies as

illustrated in a passage extracted from an American history textbook. A summary of the drawings showed that of the 136 pictures produced by boys, only eight depicted female figures, seven of these showed men and women together and only one depicted a woman alone. As for girls, they produced a total of 153 drawings in which 58 were of men, 35 of women and the remaining depicted men and women together (Fournier & Wineburg, 1997). It is apparent from these figures that women are under-represented in pictures produced by both boys and girls though in varying degrees. Fournier and Wineburg (1997) lamented that this sort of representation of the past showed that in girls' minds, women are blurred figures, while in boys' perception; women were virtually invisible in history. According to Fournier and Wineburg (1997), boys and girls drew pictures representing their genders due to gender stereotypes that are culturally coded in their minds about themselves.

Under-representation of women in the visual images in American history textbooks was also illustrated in studies by Clark, Ayton, Frechette and Keller (2005), Chick (2006), and Schocker and Woysner (2013). In their study of 18 world history textbooks for high school students from the 1960s, 1980s and 1990s in America, Clark et al (2005) noted that only 368 pictures of women were named in the captions in contrast to 2167 images of men captioned with names. Similarly, Chick (2006) who analysed the K – 12 American history textbooks for gender balance noted that all the three textbooks she studied contained significantly more males than females in the illustrations. She reported that in the grade two textbook, there were 31 images of women in contrast to 89 of men, while in a grade 7-9 textbook women comprised 53 illustrations and men 185 and a grade 9-12 textbook contained 46 pictures of females and 185 of men (Chick, 2006). Furthermore, Schocker and Woysner (2013) who studied one African American history textbook and two mainstream American history textbooks for their representation of African American women revealed that African-American women were represented in lower percentages than men in both sets of textbooks. Specifically, women were represented in only 14.4 % of the images in the African-American history textbook which implies that men comprised the remaining 85.6%. Similarly, the two mainstream American history textbooks comprised women in percentages of 44.6% and 34.1%. However, neither of these studies suggested reasons for the under-representation of women in the images.

Women were also remarkable for their under-representation in the verbal text in American history textbooks. While some studies quantified the representation of women in the content others did not. For instance, Ruthsdotter (1996) gives a vivid picture of the marginalisation and under-representation of women in American history textbooks through her quantitative report. She cited two examples of history textbooks, *A history of the United States* (1992) published by Prentice-Hall which contained less than 3% of content about women and *World history: Traditions and New Directions* (1991) published by Addison-Wesley which offered about 2% of its subject matter to females. Clark et al (2005) noted that only 853 names of females and 10,958 male names were included. This represents a ratio of eight women for every 100 men. Similarly, in the three textbooks that she analysed, Chick (2006) indicated that a grade 2 textbook comprised 58 females as opposed to 190 males, a grade 7-9 textbook consisted of 103 women and 483 men while a grade 9-12 textbook contained 113 females versus 726 males.

Unlike their analysis of the visual images where they provided figures, Sleeter and Grant (1991) do not use statistics in reporting the under-representation of women in the text. However, they indicated that content in the text made women both invisible and marginalised as their roles and contributions were not covered in detail in the story line. Women were also not usually discussed in sections dealing with major decisions concerning political and economic life (Sleeter & Grant, 1991). Furthermore, Commeyras and Alvermann (1996), in their macro analysis of content in three high school world history textbooks, revealed that the textbooks represented an androcentric view of history. An androcentric view of history is the history that presents the past from a male perspective. Attempts to include women were achieved by adding subsections on famous women, paragraphs about women's status and rights and sentences about their contributions as wives and mothers of famous men. This clearly shows that women were under-represented in the textbooks that Commeyras and Alvermann analysed. Their results are not very different from Frederickson's (2004) who also studied high school history textbooks some years later. Although Frederickson (2004) acknowledged some improvement in the American history survey course textbooks for their incorporation of women, she argued that the representation of women in the texts still remained limited and

marginal. For instance, the history survey textbooks barely reflected women in the tables of contents and where they did; they were included in chapter sub-headings and not chapter titles. Furthermore, women almost completely disappeared in charts and maps which were presented from a male perspective. Thus, according to Frederickson (2004), the narrative of the American past which is covered in survey courses is still predominated by matters related to men rather than those of women. Similarly Schrader and Wotipka (2011), who also studied American high school history textbooks with a focus on how World War II narratives presented women, noted that textbooks published before the 1970's largely omitted women in the war narratives. They also noted that although women were included in post-1976 textbooks, only a few women were made reference to in a compensatory manner (Schrader & Wotipka, 2011).

Although operating in different contexts Su (2007) in Taiwan, Schoeman (2009) and Fardon and Schoeman (2010) in South Africa and Muravyeva (2006) in Russia, reported similar results to those found in America and Europe about the under-representation of women. Su (2007), for instance, reported that no space was devoted to Taiwanese women's experiences and perspectives as well as their contributions in the past and present in the first series of Taiwanese social studies textbooks produced between 1978 and 1989. In addition, their social, economic and political status was not mentioned. However, some reference was made to women (but not Taiwanese women) where the textbooks dealt with historical experiences and contributions of aborigines, early Chinese immigrants and post-1945 Chinese immigrants of both genders (Su, 2007). Thus women were almost completely excluded from Taiwanese social studies' textbooks. Schoeman (2009) reported that the content in the textbooks she studied under-represented and almost excluded women. This is evidenced by the fact that in the three textbooks she studied, the ratios of male to female subjects were 22:3, 11:3 and 23:3 (Schoeman, 2009). Furthermore, Fardon and Schoeman (2010) observed a similar pattern of the under representation of women in the exemplar South African school history textbook they analysed whereby women were generally absent within the discursive presentation of the text and no reference to female characters was made in the content. Similarly, Muravyeva (2006) in her study of 28 Russian history textbooks on world history concluded that the narrative of those textbooks dealt with masculine characteristics

of power and economy, social frustration and revolutions, and wars and international relations which were all described from a male perspective, thus marginalising women. Women were mentioned only on rare occasions

It can therefore be argued, based on this section of the review, that women are generally marginalised and under-represented in their portrayal and in some cases even excluded in history textbooks used in countries where research of this nature has been conducted. This is reflected in both content coverage and illustrations used in the textbooks. Some scholars have suggested reasons for the under-representation of women such as little ingenuity in historical research by publishers and male dominated societal values.

### **2.5.3 Roles and activities of women in history textbooks**

The literature reviewed indicated that women were portrayed in a variety of roles and activities. However, to a large extent the literature showed that most of the roles and activities were stereotypically feminine (Cains & Inglis, 1989; O'Kelly, 1983; Osler, 1994; Schocker & Woyshner, 2013; Schrader & Wotipka, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 1991; Su, 2007). Only on rare occasions were women shown in stereotypically masculine roles and activities (Cain's & Inglis, 1989; O'Kelly, 1983; Osler, 1994; Schocker & Woyshner, 2013; Schrader & Wotipka, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 1991; Su, 2007).

The traditional feminine roles and activities in which women are portrayed in history textbooks were very evident in O'Kelly's (1983) study. Her study revealed that women were portrayed in a variety of traditional feminine roles and activities in the fine art works produced in all the four periods under study namely; the Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and Modern eras. For instance, across these four periods women were portrayed as mothers, wives, servants and peasants which are all stereotypical feminine traditional and reproductive roles. Some feminine roles and activities were specific to a particular period. For example during the Renaissance period women were portrayed as sex objects such as seductresses, participants in orgies and as victims of rape, while others were shown singing, dancing and playing and in the modern period some women were portrayed as slaves, dancers, prostitutes, harem girls and models (O'Kelly, 1983). However, there were few

occasions where women were shown in stereotypically masculine roles such as leading soldiers to victory, farming and bartending (O'Kelly, 1983). Similarly, Osler (1994), in her content analysis study conducted in England, revealed that photographs of women showed them predominantly engaged in domestic roles. For instance, women were shown in activities such as child minding and nursing babies, in family portraits with their husbands and children, spinning, working in the kitchen, being punished as scolds and as witches, dancing and as observers of scientific experiments. These activities are stereotypically associated with women. As O'Kelly (1983), Osler's (1994) study revealed only one woman who was shown as a leader (Queen Elizabeth I) which is a stereotypical masculine role.

Similar to the analyses carried out in Europe by O'Kelly (1983) and Osler (1994), studies conducted in Africa by Schoeman (2009) and Fardon and Schoeman (2010) also revealed stereotypical roles and activities for women. In her content analysis Schoeman (2009b) concluded that women were cast in traditional feminine roles. The content in the textbooks she studied was dominated with occupations and activities associated with men rather than women. The ratio of the activities for females and males in each of the three textbooks were 1:24, 5:15 and 7.31. The fact that not many activities for women were included is also stereotypical because it associates women with passivity and men with activity. According to Schoeman (2009), the roles of women in the textbooks were stereotyped according to patriarchal ideology. Similarly, in their analysis of an exemplar text from a South African history textbook, Fardon and Schoeman (2010) noted that no reference was made to women's occupations and activities in the text. The content referred to men and masculine activities and occupations with 64 incidences of male occupations and activities being mentioned as opposed to no reference to women's activities. As argued earlier on, this sort of portrayal stereotypes women with passivity and men with activity.

The review showed that most studies conducted in American history textbooks do not specify the actual roles and activities in which women were portrayed but mostly produce quantitative data. However, the few studies that mention the activities, portrayed women in both stereotypical feminine and masculine roles. For instance, in their study Schocker and Woysner (2013) noted that in mainstream American

history textbooks, the majority of black women were portrayed as slaves with few shown as leaders of anti-slavery movements. However, in the African American history textbook women were not only depicted as slaves but also as female artists, business owners and politicians. Related to these findings, Schrader and Wotipka (2011) revealed that the photographs in the textbooks they studied portrayed women as victims of war, active community members, factory workers and leaders, for example Eleanor Roosevelt. Therefore, from these findings it can be concluded that though women are portrayed in both feminine and masculine roles, the majority are depicted in feminine activities.

Despite continental differences, Su (2007) reporting her study on ideological representations of Taiwanese history documented similar results in roles of women to those in Europe, Africa and America. The textbooks' content illustrated that women face pressure of work due to their dual role as employees and caretakers for children and housework. However, the content never progressed to question why the pressures of caring for children and housework remained the sole responsibility of women, but instead the text simply validated such roles as the traditional expectation for females (Su, 2007). Thus these textbooks largely portrayed women in stereotypical feminine traditional and domestic roles.

There seems to be a consensus among various studies in the way roles and activities of women are reflected in history textbooks. Women are mainly presented in the stereotypically traditional and domestic feminine roles except for a few cases where they are shown in stereotypically masculine activities. This is similar to the way women are depicted in the other textbooks as revealed by the literature reviewed in section 2.4.3 above.

#### **2.5.4 Misrepresentation of women in history textbooks**

Though few, some of the literature reviewed indicated/ revealed a negative portrayal of women in history textbooks (Commeyras & Alvermann, 1996; Muravyeva, 2006). In the studies by Commeyras and Alvermann (1996) and Muravyeva (2006) women were misrepresented as bad people who rose to power and maintained their positions through wicked ways. For instance Commeyras and Alvermann (1996) noted that women such as Catherine de Medici and Wu Chao who were portrayed



as skilled mediators, being fighters and having power were described with Eve-like characteristics such as sensuality, wilfulness and cupidity in order to achieve what they desired. Muravyeva's (2006, p. 59) study revealed misrepresentation of women as victims and of being powerless through the personification of the country as "mother Russia" whenever it was in bad state such as "conquered, ravished, devastated, economically ruined, enveloped in the fire of revolution" and needed to be defended. Muraveyva also noted misrepresentation of women through the choice of women who were mentioned in the textbooks she studied. According to her observation, almost all the powerful women mentioned in the textbooks were included because they did something wrong which was subsequently emphasised. For example, Catherine the First, the wife of Peter the Great was labelled as a prostitute and Princess Olga was mentioned because she annihilated the whole nation in revenge for her husband's death. Thus women are negatively portrayed as wicked and poor leaders in history. Such misrepresentations according to Muravyeva (2006) would lead the students to conclude that once women come to power, the nation succumbs to problems. According to Commeyras and Alvermann (1996), these misrepresentations are due to patriarchal stereotypes about the nature of women.

### **2.5.5 Character traits of women in history textbooks**

Of the many studies reviewed, only two made reference to character traits in which women were portrayed (O'Kelly, 1983; Schoeman, 2009). In O'Kelly's (1983) study, some women were portrayed mourning the death of Christ and others fainting and crying while in textbooks analysed by Schoeman (2009), women were depicted as dependable, conforming and obedient. The traits revealed from both studies are all feminine hence it could be argued that women in some history textbooks are portrayed with stereotypical feminine character traits.

It can be concluded based on the literature reviewed in this section that women in history textbooks are marginalised and under-represented, portrayed largely in stereotypical feminine roles and activities, misrepresented and depicted with stereotypically feminine character traits. Some scholars such as O'Kelly (1983), Osler (1994) and Commeyras and Alvermann (1996) suggested reasons why women were portrayed in a particular way while others did not. A common

explanation for the particular portrayal of women was the patriarchal view of women in society (Commeyras & Alvermann, 1996; O'Kelly, 1983; Osler, 1994).

## **2.6 Locating my study in the literature**

The literature reviewed in the preceding sections provides a foundation for my study as it has alerted me to which studies have been previously executed in textbooks and specifically in history textbooks, where they were conducted, methods used and their findings, and have enabled me to identify a significant gap. This is in line with the purpose of a literature review as embraced by a range of scholars (Creswell, 2009; Delport & Fouche, 2005a; Fouche & Delport, 2005; Henning et al., 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Whisker, 2005).

It is therefore based on the literature reviewed in this chapter that insights for my study developed which finally led to the identification of the niche in which to locate my study. The review of literature on the portrayal of women in textbooks of other subjects created a curiosity in me to discover how women are portrayed in textbooks of the subject of my specialisation, history.

It becomes apparent from the review of the literature on women in history textbooks that many gender analysis studies in history textbooks have been conducted worldwide. However, geographically the literature shows that most of the studies were centred in America and Europe and some in Asia (Cains & Inglis, 1989; Chick, 2006; Fournier & Wineburg, 1997; Frederickson, 2004; Muravyeva, 2006; O'Kelly, 1983; Osler, 1994; Schocker & Woyshner, 2013; Schrader & Wotipka, 2011; Su, 2007). Few studies on women in textbooks have been carried out in Africa (Fardon & Schoeman, 2010; Schoeman, 2009). Furthermore, very little has been researched on women in history textbooks in Africa outside South Africa as evidenced by the paucity of literature. Malawi serves as a good example where no studies in history textbooks from a women's perspective or any other according to my knowledge have been done. The absence of research work in history textbooks in Malawi created a niche for my study in order to contribute knowledge to the existing body of literature in Africa as well as the whole world.

A critical scrutiny of the studies on history textbooks reviewed in this chapter showed that history textbooks for different grades and levels have been studied by researchers. However, little attention has been dedicated to history textbooks used at junior secondary school level. For example, studies by Schoeman (2009) and Fardon and Schoeman (2010) focused on grade 10 South African history textbooks, Su (2007) analysed grade four Taiwanese social studies' textbooks and Osler (1994) dealt with the UK key stage three history textbooks. Moreover, Fournier and Wineburg (1997) studied both Elementary (Primary) and Middle school (junior secondary school)<sup>1</sup> history textbooks while Chick (2006) analysed Elementary, Middle and High School<sup>2</sup> (senior secondary school) history textbooks used in America. In addition, Frederickson (2004) in America studied the History Survey Course textbooks for high school level. It becomes apparent therefore, judging from these amongst other examples that very little has been carried out specifically on junior secondary school history textbooks. This provided a niche for me to focus on history textbooks used at this level in Malawi as few studies have been executed at such a level elsewhere as compared to senior secondary school (High School) textbooks.

Furthermore, the review of the literature, particularly on women in textbooks and women in history textbooks, equipped me with a methodological starting point for my study. As indicated in the foregoing sections, the studies reviewed were dominated by a quantitative content analysis method. This involved counting the images, names of men and women mentioned in the text and the index, activities of women and men and so forth and drawing conclusions from such analyses. I adopted this method from the literature review for my study in the initial analysis of the visual images and the verbal text. It was noted from the literature that few studies exceeded quantitative content analysis to employing other methods. However my study deviated from this norm for it transcended mere quantitative content analysis to the utilisation of visual semiotic analysis and inductive analysis which are both qualitative methods of analysing text. This makes my study unique in that it also uses qualitative methods of analysis other than just quantitative content analysis in order to have a better

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<sup>1</sup> Elementary School can be equated to Primary School and Middle School to Junior Secondary School in Malawi.

<sup>2</sup> High school can be equated to senior secondary school in Malawi.

understanding of how women are portrayed in the textbooks studied. I used qualitative methods because I noted from the previous studies that raw numbers or the statistics derived from quantitative analysis did not furnish a complete story about women. This limitation in the studies reviewed therefore compelled me to supplement the quantitative content analysis with qualitative analysis methods in order to explain fully how women are portrayed in the history textbooks studied and why they are portrayed in particular ways.

Thus the review of the literature particularly on women in textbooks and women in history textbooks facilitated my understanding of which studies have been carried out in textbooks of different subjects as well as history, where the studies were conducted, the methods used and their findings. This knowledge eventually enabled me to identify a niche, locate the study in a broader field of literature and formulate an idea of the initial method to use for the analysis.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

My literature review was divided into four sections. With regards to the literature, I have argued that the inclusion or exclusion of women and how the latter are portrayed in textbooks and in history textbooks depends on a number of factors which revolve around the nature of textbooks in general and the role of history textbooks in particular. Furthermore, it can be argued based on the literature reviewed that women in textbooks as well as history textbooks are generally under-represented in the content and illustrations, misrepresented both in content and images and ascribed to stereotypically traditional, reproductive and domestic feminine roles and activities. The gaps identified from the literature based on this review provided a justification for my study. In addition, the results of the previous studies as reviewed in this chapter would be useful in discussing the findings of my study. The theoretical and conceptual framework discussed in the proceeding chapter also had its foundation in this literature review. This is because there is a need for employing theory which explains the conditions of women to understand how women have been portrayed in the previous studies as well as in mine. In the next chapter therefore, I turn to the theoretical and conceptual framework which was used to understand the portrayal of women in this study.

## CHAPTER THREE

### FRAMING THE STUDY THEORETICALLY AND CONCEPTUALLY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter is a continuation of the literature review that I initiated in chapter two. However, unlike in the previous chapter where I reviewed research literature, in this chapter I focus on theoretical literature. I explain the theory that underpins my study in order to create the theoretical and conceptual framework for the conduct of the enquiry. As the purpose of the study was to explore the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi, a theory(ies) that explains the conditions of women was considered the most appropriate to frame the inquiry. Hence feminism was deemed the most relevant theory to provide the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study.

Feminist theory explains the subordination and oppression of women in society and seeks to change the situation of women by ensuring equality between men and women. However, as feminism is broad, comprising a wide spectrum of ideological perceptions, I set the boundaries of this study within six selected feminist perspectives. These are liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist feminism, socialist feminism, black feminism and African feminism. The choice was made in order to provide a detailed and critical analysis and explanation of the phenomenon under study since women are not a homogeneous category which would be understood by one hegemonic or universalising feminist perspective. I therefore, combine some aspects of each of these feminisms to create a conceptual framework for the study. The theoretical and conceptual framework of this study could therefore be described as a bricolage constructed from notions or premises from the six selected feminist perspectives. The term 'bricolage' means something that is created from a variety of resources that happen to be available. Therefore in my case, I created the theoretical and conceptual framework bricolage from selected feminist theories which will help me to analyse and explain the portrayal of women in the history textbooks under study.

This chapter is organised into four main sections beginning with the introduction. In the second section, I explain feminism as a theory and why it was deemed relevant for my study. In section three I focus on each of the feminist perspectives used in this study which culminates with a summary and discussion of the feminisms. I highlight their beliefs about the subordination and oppression of women and their solutions to the problem and the contribution of the feminisms to the analysis of data and explanation of the findings. The final sub-section in section three is the summary and discussion of the contributions of the feminisms where I create the conceptual framework in a concise way. The last section is the conclusion of the chapter where I finalise the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study.

### **3.2 Feminism**

Considering the purpose of my study which was to explore the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks, feminism was deemed a relevant theory because of its potential or power to explain the conditions of women in society. According to Weiner (1994) the term feminism comes from the Latin word '*femina*' which means woman. Thus feminism specifically and primarily represents and addresses the interests and concerns of women (Weedon, 1987; Weiner, 1994). Feminism is based on a strong belief that women in society are subordinated, oppressed, disadvantaged and treated unequally in comparison to men and that their oppression is not legitimate, natural or justified in any way (Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007; Bryson, 1992; Code, 1995; Hannam, 2007; Kenway & Modra, 1992; Weedon, 1987; Weiner, 1994). Bryson (1992, p. 1) adds that "virtually in all known societies men appear to have power over women." Consequently, as Abbot, Wallace and Tyler (2005) argue, women's freedom is largely limited by the relative power of men who in most cases tend to possess more social, political, cultural and economic control than women.

However, feminism does not only address issues of justice and equality, but also "offers a critique of male-dominated institutions, values and social practices that are oppressive and destructive" by using gender as a category of analysis (Mannathoko, 1992, p. 71). Despite this general conclusion, some feminists argue that feminism does not only recognise sex or gender as the single source of power that

subordinates and oppresses women (Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999; Hannam, 2007) . As Hannam (2007, p. 12) states, “some feminists prioritised gender issues throughout their lives, while others shifted their focus on their political interests over time, in some periods prioritising the fight against racism or class exploitation rather than women’s subordination to men.” Therefore, oppression and subordination of women is an intersection of gender, race and class (Bryson, 1999). Consequently, based on this argument, my analysis of the portrayal of women in the textbooks will not only be limited to gender but will be extended to issues of race and class. Thus the use of feminist theory provided me with tools for both analysing and understanding the portrayal of women in the textbooks studied.

Feminism however, does not only halt at explaining the subordination and oppression of women but extends further to question and challenge the origins of these social injustices and unequal power relations between women and men and offers a variety of strategies that can effect change to ensure equality and social justice for women. As such, feminists hold the conviction that the condition of women is socially constructed, and therefore, it can be changed (Hannam, 2007). The goal of feminism therefore is to end the subordination and oppression of women and bring social justice and change in their conditions. Hence, as Weedon (1987) argues, feminism is both theory and politics. He asserts that it is a theory because it has a set of beliefs or understandings concerning the cause of the subordination and oppression of women and offers suggestions on how change to bring equality and social justice can be achieved, it is political because it is aimed at changing existing oppressive power relations in society in order to achieve equality and justice for women. Feminism, therefore, is a movement that seeks justice for women and the end of all forms of oppression and inequality (Kenway & Modra, 1992; Mannathoko, 1992; Weedon, 1987).

It is acknowledged by most feminist authors that feminism is theoretically complex and diverse as it is not a unified or holistic body of thought and it is embedded with contestations and contradictions (Abbott et al., 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1992, 1999; Haslanger, Tuana, & O'Connor, 2011; Longino, 1990; Ryan, 2001). This nature of feminism is due to the fact that feminists do not agree on their explanation of the origin of women’s subordination and oppression, what constitutes oppression

and how women can be liberated (Abbott et al., 2005; Bryson, 1999; Hannam, 2007). Consequently as Haslanger, Tuana and O'Connor (2011) argue, feminism means many things to many people and according to Jagger (1983) as quoted by Abbot, Wallace and Tyler (2005, p. 27), "there are many ways of being a feminist." The disagreements among feminists have resulted in the rise or emergence of many forms of feminist perspectives such as black feminism, liberal feminism, radical feminism, lesbian feminism, African feminism and post structural feminism. Each of the feminisms has their own ideological and political stand concerning the origin and meaning of oppression or subordination of women, the campaign and struggle against these injustices and how to bring about change in the condition of women. However, all feminists share a common belief that women are subordinated or oppressed and aim at the same goal of ending women's oppression.

Considering the fact that feminism is broad with many perspectives, I selected six feminist perspectives to create a bricolage theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. I drew some premises from each of the selected feminist perspectives and joined them together to form the conceptual framework for analysis while the theoretical beliefs provided a basis for explaining the findings. I opted to create the theoretical and conceptual bricolage framework from the six feminisms because to understand women as a heterogeneous category or group demands more knowledge from more than one theory. This strategy is line with Villaverde's (2008, p. 54) argument who asserts that "no one theory will ever be useful in isolation; rather our breadth of knowledge affords critical discernment of which ideas to juxtapose or combine in praxis." She further encourages feminists to eradicate the tendencies to completely lean on any one theory and urges them to demand more knowledge from that which the intersection of more theories can provide. Furthermore, each of the feminist perspectives have their own weaknesses which limit them from explaining diverse oppression of women and its origin as well as offer solutions which apply to all women. Therefore use of a bricolage theoretical and conceptual framework is advantageous because weaknesses of each of the theories are covered by strengths of the others. The concept of a bricolage of feminist theories would therefore be useful in the critical analysis of the portrayal of women in the history textbooks under study and in offering an explanation why women are portrayed in particular ways.



Feminist theory was deemed relevant to provide the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study for three reasons. Firstly the topic itself and the purpose of the study are concerned with women as a phenomenon of inquiry who are the primary subjects of feminism (Weedon, 1987; Weiner, 1994). Therefore, the use of feminist theory for the study was inevitable because the study was in the first place conceived with a feminist stance by making women the subject of the inquiry. Secondly, as mentioned earlier, feminism is an acceptable theory that explains the conditions of women; hence the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks could be understood better through the use of feminist theory. The various feminist perspectives framing the study would explain the portrayal of women, not only through the lens of gender as a source of power responsible for subordination of women, but by also employing other sources of power such as class, race and patriarchy. Lastly, feminism provided tools for analysing the portrayal of women in the textbooks studied. Premises of each of the feminisms used provided an insight of what to expect in the textbooks regarding the portrayal of women.

### **3.3 Feminist theories used**

As previously highlighted, from the wide spectrum of feminist theories I selected six feminisms to provide the theoretical and conceptual framework for my study which I have described as a bricolage. It is to the specific feminisms that I now turn to in order to create my conceptual framework. I highlight beliefs of each feminist theory, aspects that are drawn from each theory for analysing the portrayal of women and explain weaknesses of each of the feminisms. I begin with liberal feminism for chronological reasons because of the six feminisms chosen, liberal feminism is the oldest and most well-known.

#### **3.3.1 Liberal Feminism**

Unlike recent feminisms, liberal feminism has an inveterate history. The emergence of this feminism dates as far back as the period between the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Weiner, 1994). Despite being an old version of feminism, it is the most enduring and widely accepted of all forms of feminisms because of its belief in democratic social reforms (Beasley, 1999; Coffey & Delamont, 2000; Weiner, 1994). Liberal feminism drew its insights from the

traditional themes of liberalism which stressed individual rights, freedom, justice and democracy (Abbott et al., 2005; Baehr, 2008; Weiner, 1994). Liberalism emphasised that all individuals have rights to freedom and autonomy. Therefore, influenced by these views of liberalism, liberal feminists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, such as Mary Wollstonecraft, questioned and challenged viewpoints and practices which were oppressive to and discriminatory against women (Mannathoko, 1992). Consequently such early liberal feminists demanded equal rights and opportunities as well as freedom for women.

Liberal feminists attribute the subordination and oppression of women to unequal rights and legal systems that exist in society (Abbott et al., 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1992; Hannam, 2007). Abbot et al (2005) and Beasley (1999) argue that the unequal rights and legal systems create artificial barriers which hinder women from participating in the public world beyond the family and home. They argue that women are not essentially different from men in terms of capability and rationality but they are denied opportunities to participate because of their sex through the inhibitive legal barriers. According to liberal feminists, the barriers are deeply rooted in the customs, laws and traditions of the society and they consequently bar women from attaining their potential and rights (Tong, 1989).

It is due to these concerns that liberal feminists demand equal rights and opportunities in order to liberate women from their subordination. They assert that “individual women should be as free as men to determine their social, political and educational roles and that any laws, traditions and activities that inhibit equal rights and opportunities should be abolished” (Weiner, 1994, p. 53). Hence liberal feminism concentrates on eradicating all legal barriers that prevent women from realizing their full potential in all social institutions of the public sphere such as education, employment and politics. As Bryson (1992) and Beasley (1999) argue, liberal feminism emphasises equal rights and participation of women in the public arena with the aim of wanting to claim that which has traditionally been associated with men. For this reason, liberal feminists, perhaps due to their democratic origin, believe that equality and emancipation of women can be achieved through reforms without carrying out any revolutionary changes in economic, political, educational or cultural life; a view which has been criticised by other feminists (Weiner, 1994).

I find liberal feminism is a useful theory for my study for I utilise some of its premises as analytical tools or lenses for examining the portrayal of women in the textbooks under study. I draw from the tenets of this feminism to foreground the analysis of the portrayal of women in the junior secondary school history textbooks studied and find a basis for explaining why women are portrayed in particular ways as reflected in chapter's four to seven. As indicated above, liberal feminism emphasises equal rights and opportunities for women as one of its political strategies. I use this tenet as a lens to analyse the portrayal of women in terms of their representation in the textbooks. As Middleton (1993) argues, the political aim of liberal feminists is to ensure equitable distribution of both genders across all existing social institutions. Furthermore, of all the feminist perspectives, liberal feminism is the most widely used in education including the curriculum and curriculum materials with its emphasis on gender equality (Measor & Sikes, 1992; Weiner, 1994).

From this theory I also draw its strong emphasis on women's participation in the public sphere. As Beasley (1999, p. 51) states, "public citizenship and the attainment of equality with men in the public arena is central to liberal feminism." I use this premise to focus my analysis on the locus where women are portrayed performing their activities as well as the actual roles in which the women are engaged in the textbooks. Similarly, liberal feminism campaigns for equal opportunities in positions of power or in everything that men do with its strong belief that women are naturally as capable as men intellectually and rationally (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). Bryson (1999, p. 10) adds that if women appear inferior, this is "a result of their upbringing and lack of education rather than a quality inherent in their nature." Therefore the focus on my analysis of women will be on positions in which they are portrayed, and by so doing examining them and determining whether they are male-dominated or female dominated positions.

Another principle that is stressed in the liberal feminist perspective is the individuality and autonomy of women. Liberal feminists argue that once equal rights are granted, women just like men have to be judged as individuals based on merit and not females as a group (Abbot et al, 2005; Bryson, 1992). I use this tenet of individuality of women to analyse the type of visual images in which women are portrayed; that is,

whether women are depicted in individual, pair or group visual images. I also analyse how women are mentioned or featured in the verbal text; whether mentioned for their own achievement as individuals, as a group, or because of their husbands' or fathers' achievement.

Despite its usefulness for the study and in explaining the oppression of women, liberal feminism has been criticised on a number of grounds by other feminists. For instance, its reliance on democratic reforms as a strategy for emancipating women without “the need for revolutionary changes in economic, political or cultural life” (Weiner, 1994, p. 54) has been heavily attacked by radical feminists. As a result, this approach is apt to perpetuate the status quo rather than changing the condition of women (Manathoko, 1992). Bryson (1992) argues that liberal feminism fails to explain the continued oppression of women in society despite having equal rights and opportunities in the law, education, employment and politics. In relation to this, Bryson (1999) further asserts that full equality cannot be attained because women still live in a world where laws are written or influenced by men. Liberal feminists have also been criticised of uncritically accepting male norms as human values because of their desire to become like men and obtain what men have without questioning the value of such standards (Abbott et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). For this reason, Tong (1998, p. 31) and Beasley (1999, p. 52) argue that liberal feminism has been accused by other feminists as well as anti-feminists of suffering “from a kind of penis envy.”

Although liberal feminism offers insights for analysing and explaining the portrayal of women in the textbooks under study, it may be deficient if used on its own. This is because liberal feminism recognises sex or gender as the only source of power that subordinates women at the expense of other forces. It also presupposes women as a homogeneous group which is only affected by sexuality as a source of their problem. Radical and socialist feminists criticise liberal feminists for this assumption. Therefore as mentioned earlier a reliance on one feminist approach would not provide enough knowledge about the portrayal of women as intended by the purpose of the study. Villaverde (2008, p. 9) urges feminist researchers to “demand more from what knowledge can afford and what the intersection of theories might provide.” For this reason, I move on to radical feminism to supplement the insights or

contributions from liberal feminism for the broad analysis and explanation of the portrayal of women in the history textbooks under study.

### **3.3.2 Radical Feminism**

Unlike liberal feminism which has an inveterate history, radical feminism emerged in the late 1960s in Europe and North America. Abbot et al (2005) and Beasley (1999) argue that unlike other feminist perspectives, radical feminism is not drawn directly from other branches of mainstream thought. As Bryson (1992, p. 181) states, “it is essentially a theory of, by and for women: as such it is based firmly in women’s own experiences and perceptions and sees no need to compromise with existing political perspectives and agendas.” For this reason, it is argued that radical feminism “is feminism in its purest form” (Abbot et al, 2005, p. 33).

Radical feminism attributes the subordination and oppression of women to patriarchy which is male domination over women. According to radical feminists, patriarchy is used as the “shorthand for a social system based on male domination and female subordination” which implies that the relationship between the sexes has always been based on male power over women (Bryson, 1999, p. 27). It is argued by radical feminists that patriarchy is the primary, oldest and most basic form of domination of women and that other forms of oppression are merely extensions of it or are viewed as modelled on or derived from it (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1992, 1999; Measor & Sikes, 1992; Weiner, 1994). Patriarchy is a fundamental and universal form of domination of women by men and its power goes deeper than other forms of power based on race or class. Radical feminists argue that patriarchal or male power is not only limited to the public worlds of paid employment and political activity but also spreads to the private life of the family and sexuality (Bryson, 1992, 1999). Furthermore, as Bryson (1992) argues, patriarchy also relies upon economic exploitation, the use of threat of force, sexual violence and rape.

Patriarchy pervades all aspects of culture and social life and becomes so deeply embedded in the mental constructs of people that it seems natural and largely remains invisible or unnoticeable to both men and women (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). As Abbot et al (2005, p. 34) put it,

radical feminists argue that no area of society is free from male definition ... Men ... systematically dominate women in every sphere of life and all relationships between men and women are institutionalised relationships of power.

For instance patriarchy is so embedded in thought, values, institutions and resources that it cannot be reformed only but requires uprooting (Tong, 1989). Radical feminists argue that patriarchy is maintained by the process of socialisation which begins in the family from childhood and is reinforced by education, religion, literature and state power (Bryson, 1992, 1999). Through socialisation by these agents patriarchal values automatically become internalised by both men and women alike.

Radical feminists argue that women as a group are oppressed because of their sex. As such all women in the world are oppressed regardless of their race, class, nationality or ethnicity and that men are their main enemy (Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). Radical feminism therefore views all men as having “power over at least some women” (Beasley, 1999, p. 56). It is argued by radical feminists that women as a class / group suffer the same oppression of patriarchal domination which unites them in a common sisterhood (Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1992). Radical feminists therefore urge all women worldwide to unite and struggle together for their liberation.

In accordance with their concerns, radical feminists’ fight against patriarchy and its approach to eradicating oppression of women tends to be militant. They believe that because patriarchy is so entrenched in society it is difficult to reform (Tong, 1989), and the only way to achieve its goal is to establish the root cause of the problem, hence radical. According to radical feminists, liberation can be achieved by uprooting patriarchy in society as this is the root cause of oppression of women (Tong, 1989). Radical feminists are of the conviction that it is only through the eradication of patriarchy and all the structures that support and perpetuate it that women will attain true equality in society. Unlike liberal feminists who advocate for democratic reforms in order to attain their emancipation, radical feminists promote revolutionary measures against patriarchy to achieve liberation for women. This is because they believe that patriarchy is so entrenched in all aspects of life that the strategies to overthrow it need to be far-reaching. However, as Beasley (1999, p.56) argues,

the proposed revolutionary change in the organisation of the power relations between the sexes is not described in terms of a single cataclysmic movement, but rather as a consequence of the cumulative effect of many small scale actions.

He adds that they advocate small group organisations of women only rather than formally administered structures under the control of the state. Thus radical feminists do not encourage state or government intervention in their political activities because they consider the state as inherently patriarchal in nature, serving men and their interests. This view is in contrast to liberal feminists' strategy who consider the state as neutral and look up to it for legal policies of equal rights and opportunities. Furthermore, extreme radical feminists advocate separation from men and living in women only groups. Weedon (1987, p. 4), while acknowledging it as a short term measure, argues that "for radical feminists the only way in which women can assert their autonomy from men and recover their true and natural femininity is in separation from men and the patriarchal structures of society." However, the practicality of this strategy is questionable because women will still coexist with men.

As with liberal feminism, radical feminism was found to some extent to be useful for my study. Due to its recognition of patriarchy as being pervasive in nature, this theory will in many ways provide an explanation of how women are portrayed in the textbooks. In addition, some of the tenets of the theory provide lenses for analysing the way women are portrayed in the textbooks under study. Initially the theory argues that women are dominated not only in the public world of politics and employment but also in the private sphere of the family. This provokes a critical analysis of the locus where women are portrayed and the activities which women are depicted doing and where they are carrying out those duties.

Radical feminism, as previously mentioned, condemns patriarchy as the cause of women's subordination; and, under patriarchal social order men are viewed as superior and as leaders while women are seen as inferior and as subordinates (Lerner, 1993). I will capitalise on this belief as a lens to analyse how women in the textbooks are portrayed in terms of positions of leadership and authority. According to radical feminists, women, despite their numerical supremacy globally, are dominated by men in social, cultural, economic and political institutions. I will use this

assumption to analyse the representation of women in the textbooks as the latter are cultural artefacts of the society they serve. Finally, it was pointed out that patriarchy also relies on the use of threat of force, violence and rape to control women. This also provides an opportunity to critically analyse any signs of victimisation of women in the way they are portrayed in the textbooks.

Thus radical feminism, due to its belief in patriarchy as the fundamental and most pervasive form of male domination over women, provides a strong basis for explaining the portrayal of women in the textbooks under study. This explanation is expounded in chapter seven. It also provides lenses for analysing how women are portrayed in the textbooks through its assumptions. The analysis in chapters five and six is based on some of the tenets of this theory.

Unlike liberal feminism, radical feminism has not commanded widespread acceptance because of its radical measures in the fight for women's liberation. Radical feminism has therefore been faulted on a number of grounds. For instance, it assumes that all men are oppressors of women without considering that not all men are capable or desirous of oppressing women (Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). Furthermore, the overemphasis on patriarchy as a root cause of women's oppression obscures other forms of oppression as for example Capitalism and Communism (Manathoko, 1992). Bryson (1992) argues that radical feminism fails to explain the real origin of male power or patriarchy as well as providing a clear strategy for its demise. She also adds that by concentrating on the evils perpetuated on women, the theory reduces women to mere victims rather than active agents in history which can be contrary to a radical feminist view of women.

Since radical feminism as previously mentioned overlooks other forms of oppressive power over women such as class and race, reliance on this theory would not provide enough knowledge on how women are portrayed in the history textbooks considering the fact that history deals with the progress of people (both men and women) which entailed interaction of different groups of men and women. This weakness therefore necessitates the need for the use of Marxist theory as this recognises another form of oppressive power for women other than patriarchy.



### **3.3.3 Marxist Feminism**

Marxist feminism developed from the theory of Karl Marx in the 1960s in which feminists adapted Marxist ideas to explain the subordination and exploitation of women in Capitalist societies (Abbott et al., 2005; Weiner, 1994). According to Marxist feminists, the hierarchical class system in traditional societies and Capitalism in modern societies is the power that oppresses women as it creates divisions between them and men (Beasley, 1999). This assumption is contrary to a radical feminist view which regards patriarchy as the origin of women's oppression as well as the ultimate and primary power of all inequalities. As Beasley (1999, p. 60) puts it, "sexual oppression is seen as a dimension of class power [thus], class oppression predates sexual oppression." This therefore means that a women's situation is to be understood as a by-product of economic activity and class struggle and not patriarchy. It is argued by Marxist feminists that "even the loosest forms of Marxism have seemed to suggest that class and Capitalism are more fundamental than gender and patriarchy" in explaining the subordination of women (Bryson, 1999, p. 21).

Marxist feminism, unlike radical feminism, focuses on labour and economics rather than ideas and attitudes and the involvement of men in power relations. Beasley (1999, p. 61) elaborates that "power is not primarily associated with sex but with the imperatives of class, private wealth, property and profit." Thus the Marxist perspective shares a commonality with liberal feminism in their leaning towards the public sphere. However, due to their focus on labour, Marxist feminists concern themselves particularly with women's position in relation to paid labour in the public domain. Marxist feminists also pay attention to women's unpaid labour in the family as it has links with Capitalism (Abbott et al., 2005; Bryson, 1992, 1999). According to Marxist feminists, Capitalism oppresses women by largely excluding them from wage labour and exploiting their unpaid labour in the domestic sphere of the family to reproduce Capitalist relations of production.

It is argued by Marxist feminists that women's unpaid domestic labour in the family does not only benefit men but is also of central importance to the Capitalist economy (Abbott et al., 2005; Bryson, 1999). Abbott et al (2005) explain three ways in which women's roles in the family benefits Capitalism. Firstly they argue that women

perform domestic labour without being paid and in so doing take care of the current and even the past generation of workers. Women's unpaid labour also releases men to do paid work in the Capitalist economy. Secondly, women reproduce and socialise the next generation of workers and thirdly women consume the products of Capitalism. Marxist feminists also argue that women are oppressed in the workplace which also serves the interests of Capitalism. As noted by Bryson (1999, p. 20), "women's gender specific oppression in the workplace is central to the maintenance of Capitalism."

Marxist feminists argue that measures to liberate women have to target the class system and Capitalism and not through appealing to reason and demanding justice as radical and liberal feminists imply (Bryson, 1992). As suggested by Marxist feminists, women can be liberated by their increased entry into the labour market and participation in the class struggles aimed at overthrowing Capitalism and replacing it with Communism. Bryson (1992, p. 3) states that,

it is only in communist society that the economic dependency that is the basis of women's oppression will disappear, and communal childcare and house-keeping free them from the domestic drudgery and allow them to participate fully in productive work.

Through such a revolutionary measure, male privilege could be dismantled leading to equality.

Marxist feminism was chosen as part of the bricolage because it has some insights to offer to my study. This is because history as a subject deals with the topic or issue of labour and economy since historical people depended on the organisation of labour for their modes of production for survival. Some of the ways in which women may be portrayed in the textbooks under study could best be understood or explained by using this theory. As noted, Marxist feminism pays particular attention to women's positions in relation to wage or paid labour. Therefore this tenet provides a lens for analysing inclusion/participation and position of women in wage labour in the way they are portrayed in the textbooks. Since the organisation of labour is linked to tools and technology, this notion also provides an insight for the analysis of such materials used by women in the way they are depicted. Furthermore, Marxist feminism also emphasises class as a source of coercive power. This offers an

opportunity to analyse how women are portrayed in terms of class. The analysis presented in chapters five and six reflects this.

Marxist feminism, like other feminisms is not immune to criticism in its assumptions about oppression and the liberation of women. Other feminists criticise Marxist feminism's insistence on the primacy of economic and class issues as oppressive power for women. Bryson (1999) argues that this makes the theory unable to conceptualise gender inequality and recognises that not only bourgeois but also working class men can benefit from women. Consequently, the theory does not provide adequate information on the ways in which men benefit from women's unpaid labour. Furthermore, Marxist feminism fails to explain patriarchal relationships in societies that are not capitalist and is also unable to account for the position of women in post-colonial or developing countries (Abbott et al, 2005). Related to this, Marxist feminism tends to be blind to the significance of issues of race in feminist thought.

It is acknowledged by Weiner (1994) and Beasley (1999) that although Marxist feminism has greater explanatory power, it did not attract a large membership to its political position because the incorporation of feminist ideas within Marxism proved to be too complex for most women to understand. As a result, its influence began to wane and was consequently overtaken by socialist feminism (Beasley, 1999).

### **3.3.4 Socialist Feminism**

Socialist feminism was born from debates between radical feminists and Marxist feminists over the primary and fundamental cause of women's oppression (Beasley, 1999). While radical feminism prioritises patriarchy, the Marxist feminist perspective puts the primacy on Capitalism in a classed society. Socialist feminism therefore combines some beliefs of radical feminism and Marxist feminism in its ideology and political practice. Beasley (1999, p. 62) elaborates the marriage of the two theories by stating that,

socialist feminists attempt to maintain some elements of Marxism regarding the significance of class distinctions and labour while incorporating radical feminist view that sexual oppression is not historically a consequence of class division.

Socialist feminists do not believe that class is the only and primary and fundamental cause of women's subordination and oppression. Observations in most countries where Communism was or is still practised such as the former United Socialist Soviet Republic (USSR) current Russia, Cuba and China among others indicated that women still felt the impact of patriarchy or experienced patriarchal oppression despite entering the labour market and being economically independent (Bryson, 1999; Mannah, 2008). This testifies to the structural and ubiquitous nature of patriarchy that it pervades all areas of life despite women being granted freedom and access to the public domain of employment. Therefore, socialist feminists argue that women are primarily oppressed by patriarchy which is reinforced by Capitalism. Socialist feminists consequently view patriarchy and Capitalism as so mutually related and reinforcing of one another in their oppression of women that it is not easy to separate these two powers. Macdonald (1981) quoted by Weiner (1994, p. 57) elaborates this interplay between Capitalism and patriarchy as follows:

both class relations and gender relations, while they exist within their own histories, can nevertheless be so closely interwoven that it is theoretically very difficult to draw them apart within specific historic conjunctures. The development of capitalism is one such conjuncture where one finds patriarchal relations of dominance and control over women buttressing the structure of class domination.

This clearly shows that socialist feminists are identified by their view of the relationship between class and sex (also referred to as the category, gender), or in other words, the relationship between Capitalism and patriarchy (Beasley, 1999). Hence, unlike radical feminists and Marxist feminists, socialist feminists are concerned with forces of power that cut across class and gender.

In terms of liberation of women, socialist feminists advocate struggle at all levels whereby women have to fight both Capitalism and patriarchy. As Bryson (1992) elaborates, this may sometimes involve autonomous women's organisations but it could also entail working with men. He further argues that unlike liberal and Marxist feminists, socialist feminists see men as having at least a short-term interest in maintaining present gender relations. In addition, socialist feminists, unlike radical feminists, do not perceive the interests of women and men as being opposed permanently. Thus socialist feminism is favourable to those who are not opposed to men but are willing to work with them in the liberation of women.

Socialist feminism was found useful for this study for two reasons. Firstly, its greater explanatory power of the oppression of women as cutting across gender and class will be useful in explaining the way women are portrayed in the history textbooks under study. This takes into consideration the possibility that women may be portrayed in particular ways not only because of their sex but also due to their class. Secondly, its recognition of patriarchy and Capitalism as oppressive powers provided me with insight to be critical in my analysis to examine the influence of class and gender in the way women are portrayed in the textbooks. Thus this theory provided an additional lens for analysing how the women are portrayed in the history textbooks to be studied.

Despite its greater explanatory power, socialist feminism has been criticised by other feminists. For instance, liberal feminists reject most ideas of socialist feminism as being based on “muddled economic thinking” and naïve optimistic views of human nature (Bryson, 1999, p. 18). Furthermore, they also argue that pursuing socialist feminist ideas would result both in economic failure and loss of individual freedom. Socialist feminism has also been criticised by other feminists for failing to explain, despite its claims to supporting the liberation of women, the continued oppression of women in most Communist countries.

Socialist feminism like Marxist feminist thought does not recognise race as a source of oppressive power for women. Beasley (1999) argues that race as a form of power tended to be marginalised from the initial accounts of debates among socialist feminists. He elaborates that the issue of race was a bone of contention within the socialist feminist perspective because of its primary concern with forms of power that cut across class division and sexual difference. The debates surrounding race led to the development of other feminist perspectives particularly black feminism which is the focus of the following section.

### **3.3.5 Black Feminism**

Black feminism evolved in America and Europe as a critique of mainstream white feminism because of its neglect of the significance of race as a source of oppressive power for black women. The black feminist perspective criticised the white feminist

movement both in terms of its practice and theories which sought to explain the nature of women's oppression (Amos & Parmar, 2001).

It is argued by black feminists that "throughout the history of feminism, many white women writers and activists have simply failed to 'see' women of colour" (Bryson, 1999, p. 33). Consequently, black women feel oppressed by white feminism because it does not speak to their experiences and when it does, it is from a racist reasoning and perspective (Amos & Parmar, 2001; hooks, 2001). hooks adds that racism abounds in the writings of white western feminists which reinforce white supremacy over black women. As a result black women have tended to remain invisible within feminist scholarship and their experiences have been relegated to the margins of feminist theory (Abbott et al., 2005; Amos & Parmar, 2001). Black feminism therefore challenged the legitimacy of a feminism that pays no attention to racism. As hooks in Weiner (1994, p. 58) argues, "feminist theory would have much to offer if it showed women ways in which racism and sexism are immutably connected rather than putting one struggle against the other or blatantly dismissing racism." For this reason black feminists have demanded that experiences of black women be made a central starting point rather than an optional extra in feminist theory and practice (Bryson, 1992, 1999). Therefore, based on this political demand, it is apparent that advocates of black feminism do not only view it as a theory of and for feminists who happen to be black, "but a self-conscious epistemological standpoint" (Bryson, 1999, p. 35). However, this does not argue simply for the inclusion of black women's perspectives in feminist analysis as a matter of justice, "rather it is claiming that if this is not done, then feminist understandings of oppression experienced by white women will also be seriously flawed" (Bryson, 1999, p. 35).

Mainstream feminism has also been criticised of universalising experiences of middle class white American and European women as opposed to black women (Abbott et al., 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1992, 1999; hooks, 2001). Black feminists argue that this marginalises the experiences of women of colour while setting-up white women as the norm. The tendency has been for white feminism to generalise white middle class experiences as universal claims which for many black women are unacceptable, irrelevant, inappropriate and false (Beasley, 1999). For this reason Abbott et al (2005) assert that mainstream feminism has been accused

of being ethnocentric. Black feminists reject universalising procedures of white feminism because such tendencies reflect racial hierarchy or domination (Beasley, 1999).

One of the universal claims that white feminism makes which black feminists challenge is the singular notion of women's oppression based on sex. Mainstream feminism perceives all women, because of their sex, as belonging to a homogeneous group or sisterhood which share sexual oppression in common. While acknowledging the fact that all women suffer sexual oppression, black feminists argue that the way black women experience male domination is different from white women due to their race (Amos & Parmar, 2001; Beasley, 1999; hooks, 2001). Black feminists assert that women of colour suffer an interplay of oppression between sex and race and not only sex as suggested by mainstream feminism. According to Beasley (1999, p. 111), black feminism poses "race as the more fundamental form of power" than sexual oppression. Consequently, as Carby as quoted by Weiner (1994) argues, women cannot point to a single source of their oppression, but rather their oppression is multiple. While white women are largely oppressed by sex, black women suffer multiple oppression based on sex, race and class (Amos & Parmar, 2001; hooks, 2001; Weiner, 1994). To elaborate this, Bryson (1999, p. 34) states that

black feminists ... argue that black women's situation should not be understood as the sum of cumulative disadvantages (gender plus race plus class) but as the product of multiple oppressions (gender times race times class).

Amos and Parmar (2001) add that it is only a synthesis of class, race and gender that can lead black feminists forward as these shape black women's lives.

Black feminists, such as postmodern and poststructural feminists, reject the perception of women as a homogeneous group (sisterhood of women) with a common identity which is characteristic of white mainstream feminism (Abbott et al., 2005; Beasley, 1999). They argue that homogenising women in a common sisterhood ignores differences among women based on nationality, religion, race and ethnicity among others and even within black women as a group. It is therefore apparent that black feminists acknowledge differences among women even among

black women themselves. Therefore black feminists argue that feminist thought needs to address the issue of diversity among women in its ideology and politics.

Although the issue of race has never been a major problem in Malawi, black feminism is still useful to this study because due to colonialism, the history presented in the textbooks to be studied concerns the interaction of people of different races. Hence the women portrayed in the textbooks are likely to be of different races which require an analysis of how race impacts upon their portrayal. Therefore, the comparison with black feminism provided a lens to analyse the influence of race on the portrayal of women depicted in the textbooks. Furthermore, the theory provides an insight to explain how the women are portrayed in terms of gender, race and class as these forms of oppression shape women's experiences according to black feminism.

In addition, analysis of race in the way women are portrayed in the textbooks would help to avoid homogenising the depiction of women into a singular identity. As noted, black feminism, unlike mainstream feminist thought recognises differences even among those within the same group. According to black feminism, white and black women may be portrayed differently because of their race among other reasons. It was for these reasons that black feminism was found useful for my study.

Despite its strength in explaining the condition of women as an interplay between gender, race and class, black feminism's emphasis on race has been criticised mainly by African feminism. According to Msimang (2002), the issue of race is particular to American women's unique experience of slavery. Based on this argument, black feminism cannot perfectly explain the experiences of African women despite sharing a common identity of being black and female. This is because the historical context of African women was different from that of their American counterparts. Therefore due to black feminist inability to accurately explain the conditions of African women, African feminism was selected in this study to address this gap. This is because some of the women included in the textbooks are from Africa and Malawi in particular.



### **3.3.6 African Feminism**

African feminism is the theory that explains the oppression of African women in the continent as well as those women of African origin living in the African Diaspora (Arndt, 2002; Kolawole, 2002; Msimang, 2002). According to Kolawole (2002, p. 97), African feminism encompasses African women in the Diaspora because such women “have an inalienable African heritage and identity, and their perception of gender is often close to the perception of gender by African women on the continent.” As with Western feminism, African feminism is not monolithic; there are several perspectives of the African feminist ideology because of the diversity of the social realities on the African continent. Arndt (2002) distinguishes three main types of African feminism namely the reformist, transformative and radical perspectives. However, all the types have a “common denominator” which is “to get to the bottom of African gender relations and the problems of African women – illuminating their causes and consequences – and criticises them” (Arndt, 2002, p. 32). In this study I use the African feminist theory in general without leaning on any particular perspective because as Arndt (2002, p. 33) argues, the “borders between them are blurred.” The various African feminisms however differ in the way they explain the oppression of women. Due to the existence of various perspectives within African feminism, some scholars prefer to call the theory in its plural form as ‘African feminisms’ (Arndt, 2002; Kolawole, 2002; Msimang, 2002).

African feminism emerged partly as a reaction to Western feminism and as a desire to take into account the social and cultural context and histories of African societies to explain the oppression of African women and how to bring about change (Arndt, 2002; Kolawole, 2002; Msimang, 2002). African feminists have criticised Western feminism on numerous grounds which led to its rejection and the formation of African feminism. One of the major criticisms against Western feminism is its racist origin and nature. African feminists noted that Western feminism talks about women in general while actually meaning white middle class women from North America and Europe. Thus Western feminism glosses over the experiences of middle class white women to include African women. Arndt (2002) asserts that Western feminism does not recognise voices from Africa and hence marginalises African women.

African feminists argue that the cultural and social conditions or context under which Western feminism and African feminism developed are different from one another (Mikell, 1997). Generally speaking Western feminism deals with the cultural and historical context of North America and Europe which is not relevant to Africa. Mikell (1997) argues that the historical context under which Western feminism in the United States, Britain and other European countries grew was different from that of Africa. He asserts, for example, that ‘the debates in many Western countries about essentialism, the female body, and radical feminism are not characteristic of the new African feminism’ (Mikell, 1997, p. 4). Rather African feminism grew out of a history of female integration within the largely corporate and agrarian-based societies with strong cultural heritages that experienced the impact of colonialism by the West (Mikell, 1997). This cultural and historical background of African women is not considered in Western feminism. Kolawole (2002, p. 93) therefore argues that “the negative reception of [Western] feminism by African scholars is linked to the failure of [Western] feminism to address the many specific historical and cultural contexts” of African women. Consequently, African women have a negative attitude towards Western feminism because it does not focus on their specific needs.

Kolawole (2002) points out that because of these and other problems such as anti-family and hatred of men that African feminists have with Western feminism, many African women scholars, activists and writers resist the label, feminism. As a result, they have tried to envisage alternative names for the movement or struggle. The most acceptable alternative name has been ‘womanism’ because of its emphasis on the cultural context and its interest in the many issues that concern African women of which gender is only one aspect (Kolawole, 2002).

This background therefore clearly shows that the beliefs and demands of African feminism are broader than those of Western feminism though both deal with women’s oppression. Arndt (2002) argues that the aim of African feminism is to upset the existing matrix of domination of women and overcome it in order to improve the situation of women. Due to the diversity of social realities in the African context, African feminists do not only highlight patriarchy as the source of women’s oppression but acknowledges or recognises other forms of power. Such forms of power which Arndt (2002, p. 32) describe as “oppressive mechanisms” include

racism, ethnicity, colonialism, neo-colonialism, religion, apartheid, class, culture and tradition. African feminism therefore desires to challenge and overcome gender oppression in the context of other oppressive mechanisms (Arndt, 2002; Kolawole, 2002). Kolawole (2002, p. 95) therefore argues that in African feminism “there is recognition that the many levels of oppression vital to African women’s true emancipation need to be addressed simultaneously.” It is argued by Arndt (2002) that with this strategy, African feminism by far exceeds the race-class-gender approach of black feminism as well as those of other versions of Western feminism.

African feminists argue that African feminism must be rooted in the local experiences and situations of African women. This is one of the bones of contention with Western feminism which disregards the realities of African societies by assuming that the western context is applicable to Africa. African feminism ensures that what is local and context-specific informs gender analysis and feminist practice in Africa in order to avoid making facile generalisations (Essof, 2001). In agreement with Essof, Kolawole (2002) asserts that historical and cultural contexts are fundamental in addressing gender in Africa. To emphasise their point, Essof (2001) and Kolawole (2002) argue that failure to consider context impoverishes feminism and results in increased misconceptions of its relevance in many African societies as well as its rejection by some African scholars.

Unlike Western feminism, African feminism believes in what Arndt (2002, p. 32) calls “cooperation or complementarity with men” in the elimination of gender and other oppressive mechanisms. In support of this, Kolawole argues that in the African context, policy changes to address the needs of women cannot succeed if men are alienated. She gives three reasons for her argument; firstly, most policy makers in African countries are men and secondly, many African women prioritise communalism and the family both of which involve working with men, hence a joint struggle against gender is imperative (Kolawole, 2002). Thirdly, many African women desire the elimination of gender simultaneously with other forms of oppression which necessitates working with men. Therefore African feminism is not a man-hating ideology but believes in cooperation with men in the struggle against women’s oppression.

African feminism is characterised by its affirmation of motherhood and the family which is contrary to Western feminism. Mikell (1997, p. 8) elaborates the difference by stating that “Western feminists are often troubled that African women take their reproductive tasks too seriously, celebrate their ability to give birth and refuse to subordinate their biological roles to other roles within society.” Thus unlike Western feminism which regards the reproductive role and care for the family as oppressive to women, African women consider child bearing as their primary responsibility upon which their status as women depends (Mikell, 1997). They also consider their responsibility for maintaining the family, village and community as crucial. Mikell (1997, p. 9) asserts that “no self-respecting African woman fails to bear children and to be an autonomous economic contributor” to the family.

Unlike Western feminism, African feminism values diversity and difference. Feminists in the latter category share this belief with postmodernist feminists who both reject the homogenising tendency of Western feminism (Kolawole, 2002). African feminism recognises diversity and difference in many aspects of women’s lives such as identity, nationality, social location and context among others. In light of this, Essof (2001, p. 127) argues that “our diversity requires that we value how particular positions influence experiences of oppression as a starting point.” This is exemplified by Kolawole (2002) who argues that while African women from other African countries in the continent such as Egypt, Senegal and Kenya may have some commonalities, variations are likely to occur in the way they understand gender and gender struggles. Therefore diversity and difference cannot be overlooked in African feminism.

African feminism was found useful for this study because its tenets would help to critically and thoroughly analyse and explain the portrayal of African women depicted in the history textbooks under study rather than relying only on Western feminist theories. The theory provides more lenses for analysing African women in the textbooks to be studied not only based on their gender but also upon other aspects such as race, nationality, religion, class and roles. The fact that the theory takes into account the local conditions and the historical, social, political and cultural context to explain the situation of women would assist in broadening my analysis to include such issues when examining the depiction of women in the textbooks.

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, African feminism takes into account issues of diversity and difference. This tenet will guide my explanation of the portrayal of African women in the textbooks differently without homogenising them or their experiences. The context under which various women are depicted in the textbooks will be taken into consideration to explain their portrayal which will bring about differences among the African women. Generally the way African women are portrayed in the textbooks will be explained using this theory. Thus African feminism is very relevant and useful in the analysis and explanation of the way African women are portrayed in the textbooks under study. The analysis in chapters five and six and the discussion in chapter seven illustrate this.

Although African feminism is useful in explaining the situation of African women in Africa, it is not immune from criticism. For instance, Bakare-Yusuf (2003) criticises the theory for its over-reliance on patriarchy to explain the situation of African women in society. It has also been noted by Andrade (2002) that African feminists tend to over-value women's agency in the face of colonialism while ignoring more complex and fully developed systems of knowledge. According to Andrade who borrows from Nancy Rose Hunt, African feminism works on the assumption that women have the autonomous capacity to change their situation through its celebration of women's agency. However, this may not be easy because patriarchy is strongly entrenched in African societies.

As previously mentioned in section 3.1 above, the bricolage of six feminist theories highlighted in this chapter help to create a theoretical and conceptual framework for analysing the data and explaining the findings. Each of the feminist theories contributes some lens to the analysis of the data in the textbooks which jointly create what I describe as a bricolage conceptual and theoretical frame of operation for the study. The following section brings together the construction or building materials of the bricolage from the different theories to create a conceptual and theoretical framework for the study.

### **3.3.7 Consolidating the theoretical and conceptual framework**

This study was informed by feminism in order to explain the portrayal of women in junior secondary school textbooks used in Malawi. Feminism is the theory that explains the subordination and oppression of women in society. Since feminism is diverse encompassing many theories, six feminisms were chosen to create the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study. These are liberal, radical, Marxist, socialist, Black and African feminisms. It was noted from the discussion of the feminist theories that each one of them used on its own could not provide adequate analytical tools and explain thoroughly the portrayal of women in the textbooks under study. I therefore drew insights from each of the feminist perspectives to help analyse the data and explain how women are portrayed in the history textbooks being studied. It is for this reason that I describe the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study as a 'bricolage' constructed with ideas and concepts from the six different feminist theories. This approach concurs with Villaverde's (2008) point of view which urges feminist researchers to use more theories in order to have adequate knowledge for understanding the phenomenon under study. In this section therefore I bring together ideas and insights that were drawn from the six different feminist theories to create the bricolage theoretical and conceptual framework of the study.

The six feminisms employed in the study were chosen because of their potential to offer analytical tools and explain the findings of the study though in varying degrees. It was noted that liberal feminism provided lenses to analyse the representation of women and positions of power held by the women because of its belief in equal rights and opportunities. As indicated in section 3.3.1, liberal feminism campaigns for women's participation in the public sphere which would allow for an analysis of the locus where women are depicted performing their activities. Finally the belief in individuality and autonomy of women as already explained would be used to analyse the type of visual images in which women were depicted in the textbooks.

Apart from contributing analytical aspects to the study, radical feminism would enrich the explanation of the findings because of its belief in the pervasiveness of patriarchy which is embedded in all areas of life since liberal feminism fails to do this. One of the weaknesses of liberal feminism is that it fails to explain continued subordination

of women in society despite being given equal rights and opportunities. The radical feminist argument that women are dominated not only in the public sphere of politics and employment but also in the family would direct the analysis to the environment where women are depicted engaged in their activities, their statistics in those activities and type of activities themselves. Belief in patriarchy would also necessitate the analysis of positions of leadership and authority in which women are portrayed, representation of women in the textbooks and forms of physical violence against women. This analysis concurs with the patriarchal belief that men are superior and leaders while women are inferior and subordinates, women are dominated in social, economic, cultural and political institutions and that patriarchy uses the threat of force and violence to control women.

However, as noted in section 3.3.2 radical feminism, among other weaknesses, is criticised for not taking into consideration other forms of power that oppress women. Marxist feminism closes this gap by providing an analytical lens for analysing participation of women in paid employment in the way they are depicted in the textbooks. The analysis would extend to technology or tools used by women in the textbooks which is guided by the Marxist claim that women are excluded from the labour market which causes their subordination. Socialist feminism is useful for its greater explanatory power of the link between class and gender. It also helps to analyse the influence of class and gender in the way women are portrayed in the textbooks by focusing attention on the status of women depicted in the textbooks.

It is apparent that the above feminisms exclude black and African women from their analyses and explanation. Black feminism provides a lens to analyse race relations in the way women are portrayed in the textbooks. It also looks at the intersection of gender, class and race in the way women are portrayed in the textbooks. African feminism provides several lenses for analysing African women because it believes in diversity and difference. Such tools include nationality, religion, ethnicity and race while taking into account the local conditions and context to explain the portrayal of African women.

The theoretical and conceptual frame of this study has been drawn from six feminist theories. Relevant insights from each of the six feminisms were compiled together to create the conceptual and theoretical framework for analysing and explaining the

findings of the study. I describe such a framework as a bricolage because of the way it was created from the insights of the different selected feminisms. I felt a bricolage of feminisms was essential for this study because it would provide a strong analytical and explanatory tool for my data and findings as limitations of each theory was catered for by other theories. This is why Villaverde (2008) urges feminists to use more than one theory in their analyses to gain more knowledge from that which the intersection of more theories can provide.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I discussed feminism as a theory which informed the study. Feminism was selected because it is the theory that explains the conditions of women in society. However since this theory is complex, attention was concentrated on six feminist perspectives namely liberal, radical, Marxist, socialist, black and African feminism. Beliefs of each of the feminisms were discussed as well as its weaknesses in explaining the subordination of women. Most importantly contributions of each feminist perspective to the study were highlighted. It was elucidated that these feminist ideologies jointly contributed to the creation of the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. This is because relevant insights from each of the feminisms were extracted and synthesised to form a bricolage framework. The latter would be useful in analysing the data and explaining the findings. The analytical tool for analysing the textbooks is explained in the next chapter on methodology.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DESIGNING AND CONDUCTING THE STUDY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to describe, discuss and justify the route I followed in the process of my research. The map for this route was the research design and methodology which involved planning and conducting the research. I discuss in detail the research process in order to show how I arrived at valid and credible answers to my research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). I therefore begin the discussion with an explanation of the research paradigm or philosophical worldview that guided me in the design and the conduct of the study. This is followed by a description and justification of the type of research approach and design that I employed. I also highlight the selection of my sample. Furthermore, I explain how I collected and analysed data as well as the measures I took to address issues of ethics and trustworthiness of the research.

#### **4.2 Research paradigm**

This study was guided by the critical paradigm. Generally a paradigm is a set of beliefs or worldview that tells the researcher the nature of reality (ontology), nature of knowledge (epistemology) and how the inquirer gets to know what she wants to know (methodology) (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999; Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba, 1990). I therefore, chose the critical paradigm because I subscribe to the beliefs of this worldview.

The critical paradigm believes that reality is constructed or shaped by political, cultural, economic and social forces in society (Mahlomaholo, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010). For this reason, what can be known about the world is always subjective as it is influenced by the values and social positioning of the advocates of that knowledge including the researcher herself (Blanche & Durrheim, 1999; Guba, 1990; University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010). From this positioning I viewed the history textbooks under study to be subjective as there is no knowledge that is neutral. This concurs with my earlier assertion in chapter two that textbooks, particularly history textbooks, are subjective by nature as they contain

selective knowledge that society deems legitimate and also represent knowledge of the dominant groups (Apple, 1991; Apple Christian-Smith, 1991; Foster & Crawford, 2006). Therefore, as a researcher working in the critical paradigm, I approached the analysis of the history textbooks with “a suspicious and politicised epistemological stance” (Blanche & Durrheim, 1991, p. 6). Consequently I employed methods of textbook analysis that enabled me to deconstruct and unpack versions of reality in the textbooks in order to expose meanings and realities of the researched (women) that are marginalized, hidden and excluded because of the subjective nature of the knowledge.

Researchers in the critical paradigm do not believe in the idea of the researcher being objective or neutral in the process of research. They argue that no research is neutral and it is not possible for the researcher to take an objective or neutral stance because everyone has their own values which influence the way they see and understand the world (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2009; Mahlomaholo, 2009; University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010). Therefore, being a black African woman from a third world country with a specific history as explained in chapter 1 and who is also part of what is being researched in the textbooks, I would not claim neutrality in the conduct of the inquiry. This compelled me to choose a research approach which does not abhor values that a researcher brings into the research.

The critical paradigm thematises ‘power’ as one of its premises (Mahlomaholo, 2009). Researchers in this paradigm view the world as being unequal in terms of power relations and its social organisation. They argue that certain groups of people hold more power than others due to either their race, class or sex and so forth which leads to the oppression of the less powerful (Cohen et al 2009; University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010). Furthermore, the paradigm argues that sometimes the way power operates in the society is so structural that it is not easily noticed. The critical paradigm therefore critiques excesses of power and argues that such power is the outcome of hegemonic and repressive factors that operate in a general interest over another group’s freedom (Cohen et al, 2009). The critical paradigm also identifies the forces or interests that place a social group into relative powerlessness or indeed power and questions the legitimacy of that position or situation. The goal of the critical paradigm therefore is to emancipate the disempowered, subvert the excess of

power and bring social justice and change to those groups with little power (Cohen et al, 2009; Mahlomaholo, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This premise guided the direction of my study as it gave me insight into the textbooks I was going to study which were embedded within structural power relations as they were produced in a society, as explained in chapter one, where such relations prevail. This realisation made me approach the analysis of the textbooks under study with a critical eye by examining the texts for evidence of both overt and latent oppression, discrimination and stereotyping in the portrayal of women (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). Consequently, I had to consider appropriate methods that would assist in my analysis of the textbooks so as to expose the existence of any injustices which would influence change in the portrayal of women in history textbooks in Malawi. I explain the methods chosen at a later stage.

The belief in unequal power relations and oppression of the less powerful including women, and the emancipatory goal of the critical paradigm led me to adopt feminist theory to frame the study. Feminist theory and the critical paradigm are closely related in some of their principles for both advocate social justice, change and the emancipation of disempowered groups (Cohen et al, 2009). Feminism in itself is an offshoot of critical theory for it deals mainly with women as the oppressed group. The difference is that feminism views the world as being unequal in terms of gender relations and concerns itself mainly with issues of women while critical theory deals with all less powerful groups who are oppressed due to factors such as sex, class, race and religion. The adoption of feminist theory compelled me to use some principles of feminist research in the study. I discuss these principles in the proceeding section under research approach.

The critical paradigm was instrumental in guiding my study as it provided an insight into the type of research I should conduct as well as the methodology and methods to be used. Furthermore, the paradigm helped me to select the theories which would inform my study and also to know my position as a researcher and what kind of knowledge my research would produce.

### **4.3 Research approach - Qualitative Feminist Research**

As a study influenced by the critical paradigm, the inquiry was approached from a qualitative perspective. Creswell (2009, p. 9) observes that the critical “worldview is typically seen with qualitative research ...” Due to the fact that the study is also informed by feminist theory, I integrate some principles of feminist research into the qualitative approach. I therefore describe the approach to my study as qualitative feminist research.

Besides paradigmatic reasons, I opted for the qualitative approach because it provides in-depth and detailed understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2002; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Henning, van Rensburg, & Smit, 2009) Therefore, it is through the use of qualitative approach to research that I can gain a better understanding of how women are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. This is possible because qualitative research uses multiple methods of data collection and analysis (Ary et al., 2002; Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2011). Christensen et al (2011, p. 53) posits that in many qualitative studies, several methods are used “to try to get the best description of an event and the meaning it has for the individual or individuals being studied” which consequently provides a better understanding of the phenomenon. This implies that I will obtain a better understanding of how women are portrayed in the textbooks under study through the use of qualitative research as it allows for the use of several methods of analysis in one study.

This characteristic of qualitative research aligns with feminist research which also advocates or supports the use of multiple methods (Usher, 1996). The use of multiple methods in feminist research is encouraged in order to generate more data which could be used to influence change in the position of women. In the case of my study, findings derived from the analysis of the textbooks through the use of multiple methods would provide a detailed understanding of the portrayal of women which might influence a change in the way women should be portrayed in future Malawian textbooks.

I also found the qualitative research approach useful for my study because of its potential to “find out not only what happens but also how it happens and, importantly,

why it happens the way it does” (Henning, van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004, p. 1). The use of qualitative research therefore offered the assurance of answering my research questions. Furthermore, qualitative research is interpretive by nature. It interprets data in form of, for example, words, pictures, clothing, documents and other non-numerical data (Christensen et al., 2011). This feature of qualitative research allowed me to analyse the textbooks, i.e. my data, by focusing on the verbal text and the visual images. It was through the qualitative interpretation of the visual images and the verbal text in the textbooks that allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the portrayal of women.

Related to the above, qualitative research proved to be an appropriate approach for my study because “it seeks to understand a phenomenon by focusing on the total picture rather than breaking it down into variables” (Ary et al., 2002, p. 25). Guided by this, I analysed the portrayal of women in the textbooks under study holistically by examining both the visual images and the verbal text. In this way a deeper and more thorough understanding of how women are portrayed in the textbooks was sought.

As a qualitative study which integrates principles of feminist research, the inquiry used both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. Feminist researchers advocate the use of both methods in research (Abbott, Wallace, & Tyler, 2005; Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007; Sarantakos, 2005). They argue that a combination of both methods yields rich thick data as insights not provided by one method can be offered by the other (Moorosi, 2006). Findings derived from both methods help to justify a feminist political agenda for change since quantitative results tend to back up qualitative claims (Cohen et al., 2011).

However, the fact that I used both qualitative and quantitative methods to analyse the textbooks in compliance with feminist research methodology does not mean that the study shifted to a mixed methods approach (Christensen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2009; Tashakkori & Ceswell, 2008; Tashakkori & Teddie, 1998). The study still maintained its qualitative stance because I collected and analysed qualitative data in the form of textbooks (Ary et al., 2002). Furthermore, Stevens, Schade, Chalk and Slevin (1993) and McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue that qualitative researchers sometimes use quantification in the analysis of their data. In addition,

Ary et al (2002) and Cohen et al (2011) assert that qualitative research also occasionally produces numerical data.

As a qualitative feminist researcher, I used a gender lens in some aspects of my analysis of the data. This is because feminist research uses gender as a category of analysis (Mannathoko, 1992; Scott, 1986; Usher, 1996). In adherence to this principle, I used gender to analyse the representation of women in the textbooks. However, a larger part of the analysis was centred on women because the study is not a gender analysis inquiry.

To conclude, qualitative feminist research proved to be the most relevant approach for my study. It was through the use of this approach that the research questions could be adequately answered. In the proceeding section, I discuss and justify the qualitative research design and methodology that was employed.

To understand the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi, I adopted a documentary or secondary data analysis design for my study. Documentary or secondary data analysis design is the type of qualitative research that uses already existing data, such as census data, documents or textbooks that were previously produced by someone else for purposes different from those of the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Hakim, 2000; Neuman, 2003; Rubin & Babbie, 1997; Sarantakos, 2005; Strydom & Delport, 2009b). It is referred to as 'secondary' because the researcher analyses data for the second time, with the first analysis having been done by the author of the data (Sarantakos, 2005). Therefore, the fact that the data I analysed pre-existed in the form of history textbooks prompted me to adopt documentary analysis as a strategy for conducting the study.

Furthermore, documentary analysis design was found ideal for my study because the purpose of my study and the research questions entailed sole interaction with textbooks as a type of pre-existing data. Therefore, documentary analysis design proved to be the appropriate methodology that would provide suitable methods for analysing the textbooks in order to answer the research questions and understand

how women are portrayed. This is because each qualitative design has its own methods of collecting and analysing data (Fouche, 2009).

In addition, documentary or secondary data analysis was preferred because it generates both qualitative and quantitative data and also uses sophisticated methods that can reveal hidden meanings and trends not conspicuous on the surface (Bechhofer & Paterson, 2000; Sarantakos, 2005). Use of such a methodology allowed me to analyse the textbooks qualitatively and quantitatively in order to have a better understanding of the portrayal of women as the findings from such analyses supported each other. Before I explain the methods of analysis employed and how I actually analysed the textbooks, it is essential that I firstly discuss the sample used in this study.

#### 4.4 Research sample

In this section, I discuss and justify the sample that I used in my study. A sample is a small portion of the population that a researcher selects to study (Christensen et al., 2011; Cohen et al., 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Sarantakos, 2005). The sample for my study consisted of three history textbooks currently used at junior secondary school level in Malawi. Table 4.1 below shows the textbooks that were selected for my study.

**Table 4.1: The research sample**

Author	Title	Date of publication	Place of publication	Publisher	No of pages
Chiunguzeni, G.	<i>New junior secondary history course 1 &amp; 2</i>	2000	Blantyre	Christian Literature Association in Malawi (CLAIM)	155
Longman Malawi	<i>Strides in history 1</i>	2000	Blantyre	Longman	140
Longman Malawi	<i>Strides in history 2</i>	2001	Blantyre	Longman	156

In this study, I refer to the *New junior secondary history course 1 & 2* as Textbook A, *Strides in history 1* as Textbook B and *Strides in history 2* as Textbook C because it

is more succinct for me to refer to the textbooks in this way than using their titles especially when reporting and discussing the findings.

I used two sampling techniques to select these history textbooks namely, purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which the researcher intentionally selects or simply hand-picks cases based on her judgement and that those cases would contain specific characteristics being sought and regarded relevant to the study (Christensen et al., 2011; Cohen et al., 2011). Thus the researcher selects samples that satisfy her needs or purpose. I purposively selected the textbooks listed in Table 4.1 for their relevance to my topic because they are the textbooks that are used at junior secondary school level in Malawi.

Convenience sampling was used in the selection of the number of textbooks to be studied because they were the only textbooks available that had been published for this level when I started my PhD programme in 2010. Convenience sampling is another form of non-probability sampling which involves choosing people or objects that are readily available and hence easily recruited or contacted for inclusion in the sample (Christensen et al., 2011; Cohen et al., 2011; Sarantakos 2005). Therefore, as there were only three history textbooks available, they were conveniently sampled for my study.

Though the size of the sample (i.e. three textbooks) was conveniently arrived at, it was still appropriate for my study as a qualitative research study. My purpose in this study was to gain a deep understanding of the portrayal of women in Malawian history textbooks and therefore a small sample of three textbooks was appropriate. The use of a small sample was not unique to my study as generally, qualitative research uses small samples as such inquiries tend to “focus on in-depth understanding of one or few cases, rather than on breadth of study of many cases” (Christensen et al., 2011, p. 162). Furthermore, considering the fact that I intended to study the phenomenon holistically by analysing both the visual images and verbal text three textbooks were deemed appropriate in terms of manageability as no research assistants could be hired to assist with the analysis.



However, my sampling did not end with the selection of the three textbooks. I extended my sampling by the further selection of specific areas within the text on which to focus my analysis. I therefore purposively selected all visual images containing people and the entire verbal or written text. I included both the visual images and the verbal text in my sample because the visuals and the words work together in partnership to create text (LaSpina, 1998). In addition, both the verbal text and visuals are considered as the “central medium of information” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, p. 38) and also as an “important mode of communication” (Harrison, 2003, p. 46). Additionally, Baldry and Thibault (2006) and Ventola and Moya (2009) argue that the verbal and visual components of the text are considered as the crucial apparatus in society for constructing meaning. These views provide justification for why I used both the verbal text and visual images in my sample.

#### **4.5 Data generation and collection**

As Mason (2002) argues, some qualitative researchers prefer to use the term data generation to data collection because the information does not just lie idly somewhere in the social world waiting to be collected by the researcher. Instead the researcher rigorously and systematically constructs or generates knowledge by interacting with people or documents through the use of specific methods and principles (Mason, 2002). Despite her argument, the term data collection is still popular in most of the literature on qualitative research (Christensen et al., 2011; Cohen et al., 2011; Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009; Sarantakos, 2005). However, I deliberately use the terms, data collection and generation in the subtopic of this section because to a certain extent they are both applicable to my study considering the type of qualitative research design employed. Therefore, despite Mason’s (2002) argument, I assert that the data for this study was both collected and generated as will be explained in subsections, 4. 5. 1 and 4. 5. 2.

##### **4.5.1 Data generation**

As a qualitative documentary or secondary data studies’ design study based on the analysis of textbooks, the data for the study was the textbooks themselves. However, as a researcher, I did not generate the data myself as it was pre-generated by the authors and publishers of the textbooks. In secondary data studies’ design, the data that researchers use is pre-generated by the people who produced the

documents (Hakim, 2000; Neuman, 2003; Rubin & Babbie, 1997; Sarantakos, 2005). In the case of this study, the data, which is the three textbooks mentioned, were produced by the authors and publishers as indicated in Table 4.1. What I initiated as a researcher was simply to collect the already generated data (i.e. the textbooks) as explained in the following section.

#### **4.5.2 Data collection**

The data for the study was collected through simply buying and borrowing the textbooks as they were already available in a collectable form. When I enrolled for the PhD programme, I had a different topic which I wanted to research namely experiences of girls in the learning of history in secondary schools in Malawi which would have involved field work. However, after attending the first cohort seminar organised for doctoral students that took place between 14 and 16 February 2010, and later the first meeting with my supervisor on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2010, I realised that I had lost interest in the proposed topic. Consequently I changed the topic to the current one. Since I had not carried any history textbooks with me from home (Malawi) when I came to start the programme, I returned home in March 2010, a week prior to the Easter break, to buy or collect the textbooks.

However, before collecting the data, I consulted some secondary school history teachers in Zomba, the town where I reside in Malawi, to find out which textbooks were in use for teaching history at junior secondary school level. I also consulted the Senior Education Methods Advisor for history in the Ministry of Education South Eastern Division Zone Office based in Zomba concerning the same issue. These consultations could be equated with the practice of qualitative field researchers which Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2005, p. 142) refer to as “surveying the site and gaining entry” into the research field before actually conducting the study. From these consultations I became acquainted with the textbooks which were used in the schools. All I did therefore was simply to look for the textbooks in the bookshops or the library.

I bought one history textbook from Feg’s Distributors Bookshop in Zomba, Malawi on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. The textbook cost K1, 200.00 which was then equivalent to R60 (±6-7€/USD). The other two textbooks were not available in the bookshops then; so,

I borrowed them from my place of work in the Faculty of Education, Department of Curriculum and Teaching Studies at Chancellor College, Malawi. I knew of the availability of these textbooks in the department because as a lecturer in History Education, I was instrumental in ordering and purchasing the history textbooks for the department for use in my lessons two years before I started my PhD. Once the textbooks were collected, I moved to the next phase of the study which was to analyse the data as will be explained in the proceeding section.

#### **4.6 Data analysis**

In agreement with Nicholls (2003), I wish to emphasise that attempting research in textbooks is not an easy undertaking because methodologies for analysis are not always well described. Due to this anomaly I tried to acquire workable instruments for analysing the text from my understanding of content analysis and visual semiotic analysis methods. Furthermore, I also employed open coding to analyse the text. Overall therefore I used three methods to analyse the textbooks, namely content analysis, visual semiotics and open coding. The analysis of the data or textbooks was divided into parts, that of the visual images and of the verbal text. I commenced the analysis with the visual images for the simple reason that such text captures the attention of the reader first before the verbal text. I analysed each textbook separately starting with Textbook A and ending with Textbook C. In the following section, I explain how I analysed the visual images using content analysis.

##### **4.6.1 Content analysis of the visual images**

In the content analysis of the visual images I employed it quantitatively with pre-set categories that were derived from the literature review and the theoretical and conceptual framework. This was because with quantitative content analysis, categories for coding data are created depending on the key concepts of the phenomenon under study before the analysis (Ary et al., 2002; Leavy, 2007; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). The first step that I took therefore was to develop a data analysis instrument. Nicholls (2003, p. 4) quoting Fetsko (1992, p. 133) comments on the importance of creating a data analysis tool by arguing that “time spent in designing the analysis instrument will pay great dividends throughout the process.” The instrument had two major categories with criteria under each category to guide in the coding exercise. These categories are representation of women in the

visual images and type of visual images featuring women. This is referred to in Appendix A in the Appendices section. The aim of these two categories was to generate quantitative data that would provide part of the answer to the research question, how women are portrayed in the visual images since the aim of analysis is to draw certain conclusions about the phenomenon in response to the question under investigation (Mouton, 1996).

After the instrument was finalised, I pilot tested it with two Malawian junior secondary school social studies' textbooks to determine if it could give me rich thick data (Royse, 1995). I used social studies' textbooks for the pilot study because in a pilot study researchers use participants with the same characteristics as those in the sample (Strydom & Delport, 2009a). Therefore junior secondary school social studies' textbooks meet the criteria because history and social studies are related subjects both belonging to the social sciences' field, the textbooks were published around the same time and both are used at junior secondary school level. Citing Jenesick (1994), Strydom and Delport (2009) argue that a pilot study in qualitative research helps the researcher to focus on areas that were not previously clear and pre-empt the problems that might arise in the course of the study. In accordance with this argument, the pilot study helped me in the actual study to devise a means of putting demarcations or labels on the pages where the visual images were found for easy access. I discovered this technique because of the problem I faced with the pilot study as I had not put any labels on the pages which made me occasionally count some visual image twice and also skip others. This complexity of counting the visual images without labelling the pages was noted during the pilot study and was rectified during the actual study.

The actual investigation commenced after the pilot study. My first priority was to comb through the pages of the textbook identifying the visual images in order to have a sense of the whole prior to analysis. This practice is similar to what qualitative field researchers do when they survey the site of their research before conducting the study (Ary et al., 2002; Cohen et al., 2011). After this exercise, I started putting labels on all pages which contained visual images. These labels were coloured paper which I stapled on each page containing a visual image of people. Then I systematically started analysing the data beginning with the first category which dealt

with the representation of women in the visual images. I began by listing in my notebook the caption of each visual image and the page where it was found. I listed all visual images and page numbers because I wanted first to establish the total number of the visual images of people contained in the text or those to be used in the analysis. I compiled this information in tabular form with two columns showing the caption of visual image and page where the image was found in the text. After I finished generating this data, I counted the number of visual images listed and recorded the total. I cross-checked the total by physically counting the visual images in the textbook and compared the two figures in order to ensure that I captured the data in my notes accurately. Then I listed all visual images which featured women as well as those which showed men. The data was compiled in tabular form with two columns, for women and men respectively. The rows of the table depended on the number of visual images contained in a particular textbook. For each visual image I recorded the caption and page number in the appropriate column. Pair and group visual images, which showed both men and women, were listed in both columns, as those showing women as well as men. Refer to Appendix B showing an example of one of the tables indicating visual images featuring women and men compiled for one of the textbooks. After compiling the data, I counted the total number of visual images which featured women as well those which showed men and recorded it in the appropriate column.

The next step was to analyse the number of women and men depicted in the visual images. To do this systematically, I also captured the data in tabular form. The table had three columns with the first column listing the page containing the visual image and the second showing the number of women in the visual image while the third indicated the number of men in the visual image. The number of rows in the table depended on the number of visual images of people in a particular textbook. Refer to Appendix C for an example of one of the tables showing the number of men and women depicted in visual images. In the process of recording the data in the table, I constantly verified what I had captured with the visual images in the text to ensure that I captured the data accurately. After compiling the data, I then totalled the figures of women in each visual image to obtain a grand total of women depicted in the visual images. I did the same for men. Then I added up the two totals to arrive at

the number of people depicted in the visual images. Finally percentages of women and men depicted in the visual images were calculated.

After I completed the analysis of data for the first category, I moved to the second which was concerned with the type of visual images in which women were portrayed. I classified the visual images into single visual images showing one person, pair visual images depicting two people and group visual images consisting of three or more people. If women were shown in a pair or group visual image, I also categorised the visuals into those showing women only and those showing both men and women. I started compiling and analysing the data for the single visual images. I flipped through the textbook pages and recorded in my notes the captions of single visual images of women including the page numbers where the images were found. This data was also compiled in tabular form. After compiling the data I analysed it by counting the single visual images for women. I then generated data for the pair visual images, also in tabular form. This table had three columns, showing the number of visual images featuring women in pairs, number of visuals showing women only, and those depicting men and women in pairs. I then counted the number of visual images for each of three groups and recorded them under each column.

The group visual images were divided into two in the process of data analysis. These categories were group visual images of women only and group visual images of both men and women. Subsequently I listed all the visual images of women only and of both women and men by writing the captions and page numbers. I compiled this data in tabular form. The table had two columns indicating group visual images of women only and both women and men and the number of rows depended on the number of group visual images available in a textbook. After I finished compiling the data in the table, I counted the number of visual images in each column and recorded the figure. For the group visual images consisting of both men and women, I also counted the numbers of men and women in each visual image to find out the representation of women in such visual images. I then cross-checked the numbers in each column by counting the visual images in the textbook and compared the figures, that is, I counted the group visual images of women only in the textbook and compared the figure with that which I had in the appropriate column in the table. The other group visual images were treated in the same way. This practice of cross-checking the data

is known as member checking in field research whereby the researcher during the time of analysis of her data returns to the field to verify some information with some participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). According to these authors, member checking is executed in order to assess the intentions of participants and to correct obvious errors that might have been made during the initial data gathering. Member checking is one of the techniques of achieving credibility in qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

After the content analysis of the visual images, which was undertaken quantitatively as previously explained, I analysed the visual images qualitatively using visual semiotics. In the following section I explain the meaning of visual semiotics and how it was employed in my study.

#### **4.6.2 Visual semiotic analysis of the images**

Visual semiotics was used to analyse the visual images which featured women whether as individuals, in pairs with men or women and in groups either with men or women only. Semiotics is the study of signs in order to derive meaning from them (Harrison, 2003; Hopkins, 1998; MacCannell, 1999; Nelson, 2005; Parsa, 2012; Rose, 2001). A sign is anything that stands for or represents something and it could be verbal or non-verbal such as written text and sound or visuals such as photographs and images (Bulut & Yurdaisik, 2005; MacCannell, 1999; Parsa, 2012). Accordingly the visual images studied in the textbooks fall in the category of visual signs. Semiotics is able to reveal meaning because signs by nature are made up of two components, the signifier and the signified (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Parsa, 2012). It is through the systematic study of the signifiers in signs that meanings (the signified) are revealed or disclosed. The signifier is literally an object or word while the signified refers to the meaning or concept the signifier represents (Parsa, 2012). When semiotics is used to study visual images, the approach becomes known as visual semiotics to distinguish it from other semiotics as the latter is used in the study of signs in various fields such as for example medicine, anthropology, architecture and linguistics (Morton, 2006; Parsa, 2012). Visual semiotics therefore is the systematic study of visual images in order to expose the meaning that the images communicate (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Parsa, 2012). However, the problem is that the meanings do not manifest overtly, rather they exist in a covert way and it is

only through a sophisticated analysis that the latent meanings can be disclosed (Nelson, 2005; Parsa, 2012). Furthermore, interpretation of the meaning in images is dependent upon the context and experience of the reader which results in different meanings attached to the same image by different people (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Nelson, 2005; Parsa, 2012; Rose, 2001). It follows therefore that the meanings that I derived from the visual images in this study may not be similar to those that another researcher would interpret from the same images.

Nelson (2005, p. 134) argues that “key to visual semiotics is the idea that signs have layers of meanings.” These patterns of meaning in signs are classified into three namely; iconic, indexical and symbolic. In iconic meaning, the signifier in a sign resembles the object it represents or the signified (Hammerich & Harrison, 2002; Northcut, 2007). However, in indexical meaning, the signifier does not bear any similarity with the object it represents but there is an inherent relationship between the signifier and the signified (Hammerich & Harrison, 2002). In a symbolic sign, there is no connection between the signifier and the signified; the meaning of a symbol is known through convention and by learning in a society (Hammerich & Harrison, 2002; Northcut, 2007; Parsa, 2012). Usually signs are a combination of icon, symbol and index and it is through the systematic analysis of the images that these patterns of meaning are decoded.

Furthermore, meaning in visual semiotics is arrived at through use of denotations and connotations inherent in the images. This is because “signs are also both denotative and connotative” by nature (Parsa, 2012, p. 849). He further argues that in semiotics, the terms denotation and connotation describe the relationship between the signifier and the signified. Thus a signifier can disclose denotative or connotative meaning, or both, depending on the way the image or sign is made. Denotations give literal meaning of the image while connotations reveal hidden meaning in the sign which may be cultural or ideological (Parsa, 2012).

Visual semiotics was chosen as a method for analysing the images in my study because through the analysis of the signifiers in the images, iconic, indexical and symbolic meaning as well as denotative and connotative meanings would be disclosed about how women are portrayed in the visual images. However, the



meanings would depend on my cultural experience as a researcher, as well as the Malawian context where the study is located, as explained in chapter 1. With this background, I now proceed to explain in detail how I conducted the visual semiotic analysis of the images of women contained in the three textbooks studied.

Prior to conducting the visual semiotic analysis I developed an analytical instrument. As Morton (2006) argues, interpreting images requires the use of a tool which is guided by the background and purpose of the investigation. Since images as signs consist of signifiers and the signified (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Parsa, 2012), I developed an instrument which would enable me to decode the signifiers and signified from the images in order to reveal the meaning implied in them. The instrument had three columns indicating sign (image), signifiers and the signified. The number of rows in the instrument varied depending on the number of visual images in each textbook. For instance, the analytical tool for Textbook A had only two rows because there were only two visual images showing women in this textbook, Textbook B included 23 rows while Textbook C had 11. Therefore three analytical instruments were developed for the three textbooks. Table 4.2 below shows a sample of the tool that was developed for the analysis of the visual images.

**Table 4.2 Analysis tool for the visual images**

Sign (image)	Signifiers	Signified

In the analysis of the visual images, I looked for signifiers which would, in conjunction with the theoretical and conceptual framework discussed in chapter 3, reveal meaning about the portrayal of women. More specifically I looked for signifiers from the visual images guided by the following aspects contained in Table 4.3 below:

**Table 4.3 Guidelines for visual semiotic analysis**

Guidelines for visual semiotic analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles and activities</li> <li>• Locus where the activities are performed</li> <li>• Positions of power and authority or status of women</li> <li>• Women in paid labour</li> <li>• Technology used by women in their paid labour</li> </ul>

- Environment where women are depicted
- Race of women depicted
- Continent of origin
- Nationality in Africa
- Character traits
- Physical violence against women

Before using the visual semiotic analysis instrument in my study, I pilot tested it with selected visual images from the two junior secondary school social studies' textbooks mentioned in section 4. 6. 1. It was after familiarising myself with the tool and how to use it through the pilot study that the actual investigation commenced. As with the content analysis explained above, the visual semiotic analysis of the images also progressed from Textbook A through B to C.

In the analysis of the images, I examined the signifiers in terms of their iconic, indexical and symbolic characteristics in order to determine meaning inherent in the signs. This is because meaning in images as in other signs is signified either iconically or indexically and symbolically or in a combination of all these features (Hammerich & Harrison, 2002; Northcut, 2007; Parsa, 2012). Furthermore, as meanings in visual images also reside in their connotative and denotative elements (Fan, 2006; Nelson, 2005; Parsa, 2012), in each image I examined signifiers for their connotative and denotative aspects to arrive at meaning. Thus for each image, the signifiers were examined or analysed for their iconic, indexical, symbolic, denotative and connotative meanings. The interpretation of the images was based on the context and cultural, social and historical knowledge of the researcher. This is because images have multiple meanings and the meanings in images are not fixed but are dependent on the context (Hopkins, 1998; Nelson, 2005; Parsa, 2012; Rose, 2001). As I analysed each image, notes were recorded which were organised in tabular form as per the analysis instrument. Thus at the end of the research exercise I had three compilations of notes for the three textbooks. This was the first level of the analysis where I interacted with the visual images showing women.

The second level of analysis dealt with the notes compiled from the first level of analysis. Subsequently, categories and themes on the portrayal of women were generated from the notes recorded and I used open coding to develop them. Open coding involves breaking down data into parts looking for similarities and differences

and then classifying the data into categories until saturation level is reached (de Vos, 2005). The categories are further interpreted at a conceptual level to generate themes. Hence after this process, I developed themes and categories of the portrayals of women in each textbook. The themes and categories developed from the visual semiotic analysis were used in reporting the findings in chapter 5.

After the analysis of the visual images using visual content analysis and visual semiotic analysis, I proceeded to the analysis of the verbal text. I also used two methods to analyse the verbal text which are content analysis and open coding. In the following section I explain how I analysed the verbal text for its portrayal of women.

#### **4.6.3 Content analysis of the verbal text**

I conducted content analysis of the verbal text using a quantitative technique. As such I first developed a data analysis instrument with pre-determined categories for coding and analysing the data (Ary et al., 2002; Leavy, 2007; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). Refer to Appendix D in the Appendices section for the content analysis tool of the verbal text. The instrument had three categories, each with a set of criteria for coding the verbal text. The three categories were: representation of women mentioned, frequency of mentioning women and sections where women were included in the text. These categories were aimed at addressing the research question under study namely “how women are portrayed in the textbooks”. This is in keeping with the characteristic of content analysis as argued by Leavy (2007) and Wilkinson and Birmingham (2003) namely that the categories developed depended on the phenomenon under study and the research question.

Once the tool was finalised, I also pilot tested it with the same textbooks mentioned in section 4.6.1. After the pilot testing, I prepared myself for coding by first of all reading through the data in all the three textbooks. McMillan and Schumacher (2001, p. 464) argue that, “intensive analysis usually begins with the researcher reading all of the data to gain a sense of the whole ...” This was also done in order to familiarise myself with the data considering that content analysis deals with data that is pre-existing i.e. data which was produced by someone else other than the researcher (Leavy, 2007). After the preparatory reading, I began coding and analysing the data

in steps, category by category, as content analysis by nature is systematic and follows a clear and straightforward process (Cohen et al., 2011; Leavy, 2007; Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003).

I read again each textbook chapter by chapter generating data for the first category in my instrument which dealt with the representation of women mentioned in the text. As I read through each chapter, I noted the names of women and men mentioned in the text. I included men in this analysis because I wanted to establish representation of women in relation to their male counterparts. Names which were repeated were highlighted and recorded only once upon the first appearance. I highlighted names of men in the text in red and those of women in blue and also listed the names in my notebook. There was no criterion for the choice of colours; it depended on the highlighters that were available. I compiled the data in tabular form with three columns and the number of rows depending on the number of chapters of each textbook. The three columns of the table were labelled by chapter, and women and men mentioned. Therefore as I read through every chapter, I recorded in the table the names of women and men I discovered in the text while also highlighting those names in the textbook with the two different colours mentioned above. I also recorded page numbers where the names were found in the text. Refer to Appendix E for an example of one of the three tables used to record the data (from Textbook A). After reading each chapter, I checked the names listed in each column against those highlighted in the text to verify that I had captured the data correctly. I then counted the names in each column and recorded the total for each chapter. I also counted the highlighted names of women and men in the text and cross-checked with the totals obtained in my list. The page numbers indicated in my notes, as well as the highlighting of the names in the text, helped with this cross-checking exercise as it facilitated the location of the names in the chapters. The cross-checking exercise was done repeatedly in order to establish credibility of the findings which, among other procedures, is achieved through prolonged engagement (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). After I compiled data for all chapters and recorded totals for each chapter, I then added up all the figures for the chapters in each column to indicate the total number of women and men mentioned in the text in the entire textbook.

The second category dealt with the frequency of the mention of women in the text. To compile data for this category, I again read through the text chapter by chapter highlighting names of women and men whenever they were mentioned in the text. I used the same colours used for the first category. I also recorded all the instances when names of women and men were repeatedly mentioned in the text. This is unlike the procedure in the first category where a name was highlighted and recorded only once upon first appearance. The aim was to establish the frequency of referring to women and men mentioned in the text. I organised the notes in tabular form which had three columns, indicating chapter, women and men. Refer to Appendix F for an example of one of the three tables (from Textbook B) used to record the data on frequency of referring to women and men. A name that was mentioned several times was highlighted every time it appeared and also listed for all the instances including the pages where it was mentioned. At the end of each chapter, the number of times names of women and men were mentioned were counted and recorded. I also cross-checked the totals of each category by counting the highlighted names in the chapter to ensure that every repeated mention of a woman or man was recorded and counted. Finally, I added up the total number of repeated mention of women in all the chapters to tally with the grand total of times of mentioning women in the text. I also summed up the total number of times to which men were referred. The last step was to calculate the averages of the number of times when women and men were mentioned in the text and to interpret the meaning in terms of portrayal of women.

The third category dealt with sections in the sampled textbooks where women are included in the text. For this analysis I firstly focussed on the table of contents. I read through the table of contents and recorded the topics that specifically mentioned women and those that dealt with men. I then counted the total number of topics that I had recorded for each group and I verified the totals by counting again straight from the tables of contents. Subsequently I interpreted the results based on the total number of topics featuring each gender group. Secondly I examined the topics and subtopics in the text by reading all the topics and subtopics and listing those that featured men as well as those that featured women. Finally I counted the topics and subtopics that reflected women and recorded the total and did the same for topics and subtopics that featured men. A conclusion was then drawn based on the results.

After analysing the topics and subtopics in the tables of contents and the text, I proceeded to examine how the narrative text included women. I read through the text again chapter by chapter highlighting those sections which made reference to women whether by name or not. Immediately after highlighting a section, I copied it down in my notes indicating the chapter and page number where the citation was lifted from. I highlighted the sections where women were discussed in yellow. After reading each chapter, I cross-checked the citations copied down with the sections highlighted in the text so as to ensure that all sections were highlighted and noted. Refer to Appendices G, H and I for lists of the citations from each of the three textbooks. Having compiled data for all the chapters in a textbook, I analysed the sections by counting them to arrive at a total. I also analysed the sections in terms of number of sentences and paragraphs that discussed women. Finally, I interpreted the meaning of the results in terms of the portrayal of women. In the next section I explain how the data generated from the content analysis as contained in Appendices G, H and I was analysed by means of open coding.

#### **4.6.4 Analysis of the verbal text through open coding**

In the second phase of analysis of the verbal text, I focussed only on those sections which included women as highlighted in the text and copied down in my notes. These are the sections which I identified through content analysis as explained in the preceding section. The aim was to discover how the women included in the text were depicted and what it meant in terms of their portrayal.

Consequently, I read through those sections which made reference to women and coded the depictions of women. I used the first letters of the depictions as my codes; for example, q for queens and p for priestesses and so forth. After all sections were coded, I grouped all common codes together to form categories. Initially, these categories had specific names of the depictions as noted in the text which concurs with Leavy's (2007) argument that the emergent categories can either be literal or specific at the beginning before progressing to more conceptual groupings. For example, some of the categories identified based on their depictions were queens, priestesses and goddesses. Despite open coding being a qualitative analysis, I counted the number of times depictions of women occurred in each category as such

information would help to advance an argument at a later stage. I then interpreted the meaning of each category in response to the research question, 'how are women portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi?' After interpretation, I assigned new names to the categories. Thus, for example, the category of queens was renamed women as rulers, that of priestesses became women as religious leaders and the category of goddesses became known as women as spiritual leaders. The number of categories varied from textbook to textbook. Further interpretation led to the grouping of categories with similar traits or characteristics into themes which were broader and more encompassing. For example, all the categories that had a trait of leadership, such as religious leaders, spiritual leaders and state rulers were grouped together into a theme known as women as leaders. I also elevated the interpretation of the emerging themes to a higher conceptual level whereby the themes with some similarities were further collated into a major theme. For example themes such as women as leaders, women in traditional family roles and women portrayed in domestic and reproductive roles were grouped under one general theme known as roles and activities in which women are portrayed. This decision was made because all these themes dealt with roles and activities.

However, some categories and themes could not be merged into themes and major themes respectively and they remained as independent themes and categories of findings. The number of major themes, themes and categories varied from textbook to textbook depending on the data. The reporting of the findings in chapter 6 was based upon these emergent themes and categories.

#### **4.7 Ethical issues**

Issues of ethics are important considerations in any study and researchers are obliged to adhere to ethical standards (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Ethical issues concern the morality in the way the research is conducted that the researcher has to consider in the process of the study (Cohen et al., 2009; McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Therefore, regardless of what type of study one chooses to conduct, research ethics is an important consideration for the success of the study, and security and image of the researcher, participants and other stakeholders (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2006).

Although I did not deal with people as participants but with textbooks as public documents, I still had to adhere to some ethical issues. As most professional organisations, colleges, universities and other institutions have their own codes of ethics and institutional review boards which review research proposals for their consideration of ethical issues (Lodico et al., 2006; Mitchell & Jolley, 2007), I had to follow the UKZN route of seeking ethical clearance to obtain approval for my study. I therefore applied for ethical clearance from UKZN before conducting my research. I applied for permission to conduct the study in mid-September 2010 and received approval to proceed with the research on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2010. Refer to Appendix J for the ethical clearance letter permitting the study.

Although I used letters A, B and C to refer to the sample textbooks as indicated in section 4.4, the aim was not to hide the identity of the publishers concerning the findings (Lodico et al., 2006, McMillan & Schumacher, 2001) because textbooks are public documents. This was done solely for ease of reporting and discussing the findings by referring to the textbooks using the alphabetical letters rather than their titles.

#### **4.8 Trustworthiness of the study**

Regardless of the type of research being undertaken, researchers are obliged to abide with the issues of validity and reliability during the entire research (Merriam, 2009). Validity and reliability are crucial in any study for an enquiry which does not prove to be valid and reliable is deemed worthless by the readers and users of that research (Cohen et al., 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). However, most scholars consider the concepts validity and reliability as positivist in nature and thus to be associated with quantitative research (Merriam, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This does not mean qualitative research is lacking in terms of rigour. Researchers operating in the qualitative paradigm also display rigour in their studies, but because they have different perspectives of reality and worldviews, they prefer to consider validity and reliability from a viewpoint congruent with their assumptions and use terms that are relevant to their practice of research (Merriam, 2009). It is therefore common for qualitative researchers to replace the terms validity and reliability with their own concepts. Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 76-77) proposed “credibility as an analog to



internal validity, transferability as an analog to external validity, dependability as an analog to reliability and confirmability as an analog to objectivity.” They viewed a combination of these criteria as standards for establishing or ensuring trustworthiness or rigour in qualitative research. Thus, while quantitative researchers speak of research as being valid and reliable, qualitative researchers view their enquiry in terms of being trustworthy indicated by the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Since my study is qualitative, I will explain how I addressed trustworthiness through the use of its four criteria.

#### **4.8.1 Credibility of the research**

In a research inquiry, credibility deals with the match between research findings and the reality in the data or what is actually contained in the data (Merriam, 2009). A researcher therefore is obliged to demonstrate that her interpretation of phenomena is supported by data. I made every effort to ensure credibility in this study in different ways.

Triangulation was one of the strategies I used to ensure credibility. In a broader sense, triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods of data collection, multiple data sources, multiple investigators and multiple theories for interpreting data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Cohen et al., 2011; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, I used triangulation of data sources and theories to enhance credibility. As mentioned in chapter three, I used different feminisms to discuss the findings. Although these feminisms fall under the broad theory of feminism, they offer different perspectives of or explain the oppression of women from different perspectives, hence, they are considered as stand-alone theories. In terms of data sources there was different specific data that I focussed on in the text. As noted in section 4.4 above, I used all visual images of people as data and also the entire written or verbal text. In this way, I used different data sources identified in the visual images and verbal text.

Furthermore, credibility was ensured by providing rich data to support my interpretation and conclusions when presenting the findings. This was achieved by quoting from the sources in the form of both citations and visual images. These were included in the analysis chapters as evidence of my conclusions. This strategy is known as use of participants’ language and verbatim accounts (McMillan &

Schumacher, 2001). I also made use of figures and statistics to support the claims made. In a feminist study such as this, statistical data is essential to reinforce the claims in order to raise the consciousness of the reader and users of the research to lobby for change and social justice in the portrayal of women in textbooks.

The technique of member checking, or respondent validation, was also used to ensure credibility of the findings. This strategy involves confirming one's findings with participants observed or interviewed and or the documents studied (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Merriam, 2009). Just as field researchers confirm their findings with their participants, either formally or informally, I also continuously corroborated my findings with the data in the textbook which were my research objects. As pointed out in sections 4.6.1 and 4.6.3, I always validated the quantitative findings by returning to the data in the textbooks. Thus, after the total counts were calculated based on my notes, I verified my conclusion by counting again straight from the textbook to ensure accuracy of meaning. I similarly verified the findings that emerged from the analysis of the verbal text by corroborating it with the data in the textbooks.

Attempts were also made to search for negative cases when I analysed the data inductively by means of open coding. McMillan and Schumacher (2001, p. 410) describe a negative case as a "situation, a social scene or a participant's view that contradicts the emerging pattern of meaning." As I inductively analysed the data that was generated from the visual semiotic analysis and the verbal text I actively sought negative cases which did not "fit within the pattern" (Patton, 2002, p. 554). This helped me to draw conclusions which matched the data. To cite one example, though at first analysis I concluded that all women referred to in the text as wives were wives of important or famous men, the search for negative cases disproved it for I discovered that some of the women were wives of unimportant men who were not even mentioned in the text.

To some extent, the values a researcher holds affect the interpretation of findings. Therefore for an inquiry to be credible, it is essential for the researcher to declare his or her position in relation to the study. This strategy is known as researcher's position or reflexivity (Merriam, 2009). Lincoln and Guba (2000) argue that this strategy involves critically examining oneself as a researcher and declaring explicitly

one's predispositions, biases and assumptions regarding the enquiry being undertaken (Merriam, 2009; Patton, 2002). I declared my position up front as a feminist researcher and assumptions that feminists hold in chapter 1. This declaration would help readers of the research understand my background and how the values I hold had influenced the conduct of the study, the interpretation of the data and the conclusions reached (Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 2009).

Based on the above, I ensured credibility in my study by triangulating data sources and theories, cross-checking my findings with the data and by quoting from the textbooks in the form of citations and visual images as evidence for my argument. I also avoided making generalisations of the findings by taking into consideration negative cases and by declaring my biases and dispositions upfront. In the next section I will explain how the issue of transferability was addressed.

#### **4.8.2 Transferability of the research**

Transferability in qualitative research could be equated to generalisability in quantitative research. While it is easy to generalise the findings of a study to the population where the sample was drawn, this is not possible with qualitative research because findings in the latter are specific or typical to the experiences of a particular group of people or contexts in which they occurred (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Cohen et al., 2011; Merriam, 2009). Findings in qualitative study can only be comparable or transferable to other situations.

Transferability refers to the extent to which findings of a study could be applied to other contexts or situations and or other participants (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Cohen et al., 2011; Merriam, 2009). However, as Lincoln and Guba (1985), Merriam (2009) and Babbie and Mouton (2001) argue, the responsibility of applying the findings to other contexts lies with the readers or users of the research and not the researcher. Therefore this means that the researcher has the responsibility to provide enough information to enable the reader to be able to apply the findings to other situations. I tried to enhance transferability of the findings of my study by providing a thick and rich description of the setting of the study and the research objects in chapter one and in section 4.4 in this chapter. Knowledge of the setting and sample would enable the readers of the research to compare with and apply the findings to other textbooks

with similar characteristics. Furthermore, I presented the findings in chapters five and six in detail with evidence in form of quotes and visual images extracted from the textbooks.

Thus I tried to enhance transferability of the findings of my study by describing in detail the setting of the study, the research objects and providing thick description of the findings accompanied by evidence. This information would enable the readers of the research to apply the findings to other situations or history textbooks with similar characteristics.

#### **4.8.3 Dependability of the research**

While in quantitative research a study is deemed reliable if it produces the same results after being replicated by other researchers, in qualitative research the enquiry is judged dependable if the results or findings are consistent with the data collected (Merriam, 2009). There are a number of strategies that qualitative researchers employ to ensure dependability of their findings. In this study, I used investigator position or reflexivity, triangulation, negative case analysis and an audit trail. I already explained triangulation, negative case analysis and reflexivity in section 4.9.1 above as these are used to address both credibility and transferability in a study.

According to Merriam (2009, p. 222), “an audit trail in qualitative research describes in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry.” Efforts were made in this study to show an audit trail by describing in detail the whole research journey from data collection to data analysis. Refer to sections 4.6.1, 4.6.2, 4.6.3 and 4.6.4. Where appendices were needed to be consulted, I included them to enable the reader to follow the research process. I also explained how categories were derived for content analysis. It was also emphasised that some categories and themes emerged from the data during the process of inductive analysis of the data. Furthermore, I accounted for whatever decisions were made in the process of the research. I was able to recall some of the details such as dates and decisions made because I kept a research journal in which I recorded activities concerning the study, reflections and decisions made. A research journal is useful in the construction of the audit trail of the study (Merriam,

2009). A clear audit trail of the study would give confidence to the reader that the findings of the study are dependable.

#### **4.8.4 Confirmability of the research**

Babbie and Mouton (2001, p. 278) conceptualise confirmability as “the degree to which the findings are the product of the focus of the inquiry and not the biases of the researcher.” Confirmability was ensured by providing a detailed account of the study from data collection to data analysis (i.e. through audit trail). The data analysed was fully described, not only by mentioning the textbooks as data, but also specifying what exactly in the textbooks was used as data to be analysed. In addition, the procedure I followed for each method of analysis was systematically explained. This audit trail would enable the reader “to determine if the conclusions, interpretations and recommendations can be traced to their sources and if they are supported by the enquiry” (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

However, in feminist research, no matter how detailed the audit trail, you cannot rule out the biases and values of the researcher in the interpretations of the findings. This is because feminist research is by nature value-laden and political in its objective (Abbott et al., 2005; Cohen et al., 2011; Haig, 1999; Kenway & Modra, 1992). Furthermore, the fact that the researcher is an integral part of what is being researched makes the research inevitably biased and value-laden (Abbot & Wallace, 1997; Abbott et al., 2005; Birks, 2002; Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2007). However, this does not mean confirmability is not possible in feminist research.

The explanation in the preceding subsections indicates that I attempted to ensure the trustworthiness of the enquiry. This was achieved by ensuring that the findings were credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable as previously discussed.

#### **4.9 Conclusion**

In this chapter I explained the research design and methods that I used in my study. I discussed and justified the process of the research because I wanted to indicate the route I followed to answer my research questions. This study is a qualitative feminist study which was informed by the critical paradigm because its aim was not only to have a deeper understanding of how women are portrayed in the history

textbooks studied but also to influence change in the portrayal of women in future history textbooks. My sample consisted of three history textbooks that are used in Malawi at junior secondary school level. The sample was both purposively and conveniently selected because of their use at junior secondary level and their availability. In this sample I analysed all the visual images of people, visual images featuring women and the entire written or verbal text. I used three methods to analyse the data namely content analysis, visual semiotics and open coding. Specifically I used content analysis and visual semiotics to analyse the visual images while the verbal text was also analysed through content analysis and open coding. These methods enabled me to have an in-depth understanding of how women are portrayed in the textbooks because they provided both quantitative and qualitative findings. In chapters 5 and 6, I present findings of the analysis of the visual images and verbal text respectively.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN THE VISUAL IMAGES

### 5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I explained the research design and how I analysed the history textbooks under study. In this chapter I continue with the research process by reporting part of the findings of the study. I refer to the work in this chapter as 'part of the findings' because I focus only on the results of the analysis of the visual images and how they portray women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. The findings on the analysis of the verbal text will be presented in the next chapter.

I present findings for the analysis of the visual images for each textbook separately in order to give a vivid picture of how women are portrayed in the visual images in each textbook. I then consolidate the findings from all three textbooks to present a holistic picture. The presentation of the findings for each textbook is based on themes some of which were derived from the categories of content analysis while others emerged from the data that arose from the visual semiotic analysis of the images. I used themes in the presentation of results because this is the most common and appropriate way in which findings are presented in qualitative research (Merriam, 2009; Richardson, 2000).

Overall, this chapter is organised into five major sections. The first three present findings on visual images for each of the three textbooks studied namely Textbooks A, B and C. The findings for each textbook are presented using the following themes: representation of women in the visual images; type of visual images featuring women; identity of the women portrayed in the visual images; roles and activities in which women are depicted and character traits of women. The fourth section deals with a general consolidation of the findings on the way women are portrayed in the visual images across the three textbooks. A final section is the summary and

conclusion of the chapter which highlights the major findings of the analysis of the visual images and how they portray women.

## 5.2 Visual portrayal of women in Textbook A

The starting point of the analysis of the visual images in the textbook was to establish the quantitative representation of women as historical characters as this would provide an understanding of the portrayal of women. I present these quantitative findings in the proceeding section.

### 5.2.1 Representation in the visual images

Analysis of the visual images for the representation of women involved establishing the number of visual images featuring women and the number of women depicted in the visual images in relation to men. Table 5.1 below gives a statistical summary of the visual images which featured women in relation to men.

**Table 5.1 Number of visual images featuring women in Textbook A**

Total number of visual images of people	Number of visual images showing women	Percentage of visual images showing women	Number of visual images showing men	Percentage of visual images showing men
18	2	11.1%	17	88.9%

According to Table 5.1, the visual text in Textbook A contained a total of 18 visual images of people. Of these only two featured women while 17 showed men. One group image was counted twice in the analysis. It was counted under visual images depicting women as well as under those showing men because it was a group visual image which contained both men and women. Statistically therefore, women are included in 11.1% of the visual images contained in this textbook. From the count and percentages it becomes clear that women are represented in far fewer visual images than men.

Once the number of visual images showing women was established, the analysis was extended to find out the number and percentage of women depicted in the actual images in relation to men. In Table 5.2 below I give a summary of these findings.



**Table 5.2 Number of women depicted in the visual images in relation to men in Textbook A**

Total number of visual images included in the textbook	Total number of people depicted in the visual images	Number of women depicted in the visual images	Percentage of women depicted in the visual images	Number of men depicted in the visual images	Percentage of men depicted in the visual images
18	33	3	9%	30	91%

The findings in Table 5.2 show that the 18 visual images included in Textbook A depicted a total of 33 people. Only three of these were women while 30 were men. Thus, women are out-numbered ten times by men in the visual images. Statistically this means that only 9% of the people depicted in the visual images are women while 91% are men. It is therefore clear that women are represented in far fewer numbers than men in the analysed visual images.

Therefore based on the findings of the analysis of the visual images for representation of women, I would conclude that women as historical characters are seriously under-represented, both in terms of the number of visual images featuring them, as well as in their numerical depiction within these visual images. The under-representation of women in the visual images renders them almost invisible and portrays them as marginal to history. This marginalisation implies that women are viewed as having contributed very little to history in relation to men which is a distortion of the past.

In the following section, I present the findings on the analysis of the type of visual images in which women are portrayed.

### **5.2.2 Type of visual images in which women are portrayed**

In this chapter, “type of visual image “ refers to visual images consisting of a group of people, pair visual images comprising two people or single visual images featuring individual historical characters. The findings on the analysis of the type of visual images in which women are portrayed are summarised in Table 5.3 below.

**Table 5.3 Type of visual images in which women are portrayed in Textbook A**

Type of visual image showing women	Number of visual images showing women	Number of visual images showing women only	Number of visual images showing women and men together
Pair	0	0	0
Group	1	0	1
Single	1	1	N/A

The analysis in Table 5.3 indicates that women were not portrayed in visual images in pairs whether of women only or of a woman and a man together. It also reveals that women were depicted in one visual image as an individual and one group visual image together with men. Therefore, in Textbook A, women are portrayed in one individual and one group visual image only. Although there were only two visual images that featured women, it could still be argued that more women were portrayed in a group visual image than in a single visual image. The group visual image consisted of two women and eight men. Although the difference in number of women portrayed in the single visual image and the group visual image is not significant, the depiction of more women as historical characters in the group image portrays them as dependent on men for their endeavours. This denies women agency as historical characters which does not reflect historical reality as women initiated activities on their own without relying on men. The fact that the woman who is depicted alone in a single visual image is a goddess further implies that if women have agency at all, then it is the immortal rather than the mortal ones who do. Therefore, I would argue that mortal women in the visual images in Textbook A are portrayed with no agency but are dependent on men for action while the immortal one is portrayed with agency and as self-dependent. Furthermore, although portraying more women in a group visual image might be interpreted as an attempt to achieve some form of gender equality it defeats the purpose because women are severely dominated in the only group image where they appear alongside men.

Having known the type of visual images in which women are portrayed, and that numerically less women are portrayed in the group visual image than men, it is essential to identify who the women portrayed actually are. In the following section, I

present the results of the analysis of the visual images of the actual women portrayed.

### 5.2.3 Identity of women portrayed in the visual images

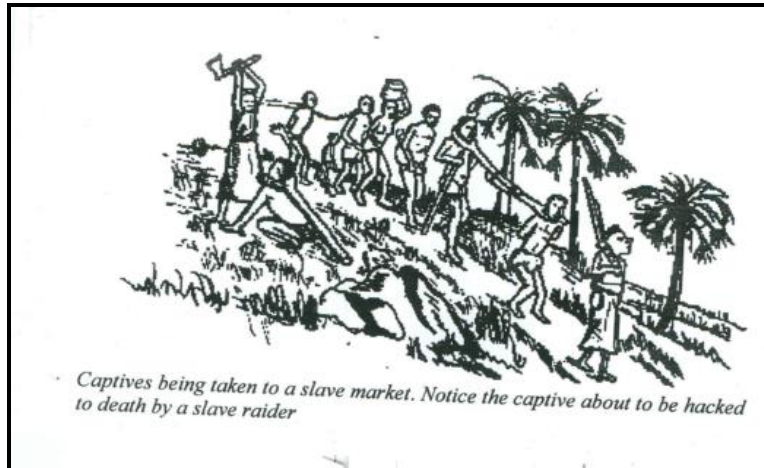
A visual semiotic analysis of the visual images containing women revealed among other things the identity and social status of the women portrayed. The woman portrayed in the single visual image was the Greek goddess, Athena, as exemplified in figure 5.1. In terms of race and nationality, this image represents a white woman from Europe. The fact that she is depicted as a goddess reveals that she is a woman of high social status, in fact a famous and powerful woman in Ancient Greek religion, not an ordinary woman but a female spiritual leader in the divine world.

**Figure 5.1 The Greek goddess Athena (p. 53)**



The other two women portrayed in a visual image in this textbook were female slaves depicted together with male slaves being led to the slave market to be sold (Figure 5.2). The slave market is probably on the East African coast as evidenced by the presence of the palm trees in the visual image as well as the fact that the slaves are led by what appears to be an Arab-Swahili slave trader. However, it was difficult to establish their nationality apart from the fact that they are black African women. This is evidenced by the fact that one woman is carrying a load on her head and the other is carrying a baby on her back as these are attributes which are characteristic of most African cultures. Furthermore, unlike the Greek goddess, these women, as slaves, are powerless people and in fact they are portrayed as victims.

**Figure 5.2 Slaves being taken to the slave market (p. 110)**



It is difficult to draw too many firm conclusions from the analysis of Figures 1 and 2 quite simply because Textbook A contained only two images which included women. However, it was noticeable that the white woman as a historical character was depicted as an individual and a goddess and the African women as an oppressed group being victimised. In addition, despite the fact that this textbook is Malawian, no Malawian woman is portrayed in the visual images. This marginalises Malawian women as historical characters and gives the impression that they did not contribute to the history of the country which denies historical reality.

Although the identity of the women to some extent implies their roles, the semiotic analysis of the visual images revealed more about the activities in which the women are portrayed. These roles and activities are highlighted in the following section.

#### **5.2.4 Roles and activities in which women are portrayed**

The analysis of the visual image of the Greek goddess positions her in a leadership role as a spiritual leader in Ancient Greek religion. Besides the divine role, Athena was also depicted in activities associated with domestic life. This was evidenced by the fact that she was depicted carrying a pot in her right hand which signifies cooking, fetching water and being responsible for food. See figure 5.1. This therefore portrays the goddess in domestic roles which are stereotypical roles for women in society.

Additionally, the visual image of the slaves being led to the slave market (figure 5.2) revealed that in serving the role of being slaves, the slave women were also shown as mothers responsible for raising children and as the custodians of food. In this visual image one slave woman was depicted carrying a baby on her back which portrays her as a mother who was captured together with her child. Another woman was depicted carrying a load on her head which looked like a basket of food; probably provisions for the long journey to the slave market. This signified the role of the woman as being responsible for food or custodians of food which means that the slave women are portrayed in both reproductive and domestic roles.

The roles and activities in which people are portrayed are sometimes related to their character traits. Therefore in the following section, I present the analysis of the character traits in which the three women depicted in the visual images in Textbook A were portrayed.

### **5.2.5 Women are presented with certain character traits**

Character traits could be conceptualised as behaviours and attributes that people display in their actions. For instance a person could display the characteristic of hard work, patience or determination. A semiotic analysis of the two visual images featuring women in Textbook A disclosed some character traits in which the women as historical characters were portrayed.

The posture of the Greek goddess (Figure 5.1) showed her looking down bending her head towards her right hand side with her eyes looking down and focussing on the plaited rope or string in her hand which coils in front of her feet. Such a posture according to my Malawian cultural context entails thoughtfulness and patience. See figure 5.1. As regards the visual image of slaves being led to the slave market, it was noted that women were placed at the middle of the single file as they walked to the market. See figure 5.2. In front of the woman carrying a baby on her back were three men with the man leading the group carrying a gun. Behind the woman carrying a load on her head are five males with the very last one carrying a machete. Placing the women in the middle in this way portrays them as weak and vulnerable who need the protection of men. A close study of the visual image also showed that the women were not chained or yoked as were the men. This portrays them as submissive,

obedient and powerless people who cannot make a decision to run away. This is further evidenced by the fact that one of the men in the single file broke the yoke, perhaps in an attempt to run away, and was about to be hacked to death by the slave master. In contrast, the slave women, despite not being yoked, do not show any signs of resistance or escaping.

Thus, I would argue that the women in the two visual images are portrayed with character traits of being thoughtful, patient, weak, vulnerable, submissive and powerless. These characteristics, except thoughtfulness, are from a patriarchal perspective mostly associated with women. Therefore it could be argued that women in the visual images in Textbook A are portrayed mostly with stereotypical feminine character traits. However, it is the white woman who is depicted with the character trait of thoughtfulness.

### **5.2.6 Conclusion of findings from Textbook A**

In conclusion, I would argue that women in the visual images in Textbook A are portrayed as marginal to history. This is evidenced by the serious under-representation of women in the visual images both in terms of number of visual images featuring women and the number of women depicted in the images. The marginal portrayal of women in the visual images shows women as a group of people that contributed very little to history which is in itself a distortion of historical reality. It was also found that the Greek goddess Athena and slaves are the only women who are portrayed as historical characters in the visual images in Textbook A. Although these women represent both black and white women, it was clear that the white woman was portrayed in the exceptional position of a divine being while the black women in a deprived position of slaves. The fact that mortal women are represented only as slaves does not reflect past reality. Both visual images are contemporary drawings which depict women as historical characters, yet they re-imagined history in a distorted way. Despite the textbook being a product of Malawi, it was found that Malawian women are excluded as historical characters in the visual images which might imply that Malawian women did not contribute to the history of their country.

It was found that except in one instance where a woman was depicted as a spiritual leader, women as historical characters are largely stereotyped in reproductive and domestic roles with associated patriarchal traits ascribed to them.

### 5.3 Visual portrayal of women in Textbook B

There were 52 visual images of people in Textbook B. However, only 48 were used in the quantitative analysis as four were omitted because they were blurred and of such bad quality that it was difficult to determine the sex of the people depicted. In the following section, I present the findings of the analysis of the visual images of their representation of women.

#### 5.3.1 Representation in the visual images

To establish the representation of women in the visual text, the visual images were analysed in terms of the number of visual images featuring women and the number of women depicted in the visual images in relation to men. Table 5.4 summarises the findings on the analysis of visual images for their inclusion of women in Textbook B.

**Table 5.4 Number of visual images featuring women in Textbook B**

Total number of visual images of people analysed	Number of visual images showing women	Percentage of visual images showing women	Number of visual images showing men	Percentage of visual images showing men
48	23	36%	41	64%

According to the data in the table, of the 48 visual images analysed, 23 featured women while 41 showed men. As with the group visual image in Textbook A, group and pair visual images which depicted both women and men were counted twice in the analysis. They were counted under the category of visual images depicting women as well as under those showing men. This explains why the numbers of visual images showing women, and those featuring men, contradict the total number of visual images. Statistically, based on the figures shown in Table 5.4, women were portrayed in 36% of the visual images analysed in this textbook. This shows that women in textbook B are represented in far fewer visual images than men.

However, the visual images were also analysed for the number of women depicted in relation to men. A summary of the results of this analysis is shown in Table 5.5 below.

**Table 5.5 Number of women depicted in the visual images in relation to men in Textbook B**

Total number of visual images analysed in the textbook	Total number of people depicted in the visual images	Number of women depicted in the visual images	Percentage of women depicted in the visual images	Number of men depicted in the visual images	Percentage of men depicted in the visual images
48	251	63	25%	188	75%

As shown in table 5.5, the 48 visual images analysed contained a total of 251 historical characters. Out of this grand total, 63 were women and 188 were men. Statistically these figures indicate that women comprise only 25% of the people represented in the visual images while men comprised 75%. Based on data in Tables 5.4 and 5.5, it is evident that women are seriously under-represented in their portrayal in the visual images in Textbook B. The under-representation is reflected both in the number of visual images featuring women and in the number of women depicted in the visual images. This under-representation portrays women as marginal to history and as people who contributed very little in the past compared to men. This undermines the role of women in history. The lack of visibility of women in the visual images in Textbook B is exacerbated by the type of visual images in which they were portrayed as will be showed in the proceeding section.

### **5.3.2 Type of visual images in which women are portrayed**

The visual images were also analysed to determine the type of visuals in which women are portrayed. This involved identifying and counting the visuals which featured women in pairs, in groups and as individuals. Table 5.6 presents the results of this analysis.



**Table 5.6 Type of visual images in which women are portrayed in Textbook B**

Type of visual image showing women	Number of visual images showing women	Number of visual images showing women only	Number of visual images showing women and men together
Pair	2	0	2
Group	19	1	18
Single	2	2	N/A

The figures in Table 5.6 indicate that there were two pair visual images which featured women. However, both these visual images depicted a woman together with a man. Similarly, it was noted that of the 19 visual images showing women in groups, 18 depicted women together with men and only one featured women only in a group. The table also reveals that there were only two single visual images which showed women as individuals on their own.

I would therefore conclude that women as historical characters are portrayed more readily in group visual images together with men rather than on their own, be it in groups, pairs or as individuals. The depiction of women in more group visual images together with men portrays them as historical characters who cannot stand on their own but depend on men. It also portrays women with no agency to initiate historical events but rather shows them as supporters of men in historical events.

### **5.3.3 Identity of women portrayed in the visual images**

One of the themes that emerged from the semiotic analysis of the visual images was the identity and social status of the women portrayed. Table 5.7 indicates the identity of the women portrayed in the visual images in Textbook B.

**Table 5.7 Identity of women depicted in the visual images in Textbook B**

Identity of women portrayed	Number of visual images of women	Number of women portrayed	Continent of origin
Black	22	58	Africa
White	1	5	Europe

The analysis in Table 5.7 indicates that both black and white women were depicted in Textbook B. It is also noted in the table that all black and white women depicted in

the visual images are of African and European origin respectively. However, black women were portrayed in more visual images (22) and in a larger number (58) than white women who were shown in one visual image consisting of five women. These results show therefore that black women as historical characters dominate in the visual images in Textbook B. According to the numbers, the difference is significant which suggests a racial issue in the representation of black women in relation to white women.

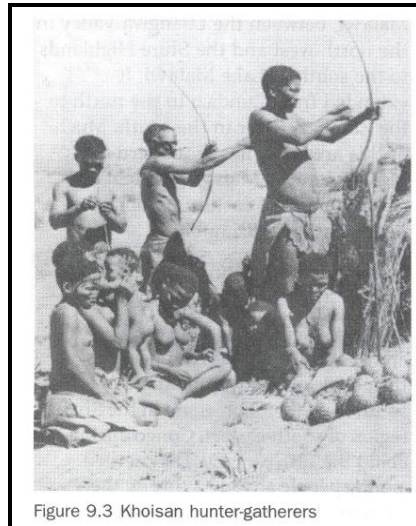
It was noted from the analysis that a wide variety of women were depicted in the visual images in Textbook B. Some were depicted as queens, angels, and as officials at a court meeting who were probably members of the royal family. Others were shown as school girls; out-of-school girls; an elderly local woman; subsistent farmers; a tourist; hunter-gatherers; business women; slaves and a Muslim woman. I would therefore argue that the majority of the women depicted as historical characters in the visual images in Textbook B are portrayed as ordinary women of lower social status in society. The exceptions were women that were depicted as queens, angels and officials at a political court meeting who could be considered as famous and important women. Therefore, a diversity of women, ranging from queens through to ordinary women in different capacities, to slaves were visually depicted as having contributed to history.

It also emerged from the semiotic analysis that the African women depicted in the visual images consisted of a few Malawian women. Of the 22 visual images of black women in Textbook B as shown in Table 5.7 above, four depicted recognisable Malawian women. The visual images that depicted Malawian women as historical characters comprised a total of 12 women. Considering the total number of women included in the visual images (63 women), and in particular the high numerical representation of black women (58), it can be argued that Malawian women as historical figures are marginalised in the visual images in textbook B despite the fact that the textbook was produced in Malawi for use in that country. This would suggest that Malawian women did not contribute much to the history of their country which does not reflect historical reality. As with other women, Malawian women contributed greatly to history in various roles and activities.

### 5.3.4 Roles and activities in which women are portrayed

My analysis of the visual images revealed the depiction of women in a variety of roles and activities. For instance, some visual images depicted women as wives and mothers. See Figure 5.3 below to illustrate this role.

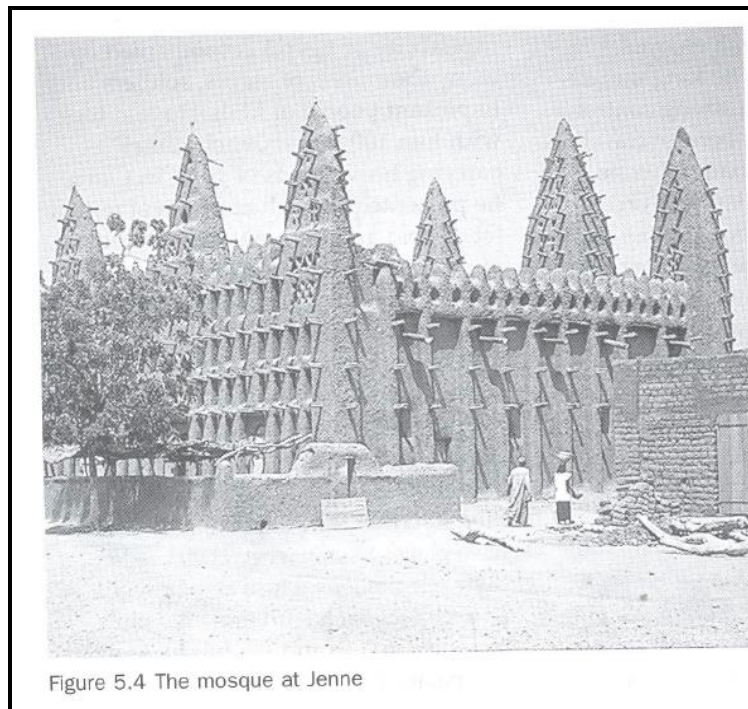
**Figure 5.3 Women depicted as wives and mothers (p. 106)**



In Figure 5.3, Khoisan women from Africa are shown as mothers, depicted sitting down and taking care of their children. In fact one woman is shown holding a baby in her hands which signifies motherhood. She is surrounded by other women and children. Furthermore, the women are depicted as wives of the three men standing behind them since this visual image depicts family members of an extended household.

Further evidence depicting women as wives is illustrated in Figure 5.4 below.

**Figure 5.4 A woman shown in the role as a wife (p. 52)**



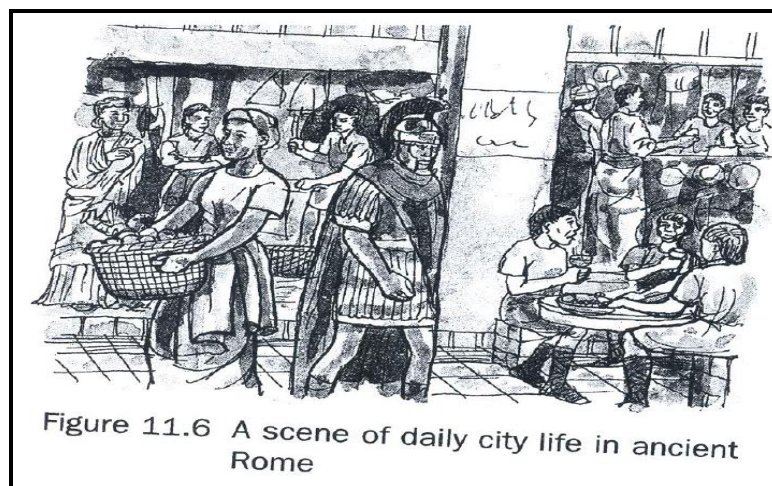
In this visual image an African woman from the ancient kingdom of Mali is shown approaching the mosque at Jenne with a man, probably her husband. This is signified by the fact that the woman and man in the visual image are shown walking together, almost side by side, on their way to the mosque. In Islam a man and woman cannot walk together in this manner, if they are not husband and wife. Therefore in this visual image the woman is shown as a wife.

I would therefore conclude that African women in Textbook B are portrayed stereotypically in the traditional family and reproductive roles as wives and mothers. Being wives and mothers have historically been, and are still, considered primary roles of women as the latter are considered as nurturers. The environment in which these women in Figures 5.3 and 5.4 are portrayed is also stereotypical of women. The women in Figure 5.3 are depicted in the private sphere of the home (i.e. temporary shelter in the bush as hunter-gatherers) and in Figure 5.4 the woman is shown in the public sphere of the place of worship (i.e. mosque). The home environment is mostly associated with women and similarly, though the woman in Figure 5.4 is shown in a public sphere of the mosque, praying or worshipping is

associated more with women than men. I would therefore argue that the women in Figures 5.3 and 5.4 are also stereotyped regarding the environment where they are depicted.

In one visual image in Textbook B, two women were depicted in an economic activity of selling goods at the market place. See Figure 5.5 below.

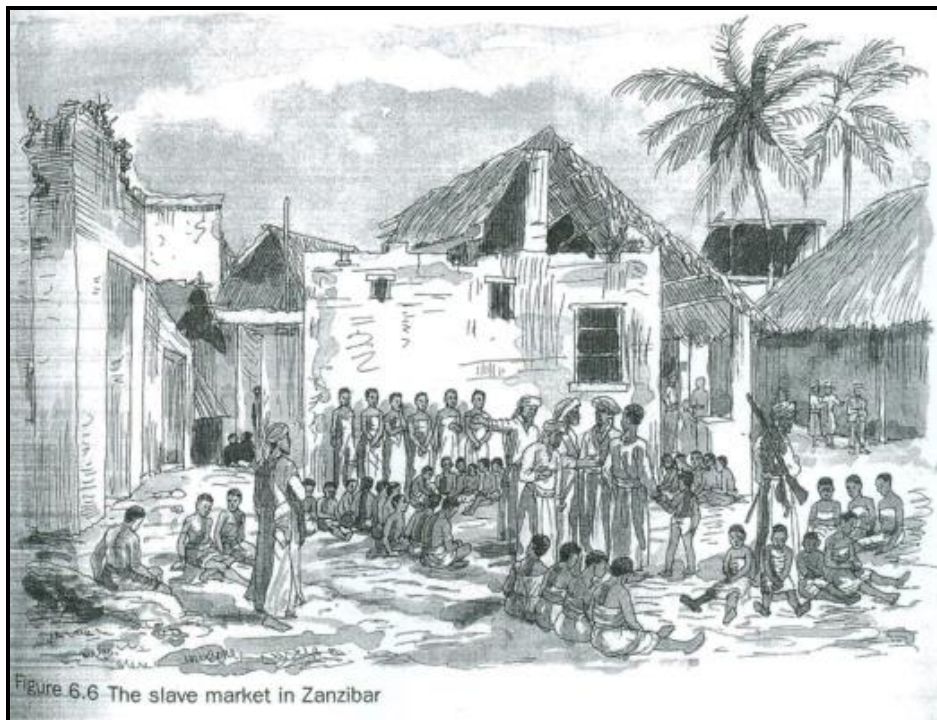
**Figure 5.5 A woman portrayed in an economic activity (p. 138)**



At the top right corner of this image (Figure 5.5) one woman is depicted in an economic activity of selling in a shop together with a man. However, it is not clear whether she was employed in the shop as a shop assistant of the man or she was the owner of the shop. There are also no indications in the visual image whether the man and woman were husband and wife working in their family business or not. Nevertheless, what is evident is that the woman is portrayed in an economically productive role. Another woman is shown carrying her goods in a basket probably foodstuffs that she went to sell or that she had bought at the market. Therefore the portrayal of these women in business activity indicates that some women are portrayed as economically self-reliant. However, these are the only two women in the entire Textbook B who are shown visually in economically productive roles outside of the house. In this way women are portrayed as people who cannot meaningfully participate in the public world of economics.

Furthermore, my analysis indicated that the two women depicted in the productive activity outside the house are white women from ancient Rome. Thus white women, despite their limited representation in the visual images, are portrayed in a more economically engaging position than black women. Where black women are shown in the public sphere of economics, they appear as slaves being sold at the market, that is, as economic commodities. Figure 5.6 exemplifies this argument.

**Figure 5.6 Women as slaves being sold at the market (p. 67)**



In this visual image (Figure 5.6) black African women are depicted as slaves being sold at the Zanzibar slave market. I would argue that despite sharing the same sex, economically, black and white women are portrayed differently. Black women are excluded from economically productive activities and portrayed as subjects of economic exploitation as slaves or only being active in their households while white women are depicted as having the ability to be economically self-reliant.

It was also revealed by the analysis that women were predominantly depicted in domestic roles. For instance in one visual image, a woman was shown engaged in domestic work in the house. See Figure 5.7 below.

**Figure 5.7 A woman doing housework (front cover page)**



The woman in Figure 5.7, who appears to be from Ancient Egypt, was depicted doing domestic work in the house. She is shown carrying a bucket of water and is taking it close to a potted plant which could be a symbolic representation of wheat. It seems the woman is doing the work in her own house because in front of this woman is a man who appears, judging by his dress, to be her servant or slave helping her with the work. The man is carrying a plant in his hands and is taking it elsewhere but only the leaves of the plant are shown. Therefore, I would argue that the woman in the visual image, on the cover page of the book as the first visual image the learners would see in this textbook, is portrayed in a stereotypical manner as being responsible for taking care of the home.

Apart from taking care of the home, women were also shown in a domestic role of processing food in the home environment. This is illustrated below in Figure 5.8.

**Figure 5.8 Women processing grain (p. 97)**

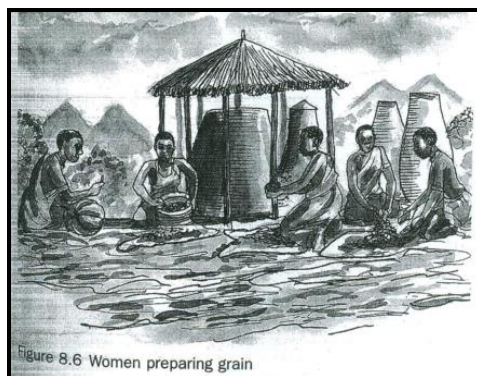
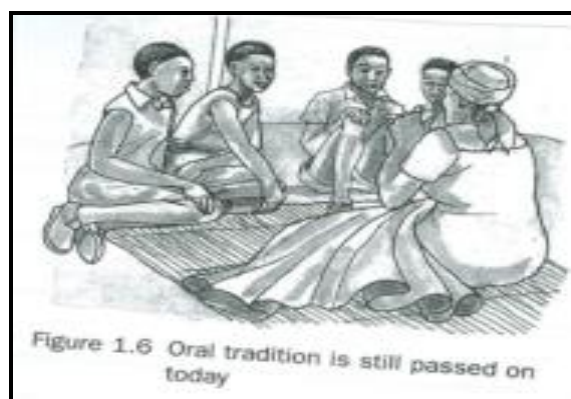


Figure 8.6 Women preparing grain

As shown in Figure 5.8 the women are depicted processing grain for storage in the granaries shown behind them. The women depicted in the image are African women evidenced by the use of granaries for storage of grain which have been and are still characteristic of many African societies. In addition, food production and processing is historically associated with African women. It must be noted that Figure 5.8 was the only group visual image which depicted women on their own. As such, this portrays African women stereotypically as being food producers. The role of women in food production was also noted in the depiction of a woman of Ancient Egypt who was shown irrigating using a shaduf (p.22 in the textbook). Figure 5.3 above, which depicts Khoisan hunter-gatherers, also portrayed the women as responsible for and custodians of food as can be gleaned by the food gathered from the bush displayed in front of them. Therefore, according to the analysis of Figures 5.8, 5.3 and the visual image on page 22 in Textbook B, African women are portrayed in a domestic role as food producers.

Furthermore, in one visual image a woman was portrayed in a socialisation role in which she was depicted passing on oral tradition to the youth in the home environment. See Figure 5.9.

**Figure 5.9 A woman passing on oral tradition to the youth (p. 4)**



There is no evidence in Figure 5.9 to indicate any parental relationship between the woman and the girls and boys depicted as they all appear to be of the same age. However, there is a close relationship between the woman and the youth which is signified by the respect they give her through attentive listening. Therefore, the woman is portrayed in an educational nurturing role of being responsible for the



socialisation into society of the youth she is addressing on the history and cultural practices of their society.

I would conclude, based on the analysis of Figures 5.3, 5.7 and 5.8 that women in Textbook B are to a larger extent portrayed in a variety of domestic roles such as taking care of the home, processing grain, being custodians of food and narrating oral tradition. However, it was noted that all the women portrayed in these roles were black African women.

My analysis of the visual images also revealed that some women were portrayed in leadership roles and positions of authority. Four visual images depicted women in this capacity and were readily identified. Figure 5.10 below shows a woman who was depicted as queen.

**Figure 5.10: The mask of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut (p. 17)**

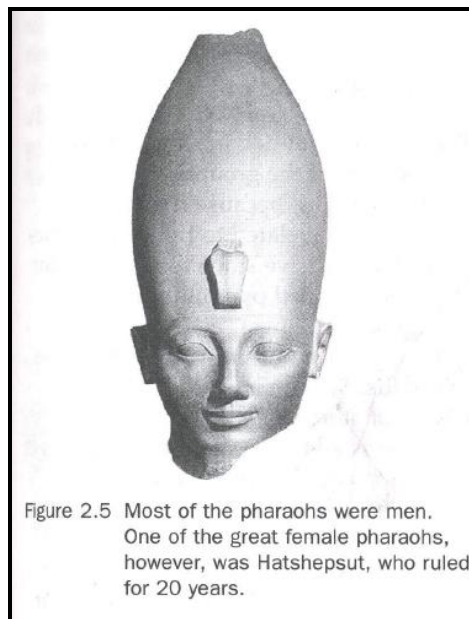
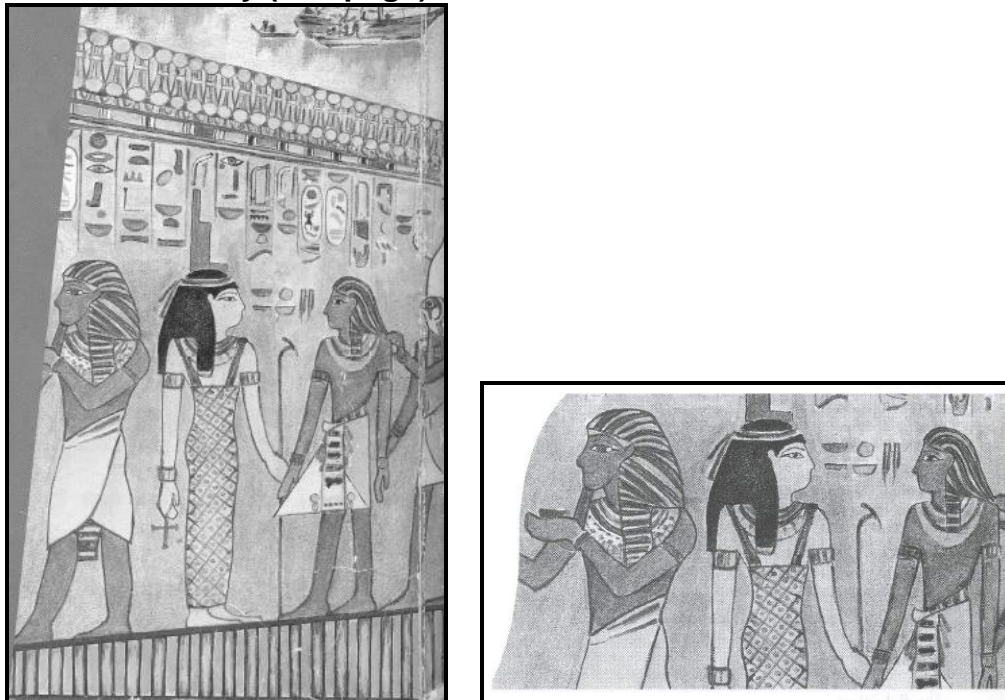


Figure 5.10 shows the mask of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut of Ancient Egypt. The caption describes Queen Hatshepsut as one of the great female pharaohs. She is therefore portrayed as a ruler or leader of her kingdom.

In other visual images the women were not specifically referred to as queens in the captions but the way the women were presented signified the authority of being

rulers. Figures 5.11 (a) and (b) below exemplify this observation. These two visual images are the same but were repeated in different pages in the textbook with minor alterations by means of cropping.

**Figure 5.11 (a) The queen in authority (back cover page) Figure 5.11 (b) The queen in authority (title page)**



The image of a woman in figures 5.11 (a) and (b) above depicts a queen in Ancient Egypt. This can be deduced by the backdrop to the image and based on her dress and the authority she displays. It is likely that the scene in the visual image is a palace judging from the way it is decorated. This is clearer in visual image 5.11 (a) than in 5.11 (b). The woman in the visual image is depicted standing in authority while holding a long staff in her right hand and giving orders to two men, possibly slaves. Holding a long staff in the context symbolises power and authority. Furthermore, the woman is shown impeccably dressed and adorned typical of Egyptian queens. Therefore the nameless woman in Figure 5.11 is portrayed as a ruler.

Other visual images which featured women as queens were included on pages 23 and 31 in Textbook B. Page 23 depicted Egyptian Queens painted on the wall of a tomb. They were identified as queens because their dress resembled that of the

woman in Figure 5.11 above. On page 31 the woman depicted was a queen from the Ancient kingdom of Kush who was sculpted on the wall of the temple of Abu Simbel together with four kings. Therefore according to this evidence, I would argue that the women depicted on pages 23 and 31 were also portrayed as rulers or leaders.

Besides the queens, my analysis also revealed some women in power who were depicted attending a political court meeting in the ancient Buganda kingdom. See Figure 5.12.

**Figure 5.12 Women attending a political court meeting (p. 70)**

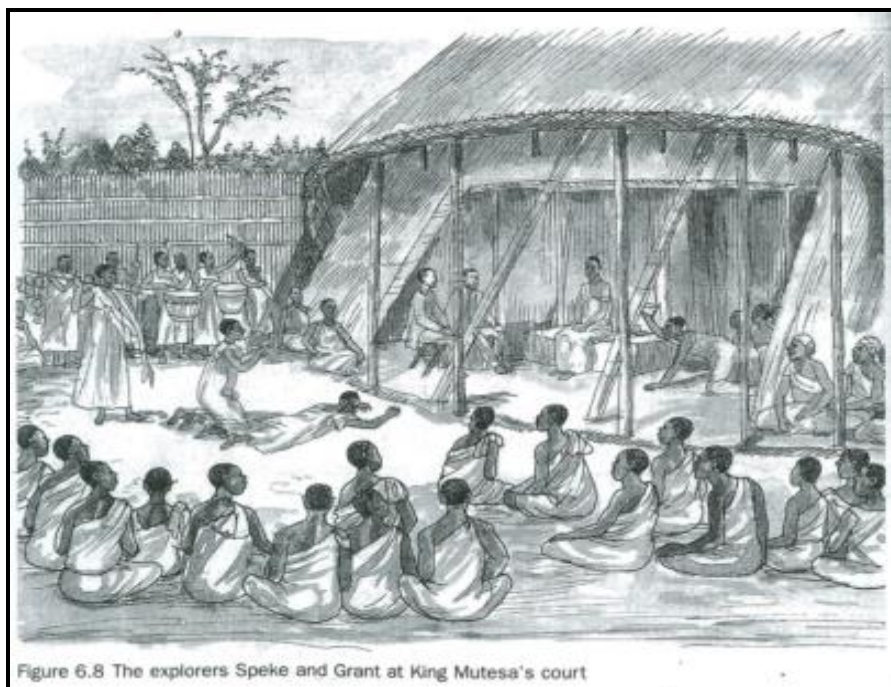


Figure 5.12 depicts two women who are attending the meeting together with the majority of men. The women are seated on the right hand side of the pavilion together with the king and other officials. The presence of the two women in the pavilion indicates that they have important leadership positions in the kingdom because such a place of honour is reserved for the king and other important leaders or officials. I would therefore argue that these two women are portrayed in power though it is difficult to tell from the visual image the exact positions they held. They probably were wives of the king or perhaps some female members from the royal family.

Some women were also portrayed in religious roles. For instance in Figure 5.4 above, the woman in the visual image was depicted going to the mosque for prayers. In addition some women were shown as angels as illustrated in Figure 5.13.

**Figure 5.13 Women portrayed as angels (p. 31)**

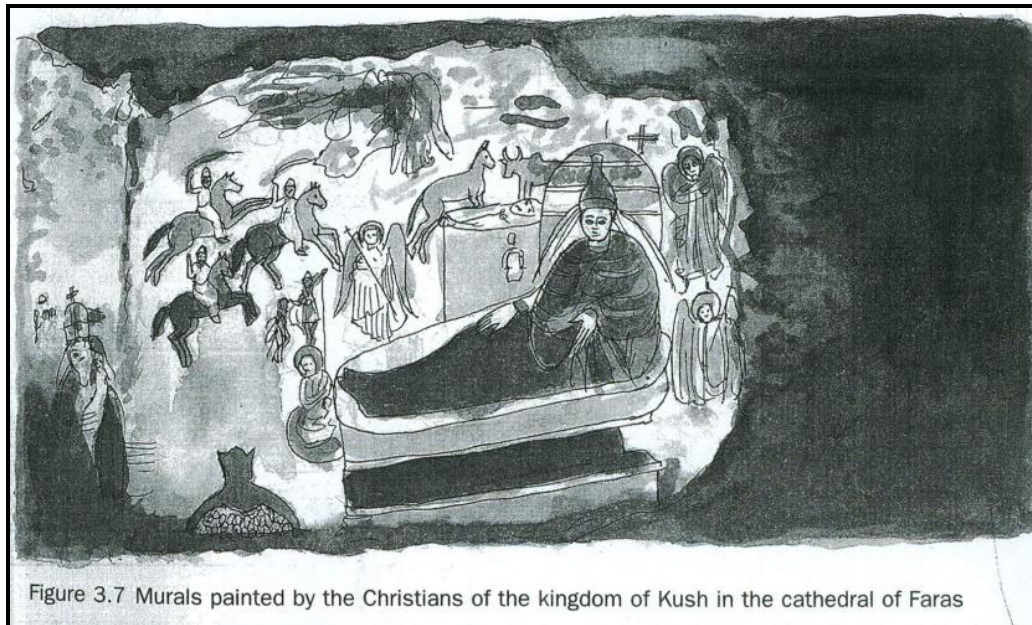


Figure 3.7 Murals painted by the Christians of the kingdom of Kush in the cathedral of Faras

In Figure 5.13 four women are visibly shown as angels performing their angelic duty around the king who is fore grounded in the visual image. I would argue that the portrayal in Figure 5.13 stereotypes women in religious service. This is because; unlike in a Biblical sense where angels are associated mostly with men, in my society popular discourse associates angels with women due to the fact that angels are related to physical beauty. Similarly religious worship in my cultural context is mostly associated with women.

According to the analysis presented in this section, I would argue that women are portrayed in a variety of roles and activities in the visual images in Textbook B. Women are stereotyped in traditional family and reproductive roles as wives and mothers as well as in a variety of domestic roles. Women are also portrayed stereotypically in religious service as angels and observers of prayer because these activities are mostly associated with women particularly in Malawi. It was also noted that women were portrayed in leadership as well as economically productive roles. Sometimes the roles and activities people perform determine their character traits. In

the following section, I present my analysis of the character traits in which women as historical characters were portrayed.

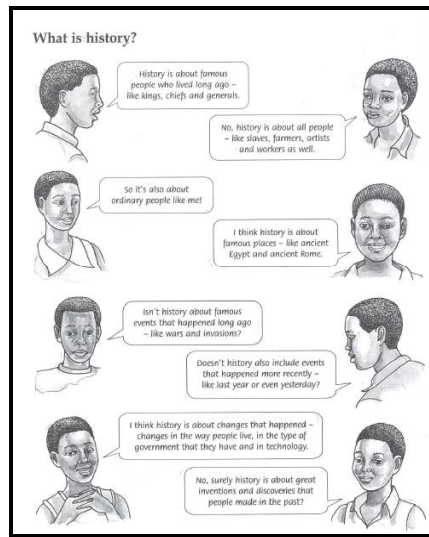
### **5.3.5 Women are presented with certain character traits**

Analysis of the visual images featuring women in Textbook B revealed a number of character traits in which women as historical characters were portrayed. Some of the visual images seemed to portray women with the behavioural trait of diligence when performing their labour. For instance in Figure 5.5 the woman who was shown selling in a shop seemed to be portrayed performing her duty in a hardworking manner as she was the one depicted serving customers while the man beside her was just standing. Furthermore, the women shown processing grain (refer to Figure 5.8 above) were portrayed engaged in their work with a hardworking spirit.

Women were also portrayed with the character traits of authority and leadership as can be gleaned from Figures 5.11 and 5.10. In Figure 5.11 (a) and (b) the woman shown in the image was depicted as behaving with authority. This was signified by the fact that the woman in the visual image was looking straight into the eyes of the man to whom she was speaking. Simultaneously the woman was holding a long staff in her hand which is a symbol of authority or power. Similarly, the caption on the visual image of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut (refer to Figure 5.10) associated her with the trait of leadership since she was described as one of the greatest pharaohs who ruled the kingdom for 20 years. In addition, she was also portrayed as thoughtful which was evidenced from her posture. She was depicted looking down with her eyes almost closed and a half smile on her face which I would interpret as signifying thoughtfulness.

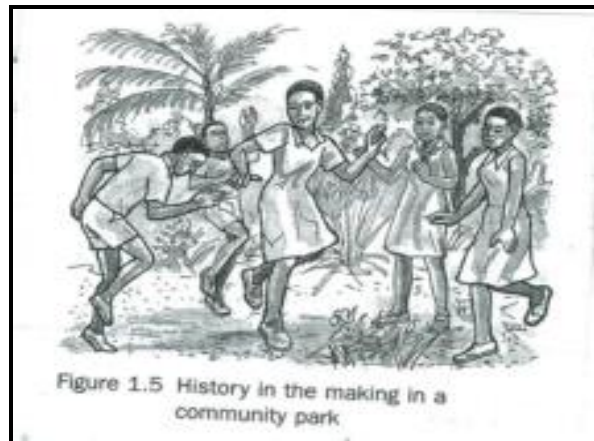
In Figure 5.14 below, in which a group of boys and girls were shown as students who as 'talking heads' were discussing the meaning of history, one young woman displayed a spirit of self-confidence during the discussion. She was shown emphasising her point by putting fingers of both hands on her chest. This gesture signifies self-confidence in the Malawian culture. Additionally self-confidence is also noted in the way she is emphasising her point using the first person pronoun "I" and the argument she is putting across.

**Figure 5.14 A girl portrayed with the character of self-confidence (p. 2)**



The same trait of self-confidence was also displayed in a visual image captioned “History in the making in the community park” where boys and girls were depicted dancing. Refer to Figure 5.15 below.

**Figure 5.15 Girls portrayed with character traits of self-confidence and shyness (p. 4)**



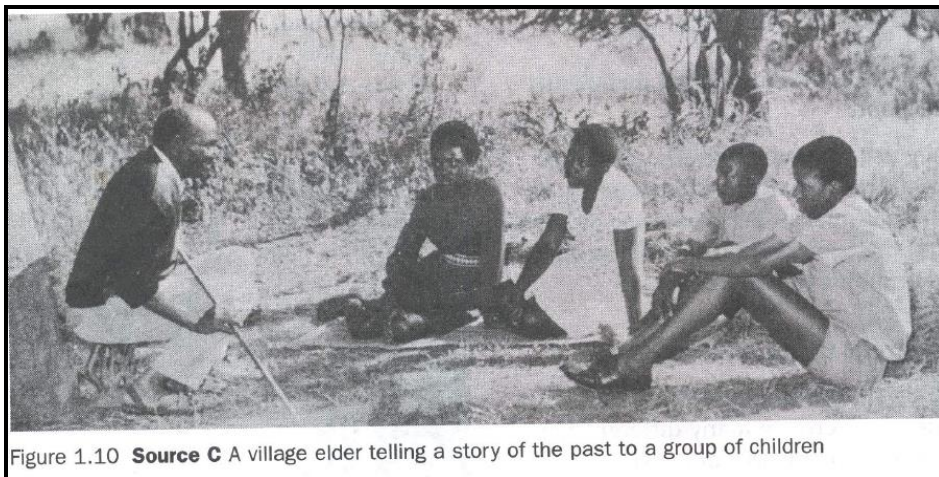
Two girls, together with the boys in the visual image, are depicted dancing actively with confidence. However, one girl in this visual image (positioned in the middle of the two girls dancing actively) is shown dancing timidly which portrays her as a shy person.

Some women as historical characters, as illustrated by the visual image of Khoisan hunter gatherers, (refer to Figure 5.3 above) were portrayed as being dependent on

men for protection in that they were depicted sitting down with children while the men in the group were shown standing and shooting arrows using bows.

Other women were portrayed respecting others which was noted in three visual images. In two of the visual images, young women were shown displaying respect towards elders while in one, a woman, was depicted showing respect to her husband. In Figure 5.9 in which the elderly woman is depicted passing on oral tradition to children, the young women show respect to her. This is revealed through the attention they pay to the woman as she narrates the story. In Figure 5.16 below, young women also show the same respect to the man, the village elder, who was depicted telling the story of the past to the youth. The girls are shown sitting humbly and listening attentively to the village elder which signifies respect in the Malawian cultural context.

**Figure 5.16 Young women display respect to the village elder (p. 8)**

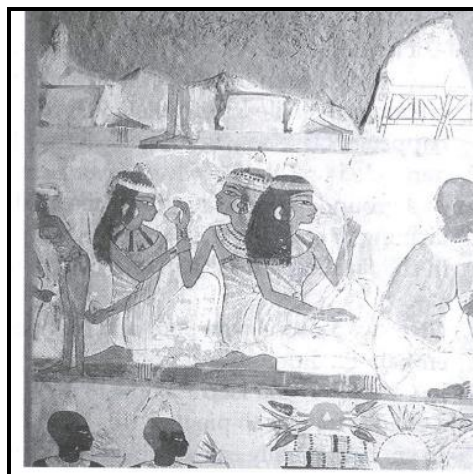


Furthermore, one woman was portrayed displaying respect to her husband. Refer to Figure 5.4 above. The couple was depicted walking together to the mosque with the woman carrying a jar of water on her head while the man did not carry anything. The depiction of the woman, carrying the jar of water, signifies the behaviour of respect for the husband in the context of Malawi where this textbook is used. This is because the water was meant to be used for ablutions by both the husband and wife and yet it was the woman and not the man who carried it. Serving a husband is regarded as a sign of respect in Malawi.

Related to this, other women were portrayed exhibiting self-respect. This was indicated by the sitting posture and the mode of dress of the women in the visual images. For instance, in some visual images the women were depicted wearing long dresses which is one of the signs of self-respect in Malawi (refer to figures 5.4, 5.5, 5.7 and 5.11 (a) above). Additionally, in figures 5.9 and 5.16 above, the young women also sat with their legs bent to one side with one hand holding their skirts on the knees to avoid exposing their body above the knees which also shows self-respect in a Malawian context. In figure 5.9, the elderly woman besides bending her legs to one side also covered them with a piece of material called *chilundu* in Chichewa, the national local language in Malawi. Her behaviour signified self-respect as she did not want to expose her legs to her listeners, who were younger than herself.

Women were also portrayed with character traits of fashion and beauty. These traits were shown through the women's mode of dress and grooming. The women who were identified as ancient Egyptian women were depicted dressed impeccably, with long hair, wearing headgear and well adorned with jewels. In addition, the women were also shown applying make-up to their faces. See figure 5.17 below and also refer to figures 5.11 (a) above.

**Figure 5.17: Women portrayed with character traits of beauty and fashion (p. 23)**



The analysis of the visual images for character traits shows that women as historical characters are portrayed with a variety of traits. It is clear that women as historical



characters are portrayed with traits of authority; thoughtfulness; leadership; diligence and self-confidence. Furthermore, they are also portrayed with character traits of respect for others; shyness; self-respect; dependence; beauty and fashion. However, some of the traits in which women are portrayed are mostly associated with men while others with females. This therefore means that women as historical characters in the visual images in Textbook B are portrayed with character traits that are associated with both men and women.

### **5.3.6 Conclusion of findings from Textbook B**

The analysis in the preceding sections of the visual images found in Textbook B has highlighted certain findings about how women are portrayed. Women are portrayed as marginal in the visual images in Textbook B. This is supported by statistics which reveal a remarkable under-representation of women in the visual images in terms of both numbers of visual images featuring women and number of women depicted in the images. The marginal portrayal of women in the visual images suggests limited contribution of women to history. It was found that women are portrayed as people with limited agency to initiate historical action but depend on men for their endeavours. This finding was evidenced by the fact that women were largely depicted in group visual images together with men rather than on their own either in groups, pairs or as individuals. It was established that black women dominate in the visual images in Textbook B with a significant difference which suggests a racial issue in the representation of women, more so when considering the different historical acts associated with white and black women respectively. Although various women ranging from queens to slaves were depicted in the visual images, it can be concluded that the majority of the women depicted as historical characters in the visual images in Textbook B are portrayed as ordinary women as opposed to famous women. This shows that the role of ordinary women in the past is recognised in the visual images in Textbook B. It was also established that despite the fact that Textbook B was produced in Malawi for use in that country that Malawian women as historical characters are marginalised through their low representation in relation to other women. This portrays Malawian women of the past as people who contributed little to the history of their country.

It was also found that historically women were portrayed in fulfilling different roles and partaking in different activities. Apart from the portrayal of women in economic and leadership roles, it was found that women are largely stereotyped in a patriarchal sense in what they can or cannot do in the activities in which they are portrayed in the visual images in Textbook B.

#### **5.4 Visual portrayal of women in Textbook C**

Findings of the analysis of the visual images in the third textbook to be analysed, Textbook C, are also organised around the same themes used for Textbooks A and B and followed the same format of presentation. Consequently I present the findings in the proceeding sections beginning with representation of women in the visual images.

##### **5.4.1 Representation in the visual images**

The analysis of the visual images in Textbook C for the representation of women focused on the number of visual images featuring women and the number of women depicted in the visual images in relation to men. Results of the analysis of the visual images to establish the number of those featuring women are presented in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8 Number of visual images featuring women in Textbook C**

<b>Total number of visual images of people analysed</b>	<b>Number of visual images showing women</b>	<b>Percentage of visual images showing women</b>	<b>Number of visual images showing men</b>	<b>Percentage of visual images showing men</b>
46	11	20%	45	80%

The results in Table 5.8 indicate that of the 46 visual images analysed in Textbook C, 11 featured women while 45 showed men. Visual images which showed both men and women in groups and pairs were counted twice - under those featuring women as well as those showing men. This explains why the total number of visual images analysed (46) does not tally with the sum total of visuals featuring women and men. The figures indicate that women were featured in only 20% of the visual images in Textbook C while men featured in 80% of the total. Therefore it is clear that women

are represented in far fewer visual images in Textbook C than men and consequently are visually under-represented as historical characters.

However, the visual images were also analysed for the number of women depicted in relation to men. Table 5.9 present a summary of the results of this analysis.

**Table 5.9 Number of women depicted in the visual images in relation to men in Textbook C**

Total number of visual images analysed in the textbook	Total number of people depicted in the visual images	Number of women depicted in the visual images	Percentage of women depicted in the visual images	Number of men depicted in the visual images	Percentage of men depicted in the visual images
46	172	29	17%	143	83%

According to the data in Table 5.9, the 46 visual images analysed comprised a total of 172 people. However, from this total, only 29 were women and 143 were men. The figures in Table 5.9 indicate that women make up only 17% of the people represented in the visual images while men comprise 83%. This suggests that women are severely under-represented in their portrayal in the visual images in Textbook C.

Therefore, according to data presented in Tables 5.8 and 5.9, it is evident that women are severely under-represented as historical role players in the visual images in Textbook C. This is indicated by both the limited number of visual images featuring women and the low representation of women in those visual images. This under-representation renders women almost invisible in the visual images and portrays them as marginal to history which implies little contribution to history by women. The limited visibility of women was aggravated by the type of visual images in which women were depicted as shown below.

#### **5.4.2 Type of visual images in which women are portrayed**

My analysis of the type of visual images in which women are portrayed involved identifying and counting the visual images which depicted women in groups and

pairs, with and without men present, and as individuals in single images. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.10 below.

**Table 5.10 Type of visual images in which women are portrayed in Textbook C**

Type of visual image showing women	Number of visual images showing women	Number of visual images showing women only	Number of visual images showing women and men together
Pair	1	0	1
Group	10	1	9
Single	0	0	N/A

As can be gleaned from Table 5.10, women are not shown as individuals in single visual images in Textbook C. This means that no woman was deemed historically important enough to be shown by herself in a visual image. However, they are depicted in pair and group visual images. The data in the table indicates that only one visual image showed women in a pair together with a man and that there was no visual image which depicted women in a pair of women only. It is also noted that women featured in ten group visual images out of which nine showed women together with men and one showed women alone. It can therefore be concluded that women are portrayed mostly in group visual images together with men and where a woman is depicted as a pair, she is also featured with a man. It is only in one instance where women are shown in a group on their own. Therefore, the fact that women are shown in the presence of men in all but one visual image in Textbook C reduces them to historical actors with very limited agency to initiate action and also portrays them as reliant on men for their endeavours. Furthermore, the absence of single visual images of women portrays women as people with no autonomy as individuals.

#### **5.4.3 Identity of women portrayed in the visual images**

The semiotic analysis of the visual images also revealed the identity and social status of the women portrayed in the visual images. Table 5.11 shows the identity of the women depicted in the visual images.

**Table 5.11 Identity of women depicted in the visual images in Textbook C**

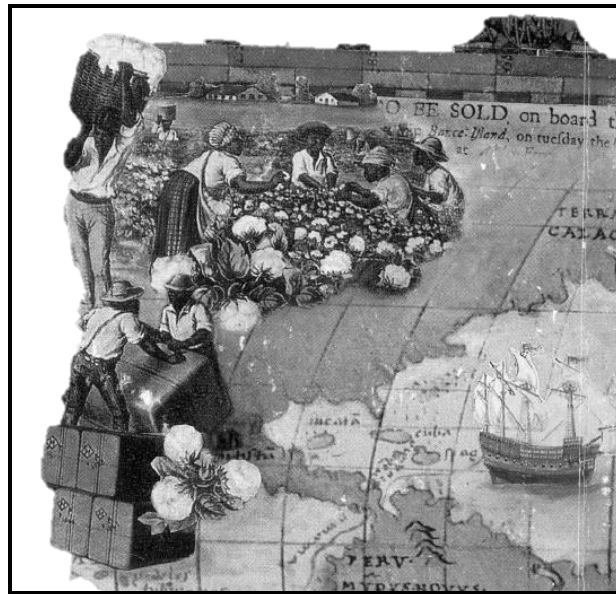
<b>Identity of women portrayed</b>	<b>Number of visual images of women</b>	<b>Number of women portrayed</b>	<b>Continent of origin</b>
Black	6	13	Africa and USA
White	5	16	Europe

Table 5.11 shows that both black and white women are depicted in the visual images in Textbook C. The table also indicates that although black women are portrayed in more visual images (six) than white women (five), there are more white women (16) depicted in the actual visual images than black women (13). The data in the table also indicates that all the white women are of European origin while black women are from Africa and the United States of America. Although white women dominate the difference is not statistically significant enough to suggest that race is an issue in the portrayal of women in the visual images in Textbook C.

I found from the analysis that a wide variety of women were portrayed in the visual images in Textbook C. Some were depicted as country representatives at the Pan-African Conference, wage labourers picking cotton in a plantation and out-of-school girls celebrating the attainment of freedom and justice. Other women portrayed in the visual images were the Virgin Mary; women in a mob celebrating the opening of the railway; spinners in a textile industry, women as slaves and mothers taking care of their children. Therefore, almost all the women depicted in the visual images in Textbook C are ordinary women of lower social status except for the Virgin Mary and the women depicted attending the Pan-African Conference. The latter two are the only historical characters that can be considered as famous and important women. This analysis therefore shows, to a certain extent, a diversity in social status among the women portrayed as historical characters in Textbook C ranging from famous to ordinary women.

It was also noted from the analysis that the visual images featuring black women as shown in Table 5.11 above comprised Malawian women. Of the six visual images depicting black women, only one showed recognisable Malawian women as historical characters. See Figure 5.18 below.

**Figure 5.18 Malawian women as historical characters (Back cover page)**



The visual image in figure 5.18 above depicts two Malawian women. These women were identified as Malawian because of their mode of dress. The women were each shown wearing a *doek* on their heads and wrapping themselves with a piece of material (known as *chitenje* in Chichewa) around the waist. It is a cultural practice in Malawi for women to dress in this manner whilst working on a farm or even at home. One woman is also shown carrying a basket of cotton on her head which is typical of Malawian women during harvest time. Considering the total number of women included in the visual images (29) and also the number of black women represented in the visual images (13), it can be argued that Malawian women as historical characters are marginalised in the visual images in Textbook C despite the fact that the textbook was produced in Malawi. This implies that Malawian women as historical characters are viewed as having contributed in a limited way to the history of their country. However, Malawian women as with other women, contributed greatly in various roles and activities in history.

#### **5.4.4 Roles and activities in which women are portrayed**

The semiotic analysis of the visual images revealed the portrayal of women in a variety of roles and activities. Some were depicted in a traditional family role as mothers while others were seen in economic and political activities. I provide

evidence for these, based on my analysis of the visual images, in the proceeding paragraphs.

The analysis revealed two visual images which portrayed women as mothers. See Figure 5.19 below.

**Figure 5.19 Women as mothers (p. 25)**

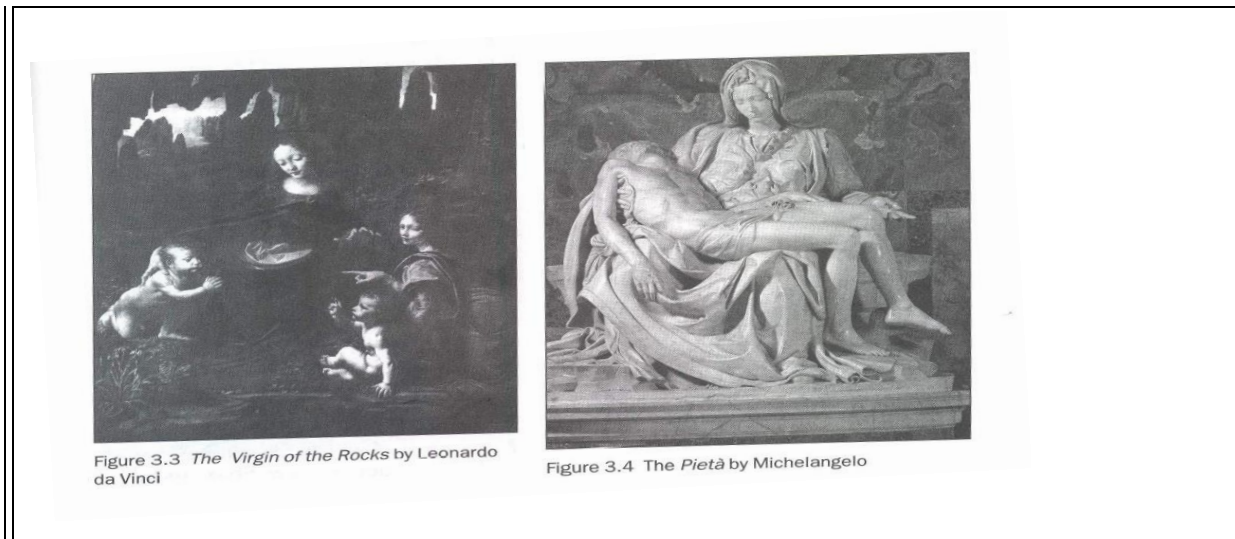
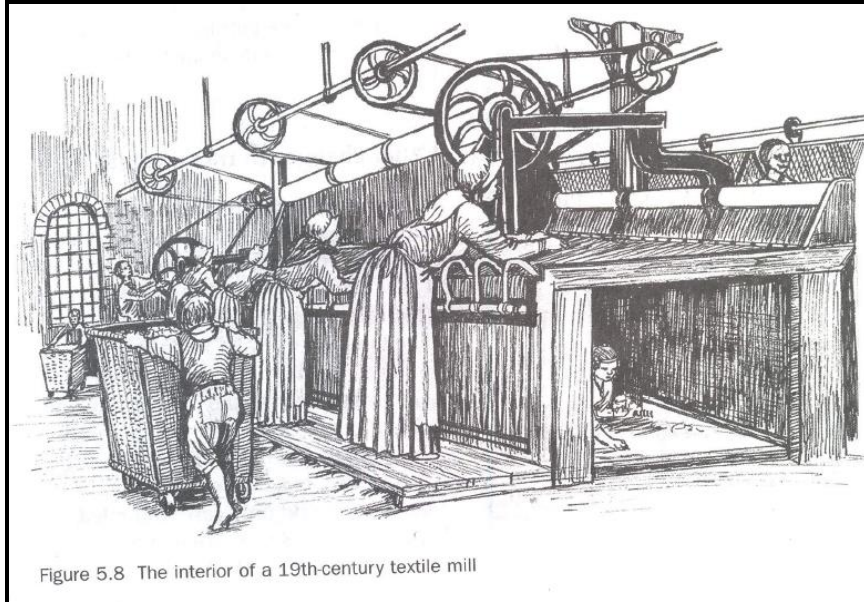


Figure 5.19 shows two visual images which depict women as mothers. The visual image captioned “The Virgin of the Rocks by Leonardo da Vinci” depicts two women sitting together with babies and attending to them. The second visual image captioned “The Pietá by Michelangelo” depicts the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus, sitting on a chair cradling the body of Jesus Christ in her lap after his death on the cross. She is shown as a mother who is mourning the death of her son. These two visual images portray women in traditional reproductive roles as mothers responsible for raising and cradling children and for mourning their death. This reflects some of the primary roles ascribed to women namely birthing and nurturing children.

Women were also depicted in economic activities in the visual images in Textbook C. However, it was noted that women were largely portrayed as labourers or workers in the public sphere of employment. For instance some women were shown as wage labourers in a cotton plantation who were depicted picking cotton. Refer to figure 5.18 above where two women are shown picking cotton together with men. In a

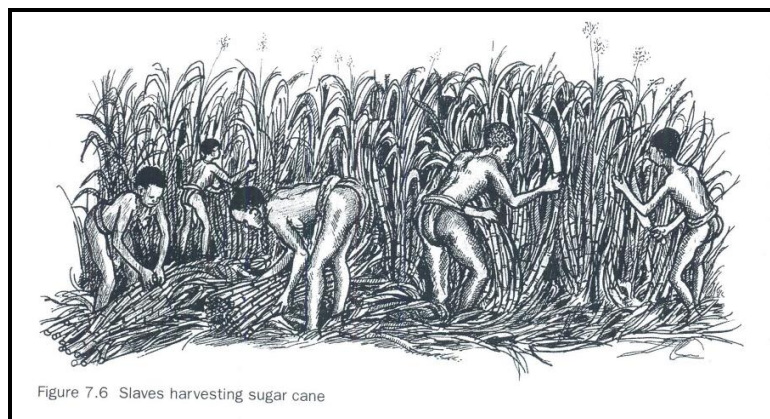
related activity, other women were depicted working in a textile mill as spinners of wool or cotton in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe as illustrated in figure 5.20 below.

**Figure 5.20 Women in an economic activity as spinners (p. 47)**



An analysis of the work of the women in Figures 5.18 and 5.20 indicates that they are portrayed in menial wage labour both of which are related to textile production. However, in another economic context, women are portrayed in unpaid labour as slaves working on a sugar cane plantation. See figure 5.21 below.

**Figure 5.21 Female slaves harvesting sugar cane (p. 74)**



As shown in Figure 5.21, the two slave women are portrayed, together with men, harvesting sugar cane in a plantation. It could be argued therefore that in terms of



economic activities, women in the visual images in Textbook C are portrayed as performing, as historical characters, menial wage labour and as subjects of economic exploitation through slave labour.

Besides the economic activities, women were also shown in political activities in the visual images in Textbook C. For instance, some women were depicted attending a Pan-African Conference. See Figure 5.22.

**Figure 5.22 Women attending a Pan-African Conference (p. 119)**

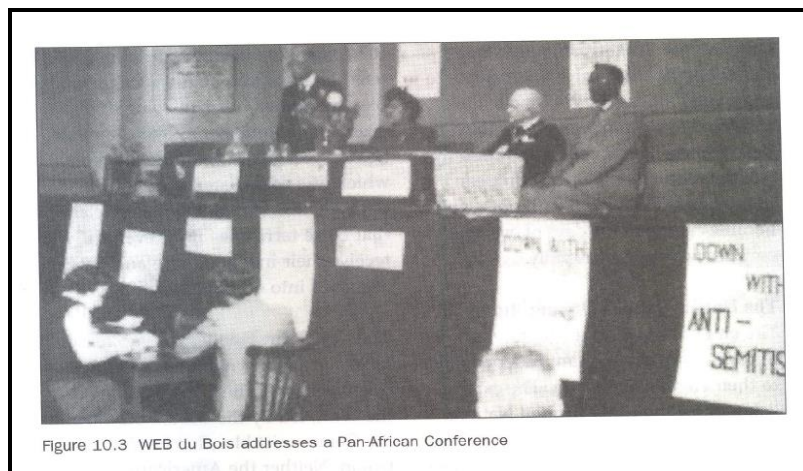
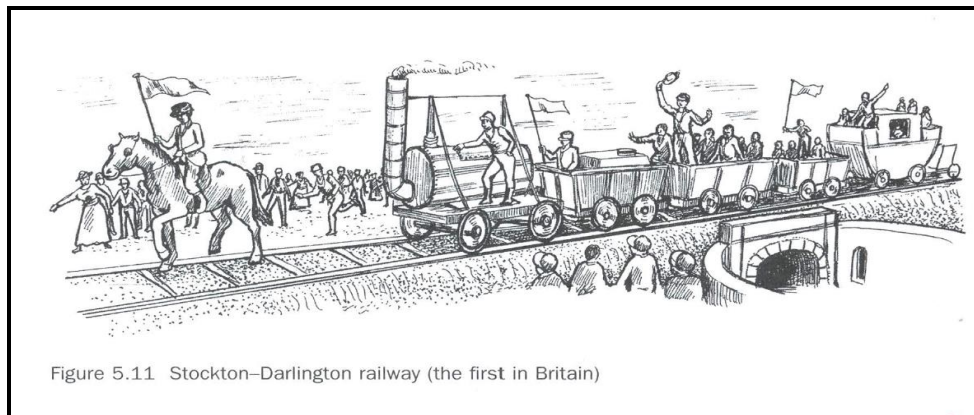


Figure 5.22 shows two women attending the Pan-African conference held in Manchester in 1945 which was addressed by W.E.B. du Bois. The two women are seated at the bottom left hand side of the picture. However, the women are depicted in an administrative and supportive role at the conference. This is indicated by the fact the women are portrayed as secretaries who are busy recording notes of the deliberations and not as decision makers. I would therefore argue that though women in figure 5.22 are portrayed as participants at the conference, they are portrayed performing a supportive role to the men who are depicted in serious deliberations.

Women were also depicted participating in a political activity in which people were shown celebrating the opening of the Stockton-Darlington railway in Britain during the period of the Industrial Revolution. See figure 5.23 below.

**Figure 5.23 Women involved in celebrating the opening of the Stockton-Darlington railway in Britain (p. 51)**



The women in Figure 5.23 participate in the opening ceremony in different ways. Some are dancing as part of the mob; others are spectators of the event; some women are on the train and one woman is shown in authority as a leader who is controlling the crowd and directing the man riding the horse. This therefore shows that at this important political event women are depicted as participating both in leadership and supportive roles.

Similarly, in a different geographical context, women were depicted in a political event celebrating the attainment of freedom and justice in an African state but it is difficult to determine the specific country because no signifiers are provided to this effect in the visual image. What is evident is that the people depicted are black African people. See figure 5.24 below.

**Figure 5.24 Women involved in a celebration for freedom and justice (front cover page)**



The four young women depicted in figure 5.24 are shown actively involved in the celebration alongside the young men through their jubilation and dancing. However, although the number of young women and men is equal in the visual image, (four women and four men), none of the women is shown in a leadership position. Instead it is the young man carrying the placard “Freedom and Justice” who is foregrounded. The young women are portrayed as followers and supporters in the historical activity.

#### **5.4.5 Women are presented with certain character traits**

The semiotic analysis of the visual images in Textbook C also revealed various character traits with which women were portrayed. It was observed that women were portrayed working in a labour intensive manner which suggests a trait or spirit of diligence. For instance, in Figures 5.18, 5.20 and 5.21 above, the women were portrayed busily engaged in their work in the sugar cane plantation, in the cotton plantation and the textile mill respectively. Furthermore, in certain visual images women were depicted as being self-confident. For instance, the young women in Figure 5.24 depicted participating in a celebration for attainment of freedom and justice were portrayed confidently dancing with their hands raised up just as the men. In addition, in Figure 5.23 above, one woman was shown actively controlling the mob and directing the man riding the horse which signifies the traits of self-confidence and leadership. In the same visual image one woman who is depicted in the train with a majority of men displays an adventurous trait by her travelling in the train for the first time during the opening ceremony of the railway line. However, a certain group of women in this visual image who were depicted as spectators were portrayed as being passive onlookers as history was unfolding.

Women were also portrayed as loving and caring. This was observed in Figure 5.19 where two women were depicted sitting with their babies and attending to them. In the same Figure 5.19, the Virgin Mary was portrayed with sorrow and sympathy. These traits were expressed by her posture whereby she bent her head observing the body of Christ whom she was holding in her lap with sadness.

Therefore, women as historical characters in the visual images in Textbook C are portrayed with, amongst others, character traits of diligence; self-confidence; leadership; adventurousness; passivity; loving and caring and sorrow and sympathy. This suggests that women as historical characters had varied historical experiences which required these characteristics.

#### **5.4.6 Conclusion of findings from Textbook C**

Several conclusions could be drawn from the analysis of the visual images in Textbook C. Women are remarkably under-represented in the visual images in this textbook. This is underscored by the statistics of the visual images featuring women and of the women depicted in the visual images. As a result this portrays women as marginal in history and as people who contributed in a limited way in the past. It was also found that women were depicted mostly in group visual images together with men which portrays women as dependent on men for their activities or endeavours and lacking in agency to initiate historical action. It was established that although both black and white women are depicted in the visual images, the latter dominated numerically. However, the difference was not significant which does not suggest that race is an issue in the portrayal of women. Related to this, it was found that although different women are depicted in the visual images in Textbook C, the majority are from a lower social status as ordinary people. It was also recognised that despite the fact that Textbook C was produced in Malawi, Malawian women as historical characters are marginalised in the visual images. This suggests a view of a limited contribution by Malawian women to the history of their country which does not reflect the reality of the past.

In terms of roles and activities, it was found that women in the visual images in Textbook C are portrayed in traditional caring and reproductive role as mothers. Furthermore, it was clear that economically, women are historically portrayed as being involved in menial wage labour and as slaves who are subject to economic exploitation. Similarly, although women are depicted in different political activities, it was found that they are largely portrayed in supportive roles to their male counterparts. It was only on one occasion when a woman was depicted in a leadership role in a political activity. Thus, women are stereotyped as subordinates in political activities in their portrayal in the visual images in Textbook C. It was also

established that women were portrayed with various character traits which reflect their varied historical experiences.

This conclusion has illuminated the major findings of the analysis of the portrayal of women in the visual images in Textbook C. In the next section, I compare the findings from Textbooks A, B and C in order to establish the patterns, tendencies and trends that cut across the three textbooks and between any two textbooks as well as those that are exceptional to a particular textbook. In this way I consolidate the findings from Textbooks A, B and C in order to present a holistic picture of the visual portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi.

### **5.5 Consolidation of findings from the visual images in Textbooks A, B and C**

One of the common patterns in the findings across the three textbooks is the under-representation of women as historical characters in the visual images. Women featured in very few visual images and their representation in the images was also very low in each of the three textbooks. On average across the three textbooks women featured in only 22% of the visual images and only 17% of the historical characters depicted. Therefore it could be concluded that women are, in visual terms, seriously under-represented as historical actors in the three junior secondary school history textbooks studied. This under-representation portrays women as marginal in history and as people who contributed in a limited way in the past.

In terms of type of visual image in which women are depicted, a common pattern emerged in Textbooks B and C where it was found that in both textbooks women are portrayed mostly in group visual images together with men. It is difficult to draw a conclusion for Textbook A because only two visual images featuring women were included in the entire text, one depicting a woman alone and the other showing two women in a group together with men. However there is a marked congruence among the three textbooks in that more women were portrayed in group visual images together with men than on their own as individuals, in pairs or groups in each of the three textbooks. The portrayal of women in the company of men portrays women as dependent on men for historical activity and reduces agency in women to initiate historical action.

The three textbooks also show a common pattern in the diversity of women portrayed. In each of the textbooks women, who differ in terms of social status, comprising both famous and ordinary women, are depicted in the visual images. However, in all three textbooks the majority of women depicted in the visual images are ordinary women as opposed to famous women. It could therefore be concluded that in terms of social status, ordinary women are portrayed in more visual images, than famous women across the three textbooks. Another common feature noted across the textbooks was that both black and white women were depicted in the visual images. This indicates that in each of the textbooks both black and white women are recognised as actors in history. However, in terms of their representation, it was noted that in Textbooks A and B, black women dominated while in Textbook C white women out-numbered black women. It was observed that in Textbooks A and C, the difference in the representation of black and white women is not significant which suggests that race is not an issue in the numerical portrayal of women in these textbooks. In contrast, the difference in the representation of black and white women is most significant in Textbook B with the former in a dominant number. This suggests a racial issue in favour of black women in the numerical portrayal of women in Textbook B. In terms of roles attributed to the women, I found that black and white women are portrayed differently. White women are portrayed as more economically empowered than black women. Black women dominated in domestic and reproductive roles while it was only in Textbook C where women were depicted as mothers only in two visual images and in Textbook A where the Greek goddess was depicted in association with activities related to cooking. None of the white women were portrayed as wives in the visual images while black women were depicted in such roles.

It was also found across the textbooks that Malawian women as historical characters are marginalised in the visual images with a few variations. Textbook A completely excluded Malawian women in the visual images while Textbook B and C included a few in relation to other women. Therefore, in Textbook A Malawian women as historical characters are portrayed as invisible while in Textbook B and C they are marginal to the history of their country.

In terms of roles and activities, it was found that women were portrayed in a variety of tasks in the visual images in the three textbooks. However, some roles were included in all the textbooks while others were common between two textbooks and some were exceptional to a particular textbook. For instance, it was established across the textbooks that women as historical characters were portrayed in a reproductive role and as mothers responsible for raising their children. For instance in Textbook A one of the slave women was shown carrying a baby on her back, in Textbook B the Khoisan hunter-gatherer women were depicted taking care of their children and in Textbook C two visual images showed women sitting together with their children. Therefore motherhood is seen in all the three textbooks as a historical role in which women contributed in the past.

Women were also portrayed in leadership roles in some visual images across all the textbooks. Textbook A depicted the Greek goddess as a spiritual leader, Textbook B portrayed women as queens in several images and in Textbook C one woman was shown as a leader who was shown controlling a mob at the celebration of the opening of the Stockton-Darlington Railway. Furthermore, across the three textbooks, it was found that women were portrayed as slaves either at work or being sold.

Some roles and activities as portrayed in the visual images were only found in certain textbooks. For instance, women portrayed in domestic roles in the visual images were only found in Textbooks A and B. Textbooks C did not contain any visual images of women in domestic roles. Women in Textbook A were depicted in domestic activities related to cooking and being responsible for food and in Textbook C there were a variety of activities such as taking care of the home, processing grain and being responsible for food. Furthermore, it was established that women were portrayed in economic and political activities only in Textbooks B and C. Economically, women were depicted in business activities in Textbook B where they were shown selling in the market place and in a shop while in Textbook C women were portrayed as wage labourers in industry as spinners and in agriculture, picking cotton. In terms of political activities, women were depicted attending a political court meeting in Textbook B and in a number of political activities in Textbook C for example celebrating the attainment of freedom and justice and attending a Pan-

African Conference. However, it was established that women were portrayed in religious roles only in Textbook B where some were depicted as angels and a staunch Muslim approaching the mosque for prayers.

It was also revealed across the three textbooks that women as historical characters were portrayed with a variety of character traits. In general women were portrayed with the character trait of leadership across the three textbooks while Textbook B and C shared in common the traits of self-confidence and hardworking spirit. Similarly, Textbooks A and B portrayed women with the attribute of thoughtfulness. Other characteristics were exceptional to specific textbooks such as patience, being weak, vulnerable, submissive and powerless in Textbook A while Textbook B portrayed women with shyness, self-respect dependence, respect for others and beauty and fashion.

It could therefore be concluded that there are more common patterns in the way women as historical actors are portrayed across the three history textbooks and between two textbooks than exceptions specific to a particular textbook.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter I presented the findings on the analysis of the portrayal of women in the visual images in Textbooks A, B and C. I presented the findings sequentially using five main themes that were used in the content analysis and also emerged from the visual semiotic analysis. Subsequently I consolidated the findings from the three textbooks to draw a holistic picture of how women are portrayed in the visual images across the textbooks.

However, this analysis does not provide a full picture of the portrayal of women in the three textbooks as the textbooks do not consist only of the visual but also of the verbal text. There is a need therefore to analyse the verbal text for its portrayal of women in the three textbooks and it is to this task which I turn in the next chapter.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN THE VERBAL TEXT**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, I presented the findings on the analysis of the portrayal of women in the visual images in the three Malawian junior secondary school history textbooks studied. In this chapter, I continue the presentation of findings with particular focus on how women are portrayed in the verbal text. Thus the findings presented in chapter five and those to be presented in this chapter will give a holistic picture of how women are portrayed in the history textbooks under study.

As in chapter five, I present the findings textbook by textbook in a chronological order from Textbook A to C. I then present a consolidation of the findings across the three textbooks in order to create a rounded picture of how the women are portrayed in the verbal text. I present the findings using themes that were derived from the categories of the content analysis as well as those that emerged from the process of open coding. I organise the presentation of the findings in this chapter into five main sections. In the first three I present findings on the analysis of the verbal text for its portrayal of women in each of the three textbooks. I use the following themes to present the findings for each book: representation of women; the identity of women mentioned; frequency of mentioning women; reference to women and roles and activities in which women are portrayed in the verbal text. In the fourth section I consolidate the findings from the three textbooks in order to give a holistic picture of how women are portrayed in the verbal text in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. Finally, in the last section, I summarise and conclude the chapter by highlighting the major findings of the portrayal of women in the verbal text.

## 6.2 The portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook A

I begin the presentation of the data and findings with the theme on the representation of women mentioned in the verbal text. This is because such knowledge would give a picture of the inclusion or exclusion of women in the text.

### 6.2.1 Representation in the verbal text

The starting point of the analysis was to know the representation of women mentioned by name in the verbal text. This was important as it would provide a picture of the quantitative portrayal of women in the text. Table 6.1 below provides a summary of the findings of the analysis of the representation of women in Textbook A.

**Table 6.1 Representation of women mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook A**

<b>Total number of people mentioned in the text</b>	<b>Number of women mentioned in the text</b>	<b>Percentage of women mentioned in the text</b>	<b>Number of men mentioned in the text</b>	<b>Percentage of men mentioned in the text</b>
297	17	6%	278	94%

The data in Table 6.1 indicates that a total of 297 people were mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook A. Out of this only 17 were women and 278 were men. Thus, women mentioned in the text are outnumbered 18 times by men. Statistically women comprised only 6% of the people mentioned in the text while men made up 94%. This clearly shows that women in the verbal text are mentioned in far fewer numbers than men. This means that women as historical characters are seriously under-represented in the verbal text in Textbook A. This renders women less visible in the text and also portrays them as marginal in history which implies that their contribution in the past was limited.

### 6.2.2 Identity of women mentioned

My analysis of the description of women mentioned in the text revealed their identity and accompanying social status. The data in Table 6.2 below gives a description of the women mentioned in the verbal text.

**Table 6.2 Women mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook A**

<b>Name of woman mentioned and page</b>	<b>Description of the woman in the text</b>
Queen Hatshepsut (p. 15)	The female pharaoh of Egypt
Makewana (p. 42)	The priestess in the Maravi Kingdom
Sybyl (p. 52)	The priestess of Apollo in Ancient Greece
Agrippina (p. 69)	The assassin and wife of Emperor Claudius of Rome
Mary (p. 74)	The Mother of Jesus Christ
Khadija (p. 80)	Rich noble, business lady and wife of Muhammad the Prophet
Laura (p. 84)	Wife of Petrarch, a well-known humanist writer of the Renaissance period
Juliet (p. 85)	A character in the play by Shakespeare entitled <i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
Mona Lisa (p. 85)	A portrait of a woman painted by Leonardo de Vinci
Catherine of Aragon (p. 88)	Wife of King Henry VIII of England
Mary (p. 88)	Daughter of Catherine and King Henry VIII of England
Anne Boleyn (p. 88)	Lover and later wife of King Henry VIII of England
Queen Isabella (p. 104)	Queen of Spain
Queen Elizabeth I (p. 108)	Queen of England
Harriet Beecher Stowe (p. 116)	A leading abolitionist of slavery in North America and writer of a novel entitled <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>
Rose Chibambo (p. 137)	One of the notable leaders of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) during the struggle for independence
Gertrude Mongella (p. 138)	President of the Pan-African Parliament and Head of State of the African Union

According to the data presented in Table 6.2 all the women mentioned by name in Textbook A were influential, powerful and famous people in diverse ways in their societies. For instance, they were either leaders' wives or mothers of important men. One woman was mentioned as a daughter of a king. This shows that only influential or famous women are portrayed by name in the verbal text in Textbook A. This implies that only famous women exist in history as articulated in Textbook A which marginalises ordinary women who are not mentioned in the text.

Based on the names and description of the women in Table 6.2, it is noted that both white and black women were mentioned in the verbal text. Black women mentioned in the verbal text are Queen Hatshepsut, Makewana, Rose Chibambo and Gertrude

Mongella who are all African women. However, Khadija is also black, although not African but Asian. The white women mentioned in the text are Sybyl; Mary the Mother of Jesus; Agrippina; Laura; Juliet; Mona Lisa; Catherine; Mary; Anne Boleyn; Queen Isabella; Queen Elizabeth I and Harriet Beecher Stowe. This shows that the text portrayed more white women, 12, than black women, five. However, the statistical difference was not significant which indicates that the race of the women mentioned is not a serious issue in this textbook.

Furthermore, it is noted in Table 6.2 that of the black African women mentioned in the text, only two were Malawian namely, Makewana and Rose Chibambo. Considering the total number of women mentioned in the text, 17, and that of black women, five, I would argue that Malawian women as historical characters are severely under-represented in the text.

### 6.2.3 Frequency of mentioning women in the text in Textbook A

The analysis was further extended to the frequency of referring to people mentioned in the verbal text. This involved establishing the number of times of mentioning women in relation to men in the text. Results of this analysis are summarised in Table 6.3 below.

**Table 6.3 Frequency of mentioning women**

Total number of times of mentioning people	Total number of times of mentioning women	Total number of women mentioned	Average number of times of mentioning women	Total number of times of mentioning men	Total number of men mentioned	Average number of times of mentioning men
616	22	17	1.2	595	278	3

The data in Table 6.3 shows that the total number of times historical characters were mentioned in the text was 616. However, the 17 women mentioned in the text were referred to only 22 times. This means each woman was generally mentioned only once with few referred to more than once. The women mentioned more than once were Khadija, two times; Mary, Mother of Christ, two times; Catherine, three times and Anne Boleyn two times. In general women were repeatedly mentioned at an average of 1.2 times. However, the 278 men referred to in the text were repeatedly

mentioned 595 times. This entails that each man was mentioned at an average of about three times. It could therefore be concluded that women as historical characters are mentioned far less frequently in the text than men. This contributes to making women less visible in the text and portrays them as marginal to history. The fact that women are mentioned at an average of 1.2 times indicates a lack of depth in treating women as historical characters in the text. Support for this comes from the fact that only a few women were mentioned more than once and were therefore treated with some depth as historical characters.

However, this analysis excludes women who are not mentioned by name in the text but are referred to indirectly. It is therefore essential to pay attention to how women mentioned directly by name and also mentioned indirectly are referred to in the verbal text.

#### **6.2.4 Reference to women**

The analysis for the inclusion of women in the verbal text focused on the tables of contents, topics and subtopics in the text and the verbal text itself. The analysis of the tables of contents indicated no topics or subtopics specifically dealing with women. Similarly, it was noted that the entire written text contained no topics or subtopics which referred directly to women. In contrast, both the table of contents and the narrative text included topics and subtopics about men. This clearly shows that women are excluded or marginalised from the table of contents and topics and subtopics in the written text and consequently the content. This lack of foregrounding of women in the table of contents and the topics and subtopics in the written text implies a distinct lack of depth in discussing women's historical experiences in the text. It also removes agency in women to initiate historical events since it is always people who take a leading role who are highlighted in topics and subtopics in history.

However, close scrutiny of the narrative text (sentence by sentence) for its reference to women, revealed that the women were referred to in the text either in only a few sentences or in a short single paragraph or two in some chapters. For instance, in the following citation which is a short paragraph, a woman is referred to in only one sentence:

The people of the Nile valley conducted trade with people of the Middle East. They exchanged wheat, barley and cotton with jewels, metal objects, spices, copper, glassware and wine. They also traded with people in the south of Egypt such as Axum and Nubia. **Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt once sent ships to Axum to buy ivory and ebony (hard wood)**. Another famous Egyptian trader, Harkhuf once went to Nubia and brought many gifts including a dancing dwarf for the pharaoh (p. 15).

It is only the highlighted sentence in the citation which specifically makes reference to a woman. I noted many instances such as this in the text in Textbook A where women were referred to merely in single sentences. More specifically I found that women were referred to in single sentences in the text in 22 instances.

However, in some instances I found that women were referred to in more than one sentence. The citation below exemplifies this observation:

In Spain, Columbus persuaded the councillors of the deeply religious **Queen Isabella** to let him look for “lost Christians” believed to be living somewhere on an island of the Atlantic Ocean. After many delays, the **Queen** finally agreed to support Columbus in his voyage. Columbus was mandated to “discover and acquire islands and main lands (p. 148).

In this citation Queen Isabella, is included in two sentences as highlighted. However, my analysis proved that there were few occasions (i.e. two instances only) when women were referred to in more than one sentence in this manner.

My analysis also revealed that in some instances women were discussed in paragraphs. However, the discussion was conducted mostly in short single paragraphs. The analysis indicated that women were discussed in single paragraphs on three occasions on pages 78, 79 and 116. It was only in one instance when women were discussed in two short paragraphs:

However, conflict with the Roman Catholic Church developed when King Henry VIII wanted the Pope to annul his marriage to his wife Catherine of Aragon. For a long time, King Henry had been thinking of marrying **a new wife** since he wanted a son to succeed him after death.

**His wife Catherine** had only one **surviving daughter, Mary**, and she was already past child-bearing age. This problem was made more urgent by King Henry’s deep love for **Anne Boleyn**. This love has important consequences for England. The Pope, Clement VII, refused to annul the marriage of King Henry **to Catherine**. King Henry defied the Pope and married **Anne Boleyn**. He also rules that the clergy in England should begin paying their allegiance to the king rather than the Pope (p. 88).

However, the subjects of the story in these two paragraphs are not the three women mentioned but rather King Henry VIII and Pope Clement VII (i.e. the men). The three women are mentioned in the story because of their submissive relationship to King Henry as husband and father. It is also evident that the subjects of the story are the men (King Henry and the Pope) because we do not hear the voice or see any reaction of the women in the conflict. I would therefore argue that though women seem to be included in these two paragraphs, they appear because of their relationship to the king and not because of their own agency. I also noted a similar trend in the other two instances where women were discussed in single paragraphs in Textbook A on pages 78 and 79. The stories in those two paragraphs were not specifically about women but both women and men. It was only in one instance, on page 116, where a woman was referred to in a paragraph because of her own agency. The woman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, was portrayed as a leading abolitionist of slavery in the USA through her publication of a novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which compelled many people in North America to start campaigning against slavery.

Furthermore, I found that not all chapters in Textbook A made reference to women in the verbal text. Four out of the 17 chapters in this textbook did not include women in the text. Those chapters that excluded any reference to women in the verbal text dealt with the following themes or topics: the study of history; evolution of humans; the kingdoms of Western Sudan – Ghana and Mali and the partition of Africa. However, even in those chapters that included women, reference to them was very scanty.

The above analysis indicates that women as historical characters are not discussed in any real detail or depth in the text in Textbook A. They do not feature in all chapters and in those chapters that include women; they merely appear in single sentences. This scanty way of incorporation of women clearly indicates that women as historical characters are portrayed sparsely and in passing in the verbal text. Based on the fact that not all chapters feature women in the verbal text, I would argue that women are seemingly portrayed to have a history in some themes or topics and not others. The finding that women are referred to only in passing in the

verbal text triggered my curiosity of wanting to know how the women as historical characters are portrayed in terms of roles and activities.

### **6.2.5 Roles and activities in which women are portrayed**

My analysis of the sentences and paragraphs which referred to women in the verbal text revealed the different roles and activities in which women were portrayed. I noted that women were portrayed variously in leadership roles, traditional family roles as wives and mothers, productive or economic activities and as a murderer. It is to these that I now turn to in order to provide evidence and interpretation of the findings.

#### **6.2.5.1 Women in leadership roles**

I observed from the analysis that most of the women mentioned directly or indirectly in the text were portrayed as leaders in various spheres. Some were portrayed as state and political leaders while others as spiritual and religious leaders. I provide evidence for this conclusion in the proceeding paragraphs.

It was noted on seven instances in Textbook A that women were depicted as queens. Some of the queens were mentioned by name while others were referred to only by title. The queens mentioned by name were: Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt (p. 15), Queen Isabella of Spain (p. 104) and Queen Elizabeth I of England (p. 108). However, on four occasions, women were just referred to as queens without mentioning their names or providing any historical detail. The following quote illustrates this:

The federation brought together the three Central African British territories of Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia under one central government which was referred to as the Federal Government. This was headed by a Governor General who represented the **Queen** (p. 134).

In all instances where women were referred to as queens, they were portrayed in the capacity as rulers of their kingdoms or states. The following two citations exemplify this:

This feat meant Francis Drake became the first English man to sail around the world. He was subsequently rewarded by **Queen Elizabeth I** by being knighted i. e. he became 'Sir' Francis Drake (p. 108).



On 6<sup>th</sup> July 1964, Nyasaland attained its independence and took the name Malawi. Dr Banda continued to be Prime Minister. The Governor became Governor General, representing the **Queen**. Consequently, he had no executive powers (could not initiate policies) (p. 138).

In both cases, the queens are portrayed as rulers exercising their authority over their subjects and territories.

From the above it is clear that the queens referred to in the verbal text in Textbook A are portrayed as powerful women with agency who were rulers of their kingdoms or states. None of them was portrayed as being queen because of being married to a king. Therefore, it could be concluded that some women in Textbook A are portrayed as rulers of kingdoms or state leaders in their own right as hereditary leaders.

Other than being state leaders as evidenced by the depiction of the queens some women were portrayed as political leaders. For instance, Rose Chibambo was shown as one of the leaders of the Malawi Congress Party (M.C.P) during the struggle for independence in Malawi. The following citation testifies to this:

The Malawi Congress Party (M.C.P) was formed to replace the banned Nyasaland African Congress ... When Dr Banda was released from prison, he assumed leadership of the party. Other notable leaders were Henry Masauko Chipembere, Dunduzu Chisiza, Willie Chokani, Augustine Bwanausi, **Rose Chibambo** and Kanyama Chiume (p. 137).

Furthermore, Gertrude Mongella, was also depicted as getting involved in the politics of the Pan-African Union and the African Union (AU) as one of the important leaders:

At the time of publishing this book, the President of the Pan-African Parliament, **Gertrude Mongella**, was the Head of State of [the] African Union; Denis Sassou-Nguesso, president of the AU state of the Republic of Congo was the Chair of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government ... (p. 148).

Chibambo and Mongella are portrayed in politics not as mere participants in political activities but as important political leaders in their different contexts.

Related to political activities, one woman, Harriet Beecher Stowe from the USA, was depicted as playing a leading role in the campaign against slavery through the publication of her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The quotation below illustrates her important role:

The plight of the slaves in the Southern plantations was brought to the knowledge of many North Americans by **Harriet Beecher Stowe**. In 1852, she wrote a novel titled *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. This book narrated horrifying stories of slaves based on true stories of runaway slaves. This made many people in North America to start campaigning against slavery (p. 116).

According to this citation, Harriet Beecher Stowe is not a mere abolitionist of slavery but one who took a leading role in the campaign against slavery through the publication of her novel which spread ideas about the evils of slavery. I would therefore argue that she is portrayed as an intellectual, activist and leader in the anti-slavery campaign.

The analysis of the verbal text in Textbook A also clearly revealed that nine women were depicted as goddesses or divine historical beings with different responsibilities. Table 6.4 below presents a list of these goddesses and their responsibilities as well as their place of origin.

**Table 6.4 Goddesses and their responsibilities in Textbook A**

<b>Name of goddess</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Place of origin</b>
Nanna (p. 46)	The moon goddess	Ancient Sumeria
Ishtar (p. 47)	The goddess of love	Ancient Assyria
Assar (p. 47)	The goddess of war	Ancient Assyria
Hera (p. 52)	Wife of Zeus and goddess of marriage	Ancient Greece
Demeter (p. 52)	The goddess of earth and harvests	Ancient Greece
Athena (p. 52)	The goddess of wisdom and peace and special protector of Athens	Ancient Greece
Aphrodite (p. 52)	The goddess of love and beauty	Ancient Greece
Artemis (p. 52)	The goddess of the moon and hunting	Ancient Greece
Isis (p. 15)	The moon goddess and wife of Osiris and goddess of fertility	Ancient Egypt

As can be gleaned from Table 6.4, some women, as evidenced by their depiction as goddesses, are portrayed as spiritual leaders with different responsibilities over people and other gods. However, according to the responsibilities shown in the table, almost all the goddesses, except one, are also portrayed in traditional and domestic roles such as wives, nurturers and being responsible for food. The goddess Assar is the only deity that is not portrayed with such a dual role. The goddesses are also portrayed with less power compared to male gods; for example, as goddesses of the moon as opposed to the sun and goddess of the earth as

opposed to heaven. The goddess Assar is again the only exception. In addition the goddesses are also portrayed as being responsible for feminine attributes or behaviour such as goddesses of love, peace and beauty. Therefore, the goddesses, despite being spiritual leaders, are for the most part stereotyped in their leadership roles and attributes. I would therefore argue that though the goddesses are portrayed as divine leaders, their positions are less powerful than those of male gods and they are stereotyped in the roles and responsibilities they hold.

The analysis of the verbal text in Textbook A also revealed two women who were depicted in another religious role, namely as priestesses. For instance, in the history of the Maravi kingdom, Makewana was portrayed as a priestess in charge of a shrine at Msinja. The citation following clarifies this:

There were two important religious shrines within the kingdoms. These were at Msinja near Dzalanyama Range and Khuluvi in Chikwawa. The shrine at Msinja was under **Makewana** while that at Khuluvi was under Mbona (p. 42).

In addition was Sibyl, the priestess of the god Apollo in the religion of Ancient Greece whose duty was to interpret the oracles of Apollo (p. 52). The fact that these women are depicted as priestesses in charge of a shrine and the interpretation of oracles portrays them as religious leaders in their own right in their societies.

Another group of women were depicted as nuns in the history of Christianity during the Middle Ages as testified in the following citation.

Much of the influence of the church in Europe was through the work of 'Monks' and '**Nuns**'. These were men and women who chose to live a life dedicated to the service of God and lived apart from ordinary life (p. 78). Both monks and nuns did a lot of work that improved the way of life during the Middle Ages (p. 79).

According to the above, both the nuns and monks played a leading role in the church in Europe. Therefore, like the priestesses, the role attributed to the nuns portrays them as religious leaders because their position in the church differed from that of ordinary lay women as they are in the service of God. However, in the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, the position of nuns is the lowest in the pyramid of power. Therefore, much as I agree that the depiction of nuns portrays some women

with religious power in the Church, it is clear that such women are less powerful leaders since their position is the least authoritative in the hierarchy of power.

### 6.2.5.2 Women in a traditional family role as wives and mothers

I also discovered from my analysis of the verbal text in Textbook A that women on many occasions were portrayed in a traditional family role as wives and mothers. For instance, the analysis revealed the presence of more than nine women, both human and divine, who were portrayed in a traditional family role as wives. Table 6.5 below gives a summary of these women.

**Table 6.5 Women portrayed as wives in Textbook A**

Name or Title of Woman/women portrayed as wife/wives	Description of the Husband
Isis (p. 15)	Wife of Osiris, Egyptian god of the underworld who judged the dead
The wife of Nebuchadnezzar (name not mentioned) (p. 47)	The king of Babylon
Khadija (p. 80)	Wife of Muhammad, the Prophet and founder of Islam
Laura (p. 84)	Wife of Petrarch, a well-known humanist writer and poet of the Renaissance period
Catherine of Aragon (p. 88)	Wife of King Henry VIII of England during the time of the Reformation
Anne Boleyn (p. 88)	Wife of King Henry VIII of England
Hera (p. 52)	Wife of Zeus, the father of all gods and people in Ancient Greece who was also referred to as the god of the sky
Agrippina (p. 69)	Wife of Claudius, Emperor of Rome
The wives of the kabaka (p. 29)	Wives of the king of Buganda kingdom. The kabaka was the title of the kings of the Buganda kingdom

However, an analysis of the social status of the husbands of the women mentioned as wives as shown in Table 6.5 indicates that they were either famous men or gods. Therefore, this indicates that all the women who are depicted as wives in the verbal text in Textbook A are wives of either famous men or gods. Consequently, this means that these women as historical characters are not portrayed as ordinary women but as powerful and important by dint of the fact that they are associated by marriage to famous men or gods. This is despite the fact that the women are portrayed in a traditional role as wives. I would further argue that the depiction of women as wives of important men or gods also portrays them as dependent on men

for their fame, position and status. This is because the women are mentioned because of the achievements of their husbands and not their own success. In this way women are portrayed as not necessarily capable of attaining important positions or recognition in society from their own achievements. Furthermore, portraying women as wives of important men and gods also gives the impression that the only notable achievement of these women in history was marriage to famous people or deities as it is through this that their names are mentioned or they are referred to indirectly in history.

Related to the above, the analysis of the verbal text in Textbook A also revealed five instances in which women were depicted as mothers (pp. 54, 69, 88 and 85). The following quotations from the latter page exemplify this:

As a sculptor, he [Michelangelo] carved the figure of the **Virgin Mary with the baby Jesus Christ in her arms.**

His [Raphael] most famous portrait is that of the **'Madonna and Child'** (p. 85).

In both instances the women are portrayed as mothers responsible for caring and raising children. Other women who were mentioned as mothers were Agrippina who was shown as mother of Emperor Nero (p.69); Catherine, wife of King Henry who was also portrayed as the mother of Mary (p.88) and Greek girls who were expected to become strong mothers and bear healthy babies through playing tough games (p.54). A close scrutiny of these women and their children as historical characters shows that all, except for the Greek girls, are mothers of important and famous people, particularly men. For example, Jesus Christ was the Messiah, Nero was the emperor of Rome and Mary was the princess, daughter of King Henry VIII and his wife Catherine. Therefore, almost all the women depicted in the verbal text of Textbook A as mothers are not only portrayed in their traditional role of motherhood, but also as mothers of people who were famous religiously or politically.

Though the depiction of women as mothers of important people elevates them to the status of important people, I would also argue that such a portrayal renders the women as inferior and incapable people who depend on the achievements of their famous children for their recognition. This is because none of the women is

mentioned because of their own achievements other than giving birth. Furthermore, since all the children bar one that the mothers are associated with are boys, I would conclude that this portrays these women as being dependent on men for their fame as mothers.

### 6.2.5.3 Women in economically productive roles

Women were not only portrayed in the traditional roles of wives and mothers. My analysis also revealed some women who were portrayed in economic activities of employment - both self-employment and wage employment. For instance, Khadija was depicted as a business person. She was a successful trader who managed to employ other people, including Muhammad, to help run her business:

Muhammad was an orphan ... brought up by a grandfather and later on by his uncle ... When he was twenty-five years old, he began working for a rich noble, twice widowed, forty-year-old **business lady, Khadija** and carried her caravans laden with goods to Syria and other distant places and returned with much profits (p. 80).

The fact that this woman managed her own business and employed people in her enterprise portrays her as a successful bourgeois, entrepreneur or owner of production and as a woman who is economically self-reliant.

However, some women were depicted as employed workers in the cloth manufacturing industry before the period of the industrial revolution in Britain. It was revealed from the analysis of the verbal text that they were depicted as spinners who spun cotton by hand in their homes:

At first, the entire process of cloth making was done by hand in the home. **Domestic workers (mainly women)** spun the cotton strands into thread or yarn. After spinning the thread, it was given to weavers (usually men) who wove the thread into cloth using a handloom. As demand for cotton cloth grew, there developed big businessmen who brought cotton to the spinners and later took the thread to the weavers (p. 92).

According to the citation, the spinners as well as the weavers were employees of the big businessmen. This therefore portrays the women as working class people in the textile industry who formed part of the production process of labour. The fact that the women are depicted as workers in the textile industry portrays them as economically self-reliant people. Furthermore the fact that the women spun the cotton by hand

while men used a handloom portrays women as technologically backward while men as the rightful users of technology.

#### **6.2.5.4 A women as a murderer**

Considering the variety of productive roles and activities in which women were depicted in Textbook A, one woman was portrayed as the odd one out in a callous role as a murderer. Agrippina was depicted as the one who organised the assassination of her husband: “Claudius was assassinated in AD 54 under the order of his wife **Agrippina** who wanted Nero, a son by her first husband, to become emperor” (p. 69). This act portrays her as a wicked woman. However, Agrippina clearly also has other virtues. For instance, despite the fact that the murder plot portrays her as an evil woman, I would argue that it also shows her as a powerful and authoritative individual who is able to influence the course of politics and history. She was so powerful that she could successfully give orders to have the emperor killed and replace him with her son.

#### **6.2.6 Conclusion of findings from Textbook A**

Several conclusions could be drawn from the analysis of the portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook A. It was discovered that women are seriously under-represented in the verbal text which renders them less visible and also portrays them as marginal to history and as people who did not contribute much in the past. It was also found out that women are less frequently mentioned in the text which is not surprising considering their little representation. This means that there is a lack of historical depth in discussing historical experiences of women in the text. Furthermore it was found that only influential or famous women are mentioned in the text which makes ordinary women invisible. Though both black and white women are portrayed as historical characters in the text, it was discovered that white women outnumber black women. However, the difference is not very significant which suggests that race is not an issue in the way women are portrayed in the text in Textbook A. Despite the fact that Textbook A was produced in Malawi, Malawian women as historical characters are seriously under-represented in the text. This means that Malawian women are viewed as not having contributed much to history. It was also established that women in the text are portrayed as marginal as

evidenced by their exclusion from the table of contents, topics and subtopics in the text and their scanty incorporation in the text mostly in single sentences.

Furthermore, it was concluded from the analysis that women are portrayed in a variety of leadership roles in the state and divine world as well as in politics and religion – sometimes by dint of their own virtues but at other times as subordinates to men. It was also clear that a large number of women were portrayed as wives and mothers of famous men and gods. Although portraying women in this way elevates their social status to a certain extent, it largely represents women as incapable and lacking in agency. It gives the impression that women's social status is dependent on the achievements of their husbands and male children, a mind-set which undermines and demeans them. However, it was also found that some women were portrayed as self-reliant through their portrayal in business activity and wage employment. At least one woman was portrayed as both a wicked and powerful person because of her involvement in the murder of her husband. This conclusion has summed up the findings on the portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook A. In the next section I present my analysis of how women are portrayed in Textbook B.

### **6.3 The portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook B**

I follow the same order in presenting the findings for Textbook B as I did with Textbook A. I therefore begin the presentation with the theme on the representation of women mentioned in the textbook.

#### **6.3.1 Representation in the verbal text**

An analysis of the representation of women mentioned in the verbal text was necessary in order to determine the numerical and statistical portrayal of women in the text. The results of this analysis are summarised in Table 6.6 below.



**Table 6.6 Representation of women mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook B**

Total number of people mentioned in the text	Number of women mentioned in the text	Percentage of women mentioned in the text	Number of men mentioned in the text	Percentage of men mentioned in the text
97	8	8%	89	92%

The data in Table 6.6 shows that 97 people were mentioned in the text in Textbook B. Out of this, only eight were women while 89 were men. Statistically, only 8% of the people mentioned in the text were women while men constituted 92%. This means that only 8% of the people mentioned in the text represent women. This therefore indicates that women as historical characters are totally under-represented in their portrayal in the verbal text in Textbook B. Consequently the under-representation of women as historical characters in Textbook B renders them less visible in the text and also portrays the women on the margins of history as people who contributed very little in the past.

### 6.3.2 Identity of women mentioned

An analysis of the description of names of the few women mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook B revealed their social status and identity. Table 6.7 below provides a summary of the description of the women mentioned.

**Table 6.7 Women mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook B**

Name of Woman mentioned and page	Description of the Woman in the text
Mrs. Ples (p. 10)	The popular nickname of the complete skull of the hominid named <i>Australopithecus Africanus</i> that was found in the Sterkfontein cave in South Africa
Nefertari (p. 32)	Wife of King Ramses of ancient Egypt
Makewana (p. 111)	A priestess in the kingdom of Maravi
Mwali (p. 113)	Wife of the first kalonga, king of the Maravi kingdom and the most important priestess of the Proto-Chewa rain-making shrine
Nyangu (p. 113)	Mother of the first kalonga, king of the Maravi kingdom
Chauwa (p. 114)	A priestess in the Maravi kingdom
Rhea Silvia (p. 131)	Mother of Romulus and Remus, founders of Rome and daughter of the King of Alba Longa
Lucretia (p. 132)	A wife of the relative of King Lucius Tarquinius Superbus of Rome

The description of each of the women indicated in Table 6.7 reveals their status in society. The women mentioned as historical characters in the verbal text in Textbook B are portrayed as influential and famous people, either politically and/or religiously. For instance, the women are portrayed as famous by dint of being wives and mothers of kings and important men and as religious leaders. I would therefore conclude that only famous and influential women are portrayed by name in the verbal text in Textbook B. This suggests that only famous women exist in history which serves to marginalise and silence ordinary women in the text.

The names and description of the women included in Table 6.7 above show that both white and black women are included in the text in Textbook B. The two white women are Rhea Silvia and Lucretia who are both European and the black women, are Mrs. Ples, Nefertari, Makewana, Mwali, Nyangu and Chauwa. This therefore shows that the text portrayed more black women (six) than white women (two). However, the race of the women as historical characters is hardly noticeable as so few women appear in the verbal text of this book and the difference in representation between the two groups of women (i.e. black and white) is not significant.

According to the names and description of women presented in Table 6.7 all black women mentioned as historical characters in Textbook B are of African origin and the majority are Malawian. Four Malawian women, Makewana, Mwali, Nyangu and Chauwa were mentioned as historical characters in the text. Therefore Malawian women as historical characters dominate among the black women mentioned. There is also a balance in representation between Malawian women and women from other nationalities. I would therefore argue that Malawian women as historical characters in Textbook B are to a certain extent given some recognition in history. However, there is also no diversity among the Malawian women portrayed since all of them are mentioned in relation to religion in the Maravi kingdom. This stereotypes Malawian women's contribution in the past merely to religious service and undermines contributions they made in other aspects of life.

### 6.3.3 Frequency of mentioning women

My analysis of the frequency of mentioning women in the text involved establishing the number of times women were mentioned in the text in relation to men. Results of this analysis revealed the data presented in Table 6.8 below.

**Table 6.8 Frequency of mentioning women in the text in Textbook B**

Total number of times of mentioning people	Total number of times of mentioning women	Total number of women mentioned	Average number of times of mentioning women	Total number of times of mentioning men	Total number of men mentioned	Average number of times of mentioning men
304	16	8	2	288	89	3.2

The data in Table 6.8 reveals that the total number of times both women and men were mentioned in the text was 304. Women mentioned in the text as historical characters were referred to only 16 times. In contrast, men were referred to 288 times. This indicates that the eight women mentioned in the text were referred to at an average of two times each while the men 3.2 times each. These statistics therefore indicate that women as historical characters were referred to far less than men and were also covered in far less historical depth. I would therefore conclude that the women mentioned as historical characters in Textbook B are hardly visible in the text. They are therefore portrayed as marginal in history which shows them as people who do not contribute much in society.

However, the analysis of frequency of referring to women mentioned in the text excludes women who were not directly referred to by name. It is therefore essential to present an analysis of how women, both mentioned directly and indirectly, are included and referred to in the verbal text. This will allow for a more complete view of their portrayal as historical characters.

### 6.3.4 Reference to women

My analysis of the verbal text for its reference to and inclusion of women focused on the table of contents, topics and subtopics in the text and the sentences narrating the story. From the analysis of the table of contents, I discovered that there were no topics or subtopics specifically referring to women. Similarly, I noted that there were no topics and subtopics that specifically reflected women in the narrative text in the

entire textbook. I would therefore conclude that women are excluded from the table of contents and the topics and subtopics in the verbal text in Textbook B. This exclusion of women portrays them as marginal to history. It also implies a clear lack of depth in discussing women in the text as they are not made subjects of the story. Furthermore, the exclusion of women as historical characters portrays them as people with no agency to initiate historical events. This is the case because it is mostly people who had initiated historical events that are foregrounded in the mentioned sections of the textbook.

However, my deeper analysis of the verbal text sentence by sentence for reference made to women, both mentioned directly by name and not mentioned directly, revealed that women were referred to in the text either in a few sentences or in short paragraphs in some chapters. For instance, in the following citation women are referred to in only one sentence:

The African people living on the estates had to provide the *prazero* and his *chikunda* with food. The *chikunda* were used for hunting and for raiding neighbouring villages and other *prazos*. **The *prazeros* married African women and their descendants became part Portuguese and part African.** Most of the wealth of the *prazeros* was based on the violent use of their *chikunda*. They traded ivory and gold with the Portuguese officials at the trading centres (p. 102).

I noted many instances where women were included in single sentences wherever they were referred to in the text. Specifically I found that women were referred to in single sentences in the text in 18 instances.

In a few instances women were referred to in sentences which ranged from two to five and this was noted in only seven instances in the entire textbook. The citation below demonstrates one example:

Over the centuries, ivory has generally been used to make luxury items. Ivory was used as far back as Roman times. **In India, the tusks of African elephants were large enough to be used for the bangles worn by Indian women when they married. These bangles had to be destroyed when the wife or her husband died.** This meant that there was a constant demand in India for African ivory. Ivory was also sought after in the Middle East and China (p. 82).

In this citation women are referred to in two sentences as indicated in bold and I found that this was the only reference made to women in the entire chapter of 15

pages. Furthermore, there was only one instance in the entire textbook where women were referred to in three consecutive paragraphs, which were also short ones:

The religious beliefs of the Proto-Chewa were strongly connected to rain-making. They worshipped a High God. They believed that the messenger of the High God was a large snake called Thunga or Nsato. The snake was the husband of the **priestess** who cared for the rain-making shrines (usually found on the top of a hill), throughout the kingdom.

Thunga's visits were a way for the **priestesses** to communicate with the High God when rain was needed at the end of the dry season. The priestesses could also limit flood damage, make the soil fertile for farmers and grant success to hunters. Each shrine was related to a particular area of land and it was served by a group of priestesses.

The most important **priestess** was **Makewana**, whose shrine was at Nsinja, which was the headquarters of all the shrines. The **priestess** of the oldest shrine was **Mwali**, whose shrine was at Mankhamba on the shores of Lake Malawi. Another important **priestess** was **Chauwa**, who was believed to be the **daughter** of **makewana** and the **sister** of **Mwali**. The **priestesses** were always **female** and they were always members of the Banda clan (pp. 113-114).

There was no other reference to women in a paragraph in the entire Textbook B, other than these three consecutive paragraphs. Additionally, from my analysis of the text, I found that all the 11 chapters or topics in this textbook made reference to women in the text at least once either in a sentence or two or more.

Some conclusions could be drawn from this analysis. I would argue that women as historical characters are not discussed at depth or in detail in the verbal text in Textbook B. This is evidenced by the fact that women are mostly referred to in single sentences sparsely and in passing in the verbal text. The limited inclusion of women renders them almost invisible in the text as fringe figures. In addition, this mode of inclusion also portrays women in the margins of history and as people with little or no contribution in the past. I would also argue that a portrayal of this nature paints women's contribution to history as insignificant as they are generally reduced to single or two sentences at the most in the verbal text. However, this analysis and conclusion does not tell us how these women who are included in the text are portrayed in the roles and activities they fulfilled as historical characters.

### 6.3.5 Roles and activities in which women are portrayed

My analysis of the text which referred to and mentioned women revealed that they were portrayed in various roles and activities. Some were portrayed in leadership roles while others in traditional family roles as spouses and mothers. Yet others were portrayed in domestic roles, as an explorer and as captives.

#### 6.3.5.1 Women in leadership roles

The analysis of the text revealed women as historical characters who were portrayed in various leadership roles. Some were portrayed as state leaders and decision makers in government while others as spiritual and religious leaders. I provide evidence for this finding in the proceeding paragraphs.

In my analysis, I noted four references to women as queens - both divine and human - in the verbal text. Three were human queens while one was a divine queen. Only one human queen was mentioned by name in the text, though not directly:

The first European explorers to reach the Great Lakes region were Richard Burton and John Speke. **They both reached Lake Tanganyika in 1858 and Speke also reached Lake Victoria (he named it after the queen of Britain) in the same year** (pp. 67-68).

From this citation, it can be implied that the name of the queen being referred to is Victoria of Britain. The other queens who were not named were identified as being from Ancient Egypt and Kush as indicated in the following two quotations:

In 3100 BC, the two kingdoms were united by Menes, the king of Upper Egypt. He built his capital at Mephis, near what is now Cairo, and founded the first Dynasty of the unified kingdom of Egypt. **(A dynasty is a succession of kings and queens who all belong to the same family)** (p. 15).

Like the Egyptians, the Kushites also believed in life after death. **They embalmed bodied and buried their kings and queens in pyramids in the same way that the Egyptians did** (p. 31).

According to the three citations above, all the queens being referred to are portrayed as rulers of their state and kingdoms. The divine queen mentioned was the Egyptian goddess Hathor who was referred to as “the goddess of the sky and queen of heaven” (p. 16). This divine queen too is portrayed as a ruler of her heavenly kingdom. I would therefore conclude that some women in the verbal text, as

evidenced by the presence of queens, are portrayed as leaders or rulers of their states or kingdoms.

The analysis of the verbal text also showed women portrayed as decision makers in the government and administration of their kingdoms. This was noted in two instances. In the first the Queen Mother and nine main wives of the king in the Mwenemutapa kingdom, in present day Zimbabwe, were shown getting involved in the administration of the kingdom. The following citation illustrates this:

The Queen Mother, the king's sister and the nine main wives of the king were also very important in the administration of the kingdom ...The king used some of his main wives to take charge of dealing with foreign traders (p. 98).

Administration and "taking charge of dealing with foreign traders" (p. 98) required decision making on the part of the women. The second instance in which women were depicted as decision makers was in the history of the Maravi kingdom in present day Malawi where some women were involved in selecting a new king, titled the kalonga:

When the kalonga died, a new one (from the brothers or nephews of the dead kalonga) was chosen from the royal matrilineage. There were always long negotiations before a new kalonga was selected. An important role in the selection of a new kalonga was played by the female members of the royal matrilineage (*mbumba*). When a candidate was agreed on, the royal councillors and senior male members of the royal family had to give their final agreement (p. 112).

As in the first example, selecting a new king required decision making skills. These two pieces of evidence therefore indicate that some women as historical characters were portrayed as decision makers in the verbal text in Textbook B.

Furthermore, my analysis of the verbal text revealed that seven women were portrayed as spiritual leaders or goddesses from different regions with different responsibilities. This was evidenced by the depiction of goddesses in the text. Table 6.9 below contains a list of these goddesses, their responsibilities and place of origin.

**Table 6.9 Goddesses and their responsibilities in Textbook B**

<b>Name of goddess</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Place of origin</b>
Mut (p. 16)	The goddess of the sky and often the divine mother of the reigning pharaoh	Ancient Egypt
Isis (p. 16)	Wife of the god Osiris	Ancient Egypt
Hathor (p. 16)	The goddess of the sky and queen of heaven (p.16)	Ancient Egypt
Athena (p. 124)	The goddess of wisdom	Ancient Greece
Hera (p. 124)	Wife of Zeus, father of all gods	Ancient Greece
Demeter (p. 124)	The goddess of the earth and harvests	Ancient Greece
Not named (p. 119)	The moon goddess	Ancient Sumeria

Based on the responsibilities assigned to the goddesses as shown in Table 6.9, some, despite being divine beings, are portrayed in traditional and domestic roles as mother, wives and providers of food. Furthermore, the goddesses are generally portrayed in positions with less power when compared to male gods. For example, the goddesses are portrayed as being responsible for the moon as opposed to the sun; the earth and not heaven; the sky and not the universe; harvests rather than rain and as wives and mothers. Therefore goddesses are portrayed in a stereotypical manner in terms of responsibilities they are assigned with and the positions of power they hold. That is, the goddesses are stereotyped with traditional feminine roles and positions of less power. It is only the goddess Athena who is portrayed differently from the rest with the attribute of wisdom.

Related to the above, my analysis also revealed that four women were depicted as priestesses in the verbal text in Textbook B. Three were mentioned as priestesses in relation to the history of the religion of the Maravi kingdom. These are Makewana, Mwali and Chauwa (pp. 113-114) who were all priestesses of the rain-making shrines in their religion. The fourth priestess was mentioned in relation to the history of Greek religion. She was the priestess of Apollo (p. 124) but her name was, unlike in Textbook A where the same priestess was named, not mentioned:

The god Apollo had a special shrine at the city of Delphi. Worshippers went there to ask the god questions, which, they believed, were answered by the god through his **priestess** (who looked after the shrine) (p. 124).

The priestesses took a leading role in religious functions in their societies which therefore portray them as religious leaders. I would therefore argue that some



women, as indicated by the presence and role of the priestesses, are portrayed as religious leaders in Textbook B.

### 6.3.5.2 Women in a traditional family role as wives and mothers

Other than leadership roles, the analysis revealed that some women as historical characters were portrayed in traditional family roles as wives and mothers. I noted that more women were portrayed in the traditional roles as wives and mothers than in other roles in Textbook B. For instance, my analysis revealed 13 references to women who were portrayed as wives in the text. The data in Table 6.10 below presents a summary of these women.

**Table 6.10 Women portrayed as wives in the verbal text in Textbook B**

<b>Name or title of woman/women portrayed as wife/wives</b>	<b>Description of the husband</b>
Nefertari (p. 32)	Wife of King Ramses of Egypt
Women of Mali kingdom who were referred to as wives (p. 52)	Husbands not mentioned
The wife of Samuel Baker (p. 68)	Samuel Baker was one of the explorers of Africa
Indian women who were referred to as wives (p. 82)	Husbands not mentioned
Nine main wives of the king of the Mwenemutapa kingdom (p. 98)	Mwenemutapa was the king of the Mwenemutapa kingdom
Wife of the king in Mwenemutapa kingdom (p. 98)	Mwenemutapa was the king of the Mwenemutapa kingdom
Wives of the prazeros (p. 102)	Prazeros were Portuguese plantation owners in the Zambezi valley
Wife of Odysseus (p. 128) king of Ithaca of Greece	Odysseus was king of Ithaca in Greece
Lucretia (p. 132)	Wife of a relative of Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, the last king of Rome
Goddess Hera (p. 124)	Wife of Zeus, the father of all gods in ancient Greece
Goddess Isis (p. 16)	wife of the god, Osiris in ancient Egypt
Mwali (p. 113)	Wife of the first kalonga (king) of the Maravi kingdom
Priestesses of the rain-making shrines in the Maravi kingdom who were believed to be wives of a large snake Thunga (p. 114)	Thunga was the messenger of the High God in the Maravi kingdom

An analysis of the husbands of the women mentioned as wives as shown in Table 6.10 indicates that they were both famous men or gods and ordinary men. This implies that the women are portrayed as wives of both famous men or gods and

ordinary men. However, of all the women shown in Table 6.10, only three groups of women are portrayed as wives of ordinary men whose names are not even mentioned in the text. These are the women of the Mali kingdom, the Indian women and the wives of the prazeros. Therefore the vast majority of women portrayed as wives in the verbal text in Textbook B are spouses of famous people or gods. This means that the women portrayed as wives in this textbook are both powerful and less important women because of their association by marriage to famous men or gods and ordinary men. Though portraying a large majority of women as wives of famous men or gods raises their status to that of important women, and I would argue that such a portrayal undermines the capability of women as independent people. It portrays women in general as dependent on men through marriage or a similar association for their fame or recognition in society rather than on their own success. This is because, according to the table above, women are mostly mentioned because of the achievements of their husbands and not their own success.

A similar pattern was observed in women who were portrayed as mothers in the text. Table 6.11 below provides a summary of the women who were depicted as mothers in the text in Textbook B.

**Table 6.11 Women portrayed as mothers in the verbal text in Textbook B**

<b>Women portrayed as mothers</b>	<b>Description of mothers' children</b>
The Egyptian goddess Mut (p. 16)	The divine mother of the reigning pharaoh, king of ancient Egypt
Queen Mother in the Mwenemutapa kingdom (p. 98)	The mother to the successor of the king in the Mwenemutapa kingdom
Woman referred to as mother in the Maravi kingdom (p. 108)	Mother of the successor to the king, the kalonga, in the Maravi kingdom
Nyangu (p. 113)	Mother of the first kalonga (king) in the Maravi kingdom
Woman referred to as mother in the kingdom of Ghana (p. 39)	Mother of the next king in the kingdom of Ghana
Rhea Silvia (p. 131)	Mother of Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome
The priestess Makewana (p. 114)	Mother of the priestess Chauwa in the Maravi kingdom

Table 6.11 shows that seven references were made to women as mothers in the verbal text in Textbook B. However, almost all women listed in the table are depicted

as mothers of kings except one who was mentioned as a mother of a priestess. This indicates that all the women referred to as mothers in the text in textbook B are portrayed as mothers of important or famous people, the majority of whom are men (kings). Much as this portrayal raises the status of the mothers to become important and powerful women because of the success of their children, this largely portrays them (the women) as people who are not capable of their own achievement other than the ability to give birth and rear children. This is because none of the women portrayed as mothers are mentioned because of their own achievement or success. Furthermore, the fact that all the children except one that the mothers are associated with are male also portrays women as dependent on men for their recognition or fame in society.

### **6.3.5.3 Women in domestic roles**

In Textbook B only in one instance, women were portrayed in the domestic role as being responsible for producing food in society as the citation below illustrates:

Because the people of Buganda did not have to worry about food, they could spend their time and energy on other activities. **While the food was left to the women**, the men did things like building, carpentry, making barkcloth, metal objects and tools, doing government administration and making war (p. 63).

Historically, food production in Africa has been associated with women. Therefore the depiction of Buganda women in food production portrays African women in their stereotypical role in society.

### **6.3.5.4 A woman as an explorer**

An analysis of the verbal text revealed the presence of one woman who was depicted as an explorer: "In 1862, Speke and Grant met two other European explorers, Samuel Baker and his wife. The Bakers were also searching for the source of the Nile River" (p. 68). It is clear that this nameless woman is not merely accompanying Samuel Baker as a wife, but she is depicted as an explorer in her own right. This portrays her as an exceptional and extraordinary woman for the historical times in which she was living.

However, certain conclusions could be drawn from her portrayal. Despite her contribution to history, she is backgrounded in the way she is portrayed. Her name

is not mentioned which reduces her visibility in the text and it is her position as a wife which is highlighted. It is also noted that her contribution is reduced to only two sentences as shown in the citation. In addition, depicting her as an explorer in the company of her husband portrays her as dependent on a man for her achievements. Furthermore, the fact that she is the only woman who is portrayed as making a remarkable contribution based on her own ability in the entire Textbook B serves to further marginalise women as historical characters from major achievements in history.

#### **6.3.5.5 Women as captives**

Women were also depicted as captives of war in the verbal text in Textbook B. This was noted in the history of the Buganda kingdom: “The household of the kabaka contained many thousands of women who had been captured in war and large quantities of loot and tribute paid by the conquered rulers” (p. 63). According to this citation it is only women who are portrayed as captives of war. This portrays women as vulnerable people in society. However, the fact that the captive women were kept in the king’s compound together with loot and tribute portrays the women as useful booty or loot. Therefore the captive women despite being depicted as vulnerable are also portrayed as useful people in the king’s household in Buganda kingdom.

#### **6.3.6 Conclusion of findings from Textbook B**

Certain conclusions could be drawn from the analysis of the portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook B. It was discovered that women are severely under-represented in the verbal text in this textbook. Related to this it was recognised that women were less frequently mentioned in the text when compared to men which tallies with their under-representation. Consequently, the under-representation and less frequent mentioning of women render women less visible in the text and portray them as marginal to history. It was also found that only famous or important women are mentioned by name in the text. Such a portrayal renders ordinary women invisible in the text. Furthermore, although both black and white women are portrayed in the text, black women dominate. However, the numerical difference is not significant which does not make race an issue in Textbook B. Though the representation of women is limited in the verbal text, it was found that there is a balance in numerical portrayal of women as historical characters from Malawi and

other parts of the world. Textbook B therefore shows some recognition of the role of Malawian women as historical characters in the history of the country in which the textbooks that are studied is situated.

What was clear was that women are seriously portrayed as marginal in history in Textbook B. This was indicated by their exclusion from the table of contents, topics and subtopics in the text and their scanty inclusion in the narrative text mostly in single sentences. In terms of roles and activities, it was found that women were portrayed in leadership positions as state leaders, decision makers in their kingdoms, spiritual and religious leaders. But equally women were also mostly portrayed as wives and mothers of important men. This depicts women as people who are not capable of achieving their own success but depend on men for their fame or recognition in society. Some women were portrayed in a stereotypical domestic role of food production. In contrast, one woman was portrayed as exceptional and extra-ordinary through her depiction as an explorer. However, she was back grounded in the text by limiting her contribution to two sentences and not having her name mentioned. Unlike this woman, some women were portrayed as captives of war.

In this conclusion I have summarised the major findings on the analysis of the portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook B. In the next section, I present findings on my analysis of the portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook C.

#### **6.4 The portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook C**

As in Textbooks A and B, I present the findings of the analysis of the verbal text for the portrayal of women in Textbook C using the same themes and logic. I therefore commence the presentation of the findings with the theme on representation of women.

##### **6.4.1 Representation in the verbal text**

An analysis for the representation of women was necessary in order to have a picture of the quantitative portrayal of women in the text in Textbook C. This was necessary because it would establish the statistics of the women represented in the

text. Results on the analysis of the representation of women in Textbook C are summarised in Table 6.12 below.

**Table 6.12 Representation of women mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook C**

Total number of people mentioned in the text	Number of women mentioned in the text	Percentage of women mentioned in the text	Number of men mentioned in the text	Percentage of men mentioned in the text
192	7	4%	185	96%

The data in Table 6.12 shows that a total of 192 historical characters were mentioned in Textbook C. Out of this, only seven were women and 185 were men. Statistically this indicates that 4% of the people mentioned in the text were women and 96% men. I would therefore, at the outset, conclude that women are under-represented in the verbal text in Textbook C. This under-representation renders women less visible than men as historical characters and portrays them as marginal to history which suggests that their contribution in the past was of little value.

#### 6.4.2 Identity of women mentioned

My analysis of the description of the seven women mentioned in the text revealed their social status as well as identity. Table 6.13 below provides a summary of the description of the women mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook C.

**Table 6.13 Women mentioned in the verbal text in Textbook C**

Name of Woman mentioned and page number	Description of the Woman in the text
Eve (p. 2)	Wife of Adam in the Bible, the first man to be created
Mary (p. 2)	The mother of Jesus Christ
Helen (p. 7)	The mother of Emperor Constantine of Rome
Khadija (p. 14)	A wealthy widow and wife of the Prophet Muhammad
Isabella (p. 57)	Queen of Spain
Elizabeth II (p. 132)	Queen of Britain
Rose Chibambo (p. 147)	An important leader of the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC) in the struggle for independence in Malawi

The description of the women listed in Table 6.13, among other things, reveals their social status as historical characters. They were all influential and famous in their society in one way or the other. Some were famous politically, such as Rose

Chibambo and the two queens, others religiously in the case of Mary, Khadija and Eve and yet others economically such as Khadija. I would therefore argue that only famous and important women are portrayed by name in the text in Textbook C. This logically implies that only famous women exist in history. In light of this, I would argue that the fact that only famous women are mentioned as historical characters in the text marginalises ordinary women as historical characters and they are silenced in the text.

The description of the women in Table 6.13 also reveals their racial identity. Both black and white women were mentioned in the text. However, there were only two black women versus five white women. The white women mentioned are Eve, Mary, Helen, Queen Isabella and Queen Elizabeth II while the black women were Rose Chibambo and Khadija. White women dominate the small number of women mentioned in the text in Textbook C. However, the difference is very insignificant which suggests that race is not an issue in this textbook.

Of the two black women mentioned in the verbal text, one was of African origin (Rose Chibambo) and the other was from Arabia (Khadija). Chibambo is a Malawian. Thus only one Malawian woman is mentioned as a historical character in the text despite the fact that the textbook was produced in Malawi for use in Malawian junior secondary schools. This renders the majority of Malawian women as invisible historical characters in the history of the country.

### 6.4.3 Frequency of mentioning women

The analysis of the frequency in which women were mentioned involved establishing the number of times in which women, in relation to men, were mentioned in the text. The results of this analysis are summarised in Table 6.14 below.

**Table 6.14 Frequency of mentioning women in the text in Textbook C**

Total number of times of mentioning men and women	Total number of times of mentioning women	Total number of women mentioned	Average number of times of mentioning women	Total number of times of mentioning men	Total number of men mentioned	Average number of times of mentioning men
578	8	7	1.1	570	185	3

The data in Table 6.14 indicates that historical characters were mentioned 578 times in the text. However, women were mentioned only eight times and men 570 times. This means that out of the seven women mentioned in the text, only one, Mary the mother of Jesus, was mentioned twice. Thus women were mentioned at an average of 1.1 times while for men the average was three times. This means that women as historical characters are portrayed significantly less frequently in the verbal text in Textbook C. This renders them almost invisible in history. In addition, mentioning women less frequently in the text portrays them as marginal to history. The fact that women are generally only mentioned once displays a lack of depth in treating women as historical characters in the text. Only one woman, Mary who is mentioned twice, is treated with slightly more depth as a role player in history.

However, the text included women who were both mentioned directly by name and indirectly referred to in passing. In the following section I present an analysis of how women, mentioned both directly and indirectly, are included or referred to as historical characters in the verbal text.

#### **6.4.4 Reference to women**

My analysis of how women were referred to in the text focussed on the table of contents, topics and subtopics in the text and the narrative text. From the analysis of the table of contents, I found that there were no topics or subtopics that reflected women. Similarly, I also established that there were no topics or subtopics in the narrative text that specifically made reference to women in the whole of Textbook C. Differently put, women are completely excluded from the table of contents and topics and subtopics in the narrative text. This exclusion reduces women as historical characters to the margins of history. As a result of this exclusion no in-depth discussion of women as historical characters took place in the verbal text as they were not made subjects of the story. Furthermore, the exclusion of women portrays them as people with no agency to initiate historical actions. This is because most of the time, it is people who initiate the course of events who are highlighted in textbooks, and such people appear in the tables of contents and topics and subtopics in the narrative text.



However, a sentence by sentence analysis of the verbal text for reference made to women, showed that the latter were mostly included in the text in a sentence (19 times) or two and rarely in a paragraph. There were also only a few instances where women were referred to two times or more in a page.

The following citation exemplifies the observation that women were for the most part reduced to a single sentence in history:

The first emperor was Octavian (who was first known as Augustus before he became emperor), grand-nephew of Julius Caesar...The last of his descendants to become emperor was Nero (AD 54-68), who became well-known for his cruelty...During his reign, crucifixions of Christians were common. **Men, women and children were thrown to wild animals to provide entertainment for the people** (p. 6).

This citation is part of a long paragraph but women were referred to only in one sentence as shown in bold.

Furthermore, it was noted from the analysis that women were included in two sentences on only one instance in the entire text in Textbook C:

The second stage is that of spinning the short strands into one long thread by stretching and twisting wool or cotton so that all the strands hold together ... **In pre-industrial times, the spinning of wool into thread was done by women on a spinning wheel, while men wove the thread into cloth on a handloom. Dealers distributed the wool to the women and the thread to the men and later collected the finished products from them.** This system is sometimes ... (p. 47).

This citation is extracted from a long paragraph and it is the only reference to women on the page as well as in the whole chapter comprising 14 pages. Similarly there was also only one instance in which a paragraph made reference to women as historical characters:

One of the most important branches of the Christian Church during the Middle Ages were the monasteries. Monasticism is a way of life practised by people (monks or **nuns**) who have abandoned the world for religious reasons and devote their lives, either separately or in a community to spiritual perfection. Typical of Western monasticism were Abbeys, which were self-contained communities of monks ruled by an abbot, or of **nuns** ruled by an **abbess** (p. 9).

The fact that women are referred to mostly in single sentences and once in two sentences and a paragraph means lack of depth and detail in discussing

experiences of women as historical characters. It also renders women almost invisible in the text as well as portraying them in the margins of history and as people who contributed little in the past. In addition, it reduces women's contribution to history merely to single sentences.

Furthermore, I found that not all chapters made reference to women in this textbook. Of the 11 chapters, four did not make any reference to women. The chapters that excluded any reference to women in the verbal text dealt with the following themes or topics: the Renaissance, Reformation, partition of Africa and the Organisation of African Unity. This means that in these topics women are portrayed to have no history which gives a false portrayal of women in these themes as in reality women experienced and participated in these historical events in one way or the other. However, women are shown to have a past in other themes although reference to them was made for the most part in passing. The conclusions drawn so far do not tell us the roles and activities in which women are depicted which are also essential in understanding the portrayal of women in Textbook C.

#### **6.4.5 Roles and activities in which women are portrayed**

My analysis of the sections where women were mentioned and referred to in the verbal text revealed various roles and activities in which the women were portrayed. Some women were depicted in leadership roles while others in traditional family roles as wives and mothers. Furthermore, women were also portrayed as historical characters fulfilling productive or economic roles.

##### **6.4.5.1 Women in leadership roles**

From my analysis it emerged that women were portrayed in various leadership positions at state, political and religious levels. Evidence for this finding is provided in the proceeding paragraphs.

In two instances women, Queen Isabella of Aragon in Spain (p. 57) and Queen Elizabeth II of Britain (p. 132), were mentioned as queens. This is illustrated in the following two citations:

Christopher Columbus was a sailor from Genoa, a famous seaport in Italy, who had studied navigation in Portugal, but had failed to get help there for

a plan to sail west ... He had to wait nearly 20 years before king Ferdinand of Castile and **Queen Isabella** of Aragon employed him to sail west and claim for Spain any islands he discovered (p. 57).

A vote was held to request independence from Britain, although the opposition left the assembly and refused to participate. The British parliament passed a bill formally granting independence to the Gold Coast, and, on 22 February 1957, **Queen Elizabeth II** signed the bill into law. The Gold Coast had achieved its independence, with Nkrumah as its first prime minister (p. 132).

The contexts in which these queens are shown indicate that they were hereditary rulers of their states. In the first citation Queen Isabella displays her authority as ruler by the employing of Columbus to embark on a voyage and also ordering him to claim for Spain any islands he discovered. In the second, Queen Elizabeth II is shown as a colonial master or ruler of Ghana by signing a bill for Ghana's independence. This therefore shows that the two queens are portrayed as powerful women who are leaders of their state and empire in their own right.

Related to this, some women were portrayed being actively involved as leaders in politics. In two instances women were depicted in this way:

Nkrumah resigned from the UGCC in 1949, together with his close assistants, KA Gbedenah and Kojo Botsio. Together they set up the Convention People's party (CPP). Most people who had supported Nkrumah in the UGCC now moved over to join the CPP, and the party soon attracted wide support throughout the colony. Because he had identified himself with the problems of the people, Nkrumah was supported by ordinary people, including the working class and people without much education ... **Nkrumah also tried to win the support of market women, who held very influential positions in the community, and of trade unions (p. 127).**

The women mentioned in this citation were clearly active in politics as leaders in the community, and trade unions and powerful enough to be sought out by a male political leader who wanted to gain their support.

The second instance showed a woman, Rose Chibambo, who was portrayed as one of the leaders of the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC) during the struggle for independence in Malawi:

Other important leaders of the struggle for independence were Dunduzu Chisiza, who was called home from his studies in Birmingham in 1958 to become Secretary-general of the NAC; and **Rose Chibambo**, who was

called upon in the same year to organise the NAC Women's League (p. 147).

Therefore according to these two pieces of evidence, I would conclude that the women referred to in the two citations are portrayed as powerful political leaders who were relied upon during the struggle for independence in their countries. For instance, Nkrumah relied upon the support of the market women in his political party and Chibambo was the organiser of the Women's League in the NAC party. However, the market women from Ghana are not only portrayed as leaders in the politics of the struggle for independence but also in trade unions and the community.

An analysis of the text also revealed one instance where some women were portrayed as religious leaders. The women were depicted as nuns and an abbess (p. 9). The latter was portrayed as a leader of the community of nuns. The depiction of nuns also portrays them as leaders in the church. However, their position, as explained earlier under the analysis of Textbook A is the least in the hierarchy of the leadership of the Catholic Church.

#### **6.4.5.2 Women in a traditional family role as wives and mothers**

Besides portraying women in leadership roles, my analysis of the verbal text also revealed the portrayal of some women in the traditional family role as wives and mothers. Three instances where women as historical characters were portrayed as wives were identified in Textbook C. These women are: the wife of Peter the Missionary (p.8); Khadija, wife of the Prophet Muhammad (p. 14) and the wife of Lot (p. 14). A close scrutiny of the status of their husbands reveals that they were all famous men religiously speaking. Historically, Peter was a famous missionary of the New Testament, Muhammad was a Prophet and founder of Islam and Lot was one of the patriarchs of the Old Testament who was also a nephew of Abraham. Therefore, this means that all the three women depicted as wives in Textbook C are portrayed as wives of famous men. Consequently, the fact that the women are portrayed as wives of famous men elevates them to a higher status. However, implicitly, this portrays the women as dependent on the achievements of men for their fame and inclusion in a history textbook. As such the mentioned women are viewed as people who cannot achieve recognition on their own. This is because

none of the women is mentioned because of their own success but because of the achievements of their husbands. Furthermore, the fact that the women depicted as wives are associated with famous men silences the majority of women who are wives of ordinary men. This portrays the latter as being absent from history.

A similar pattern to the above was shown in the women who were depicted as mothers. These were Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ (p. 2) and Helen, the mother of Emperor Constantine (p. 7). As the description of their sons reveals, these women are portrayed as mothers of famous men. Historically, Jesus Christ is the Messiah and founder of Christianity and Emperor Constantine was one of the most famous emperors of Rome. These two women are therefore portrayed in history not because of their own achievements but for those of their sons. This portrays women as a group of people which is not capable of achieving recognition or positions of importance on their own merit but only because of their ability to give birth to famous men. Furthermore, the fact that only mothers of famous men are mentioned in the text portrays the majority of women who are mothers of ordinary men and women as being outside the margins of history.

#### **6.4.5.3 Women in economically productive roles**

My analysis of the text further revealed that some women were portrayed in the economic activities of self-employment as well as wage employment. Two instances were noted in the text in which women were portrayed as business people. In one instance, Khadija, apart from being referred to as the wife of Muhammad, was shown as a business lady who owned a trading enterprise: "At the age of 25 he [Muhammad] married a wealthy widow, Khadija, whose trading business he was managing" (p. 14). In the second, reference is made to 'market women': "Nkrumah also tried to win the support of market women ..." (p. 127). The market women were business people who conducted their trade at the market place and who were powerful enough that a male political leader sought out their support. These two extracts serve as evidence of the portrayal of some women in the text as entrepreneurs or business people who are economically self-reliant.

The analysis of the verbal text also revealed the presence of women who were depicted in the employment sector as spinners of wool in the pre-industrial times in

Britain (p. 47). These women were employed by the business dealers who owned the cloth manufacturing industry. However, in the entire text, this was the only instance when women were portrayed in employment as wage earners. Despite the fact that spinning was a menial job which may entail some exploitation, the women are portrayed as self-reliant economically.

In a different economic sense women, as historical characters, were portrayed in six instances as slaves in the verbal text in Textbook C. Table 6.15 below provides an overview of the instances where women were portrayed as slaves.

**Table 6.15 Instances where women were depicted as slaves in the text in Textbook C**

<b>Instances when women were shown as slaves</b>	<b>Page</b>
Women slaves shown being taken to North Africa and the Middle East during the period of the Trans-Saharan slave trade	65
Women depicted as slaves in the seventh century during the period of the Arab slave trade	67
Female slaves shown imported to America in smaller numbers than male slaves	74
Slave women shrieking under difficult conditions in a ship on their way to America	80
Women mentioned in relation to effects of the slave trade in Africa	87

As shown in Table 6.15, the women are shown as slaves being taken to America and the Middle East and others are mentioned in reference to the slave trade. However, unlike the women portrayed in business and wage employment who are economically self-reliant, the slaves are portrayed as objects of economic exploitation as they were not paid for their labour nor did they benefit economically from their being sold. Therefore, the women are portrayed in an economic activity that is beneficial to the slave traders and slave masters and not to themselves; hence the exploitation of the slave women.

#### **6.4.6 Conclusion of findings from Textbook C**

In summary, some conclusions could be drawn regarding how women are portrayed in the verbal text in Textbook C. It was found that women are remarkably under-represented in their portrayal in the verbal text in this textbook and are therefore reduced to silent participants on the margins of history. Women are also less frequently mentioned in the text which is not strange considering their under-

representation. Less frequent mentioning of women contributed to making them less visible in the text and implies a limited contribution to history by women. It was also clear that only famous women were portrayed by name in the text in Textbook C. Such a portrayal marginalises ordinary women as historical characters in the text. Although both black and white women were portrayed in the text, it was found that white women dominate. However the difference was not significant which suggests that race is not an issue in the portrayal of women in this textbook. Despite the fact that Textbook C was produced in Malawi for use in that country, it was found that only one Malawian woman was mentioned in the text. This marginalises women as historical characters in Malawi.

What is clear is that women were portrayed in the margins of history in Textbook C as evidenced by their exclusion in the table of contents, topics and subtopics in the text and lack of reference to women in some topics or themes. There is also lack of depth in discussing women as historical characters as they are mostly referred to in single sentences in the text. In terms of roles and activities, it was found that women are portrayed in leadership positions as powerful state, political and religious leaders. Women were also portrayed in a traditional role as wives and mothers of famous men. Although this portrayal raised the status of those women to positions of importance, it also depicted them as dependent on men for their recognition and inclusion in history. In contrast, some women were portrayed as economically self-reliant evidenced by their depiction in business and wage labour. However, other women were portrayed as objects of exploitation as indicated by the portrayal of women as slaves.

This conclusion has highlighted major findings on the analysis of the portrayal of women in the verbal text in Textbook C. In the next section, I compare and consolidate the findings from Textbooks A, B and C in order to present a holistic picture of the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi.

## **6.5 Consolidation of findings from the verbal text in Textbooks A, B and C**

In this section, I present a synthesis of the main findings that arose from the analysis of the verbal text from the three textbooks for their portrayal of women. I explore the common patterns and trends and exceptions that emerged across the textbooks and between any two textbooks. Such a synthesis would provide evidence or a basis for making some general conclusions about how women are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi.

One common pattern that emerged was the serious marginality of women in the verbal text across the three textbooks. This was evidenced by their representation and inclusion in the text. For instance, it was found that women across the three textbooks are excluded from the tables of contents, topics and subtopics in the text and consequently they are included sparsely and in passing, mostly in single sentences, in the verbal text. This portrays women as marginal to history and as people who contributed little in the past. The exclusion of women from the tables of contents and topics and subtopics in the text also portrays women as people with no agency to initiate historical events. It is mostly people who initiate events that are foregrounded and highlighted in the tables of contents and topics and subtopics in textbooks.

In addition, marginalisation of women was evidenced by the fact that women were included in the verbal text mostly in single sentences and that some topics in the textbooks did not make any reference to women in the verbal text. The fact that women are mostly referred to in single sentences in the text suggests a lack of depth and detail in the portrayal of the historical experiences of women. This marginalises women as their historical roles and experiences are reduced to mere sentences. Additionally, in textbooks A and C, women are marginalised as they are portrayed to have a history in some themes or topics and not others. This is because in these two textbooks, some topics or themes avoided any specific reference to women in the narrative text. The 'Partition of Africa' was found to be a common topic or theme in which women are portrayed to have no history in both textbooks. Such a portrayal undermines the potential of women in history as in reality women either participated in or experienced the 'Partition of Africa' as a historical event. Other topics in which women are excluded as historical characters are the study of history, evolution of



humans and the kingdoms of Western Sudan – Ghana and Mali in Textbook A; and Renaissance, Reformation and organisation of African Unity in Textbook C. However Textbook B included women in the verbal text at least once in all the topics or themes. For this reason therefore, I would argue that although women are also marginalised in Textbook B, the degree of marginalisation is less than that of Textbooks A and C.

Furthermore, marginality of women was indicated by under-representation and less frequent mentioning of women in the verbal text. On average women represent only 6% of the historical characters mentioned in the three textbooks. Consequently the under-representation of women portrays them as less visible and at times as almost invisible in history as they hardly appear in the text. It also arrogates women to the margins of history as people who contributed little in the past in relation to men. This undermines the role of women in history since in reality they contributed greatly in the past. Apart from aggravating the invisibility and marginality of women in the text, less frequent mentioning of women shows that women are not developed in depth as historical characters. Rather, they are, in most cases merely superficially mentioned. Therefore women, as indicated by their pattern of inclusion and the statistics in the text across the three textbooks, are portrayed as marginal and almost invisible as well as a group of people with no agency to initiate historical events.

It is clear from the 6% of women portrayed that only famous or influential women are portrayed by name across the textbooks. These women are portrayed as being famous, either as religious or political figures, and others are shown as famous because of patriarchal relations with men as mothers and wives of important men. In fact this is the route in which women mostly found their entry into the textbooks as historical characters. The fact that only famous women are mentioned arrogates ordinary women to the outer boundaries of history. In fact ordinary women are ignored or neglected except in a very few instances when they are referred to in relation to marriage or motherhood to ordinary men and children respectively. This therefore means that ordinary women are portrayed as a group with no history or who did not contribute in society hence cannot be recorded in history. Therefore, it can be argued that in the verbal text across the three textbooks, famous women are

portrayed as actors in history while ordinary women are neglected and silenced as people who did not play any role or contributed very little in history.

Another common pattern that was observed across the three textbooks is that both black and white women were portrayed in the text. However, in terms of their representation, I found that Textbooks A and C portray white women in a larger number than black women while Textbook B was the opposite. Overall, the three textbooks portrayed more white women (19) than black women (13). However, the difference is not statistically significant which means that race is not an issue in the way women are portrayed numerically in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. However, white women seem to be portrayed differently to black women in terms of historical roles and activities. For instance, in terms of women who are mentioned as queens, a significant number of them are white (Queen Isabella, Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II) while only one black woman, Queen Hatshepsut, is portrayed in that capacity. Furthermore, black women are portrayed as victims evidenced by their depiction as slaves and captives while white women are not shown in this capacity. It was also observed that white women were portrayed in paid jobs as spinners while black women were shown in an unpaid job as food producers. Therefore black women are portrayed, unlike white women, as subjects of economic exploitation. Therefore, although race is not a significant issue in the numerical representation of black and white women, racial differences could be noticed in the portrayal of women in historical roles and activities.

Despite the fact that the three textbooks are a product of Malawi and intended for use in the country, I found that Malawian women as historical characters are generally marginalised in the verbal text. This was remarkable in Textbooks A and C where the representation of Malawian women as historical characters was very limited. Textbook B showed a balance in the representation of Malawian women and women from other parts of the world. In total only five Malawian women are included as historical characters in the verbal text in the three junior secondary school history textbooks. This means that at the end of junior secondary school level, learners would be exposed to very few Malawian women as historical characters. This portrays Malawian women as people who played a very limited role in the history of the country. Despite their marginalisation in history, women in Malawi contributed

immensely in the past in many fields such as politics, agriculture and religion, but their roles have not been documented in the history of Malawi as revealed in the textbooks under study.

In terms of roles and activities, I found that across the textbooks, women were portrayed in various leadership positions although with some variations. For instance women in the three textbooks were portrayed in leadership roles as powerful state leaders as was evidenced by the depiction of queens in the verbal text. However, what was noted was that all the state leaders were portrayed as queens which are hereditary positions that one attains because of being born in the royal family and not through merit. For instance the British queens, Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II inherited their position of power by virtue of being born in the royal family. This means that women as historical characters could not manage to attain high positions on their own other than through privileged genealogical inheritance. Women were also portrayed as political leaders across the textbooks. Some were shown as party leaders, others were shown in the politics of their kingdom and yet another woman was shown in the politics of the anti-slavery movement. Unlike the position of queens, some leaders were portrayed as being powerful political leaders on their own merit for example Rose Chibambo, Gertrude Mongella and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Though few, these women are portrayed as exceptional. However, the majority of women referred to as leaders are associated with men in one way or another. For instance, the wives of the kabaka were involved in the administration of the kingdom because of their marriage to the king and the women who were involved in the selection of a new king in the Maravi kingdom were members of the royal family. This indirectly portrays women in a subordinate role despite holding positions of power.

Some leadership positions in which women were portrayed were specific only to Textbooks A and B. It was only in these two textbooks where women were portrayed as spiritual and religious leaders. This was indicated by the depiction of goddesses with different responsibilities to priestesses and nuns. Despite being spiritual leaders, the goddesses were portrayed with less power than male gods and stereotyped in their responsibilities. Similarly, the nuns held lower positions in the hierarchy of the church leadership. It could therefore be argued that although women

are portrayed in leadership, their power is limited and they are not independent leaders on their own merit.

Another common pattern across the three textbooks was the portrayal of women in traditional family roles as wives and mothers, mostly of famous men. For instance, Catherine of Aragon in Textbook A was portrayed as the wife of King Henry VIII of England, Nyangu in Textbook B, depicted as the mother of the first kalonga, king of the Maravi kingdom and Khadija, wife of the prophet Muhammad in Textbook C. Although this kind of portrayal elevates the status of such women to important people in society by dint of their association with famous men, it also depicts women in general as dependent on men for their recognition in society and inclusion in history textbooks. Related to this, some women were referred to in the text because of marriage although the husbands were not famous and not even mentioned in the text. This therefore shows that women are referred to in the text merely because of their relationship with men through marriage and motherhood. Therefore marriage whether to famous men or ordinary men is seen as a determining factor for including women in history across the three textbooks. Equally, the ability to give birth to famous sons provides an opportunity for women to enter into the three history textbooks.

Some common patterns were noted between Textbooks A and C and B and C. For instance it was found that women were portrayed in economic activities as business people and wage labourers in Textbooks A and C. In these textbooks some women were depicted as business people for example Khadija and the market women in colonial Ghana and as wage labourers (spinners) in the textile industry in pre-industrial Europe. Thus some women in these textbooks are portrayed as economically self-reliant. In contrast it was found that women in Textbooks B and C are portrayed as objects of economic exploitation which was evidenced by the depiction of women as slaves and captives. Overall, it is clear that economically speaking, women are portrayed as business people, workers in the textile industry and as slaves and captives. However, a few women such as Khadija and the market women in Ghana were portrayed as economically powerful while the majority were shown as victims of an economic system as slaves, captives and spinners.

What is also clear is that some findings were unique to specific textbooks. For instance, it was only in Textbook A where a woman, Agrippina, was portrayed as a murderer, and it was also only in Textbook B where a woman, Mrs. Baker, was portrayed as an explorer. Agrippina and Mrs. Baker are portrayed as exceptions as their historical roles do not coincide with the general historical roles attributed to women in the three books.

In consolidating the findings from the analysis of the verbal text, I would argue that there are general patterns and trends as well as exceptions in the way women are portrayed. In general women are portrayed as marginal and almost invisible in history and as people with limited agency to initiate historical events. It is also clear that there is lack of depth and detail in discussing women as historical characters as women are mentioned superficially and referred to in passing mostly in single sentences. It was also clear that only famous women are mentioned by name which marginalises ordinary women who are silenced in the text. However, those mentioned by name were invariably famous women who for the most part became acceptable historical characters by dint of their association to important men - either as wives or mothers. Others were included as leaders because of the hereditary nature of royal lineages. Despite this, there were some exceptions where women were portrayed as powerful people on their own merit, for example, Rose Chibambo, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Gertrude Mongella. Although both black and white women are portrayed in the text, it was clear that numerically white women are represented in a larger number than black women though the difference is not significant. However, racial differences were noted in the portrayal of white and black women in roles and activities whereby the former were depicted as having done different things in history. Related to this, Malawian women are marginalised in the text which gives a false impression that they contributed very little in history. Exceptions were also noted in the roles of women in that two women were portrayed as a murderer and an explorer respectively.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I presented the findings on the analysis of the verbal text in three junior secondary school history texts used in Malawi namely for their portrayal of women. I first presented the findings of each textbook separately and later

consolidated the results to have a holistic picture of how women in general are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. The findings presented in this chapter, and chapter five, give a holistic picture of how women are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. In the next chapter, I discuss and analyse these findings and those of chapter 5 in relation to the known knowledge on the portrayal of women in textbooks by applying my bricolage of theories to it.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

## DISCUSSING THE FINDINGS

### 7.1 Introduction

In chapters five and six I presented the findings on the analysis of the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. Chapter five dealt with the findings on the analysis of the visual images while chapter six focused on the results of the analysis of the verbal text. In this chapter, I reflect on the findings from the two chapters and discuss the major themes that emerged from the analyses. I collate the two sets of findings and discuss them because as LaSpina (1998) has argued, text consists of both the visual and verbal material and they are complementary rather than contradictory. Therefore, I discuss the two sets of findings together in order to provide firm answers to the research questions underpinning the study. In this chapter I discuss and theorise my findings by comparing them, as a second level of analysis, to the literature, both research and theoretical. In the process, I established the similarities and differences between my findings and the literature and account for the disjuncture between the two and propose theoretical and philosophical reasons for the divergence and adherence. However, before I discuss the findings, I present a brief overview of the emerging themes from the confluence of the visual and verbal analysis on which the discussion will be based in this chapter.

### 7.2 Major findings of the study

Strydom (2005) and Merriam (2009) suggest that any discussion of findings should begin with a brief overview of the results in non-technical language. In light of this suggestion I briefly highlight the major findings of the study that emerged from the analyses as conducted in chapters five and six. These were that women are portrayed as marginal to history and are variously stereotyped in roles and activities as historical characters. I found also that, despite the marginalisation and stereotyping, some women were also portrayed as exceptional historical characters.

I discovered also that there were silences in the way women were portrayed and I discuss the silences identified as part of the general conclusion of the chapter.

It is upon these findings that the discussion in this chapter will be based. In the course of the discussion, reasons why women are portrayed in particular ways as historical characters will be highlighted and theorised. I begin with a discussion on the marginalisation of women as historical characters in the textbooks as one of the major findings.

### **7.3 The marginalisation of women in history**

This study revealed a serious marginalisation of women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. Marginalisation of women was established in both the visual images and verbal text and it manifested itself in different ways in the textbooks. One of the ways in which women were marginalised was through under-representation. As noted in chapters five and six the under-representation of women was in both the visual images and verbal text where the numbers of women were remarkably less than those of men. In support of this finding - in Textbook A women comprised nine % of the people depicted in the visual images and six % of the people mentioned in the verbal text. Similarly in Textbook B women represented 25% and eight % of the people appearing in the visual and verbal text respectively. Textbook C did not fare better and women as historical characters consisted of only 17% and four percent of the people appearing in the visual images and verbal text respectively. On average, across the three textbooks, women formed 17% of the historical characters in the visual images and six percent of those appearing in the verbal text.

However, this under-representation of women is not unique to my study and resonates with a range of other studies. The literature reviewed showed that women are generally under-represented, not only in history textbooks, but also in textbooks of other subjects which indicate that women are in the main marginalised in textbooks. For instance, Lee and Collins (2009) in Australia, Regueiro (2000) in Spain and Elgar (2004) in Brunei exposed the under-representation of women, both in the visual images and the verbal text. Since the findings of my study confirm the literature reviewed on textbooks of other subjects, I would argue that despite the type



of textbook and the nation or geographical context the text serves, women are generally statistically marginalised in their portrayal in textbooks through under-representation both in the visual images and verbal text.

Similarly, the under-representation in my study concurs with the results of other history textbook analysis studies conducted in countries across the globe. Research conducted by Osler (1994) in England, Schoeman (2009) in South Africa and Schoker and Woyshner (2013) in the USA, to mention just a few, bears this out. What is clear from the literature reviewed is that studies in history textbooks have been conducted since the Middle Ages between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries and are still going on but women still continue to be marginalised through under-representation. This raises a question as to why women in my study, as well as in other history textbook studies, are under-represented. However, before theoretically explaining the possible reasons for this finding, I wish to firstly discuss, in relation to the research literature reviewed, all the ways in which marginalisation of women manifested itself in my study.

Related to under-representation was the frequency in which women as historical characters were mentioned in the text which also signified a marginalisation. As highlighted in chapter six, women were mentioned less frequently than men in the text in all the three textbooks. It was found that in Textbook A women were mentioned at an average of 1.2 times while for men the average was three times and in Textbook C the average for women was 1.1 times versus three times for men. Textbook B was slightly better in its portrayal of women than the other two textbooks for its averages were 2 times and 3.2 times for women and men respectively. Less frequent mentioning of women marginalised them as it portrayed them only in snippets of history. However, less frequent mentioning of women, as a form of marginalisation, is not fully supported by the literature reviewed in chapter two. The literature only revealed under-representation of women but not the frequency to which the few women mentioned in the text were referred. My study is therefore enhancing the debate on the under-representation of women which might not have been addressed by previous studies, both in history textbooks and textbooks of other subjects.

The marginalisation of women as revealed by my study also manifested itself through the exclusion of women in the tables of contents and topics and subtopics in the narrative text. All three textbooks excluded women in the tables of contents and the topics and subtopics which portrayed women as marginal to history. A consequence of this was a lack of in-depth discussion of women in the textbooks as historical actors as they were not denoted as the subjects of the story. This finding to a certain extent corroborates with Frederickson's (2004) study conducted in the USA but with a slight difference. Frederickson acknowledged some reflection of women in the tables of contents in chapter subheadings but not in chapter titles, while I found no inclusion of women in both areas of the tables of contents in all three textbooks. I would therefore argue, that in terms of inclusion in the tables of contents, women as historical characters in Malawian junior secondary school history textbooks are more marginalised than in Frederickson's (2004) survey. Furthermore, my finding about the exclusion of women in the topics and subtopics in the text is not supported by the literature reviewed in any specific way. However, Su (2007) reported that there was no space devoted to Taiwanese women in the social studies' textbooks produced between 1978 and 1989 and Cains and Inglis (1989) noted the omission of women in most history textbooks they studied. But, their findings are not specific to topics and subtopics in the text but rather apply to the entire verbal text.

Additionally, marginalisation of women was indicated by the fact that there was a lack of depth in discussing women as historical characters in the text since women were mostly referred to in passing in a sentence or two in the text and rarely in full-length paragraphs. This marginalises women since it portrays them as people who contributed only in a limited way to history because their historical roles and experiences are of such insignificance that they are reduced to mere sentences. The shallow inclusion and discussion of women in the text was also laid bare by other studies. For instance, studies by Mayer (1989) and Zagumny and Pulsipher (2008) in geography textbooks also revealed superficial reference to women in the text. Besides geography textbooks, my finding also corroborates with several studies in history textbooks which reported a similar marginalisation in the inclusion and reference to women in the text. For example, Sleeter and Grant (1991) reported that the roles and contributions of women were not covered in great detail in the story line of the books they had analysed which made women both invisible and marginalised

in the verbal text. In addition, Commeyras and Alvermann's (1996) indicated that the history textbooks they studied attempted to include women in paragraphs in their roles as wives and mothers. Additionally, research by Schrader and Wotipka (2011), Su (2007) and Fardon and Schoeman (2010) also revealed a lack of depth and detail in discussing women in the textbooks they surveyed. The fact that the lack of depth in discussing women as historical characters as found in my study are confirmed by other studies in history textbooks leads me to conclude that women are not only marginalised in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi but in history textbooks used in many other countries which points to a global phenomenon in this regard.

In addition, the marginalisation of women also manifested itself through the exclusion of, and lack of reference to, women as historical characters in some topics in the textbooks. This revealed them to be viewed as having a history in some topics and not in others. Such a portrayal denies historical reality as women were present in all topics. This finding echoes the work by Cains and Inglis (1989) who observed the omission of women in most history textbooks that they studied. Schrader and Wotipka (2011) likewise revealed that women were largely omitted from World War II narratives in textbooks published before the 1970s and that although women were included in such narratives in textbooks produced after 1976, only a few were made reference to in a compensatory manner. My study therefore confirms the marginalisation of women in history textbooks which has been perpetuated for a very long time and reveals no significant change in the portrayal of women in history textbooks. This is happening despite feminist historians' call for the rewriting of history so as to rectify this situation.

Marginalisation was also revealed in the visual images whereby women were rarely portrayed on their own as individuals, in groups or in pairs while there were many such visual images for men in all three textbooks under study. The worst in this regard was Textbook C which did not contain a single visual image of women on their own while textbook A had one visual image of an individual woman and Textbook B included one group visual image of women only and two of individual women. Most of the visual images in the textbooks, particularly those in Textbooks B and C, portrayed women in groups with men or in pairs with men. For instance, out

of the 23 visual images featuring women in Textbook B, 14 portrayed women in group images together with men. Textbook C contained 11 visual images featuring women out of which 10 showed women in groups alongside men. The fact that women are not portrayed visually on their own marginalises them because it denies their agency as historical actors who were capable of initiating events in the past. This finding resonates with the work of Fournier and Wineburg (1997) who found that drawings of historical characters produced by both boys and girls in their study showed women more in groups together with men than women alone. Specifically they found that of the 136 drawings of historical characters produced by boys in their study, only one depicted a woman alone while seven showed both women and men. Similarly, of the 153 drawings produced by girls, 35 showed women alone while 60 showed both women and men. This therefore shows that marginalisation of women in the visual images by denying them agency in history is not unique to my study but resonates with at least one other study.

What is clear from the discussion above is that women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi are marginalised in different ways and that their marginalisation is to a larger extent supported by literature from studies conducted in history and textbooks of other subjects. This hints at a universal trend in this regard. This situation raises questions as to why women are portrayed in such a marginal way in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. The problem of marginalisation of women in history textbooks could best be explained theoretically using feminist theory. As pointed out in chapter three, feminism is a theory that explains the conditions of women in society. Therefore, from my bricolage of feminist theories I would argue that the issue of marginalisation of women in junior secondary school history textbooks, as well as in history textbooks from other countries, could be understood through the views of liberal and radical feminists.

According to liberal feminists, traditions and customs that exist inherently in society create barriers for women to participate equally with men in the public world beyond the home and family (Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). These barriers are so deeply rooted that they impede women from attaining their full potential (Tong, 1989). In light of this, I would argue that women in the past have been barred by the deep-rooted customs and traditions from participating fully in the public domain in society

with the result that they were omitted in much of history. As such one would not expect equal representation of women in history textbooks as the latter provide a record, both of what happened in the past and how women of the past are viewed in the present when the books that were analysed were written. Consequently one could not expect women to be mentioned frequently, discussed at depth, be included in the tables of contents and topics and subtopics in the text, included in all themes and appear in most visual images in history textbooks.

Furthermore, the issue of marginalisation of women in junior secondary school history textbooks could be understood in the light of radical feminist beliefs in patriarchy as a source of women's oppression. As previously mentioned, patriarchy as a fundamental and universal form of male power or domination over women takes many forms and permeates all aspects of life (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). Therefore, the different ways in which the marginalisation of women manifested itself in junior secondary school history textbooks as discussed above reflect patriarchal beliefs about women in the past societies as well as in the present. The fact that women are under-represented and mentioned less frequently in the history textbooks studied reflects patriarchal disregard of the roles of women in society as they are considered as an inferior class (Lerner, 1993). This is the case since, under patriarchy, women lack power and are labelled as a group which is not as capable as men, even if they participated in different roles and activities in the past, their contribution would not be recognised. Therefore, I would argue that women contributed in various ways in the past but most of their actions, names and images were not captured and are therefore not mentioned and included in history because of patriarchal assumptions. This would theoretically explain why women are under-represented and mentioned less frequently in history textbooks in general and in this study in particular. It is also important to note that most of the limited number of women that were represented and mentioned in the textbooks largely appeared because of their relation to men, either as wives or mothers, which is also a reflection of patriarchal thinking.

In addition, patriarchal assumptions or views about women as followers and not leaders and as less capable (Lerner, 1993; Bryson, 1992, 1999) resulted in a lack of recognition of women as people with agency, past and present, who initiated

historical action. Consequently, historical records captured experiences of women superficially and portrayed them only in the margins history and did not highlight them as subjects of and initiators of historical action. Hence, their exclusion from topics and subtopics in tables of contents and headings and subheadings in the textbooks analysed. In addition, women would not be included in all topics or themes in history because of the assumption that they did not participate in activities related to that theme. Moreover, because of the patriarchal belief that women are followers and lack agency, they cannot be illustrated in historical drawings as individuals or in groups and in pairs of women only. This would explain why women were mostly portrayed in a patriarchal manner in group visual images together with men who are capable being leaders and initiating action. Therefore, women in group visual images alongside men are portrayed as followers of, and dependent on men, which concurs with the patriarchal perception of women. Despite the fact that most of the visual images found in the textbooks studied are contemporary drawings produced by publishers to reconstruct the past, and hence could have been altered to present women more equitably, they still marginalised women. This is because patriarchy is deeply embedded in the mental constructs of people in such a way that it largely remains invisible or unnoticeable (Abbot & Wallace, 1997; Lerner, 1993) and is only revealed by means of scientific analysis as has happened in this study.

While acknowledging the power of patriarchy and the associated discriminatory customs and traditions that are deeply rooted in society as a cause of the marginalisation of women in junior secondary school history textbooks, I would not rule out historiography in general and historiography of women's history in particular as contributing factors to the problem. Historically, as pointed out by Tetreault (1986), the conceptualisation of history itself as a subject, excluded women. According to Cains and Inglis (1989) and Osler (1994), the early historians did not consider topics which dealt with issues related to women important in their selection of the subject matter for history and in cases where some topics showed links to women, the role of women was downplayed. In reaction to this, women's history emerged in the 1960s due to the activities of the Women's Movement in the USA and Europe (Lewis, 1981; Robinson, 1997; Scott, 1992). Feminist historians noted the absence of women in history and began to incorporate women in history using different approaches. One of the strategies known as the compensatory approach

involved integrating women in the already existing mainstream history which was male dominated. As a result little was included about women. This perhaps could explain why women are under-represented and discussed superficially in the text which is dominated by the accounts of men. Therefore, in agreement with Schrader and Wotipka (2011), I argue that women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi, as in textbooks analysed in their study and other studies on history textbooks, tend to be included in a compensatory manner. This would clarify why women as historical characters are not discussed at depth in the text but simply included in passing, mostly in a sentence or two, excluded in some themes, tables of contents and topics and subtopics in the text as well as under-represented in visual images. Differently put – the textbooks' authors had no evidence to draw on regarding women but were simultaneously also hamstrung by powerful patriarchal notions. As a result the historiography of women's history could also be held accountable for the situation for the marginalisation of women in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi.

Although discriminatory customs and traditions, patriarchy and historiography seem to offer a powerful explanation for the marginalisation of women in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi, I would argue that they do not explain everything because women in these textbooks are marginalised in different ways due to their heterogeneity. Despite the fact that all women are marginalised because of the above mentioned factors, other women experienced further marginalisation due to other reasons. For instance, it was noted that black and white women are portrayed differently in the studied textbooks in terms of their representation and roles and activities. Despite the fact that the junior secondary school history textbooks studied are used in an African country, it was found that Textbooks A and C marginalised black women by under-representing them in relation to white women. In total Textbook A contained 13 white and seven black women and Textbook B included 21 white women and 15 black women. These figures comprise of women portrayed both in the visual images and verbal text. The marginalisation of black women in relation to white women in terms of their representation corroborates with studies by Hanson (2004) and Schocker and Woyshner (2013). In her study of 18 American public speaking texts for gender and diversity, Hanson noted that white American women dominated in the photographs. Similarly Schocker and Woyshner (2013) found that

in the two mainstream American history textbooks they studied, black women were represented in fewer numbers than white women. For instance in one textbook, entitled *The Americas*, of the total of 306 images of women included, 53 were of black women while 232 were of white women. In the other textbook studied, *America: Pathways to the present*, 50 black and 157 white women out of a total of 238 women were depicted in the visual images.

The difference in the portrayal of black and white women in terms of their representation, although not overly statistically significant, can be understood in light of black feminist arguments. Black feminists argue that, although all women share common gender oppression because of their sex as mainstream feminism claims, black women are also oppressed because of their race (hooks, 2001). While white women are oppressed only because of their gender, black feminists argue that black women experience both gender and race as forces for their oppression (Amos & Parmar, 2001; Beasley, 1999; hooks, 2001) and this is what has been reflected in their representation in Textbooks A and C and in the studies reviewed in the literature. This scenario poses a challenge to curriculum developers and textbook authors and publishers in Malawi to include more black women in future instructional materials. The history of black women abounds in the literature which curriculum developers and producers of textbooks can unearth other than using white women as the 'norm' which marginalises black women (Bryson, 1992, 1999).

However, in contrast to Textbooks A and C, Textbook B proved an exception as it marginalised white women in relation to black women in terms of their representation. Textbook B represented many more black women (64) than white women (seven). This finding is not supported by any of the literature reviewed in chapter two and also contradicts black feminist arguments as presented earlier. This clearly indicates that in Textbook B, it is the white women who are marginalised in terms of their representation and not black women which is contrary to black feminism which considers race as a factor affecting only black women. I would explain this contradiction to black feminist theory in two ways. Perhaps what is revealed in Textbook B calls for a revision of the theory to accommodate exceptions or maybe the topics covered in Textbook B were dominated by African history which did not have much interaction with the Western world.



Besides the marginalisation of women in general and of black women in relation to white women and vice versa, it was also established that Malawian women as historical characters in the textbooks studied were seriously marginalised in relation to other women as historical actors. This was noted in both the visual images and the verbal text. For instance, in Textbook A, out of a total of 21 women shown in both the visual images and verbal text, only two were Malawian. The rest were either white (the majority) or black women from other nationalities. Similarly, Textbook B included 16 Malawian women out of a total of 71 women and Textbook C depicted three Malawian women out of 36 women. This clearly shows that Malawian women as historical characters are marginalised in the junior secondary school history textbooks produced in their own country and portrays them as people who had contributed in a limited manner to the history of their society. This finding is not supported by any literature reviewed but rather contradicts Hanson's (2004) study who found that American women, beginning with white American and followed by African American, were more represented than women from other places of origin such as Asia. This is justifiable and understandable because the textbooks Hanson studied were American textbooks and therefore priority had to be given to American women rather than women from other places. However, the situation in the Malawian history textbooks studied raises a question as to why Malawian women as historical characters are marginalised in history textbooks of their own country. I would argue that the marginalisation of Malawian women reflects the patriarchal nature of the past society of Malawi as explained in chapter 1 and which still continues to the present since textbooks by nature mirror the society they serve (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Foster & Crawford, 2006). I would also argue that the selection of subject matter for the three textbooks studied was also problematic because the history of Malawi was not emphasised. There was only one topic in each textbook concerning the history of Malawi and this would help to explain why there was such a limited number of Malawian women represented in the textbooks.

In conclusion, regarding the portrayal of women as marginal to history in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi I would argue that this finding largely confirms the literature from other parts of the world (Schocker & Woysner, 2013; Schrader and Wotipka 2011, Su, 2007) which points to a phenomena that

transcends international boundaries and the history and other textbooks located within them. Theoretically, the marginalisation of women in the textbooks studied could be explained as a product of discriminatory customs and traditions in past societies such as patriarchy, historiography, race and limited inclusion of national history in the textbooks.

#### **7.4 Stereotyping of women in historical roles and activities and character traits**

The second major finding that emerged from the analysis was the stereotyping of women as historical figures in the textbooks in terms of the roles and activities allotted to them as well as the character traits attributed to them. The stereotypical portrayal of women as historical actors was manifested in different ways in the textbooks.

One of the clearest indicators of stereotyping was the portrayal of women as wives and mothers. It was found that in each of the three textbooks women were regularly portrayed as wives and mothers and this was evidenced in both the visual images and the verbal text. For instance, in Textbook A, the visual image of slaves being led to the slave market depicted one woman as a mother who carried a baby on her back and several women were mentioned as wives in the text such as Laura, wife of Petrarch and Agrippina, wife of Emperor Claudius. In Textbook B, the visual image of Khoisan hunter-gatherers depicted the women as wives and mothers who were surrounded by their children and husbands. More women were shown as wives and mothers in the visual text such as Nefertari, wife of King Ramses and Nyangu, mother of the first kalonga in the Maravi kingdom. In Textbook C, one of the visual images showed two women as mothers taking care of and cradling their babies and in the verbal text, among other women, Khadija was referred to as a wife of the prophet Muhammad. These examples mentioned from many others found in the textbooks studied shows that women are stereotyped in traditional reproductive roles in their portrayal as historical characters.

These findings concur with the literature reviewed for this study on both history textbooks and textbooks of other subjects. For example, Ozdogru et al (2004) found in the textbooks they studied (elementary school textbooks of Turkish and life sciences) that women were essentially shown at home/domestic settings as

housewives and mothers taking care of their children. Similar findings were also established by Elgar (2004), Hardin et al (2006) and Lee and Collins (2009) to cite just a few examples from the glut of literature reviewed in this regard. Therefore, as with the junior secondary school history textbooks I studied, the textbooks of other subjects also portrayed women stereotypically in traditional and reproductive roles. My findings also resonate with results revealed by history textbook studies conducted by Osler (1994) and O’Kelly (1983). For instance, O’Kelly indicates that women in the Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and Modern era, in which the fine art works she studied were produced, were predominantly portrayed as wives and mothers. Similarly Osler found that women in the history textbooks she studied were portrayed in activities such as nursing babies and looking after children and in family portraits with their husbands and children which imply motherhood and being wives. Since the portrayal of women as wives and mothers in the textbooks I studied confirms findings of other studies, both in history textbooks and textbooks of other subjects, I would conclude that women are generally stereotyped in textbooks in traditional and reproductive roles and this is regardless of which nation a particular textbook serves.

The stereotypical portrayal of women as wives and mothers could be explained as a reflection of the patriarchal expectation of the role of women in society, not only in Malawi, but also in other countries as illustrated by the findings of other similar studies. As Lerner (1993) argues, in a patriarchal society, women are expected to marry and bear children as they are the nurturers and this is regarded as the primary role of all women regardless of race, class, nationality or continent. These are the roles in which women as a class have primarily and mainly participated most historically and still continue to do so in the present. This would explain why in the textbooks I studied, as well as those analysed by other scholars, women are not left out in the roles of wives and mothers. Therefore, depicting women as wives and mothers portrays them in their stereotypical traditional and reproductive roles according to societal expectation. In the Malawian context this also speaks to another dimension, namely that of African feminism which celebrates or affirms motherhood and the family (Arndt, 2002; Mikell, 1997). As pointed out in chapter three, the status of an African woman is determined by her primary responsibility to bear children and her duty to maintain the family (Mikell, 1997). Therefore, the

portrayal of women as wives and mothers in the textbooks under study serves to inculcate in the users of the textbooks, both girls and boys, of the societal values of motherhood and the family in Malawi. This confirms the role of textbooks as ideological tools responsible for the transmission of cultural values and beliefs (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Foster & Crawford, 2006). However, radical feminists consider women's involvement in reproductive and family roles as exploitation of women because they are not paid for performing such roles. Furthermore, they consider child-bearing as the source of women's subordination because it hinders them from participating in economically productive activities. Therefore the portrayal of women as wives and mothers could be explained differently depending on the feminist perspective one upholds.

Stereotyping of women in roles and activities was also shown in their portrayal in domestic roles and activities in Textbooks A and B - both in the visual images and verbal text. For instance, in the visual images in Textbook A, a slave woman was shown carrying food provisions on her head and a Greek goddess was depicted carrying a pot which signifies cooking. Furthermore, in the verbal text, two goddesses, Demeter and Artemis, were portrayed having responsibility over food. Thus, be it a slave or a goddess, women as historical characters were bound by stereotypical domestic cords. In Textbook B, women were shown in the visual images engaged in house work, processing food, and as food gatherers while in the verbal text they were depicted as food producers and the Greek goddess Demeter as being responsible for harvests. This evidence shows therefore that women as historical characters are stereotyped in domestic roles in the way they are portrayed in roles and activities in Textbooks A and B. However, this finding is not unique to my study and echoes the results of other textbook studies. With regard to textbooks of other subjects, Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari (1991) and Ozdogru et al (2004) reported that women were shown doing housework and agricultural work in the fields. Studies in history textbooks by O'Kelly (1983), Osler (1994) and Su (2007) also produced similar results to the current study where women were portrayed farming, working in the kitchen and engaged in housework. Thus, according to the findings of the present study, and its resonance with the results of previous studies, I would argue that women are generally stereotyped as historical characters in domestic roles in

textbooks. My study therefore confirms the stereotypical portrayal of women in domestic roles as found internationally.

As with reproductive roles, domestic roles are regarded as the primary responsibility for women in society because of the division of gender roles in a patriarchal order. Therefore, in agreement with Regueiro (2000) I attribute the portrayal of women in domestic roles as a reflection of patriarchal stereotypes about the roles of women in society, regardless of differences in race, nationality or continent. Lerner (1993) argues that patriarchy believes that because of their nurturing role, women are meant for sustenance of daily life. This explains why women in a patriarchal society, such as in Malawi, are cast into domestic roles as it is these activities which maintain society through provision of food, care and support in families.

Stereotyping of women was also noted in their portrayal in group visual images together with men and mentioning them in the text by dint of their marital or parental relationship to famous men. As elucidated earlier in section 7.3, women were mostly portrayed in group visual images together with men in all three textbooks analysed. This stereotypes women as people who are not capable of commencing historical action but depend on men for historical endeavours. Though the literature reviewed was silent on the type of visual images in which women are mostly depicted, there was evidence of women being portrayed in group visual images together with men in some studies in history textbooks. For example in studies on history textbooks by Osler (1994) and Sleeter and Grant (1991) and in textbooks of subjects other than history by Lee and Collins (2009), Mayer (1989) and Hardin, Dodd and Lauffer (2006).

Similarly, in all three textbooks analysed most of the women named in the text were mentioned because of their marital or parental connection with famous men. Examples abound and I will refer to only a few: Nefertari, wife of king Ramses of Ancient Egypt; Agrippina, wife of Emperor Claudius of Rome; Rhea Silvia, mother of Romulus and Remus, founders of Rome and Helen mother of Emperor Constantine. Mentioning of women because of their relationship with famous men stereotypes the women as people who are not capable of achieving their own fame that makes them worthy of inclusion in history but depend on men for their recognition, be it via

marriage or motherhood. This finding concurs with the work executed by Commeyras and Alvermann (1996) who established that women's contribution in the history textbooks they studied was added in mere sentences as wives and mothers of famous men. Based on this I would argue that in the history textbooks I have studied women are largely stereotyped as people who are not capable of significant historical acts other than being either mothers or wives.

I would attribute the portrayal of women in group visual images and mentioning of women because of their relationship with men to patriarchal stereotypes regarding the potential of women. This is in itself a clear manifestation of male power or domination over women. Under patriarchy, as pointed out in chapter three, women are regarded as inferior and not as capable as men (Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). This stereotype is reflected in the visual images by depicting women together with men. Since patriarchy also affects people's thoughts and becomes normalised in minds (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999), it would not be surprising for publishers to illustrate women together with men in the visual images. What is contained in their minds, because of socialisation, is a world dominated and controlled by men where women exist because of the capability of men and not of their own potential. In the same vein, historians become blind to the achievements of women because they are regarded as inferior and only see them (women) through the accomplishments of their husbands or sons, the superior beings. Consequently, women are mentioned in the text alongside the achievements of men because their own accomplishments tend to be disregarded by patriarchy.

Women were also portrayed in a stereotypical manner through their depiction in exploitative economic activities in both the visual images and the verbal text in the three textbooks studied. This was evidenced through their portrayal as slaves and in menial labour. Such a portrayal stereotypes women as only being capable economically in exploitative capacities as slaves and in menial jobs. It was observed that in all the three textbooks, women as historical characters were shown as slaves, either being led to the slave market to be sold, being sold at the slave market or doing slave labour. For instance in Textbook A women were depicted in the visual image being led to the slave market to be sold and in Textbook B they were shown actually being sold at the Zanzibar slave market while in Textbook C women were

portrayed doing slave labour – harvesting sugar cane in a sugar cane plantation. Reference to women as slaves was also noted in the verbal text particularly in Textbooks B and C. However, it was noted that only black African women were portrayed as slaves which stereotypes them with slavery and being capable in serving as slaves while white women were portrayed as performing other menial jobs.

Stereotyping of black women in exploitative economic activity as slaves was also established by other studies on history textbooks. For instance, O’Kelly (1989) noted that some women were portrayed as slaves in the pieces of art of the modern period. However, O’Kelly did not indicate whether the women portrayed as slaves were black or white women but the possibility of those slaves being black is high because the women were depicted as slaves in the pieces of art of the modern period which was the time slave trade between Africa and Europe took place. Similarly Schocker and Woyshner (2013) reported the portrayal of black women as slaves in both the mainstream American history textbooks and in the African American history textbooks they studied. The corroboration of results between my study and other studies in history textbooks shows that black women are generally stereotyped, unlike their white counterparts, in economic exploitative activities as slaves in history. The fact that black women are stereotypically portrayed as slaves in history textbooks, not only in Malawi but also in Europe and America as evidenced by O’Kelly (1989) and Schocher and Woyshner (2013) respectively, makes this a global issue which raises questions as to why only black women are portrayed in this manner.

Furthermore, women as historical characters were also portrayed stereotypically as subjects of economic exploitation through their depiction as performing menial labour. As noted in chapters five and six, women were portrayed in wage employment circumstances as spinners of wool or cotton and in a job of picking cotton in a plantation. Although both black and white women were portrayed in menial jobs, differences still occurred between the two groups in that white women were depicted performing their labour in the industrial sector while black women were in the agricultural field. As menial jobs, these are lowly paid though labour intensive jobs which could entail exploitation. This finding corroborates with results of

other studies, both in history textbooks and textbooks of other subjects, who also found that women were mainly portrayed in menial jobs in the public sphere of employment. For instance, Zagumny and Pulsipher (2008) found that women were depicted doing menial labour such as cotton picking and factory work which are similar to the findings in the present study. Similarly, in their study of history textbooks, Schrader and Wotipka (2011) reported the portrayal of women in menial work as factory workers. My finding therefore resonates with results of other studies which show that women, regardless of race, are generally stereotyped in exploitative menial labour in the way they are portrayed in history textbooks which raises the curiosity to know the reasons for this situation.

The stereotypical portrayal of women in menial labour and as slaves could be explained as a reflection of the exploitation of women in the capitalist economy of the past as Marxist feminists have argued. Marxist feminists claim that women are exploited in the workplace for the maintenance of capitalism (Abbot et al, 2005; Bryson, 1999) and this is what is reflected in the textbooks under study through the use of either unpaid slave or cheap wage slave labour from women. However, in agreement with socialist feminists, the exploitation of women as historical characters in these textbooks is not only a result of capitalism as a source of oppressive power. It is rather a combination of both capitalism and patriarchy. From a patriarchal point of view, women are regarded as inferior and less capable in performing certain duties who can only perform in supportive roles. Consequently women are cast in unskilled menial labour which is exploited in the capitalist economy and are portrayed as such in the textbooks. Therefore, I would reason that the stereotypical portrayal of women in exploitative economic activities in junior secondary school history textbooks, as in other textbooks, is due to both capitalism and patriarchy as these forces of power are mutually related and reinforcing of one another in their oppression of women (Beasley, 1999, Weiner, 1994).

However, the depiction of the exploitation of women in the textbooks studied could also be understood beyond patriarchy and capitalism. Other forces of oppressive power also come into play. It was found that all women portrayed as slaves were black African women and for those portrayed in menial labour, white women were portrayed in the industrial economy as spinners while black African women were



depicted in the agricultural economy as for example cotton pickers. Although all are women, they experience capitalism and patriarchy differently. Therefore, in addition to capitalism and patriarchy, black women are portrayed as being economically exploited more than white women and are also stereotyped in terms of labour because of their race. This reflects black feminist arguments that black women unlike white women also suffer from race as an oppressive force of power (Amos & Parmar, 2001, hooks, 2001). Furthermore, the fact that it is African women who are exploited more concurs with African feminist claim that African women do not only suffer from patriarchy as a source of their oppression but recognise other forms of power such race and class which Arndt (2002) describe as oppressive mechanisms. I would here strongly argue that women in the junior secondary school history textbook studied are stereotyped in economic exploitative activities, not only because of capitalism and patriarchy, but also because of race.

Despite the fact that women were depicted participating in political activities, it was observed that they were for the most part stereotyped in subservient and supportive roles. This was noted in both the visual images and the verbal text particularly in Textbooks B and C. For instance, in Textbook B in one visual image, although two black women were depicted attending a political court meeting, they were stereotyped with limited or no contribution at the meeting. This is clear because of the limited number of women in the image as well as their positioning in the visual image. Although the women sat in the pavilion together with the king, and other important officials, they were positioned at the right hand side corner on the margin of the visual image (refer to Figure 5.12) away from the centre of activities. This stereotypes the women as historical characters who do not contribute much in political meetings.

Textbook C provided more evidence of women being stereotyped in political activities in the visual images. For instance, in one visual image, only two white women amidst the majority of men were depicted attending a Pan-African Conference (refer to Figure 5.22) The presence of only two women stereotypes women in general as people with little contribution in politics. Also, the women were stereotyped in a feminine role at the conference as they were depicted in a supportive role as secretaries who were taking minutes of the meeting. The women

were not shown as decision makers at the conference but in supportive role to the men who were shown in serious deliberations. In two other visual images, the majority of white women were depicted as spectators at a political function (Figure 5.23) and black women as followers and supporters while a man was shown as a leader in a celebration for the attainment of freedom and justice (Figure 5.24). These depictions stereotype women with passivity and subordinate role in terms of political involvement. References to women in supportive roles in politics were also noted in the verbal text in both Textbooks B and C. For example, in Textbook C it was mentioned that Nkrumah sought the support of market women in his political party. However, in both textbooks, it was black women who were stereotyped in supportive political roles. This clearly pigeonholes women as supporters in politics. I would consequently argue that although women are depicted in political activities in Textbooks B and C, they are largely stereotyped as people with limited contribution and as mainly supporters of men in politics.

In comparison with studies carried out in textbooks of other subjects, it was noted that none of the studies reviewed portrayed women in political activities. The absence of women in political activities on its own also stereotypes women as people who are not capable of political participation. Similarly, in studies executed in history textbooks, only the study by Schocker and Woysner (2013), indicated the depiction of some women as politicians. The remainder of the studies did not portray women as participants in political activities which also stereotypes women as innate actors in politics. However, Schocker and Woysner did not indicate whether those women portrayed as politicians were labelled in the roles assigned to them in politics or not. Therefore, my study adds to the literature by providing insight in women's participation in politics in history textbooks although in stereotypical roles and activities. The stereotypical portrayal of women in political activities in my study, and the absence of women in political roles in other studies, could be explained as a product of patriarchal stereotypes about women with regard to politics. Lerner (1993) argues that under patriarchy, men are political citizens while women are regarded as not capable of political participation. This therefore would explain why women in the textbooks I studied were portrayed in stereotypical supportive roles in the domain of politics and also why they are not portrayed in political activities in other studies.

In terms of character traits, it was found that women as historical actors were portrayed differently in the three textbooks. While in Textbook A women were stereotyped in their character traits, stereotyping was minimal in Textbooks B and C because women were depicted with characteristics associated with both women and men according to a patriarchal perspective. In Textbook A, women were portrayed as being thoughtful; patient; weak; vulnerable; submissive; obedient and powerless. All these characteristics, except for thoughtfulness, are generally associated with women, hence the conclusion that women as historical characters in Textbook A are stereotypically portrayed in their character traits. However, in Textbooks B and C stereotyping of the character traits of women as historical actors was minimal because women were portrayed with characteristics that are associated with both women and men. For instance, women in Textbook B women were portrayed as having the following characteristics as historical actors: leadership; diligence; authoritativeness; thoughtfulness; self-confidence; shyness, self-respect; dependence; respect for others and beauty and fashion. In textbook C women were shown with characteristics of diligence; self-confidence; leadership; adventurousness; passivity; loving and caring and sorrow and sympathy. I would therefore argue that overall in the three textbooks, women are portrayed with character traits that are both stereotypically associated with females and those that are considered male attributes.

These findings concur with results of some studies in textbooks of other subjects which also found that women were portrayed with characteristics that are associated with both females and males. For instance, in their study of Persian language elementary textbooks Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari (1991) concluded that women were portrayed with character traits that are stereotypical to females as well as those that are associated with men. However, only one example of the trait associated with men, rationality, was mentioned while the rest were not specified. Regueiro (2000) noted in a Spanish music textbook study that women were mostly stereotyped in terms of character traits except in one instance where they were depicted with the attribute of assertiveness. Regueiro indicated that women were portrayed with stereotypical traits as being sensitive, emotional, irrational, dishonest and unstable.

However, apart from the two studies cited above, my findings slightly deviate from the results of other studies. While I found that women were portrayed with both stereotypical female characteristics and character traits associated with men, other studies revealed that women were portrayed with only feminine characteristics. For instance, Ozdogru et al (2004) established that women, especially in the life sciences textbook analysed, were portrayed with traditional Turkish female attributes of being hardworking, loving, caring and involved in child-raising. Similarly, Lee and Collins (2009) found that women were shown with stereotypical feminine traits of caring and comforting in the textbooks they researched. Studies in history textbooks by O'Kelly (1983) and Schoeman (2009) also indicated the portrayal of women with stereotypical feminine traits. For instance O'Kelly (1983) noted that some women were portrayed mourning the death of Christ and others were fainting and crying while Schoeman (2009) observed that women were depicted as dependable, conforming and obedient.

What is apparent with these studies, including my own, is that despite continental, national and other differences, women are mostly portrayed with stereotypical female characteristics and on the odd occasion with traits not usually associated with women. Theoretically, according to Ozdogru et al (2004) and Regueiro (2000), such a portrayal fits with the patriarchal perception on the behaviour of women in society. Women attain such traits from an early age through the process of socialisation in the family, at school and the wider community (Bryson, 1999). Therefore, the findings in my study not only confirm other studies but are also a simple reflection of the reality of the behaviour of women in a patriarchal society such as Malawi where they are expected, and even forced, to behave in what is deemed a feminine way.

From the discussion presented in this section, I would argue that women are stereotyped in different ways in terms of the manner in which they are portrayed in terms of the roles and activities and in their character traits in the three junior secondary school history textbooks studied. Women are stereotyped in reproductive and domestic roles, as people with limited or no agency to initiate historical action, in exploitative economic activities as slaves and in menial labour, supportive political roles and in feminine characteristics. These findings largely confirm results of other studies globally which show that women's experiences in society, and the way they

are portrayed in textbooks, are not very dissimilar regardless of geographical and other differences where the textbooks are used. Theoretically, stereotyping of women in junior secondary school history textbooks has been explained as a reflection of a patriarchal perception of women in society. This explanation also holds as to why my findings correlate with results of other studies because patriarchy is a fundamental and universal form of male domination over women (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999, Bryson, 1999). Stereotyping of women was also due to capitalism, race and the African culture. However, it must be noted that a small number of women, from the limited number of women portrayed in the textbooks under study, were also portrayed in a positive light beyond stereotyping as exceptional historical characters. These exceptions will be discussed below.

### **7.5 Women as exceptional historical characters**

Although, for the most part, women were marginalised and stereotyped in the way they were portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks as discussed in the preceding sections, it was found that of the few women represented in these textbooks, a good number were portrayed as exceptional historical characters. These are women who were portrayed beyond stereotypical roles but as women with agency, capable of remarkable achievements and powerful in their own right socially, economically and politically. Since these women emerge from the general marginalised group portrayed in the textbooks, it is a small but powerful group that overshadows those women portrayed as ordinary who are numerically dominant. Such women were depicted in both the visual images and the verbal text, although the latter revealed more exceptional women than the former.

Some women were portrayed as exceptionally powerful leaders of their states and in politics. To begin with state leaders, it was observed that in each of the textbooks some women were portrayed as powerful and exceptional queens in their own right without any association with men. Although the position of queen is hereditary the queens who were mentioned in the verbal text, and one queen who was captioned in the visual image in Textbook B, were depicted as powerful rulers of their kingdoms or states who exercised their authority over their subjects without undue influence of men. This is why I describe such women as exceptions to the norm. For instance, Textbook A, mentioned Queen Elizabeth I of England and Queen Isabella of Spain.

Queen Elizabeth I was portrayed showing her power by promoting Francis Drake to the position of a knight and assuming the title of 'Sir' Francis Drake due to his being the first Englishman to circumnavigate the world. In a similar vein, Queen Isabella showed her authority by employing Christopher Columbus to embark on a voyage on behalf of Spain after Columbus pleaded with her. In Textbook B, Queen Victoria was referred to as Queen of Britain who even in her absence exerted power over her subjects as evidenced by John Speke's gesture to name a lake, he explored in Africa, Lake Victoria, after her. In addition, the visual images in Textbook B included the image of the mask of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut of Egypt. She was portrayed as a powerful queen as evidenced by the caption which described her as one of the great female pharaohs who ruled for 20 years. Textbook C also mentioned two queens, Queen Isabella of Aragon in Spain and Queen Elizabeth II of Britain, who were both portrayed as powerful rulers. Queen Isabella was portrayed with the same power as in textbook A whereby she employed Christopher Columbus to sail west and claim for Spain any lands he discovered. Queen Elizabeth II was shown in power as a colonial master who signed a bill into law for the independence of Ghana in 1957. I would therefore argue that these queens were truly portrayed as powerful rulers of their states and hence qualify to be described as 'exceptional historical characters'.

Furthermore, some women were portrayed as exceptional leaders in politics. Textbook A made reference to two women namely, Rose Chibambo who was described as one of the notable leaders of the NAC during the political struggles for independence in Malawi, and Gertrude Mongella who was mentioned as the President of the Pan-African Parliament and Head of State of the AU. Chibambo was the only woman in the NAC executive and Mongella was portrayed holding two powerful positions. Textbook C also made reference to Rose Chibambo as one of the leaders of the NAC who was responsible for organising the Women's League. Therefore, Chibambo and Mongella were depicted as powerful political leaders who are portrayed as exceptions to the norm in the way women generally are portrayed in the textbooks studied.

The portrayal of women as exceptional historical characters in leadership diverts slightly from the results of other studies, both in history and textbooks of other

subjects. Most of the studies reviewed showed women with little or no power in terms of leadership positions (Hanson, 1999; Hardin et al, 2006; Higgins & Shoar-Ghafari, 1991; Lee and Collins, 2009; Regueiro, 2000). It was only on rare occasions when women were depicted in power or as leaders in these studies. For instance, only one woman in an Australian English language textbook was portrayed as either a hero or villain (Lee & Collins, 2009) and in another study only four % of the sports leaders referred to in the text were women (Hardin et al, 2006). As regards history textbooks only two studies mentioned at least one woman as a leader. The study conducted by Osler (1994) revealed Queen Elizabeth I in such a role, and Schrader and Wotipka (2011), who identified Eleanor Roosevelt in their study. However, I would like to argue that the findings of my study confirm results of other studies because the women who are portrayed in historical leadership roles are a small minority in relation to those shown with no power and who are not even mentioned by name in the text.

Although the portrayal of women as exceptions in leadership seems to challenge patriarchal ideology which associates leadership with men and not women, I would argue that patriarchy still holds sway because the number of women portrayed in such positions is minute, even insignificant, in relation to the majority of women who are portrayed with no power in the same textbooks. However, the fact that more women are portrayed in power in the textbooks I studied than other studies signals a glimmer of change due to policies changes in Malawi as explained in chapter 1.

Some women were also portrayed as exceptional in roles other than politics. For instance, Harriet Beecher Stowe in Textbook A was portrayed as one of the leading abolitionists of slavery in America who through the publication of her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, publicised the evils of slavery. It was through the influence of her novel that many people in the USA took an active role in the campaign against slavery. Another woman, Mrs Baker mentioned in Textbook B, was portrayed as an explorer who came to Africa to explore the source of the Nile River. This portrays the two women as exceptional people because they are portrayed as misfits in their roles which are mostly associated with men. Furthermore, unlike other women who were depicted in exploitative economic activities, Khadija in Textbooks A and C was portrayed as an exceptional business woman. She was a successful rich business

woman who managed to employ extra labour, including Muhammad, to help run her trading enterprise. In addition, Agrippina in Textbook A was portrayed as an extraordinary woman because of her power to be able to change the course of history. Agrippina, who was the wife of Emperor Claudius, was so powerful that she organised the murder of her husband and managed to replace him with Nero, her son from her first husband. Such courage is unique to the behaviour of women as depicted in the textbooks under study.

In comparison with the literature reviewed, the portrayal of women in exceptional roles as found in my study resonates with other studies, both in history and textbooks of other fields. For instance, the study by Lee and Collins (2009) reported occasional portrayals of women as a weight-lifter, manager, film-maker, astronaut and boxer. Furthermore, Ozdogru et al (2004) revealed one woman who was depicted as a pharmacist in the visual images and Mayer (1989) noted the presence of one woman who was included in the 16 biographical sketches of geographers and other social scientists in one of the nine geography textbooks she studied. My finding also corroborates with results of studies in history textbooks by O'Kelly (1983) who noted few instances where women were portrayed in roles stereotypically associated with men such as leading soldiers to victory, farming and bartending and Schocker and Woysner (2013) who indicated the depiction of women as female artists and business owners. Therefore, what is clear from this discussion is that women in textbooks, can be portrayed in exceptional roles which are mostly associated with men, although only on rare occasions. Such a portrayal of women supports liberal feminist views that women are as capable as men and where they appear inferior, it is because of their upbringing and lack of education and not due to nature (Abbott et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). However, I would argue that the fact that only a few women are portrayed in exceptional roles in the textbooks studied still reflects a patriarchal view of the potential of women. Despite this, the portrayal of women in exceptional roles in history textbooks under study could be attributed to the slow impact of policy enactment by government to avoid gender role stereotyping in textbooks in Malawi.

Based on the discussion in this section, I would argue that although women are generally marginalised and stereotyped in their portrayal in the textbooks, some are



portrayed as exceptional historical characters in their roles and activities. Such women are portrayed as exceptional because they are shown as having more power and in roles and activities not commonly associated with females. This finding corroborates the results of other studies in history and textbooks of other subjects conducted in different countries in the world. However, I noted that women, not only in my study but in other studies, tended to be portrayed as exceptional historical characters in limited numbers. For this reason, the portrayal of women in such roles does not really pose a challenge to patriarchal perceptions about the potential of women because the majority of women still remain portrayed in stereotypical roles.

### **7.6 Conclusion on the portrayal of women in the textbooks studied**

I conclude this discussion chapter in two parts. In the first part I highlight the silences identified in the way women as historical characters are portrayed in the textbooks based on the discussion in the preceding sections. This is because the silences would reveal more about women as historical characters than what is visible about the women in the textbooks. Therefore, by identifying the silences I will be able to have a clearer picture on the portrayal of women as historical characters in the textbooks studied. In the second part of the conclusion, I emphasise the theoretical-philosophical explanation as to why women are portrayed in the way they are in junior secondary school history textbooks studied. This will bring to light an answer to the second research question in a specific way and lead to the thesis of the study.

According to radical feminists, women form a homogeneous category because they share the same sex (Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1992), an assumption which is refuted, amongst others, by black and African feminists. However, in this study I found that women are portrayed in a diverse manner due to many factors such as their social status, race and nationality which resonates with black and African feminists' beliefs of diversity and difference among women (Abbot et al, 2005; Kolawole, 2002). From the analysis in chapters five and six, it was found that a diversity of women were portrayed in the three textbooks ranging from goddesses; angels; priestesses; queens; politicians and an explorer to a wide range of nameless ordinary women in different capacities. This finding echoes results of other studies in history textbooks where women were also found to be represented diversely which confirms the

heterogeneous nature of women as a group. For instance, O'Kelly (1983) indicated the presence of diverse women in the works of art she analysed such as slaves; prostitutes; models; servants; peasants; wives; mothers and one woman who was shown as a leader. Similarly, Osler (1994) revealed women as witches; spinners; and dancers. I would therefore argue that women as historical characters in the textbooks studied, as in other history textbooks were portrayed diversely as they are not a homogeneous group (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999).

Despite the diverse representation of women in junior secondary school history textbooks studied, I identified some silences in the way women are portrayed in these textbooks. One of the major silences identified is a general silence on women as historical characters. It was noted that women as a collective group comprised a very small population of people represented as historical role players in the Malawian junior secondary school history textbooks. The under-representation of women in these textbooks was so serious that it obscured the visibility of women and tended to make them silent in the history covered in the textbooks. Furthermore, the silence on women was manifested through less frequent mentioning of the women in the text, superficial coverage of women in the verbal text in mere sentences, the exclusion of women in the tables of contents and topics and subtopics and also the exclusion of women from some themes. I would therefore argue that the junior secondary school history textbooks are largely a history of silence on women as legitimate historical characters.

As per the literature reviewed, this silence is not unique to the junior secondary school history textbooks studied but mirrors studies in history textbooks in other parts of the world. All the literature reviewed on studies executed in history textbooks revealed silences on women in one way or the other. For instance, Schrader and Wotipka (2011) found that textbooks on USA history published before the 1970s omitted women in World War II narratives and that only a few women were included in post-1976 history textbooks. Schoeman (2009), in a South African context, revealed that women were not represented much in roles and activities in relation to men. These two examples speak to the silences on women in terms of equitable representation with men. In addition, all the studies reviewed are replete with the under-representation of women in history textbooks. I would therefore reason that

the findings of my study confirm the silences on women as historical characters established in other studies.

Theoretically, the silences on women could be explained largely as a manifestation of patriarchal power over women in past societies and even in the present time. Due to patriarchal stereotypes, women have been denied participation in some activities which are deemed the domain of men. For this reason, one would not expect women to be equally represented with men in historical records of which textbooks are a by-product. Furthermore, patriarchy undermines the potential of women, disregards women and views them as inferior (Lerner, 1993, Bryson, 1999). Such an attitude would result in neglecting women in history and in history textbooks. For instance, it was noted that even in the visual images, which were mostly contemporary drawings aimed at reconstructing the past, women were still not equitably represented with men despite the calls for gender equality in textbooks in Malawi. This is because patriarchy becomes so embedded in the mental constructs and values of people that unequal treatment of women seems natural and becomes largely invisible (Abbot et al, 2005). I would therefore argue that the illustrators of the visual images reconstructed the past influenced by patriarchal thoughts about women inherent in their mental constructs. Since silences on women are not only a problem in the history textbooks I studied, but seem to be characteristic of all history textbooks as noted in the literature review, I would argue in agreement with radical feminists that patriarchy is indeed a universal and fundamental form of male domination over women. I would therefore strongly blame patriarchy as a root cause of the neglect and silence of women in history textbooks globally.

Although women as a collective were generally portrayed as silent historical characters in the junior secondary school history textbooks studied, I discovered that some women were more silent and invisible than others and this speaks to issues of class and position. Within the general group of women portrayed in the textbooks, I identified ordinary women as another silence in the textbooks as very little, and in some cases none at all is, mentioned about them in the text. The silence on ordinary women was identified or revealed through the foregrounding of famous women. It was found that most of the women mentioned and made reference to in the text were famous women either because of marriage to famous men or parenting famous sons

or through their own achievements. Examples of famous women mentioned in the text in the textbooks studied include Agrippina, wife of Emperor Claudius; Khadija, rich business woman and wife of Muhammad the prophet; Rhea Silvia, mother of Romulus and Remus, founders of Rome; the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ; Rose Chibambo, one of the notable leaders of the NAC and later MCP and Harriet Beecher Stowe, a leading abolitionist of slavery in the USA. The fact that only famous women were highlighted in the textbooks silenced ordinary women although they contributed in many ways in the past to their societies. I would therefore argue that the history presented in junior secondary school history textbooks celebrates famous women and silences ordinary women.

The tendency to mention only famous women in history is characteristic to many studies. For example, Muravyeva (2006) indicated that most of the women that were mentioned in the Russian textbooks she studied were influential and powerful women such as Princes Olga and Catherine the First, wife of Peter the Great. Similarly Commeyras and Alvermann (1996) found powerful women such as Catherine de Medici and Wu Chao as historical characters that were included in the textbooks they studied. I would therefore maintain that the finding of my study confirms results of other studies in history textbooks which trigger the curiosity as to why mostly famous women are highlighted in history in relation to ordinary women.

Certain possible explanations could be advanced to account for this tendency. Differences in social status could be one of the reasons. By virtue of being famous women, the latter belong to a higher social status and tend to be powerful while ordinary women belong to a lower social status and have less power. Therefore, fame and power enabled some women to impact history while those with less power were excluded. This echoes black and African feminist belief in diversity and differences among women which result in differential treatment. African feminists argue that women are not only oppressed because of gender but also because of their social class and other forces of power. Therefore ordinary women in general are silenced in the text because of their low social status.

I would also attribute the silencing of ordinary women in the text to one of the methods that was used in the historiography of women's history. This was the

'women worthies' (Lerner, 1975) approach, or sometimes called women of substance approach, in which feminist historians incorporated famous women in mainstream history alongside famous men. In the process ordinary women who did not achieve significantly in life were excluded from the historical record. Therefore, the history that is contained in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi might be a product of the women worthies approach to the writing of women's history. The problem might also be credited to mainstream historiography in that history was initially conceived as a record of achievers and therefore only those who were deemed to have achieved in life were included in historical record. Consequently, it was mostly men, and a few accomplished women, who were initially included in history. The majority of women were excluded as they did not make recognisable achievements because, due to patriarchy, they were not involved in most activities which constituted history. As a result, the history that is contained in the history textbooks studied might be a legacy of early mainstream historiography and women's historiography.

However, in the visual images an exception occurred when compared with the verbal text – this is the only and most obvious disjuncture between the visual and verbal text. This being that ordinary women featured highly. There were few famous women depicted in the visual images. Textbook A had only one visual image of the Greek goddess, Athena, Textbook B pharaoh Hatshepsut and two other visual images of Egyptian queens which were not captioned by name and Textbook C featured the Virgin Mary. The dominance of visual images of ordinary women in the textbooks could be attributed to the fact that most of the visuals were contemporary drawings meant to reconstruct the past. Therefore, the illustrators had the liberty to re-imagine the past where women were involved in different roles and activities. However, in a few visual images which were photographs, I noted that inclusion of women was incidental. The focus of the photographer was not necessarily on the women captured in the image but on men or other structures because in such visual images women are not foregrounded but nevertheless captured. For instance, in the visual image of the Pan-African Conference (Figure 5.22), the focus of the photographer was on the men discussing at the high table and not on the women (secretaries) taking down notes. Similarly in Figure 5.4 the focus of the photographer was on the

mosque and not on the woman and man walking to the mosque. Therefore the women in these two photographs were included incidentally.

The silence on women identified in the textbooks was most deafening pertaining to Malawian women who were seriously under-represented in the textbooks of their own country. It was established that in all the three textbooks Malawian women, in both the visual images and verbal text, were seriously under-represented. As pointed out in section 7.3 above, this finding is not supported by literature and therefore I would argue that it adds a new dimension to the existing literature on the portrayal of women in history textbooks. The silence on Malawian women could be attributed to the neglect of Malawian history in the textbooks studied. The textbooks mainly cover world history and not national history and would explain why there were only a few Malawian women in them. There was only one topic on the history of Malawi in each textbook and as such one would not expect more Malawian women to be featured.

The textbooks were also silent on the ability of women to perform certain roles although there were exceptions. What was most conspicuous in the textbooks was the portrayal of women as wives and mothers and in domestic roles. There were few occasions where women were depicted in exceptional roles that are not commonly associated with women as discussed in the previous section. This silence portrays women as being only successful in certain roles, particularly reproductive and domestic roles and not in others. In comparison to literature, this finding resonates with other studies where silence on the participation of women in masculine roles was also reported such as Lee and Collins (2009), Schoeman (2009) and O'Kelly (1983). This therefore shows that silence on the exceptional roles of women has been identified in many studies and my study serves to confirm this be it in a central African third world context.

From the discussion presented in this chapter, I would firmly argue that women are oppressed in different ways in the way they are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. This was evidenced by the fact that women were marginalised, stereotyped and silenced as historical characters in these textbooks. The oppression of women in the textbooks studied resonates with the portrayal of women in other textbook studies globally as revealed by the literature reviewed. This

therefore leads to the conclusion that women are generally oppressed in textbooks in different forms despite the differences in subject area and the geographical and national context where the textbooks are produced and used. Through the use of feminist theory, I established that patriarchy was the major factor in the oppression of women in junior secondary school history textbooks which also applies to other history textbooks because of the resonance of the findings. However, traces of other forms of oppressive forces such discriminatory customs and traditions, race, capitalism and African culture were also established as reasons for the oppression of women in junior secondary school history textbooks. Therefore, the findings of my study confirm feminist conclusions that women are oppressed because of gender, race and class. In the next chapter, I conclude my study.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## CONCLUDING THE STUDY

### 8.1 Introduction

In this study I set out to explore the portrayal of women in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. The study was guided by two key research questions namely: How are women portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi and; why are women portrayed in the way they are in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi? I presented the findings of the study in chapters five and six and discussed them, in relation to both research and theoretical literature covered, in chapter seven. In the process firm conclusions on the portrayal of women in the textbooks studied were reached. In this, the final chapter, I conclude the study by reflecting on the main findings in order to advance my thesis and suggest recommendations.

In order to logically conclude the study I have organised the final chapter into eight sections. I commence the conclusion with a summary and review of the study to reiterate how the findings and conclusions were reached. In the second section, I summarise the findings of the study by relating them to the research questions posed. This is followed by a reflection on the suitability and effectiveness of the methodology and methods used. In the fourth section I reflect on the study by explaining how undertaking this research has impacted on me as a researcher and educational practitioner. I then, in section five elucidate the implications of the study on policy, practice and further research. In sections six and seven, I highlight the contribution and the limitations of the study. Finally, in the last section, I conclude the chapter and the study by proffering my final reflections.

### 8.2 Summary and review of the study

This study was organised into eight chapters. Chapter one was an introduction to the study. In this chapter I provided the background and context in which I described the geographical location of Malawi as well as its social, economic and political situation



and the education system in the country. I also explained my position and biographical background as a researcher whereby I declared my feminist orientation and elucidated how I developed a political stance towards women's issues. Furthermore, I explained the rationale and motivation of the study and the process of textbook production and inclusion of women in textbooks in Malawi. It is also in this chapter where I highlighted the statement of the research problem, purpose and focus of the study and stated the research questions. Finally, I also gave a brief summary of the theoretical and conceptual framework and research design and methodology of the study to give a glimpse of how it was planned and conducted to answer the key questions posed.

In chapter two, I reviewed the literature related to my research topic. It was emphasised, among other reasons that the review of literature was carried out in order to locate a niche for my study and a platform for discussing the findings. Consequently I reviewed literature on the nature and role of history textbooks in which I discussed the major debates in the production of textbooks as well as their characteristics. It was highlighted that the politics surrounding textbook production determines the inclusion and portrayal of women and other social groups of people in the textbooks. In addition I reviewed literature on studies that were executed in various countries in history and textbooks of other subjects where I noted that despite the volume of these studies, very little or nothing at all had been instigated in textbook analysis in Africa outside of South Africa and in Malawi in particular. This created a gap for my study. From the review of studies on women in textbooks it was noted that women as historical characters tended to be under-represented, portrayed in traditional family roles as wives and mothers and in stereotypical feminine reproductive and domestic roles and so forth. These observations provided the arena for the discussion of the findings in chapter seven.

I continued the review of literature in chapter three. However in this chapter I reviewed literature on feminism in order to locate the study in its theoretical perspective. I used feminism to create the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study which was used to explain the portrayal of women which was the focus of my study. Six feminist perspectives were reviewed namely liberal, radical, Marxist, socialist, black and African feminisms. A bricolage framework created from these

feminisms was used to analyse the textbooks for their portrayal of women and theorise the findings.

In chapter four, I explained the research design and methodology used in the study in order to answer the research questions posed. I used a qualitative feminist research approach with a bias towards documentary or secondary data studies design with the textbooks as data sources. As a study that focused on women and employed feminist theory, some principles of feminist methodology were applied in the conduct of the research. Three methods were used to analyse the textbooks: content analysis, visual semiotics and open coding. The findings from this analysis were presented in chapters five and six.

In chapter five I reported on the findings of the analysis of the visual images from the three textbooks studied, while in chapter six I presented findings of the analysis of the verbal text. These findings were discussed in chapter seven. I discussed the findings by comparing them to research literature. The findings were also theorised by using feminist theory. From the discussion of the findings it was noted that most of the findings I reached confirmed the results of previous studies in different contexts. This indicated that the oppression of women in textbooks was not unique to the third world central African context of Malawi but that it is a global issue. However, the discussion also showed that there were some findings which enhanced the results of previous studies such as the marginalisation of Malawian women as historical characters. From the theorisation of the findings it was concluded that patriarchal power was the major factor that influenced the way women were portrayed in the textbooks studied. However, other forces of power such as Capitalism; race; African culture and discriminatory customs and traditions as found in Malawi have also contributed to the oppression of women as historical characters in the junior secondary school history textbooks studied. In addition historiography and minor changes due to policy enactment also helped to explain the portrayal of women in the textbooks. Finally in chapter eight I concluded the study.

This overview shows the process followed in order to answer the research questions which were the ultimate goal of the inquiry. In the next section I provide a final theoretical-philosophical overview of the research findings by relating them to the

research questions posed. The purpose of this is to demonstrate how adequately the study achieved its purpose.

### **8.3 Relating the findings to the research questions**

#### **8.3.1 Research Question One: How are women portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi?**

The study revealed various ways in which women were portrayed in the junior secondary school history textbooks studied. The women were marginalised, stereotyped, silenced and represented less as exceptional historical characters. I briefly summarise these findings in the proceeding paragraphs.

It was found that women were seriously marginalised in their portrayal in the junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. This marginalisation manifested itself in different ways. For instance, women were marginalised through under-representation in both the visual images and the verbal text in the textbooks. The under-representation of women as historical characters portrayed them as marginal to history. Women were also marginalised through them being far less frequently mentioned in the text than men. Marginalisation of women was also noted through their exclusion from the tables of contents and topics and subtopics in the verbal text. Consequently, women were superficially covered in the text because they were not represented as the subjects of the story. Furthermore, marginalisation manifested itself through the lack of depth in discussing women since they were mostly referred to in passing in a sentence or two and rarely in full-length paragraphs. This marginalised women as it portrayed them as people who contributed in a limited way to history. Women were also portrayed as marginal to history through their exclusion and lack of reference to them in some topics in the textbooks. This showed them as having a history in some topics and not in others which contradicts historical reality. In addition, women were marginalised by their not being depicted on their own in the visual images as individuals, in groups or pairs while there were many such visual images of men in all three textbooks studied. Such a portrayal marginalised women as it denied them agency as historical actors who could initiate events in the past.

The marginalisation of women in textbooks is not unique to my study. It is supported to a great extent by the literature from other studies, both in history and textbooks of other subjects. This therefore confirms that the marginalisation of women in textbooks is a universal problem which needs to be addressed, not only in Malawi, but across the globe in order to attain equitable portrayal of women and men in textbooks.

Stereotyping of women was another of the findings that emerged in response to the first research question. It was found that women, as historical figures, were stereotyped in different ways. One of the ways in which stereotyping manifested itself was through the portrayal of women as wives and mothers which was noted in all the textbooks in both the visual images and verbal text. These are the roles which are common to women in most societies since most women are expected to marry and bear children. Therefore, portraying women as wives and mothers stereotyped them in traditional and reproductive roles according to societal expectation. Related to this, women were also stereotyped by being shown in domestic roles particularly in Textbooks A and B. Women were shown in domestic roles in these textbooks in both the visual images and the verbal text. As with reproductive activities, domestic roles are regarded as the responsibility of women in society because of their nurturing role.

Further stereotyping of women was noted in their portrayal in group visual images together with men and mentioning them in the text by dint of their marital or parental relationship with famous men. This was evidenced in all three textbooks. Such a portrayal stereotypes women in history as people who are not capable of initiating historical action and achieving fame on their own but depended on men for their historical endeavours and recognition. It also stereotypes women as not being capable of any significant act other than being wives and mothers. Women were also portrayed in a stereotypical manner depicting them in exploitative economic activities in both the visual images and the verbal text in the three textbooks studied. This was evidenced through the portrayal of women as slaves and in menial labour which stereotyped them as mostly being economically capable in exploitative capacities only. Furthermore, women were stereotyped by portraying them in subservient and supportive roles in political activities which was observed in both the visual images

and the verbal text in Textbooks B and C. It was found that in the visual images where women were depicted in political activities, women were shown in passive and supportive roles such as secretaries. This stereotyped women as mainly supporters of men in politics. Stereotyping was also evident in the character traits attributed to women. In all three textbooks studied women were stereotyped with characteristics associated with females, be it in varying degrees. While stereotyping was very serious in Textbook A, it was less so in Textbooks B and C because here women were also shown with characteristics which in a patriarchal order are associated with men. The evidence as abridged in this section clearly shows that women in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi are seriously stereotyped in their portrayal in roles and activities as well as character traits.

Except in one instance, the stereotypical portrayal of women in my study resonates with the literature of both the history and textbooks of other subjects. Again this indicates a global issue in education. There is need therefore for a change in such a portrayal of women in textbooks because learners who are the users of the textbooks might be influenced to believe these stereotypes leading to their perpetuation. This is the case since textbooks are authoritative in nature (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Nicholls, 2006b).

Although women were for the most part marginalised and stereotyped in their portrayal in the junior secondary school history textbooks analysed, it was found that some were portrayed as exceptional historical characters. Such women, although few in number, were portrayed in activities beyond the stereotypical reproductive and domestic roles generally attributed to women in the books. The women categorised as exceptional historical characters were portrayed with power, agency and the ability to achieve outstanding accomplishments on their own with little or no association with men. Some of these women were portrayed as powerful state leaders such as Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt, Queen Isabella of Spain and Queen Elizabeth I of Britain, while others as powerful political leaders such as Rose Chibambo, who was one of the notable leaders of the NAC and later MCP and Gertrude Mongella, President of the Pan-African Parliament and Head of State of the AU. Furthermore, some women were portrayed in roles outside state and political leadership; for example, Harriet Beecher Stowe who was depicted as a leading

abolitionist through the publication of her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* which publicised the evils of slavery. Other women were Khadija who was portrayed as a rich and successful business lady; Mrs. Baker, who was shown as an explorer and Agrippina who was portrayed with agency and power to influence the course of history by organising the assassination of her husband, Emperor Claudius and replacing him with her son, Nero, from her first husband. I would argue, based on these examples that some attempt was made to portray women, although few in number, as exceptional historical characters amidst the general group of marginalised and stereotyped women in Malawian junior secondary school history textbooks studied.

It was found that the portrayal of women as exceptional historical characters in leadership and other roles as found in my study resonates with the findings of other studies in history as well as textbooks of other subjects. What is striking is that in all these studies, including my own, women are portrayed in exceptional roles in miniscule numbers which portrays the majority of women as not being capable of achieving outstanding accomplishments. This therefore sounds an alarm for change to include more women in exceptional roles in textbooks, not only in Malawi but across the globe in order to challenge stereotypes about the potential and capability of women in the past.

Another major finding of the study was the silence in general in the way women are portrayed in the textbooks studied. Although women were portrayed diversely, ranging from queens to slaves, I identified clear silences in the way women were portrayed in the history textbooks studied. The silences manifested themselves in a general as well as in specific ways. Generally I found that there was enormous silence on women as a collective group. It was found that women comprised a very small population of the people represented as historical role players in the Malawian junior secondary school history textbooks. The women were seriously under-represented in these textbooks to the extent that their visibility was obscured and rendered them silent in the history covered in the text. This silence was exacerbated by the fact that the women were less frequently mentioned in the text, excluded from the tables of contents and topics and subtopics in the verbal text as well as referred to in passing in the text mostly in a sentence or two. Therefore, what is contained in the history textbooks can best be described as a history of silence on women.

Besides the silence on women in general, I also found that ordinary women were silenced in these textbooks as very little was mentioned about them in the verbal text. It was mostly famous women such as wives and mothers of important men, women in leadership positions and accomplished women who were foregrounded in the text. The fact that only famous women were highlighted silenced ordinary women who, although they contributed in the past, did not have their contributions recognised. Similarly Malawian women were silenced despite the fact that the textbooks were produced in their own country. It was established that Malawian women comprised a negligible population of the women contained in the three textbooks which portrays Malawian women as being almost non-existent in history. The textbooks were also silent on the ability of women to perform certain roles although some exceptions were noted. This portrayed women as being capable only in certain roles particularly reproductive and domestic roles and not others. This is because only a handful of women were portrayed in exceptional roles and activities while the majority were cast in traditional roles.

With the exception of the silence on Malawian women, the other silences on women are supported by other studies both in history and textbooks of other subjects. This shows that silencing of women as participants in history is a common problem in most textbooks. In terms of history textbooks, the silences on women obscure the experiences of women in the past which imply that they do not have a history. There is therefore a need to break the silence on women in history textbooks by portraying them equitably to men as participants in past historical events.

The summary of findings presented above shows that women are marginalised, stereotyped and silenced in the way they are portrayed in the Malawian junior secondary school history textbooks studied and very few were portrayed as exceptional historical characters. According to feminists, this sort of portrayal whereby women are marginalised, stereotyped and silenced with only a few being recognised as exceptional historical characters entails oppression. I would therefore strongly argue, from a feminist perspective, that women in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi are oppressed in the way they are portrayed as historical characters. This conclusion raises a question as to why women are portrayed in an

oppressed manner in these textbooks. It is to this question that I now turn in the next section.

### **8.3.2 Research Question 2: Why are women portrayed in the way they are in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi?**

In the summary of findings for the first research question presented above, I pointed out that women are marginalised; stereotyped; silenced and very few are shown as exceptional historical characters. I also emphasised that this sort of portrayal of women signifies oppression. In this section, I provide a theoretical and philosophical explanation as to why women are marginalised, stereotyped, silenced and less represented as exceptional historical characters – in other words why women are oppressed in these textbooks.

I would argue that one of the major reasons for the oppression of women in junior secondary school history textbooks is patriarchy. It was established in the discussion of findings that patriarchy was behind marginalisation; stereotyping; silencing and under-representation of women as historical characters. Furthermore, it was noted that in almost every manifestation of marginalisation; stereotyping; silencing and the limited representation of women in exceptional roles, the workings or operations of patriarchy were inherent or underlying in it. This is because patriarchy permeates all aspects of life, is hegemonic and systemic and operates structurally in all institutions of social life as well as in values and thoughts and becomes invisible and unnoticeable and hence the norm (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Bryson, 1999). In addition, the patriarchal view believes that women and men are different; and views women as naturally weak, inferior, less capable, irrational, incapable of political participation, subordinate and nurturers while men are strong, superior, capable, rational, political citizens and leaders.

It is these beliefs of patriarchy which were, in my view, responsible for the different manifestations of marginalisation, stereotyping, silencing and limited representation of women in exceptional roles as was elaborated in the discussion. For instance, it was the patriarchal belief that women are nurturers and created for reproduction which influenced the portrayal of women as wives and mothers and in domestic roles because these are the roles in which women have contributed most in history and



still continue to do so. Patriarchal perceptions of women as less capable also rendered women to not be involved in many activities of the past with the result that women are seldom included in history which permeates the textbooks. Consequently, women are not included in the tables of contents, topics and subtopics in the verbal text and are only included superficially in the text mostly in a sentence or two. This is because women did not initiate historical action and where they did their roles were down-played; therefore, could not be highlighted and discussed at depth in historical record and this is what is reflected in the textbooks. It is also because of the patriarchal view of women as subordinates and being incapable of political participation that few women were portrayed in leadership roles and women were stereotyped as supporters, spectators and secretaries in political activities. In short, women were marginalised, stereotyped, silenced and represented less in exceptional roles in accordance with patriarchal views and perceptions of women. Thus women are oppressed in their portrayal in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi mainly because of patriarchy.

Although all women were oppressed because of patriarchy, I found that other groups of women were oppressed further due to race and a lack of social status. This is because, as black and African feminists argue, women are not a homogeneous group and therefore experience oppression in different ways (Abbot et al, 2005; Beasley, 1999; Kolawole, 2002). Therefore, it was found that black women were marginalised and stereotyped differently from white women. For instance, I found that black women were stereotypically linked to slavery unlike white women who were never depicted as slaves in the textbooks. In addition, white women were portrayed in menial jobs in industry more than black women who were cast into menial jobs in the agricultural field. Therefore, I would argue that there were differences in the way black and white women were depicted as being oppressed, with the former being subjected to very different oppression than the latter. This confirms the black feminist argument that black women are oppressed not only because of patriarchy but also because of race (Amos & Parmar, 2001; hooks, 2001).

Furthermore I found that ordinary women were portrayed differently from famous women. While famous women were mentioned and made reference to in the text,

little attention was paid to ordinary women and they were largely marginalised and silenced. The difference in their portrayal was due to social status. Famous women were made visible because of their high status while ordinary women were portrayed as invisible because of their low social status. Therefore, besides patriarchy, race and social status contribute to the oppression of women in the textbooks studied.

It was established in the previous chapter that one of the ways in which women were stereotyped was their portrayal in exploitative economic activities as slaves and in performing menial labour. Theoretically, the major reason for this sort of portrayal is because of an intersection between Capitalism and patriarchy. Marxist feminists argue that women are exploited in the labour market for the sustenance of Capitalism (Abbot et al, 2005; Bryson, 1999) and this is what was reflected in the textbooks studied through the portrayal of women in unpaid slave labour and cheap wage labour. However, in accordance with socialist feminists' argument, the exploitation of women in these textbooks was due to a combination of Capitalism and patriarchy as these forces of power are mutually interrelated and reinforcing of one another in their oppression of women (Beasley, 1999; Weiner, 1994). However, race also played a role in the exploitation of women as black and white women were exploited differently as historical characters in the text. Although the three oppressive forces were interwoven, Capitalism was the major factor for the portrayal of women in exploitative economic activities in the textbooks studied.

It was noted in the discussion chapter that both mainstream historiography and women's historiography played a role in the marginalisation and silencing of women in the verbal text. The way history as a subject was conceived as a discipline initially largely excluded women. This is because the subject was originally conceived as a record of achievers. As a result it was mostly men and a few accomplished women who were initially included in history. Furthermore, historians did not consider those topics that dealt with issues of women as important in the selection of subject matter for the subject and where such issues were mentioned, they were downplayed. Even though feminist historians began to include women in history, marginalisation of women still continued because of the approaches they used. Consequently women were still in most cases excluded and in other instances included in a compensatory manner in the already existing mainstream history which was male dominated. As a

result not much was included about women in mainstream history which is also reflected in the textbooks studied. I would therefore argue that the marginalisation of women in the textbooks studied reflect the legacy of early mainstream historiography as well as women's historiography.

Furthermore, it was found that Malawian women were seriously marginalised in the history textbooks analysed despite the fact that those textbooks are a product of Malawi for use in that country. The major reason for this problem is the lack of national history in the curriculum and hence the textbooks. I found that the textbooks studied did not deal with the history of Malawi but rather dealt with world history. In each of the textbooks, there was only one topic dealing with the history of Malawi. As such one could not expect Malawian women to be included in large numbers in textbooks which are dominated by world history. This is in itself a commentary, not only on Malawian women in history, but on how Malawi views its own history in general.

The social and political context in Malawi prior and during the time the textbooks were produced also had a major influence on why women are shown in the way they are. Socially, economically and politically women were, in the past, marginalised in most aspects of development and only under the new democratic government were aims expressed at achieving gender equality, granting equal opportunities to both women and men and ensuring female empowerment. Initiatives therefore were being taken to this effect by both government and NGOs. To this effect, the Ministry of Education was mandated to ensure gender sensitivity in the curriculum and textbooks, to avoid gender stereotypes in roles and activities and reflect women in a positive light in the curriculum and textbooks and other instructional materials. This might explain why in the textbooks studied women were portrayed in group visual images together with men, as an attempt was made to include women although they were under-represented and not discussed at depth and why some few women were depicted as exceptional historical characters in the roles and activities they were portrayed. Therefore, I would argue that the textbooks reflect some change, although extremely limited in nature and bordering on tokenism, in the way they portray women due to policy enactment that is propelled by the global feminist trend.

However, there is still much to be done in these textbooks because women are deeply oppressed in the way they are portrayed as historical characters.

The political and economic nature of textbooks could also be used to explain why women were marginalised in the textbooks studied. Since selection of subject matter for inclusion in textbooks is a highly political exercise, it is knowledge of the powerful group that dominates in the textbooks while the less powerful group are included only in passing through mere mentioning (Apple, 1991). This explains why women as a less powerful group in relation to the patriarchal power of men are marginalised in junior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi. Malawi is, after all, a deeply conservative and traditional society which is deeply rooted in patriarchal practices and as previously argued textbooks are a mirror of the country that produces them (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Foster & Crawford, 2006).

Furthermore, for example, it was noted that women were portrayed mostly in group visual images together with men which among other factors could be attributed to the economic nature of textbooks. Publishers may have made attempts to ensure gender equality in the visual images to ensure that their textbooks are approved for use in schools as this would entail huge profit. Due to the power of images, gender sensitivity or insensitivity would be more conspicuous in the visual images than the verbal text. Therefore, to secure a place in the list of approved textbooks, publishers made an attempt where it would be most noticeable during the process of scrutiny to ensure gender sensitivity in the illustration of the visual images by re-imagining the past where both women and men contributed to history. However, such an attempt was not made in the text at all as the afore-mentioned argument illustrates.

From the above, it can be argued that there is no one specific theoretical-philosophical positioning that could explain the oppression of women as historical characters in junior secondary school history textbooks in Malawi. Rather women are oppressed through marginalisation, stereotyping, silencing and little representation as exceptional historical characters because of a combination of factors which operate in varying degrees. However, patriarchy plays a major role and is intricately and intrinsically interwoven in all the aforementioned forms of oppression of women found in this study. I would therefore argue that women are oppressed in their

portrayal in the textbooks studied largely because of patriarchy and its manifestations.

#### **8.4 Methodological reflections on the study**

In this section I evaluate and reflect on the methodology and methods used in this study to address the research questions. Firstly, I want to acknowledge the fact that conducting research in textbooks was not an easy undertaking for me because this was my first encounter with such research. In addition to being my first exposure to textbook research, the latter proved to be a significant challenge especially because, as Nicholls (2003) points out, methodologies and methods for textbook analysis are not well developed and described in the literature. However from my wide reading of the methods of textbook analysis, I managed to use content analysis, visual semiotics and open coding to conduct the research. A combination of these methods effectively enabled me to address the research questions particularly the first question on how women are portrayed in junior secondary school history textbooks. However, it was through discussion of the findings for the first question in relation to literature and theory that the second research question was addressed, that is reasons why women were portrayed in that way. I would therefore strongly argue that the methods used in this study proved to be suitable and effective.

Despite their effectiveness, I found these methods of analysis, particularly quantitative content analysis of the visual images and verbal text and visual semiotic analysis to be very challenging. As indicated in chapter four, reading through the text of each of the three textbooks to identify and code data for each of the set categories for both the visual images and verbal text was laborious and time consuming. While some researchers hire research assistants to help with the coding when they use quantitative content analysis, I conducted all the work myself as I wanted to do the analysis on my own to develop the skill and familiarise myself with the process through hands on experience. With this skill and knowledge, I will be able to train coders in future to help me with similar analysis. Another advantage I noted in the course of the analysis was that I was able to gain some insights of the ultimate likely conclusions to be reached.

As regards visual semiotics, the challenge was identifying the signifiers and the signified and to initiate a sensible meaning. This was particularly so because with visual semiotics, interpretation of meaning is context-specific and depends on the experience and knowledge of the researcher. The problem I grappled with concerned which context to use to interpret meaning of the historical figure being analysed, the Malawian culture or the culture of the character under study. For example, the posture of looking down means different things in different cultures - it can either mean shyness or consent and or thoughtfulness depending on the cultural context. In the end, I interpreted the signifiers using my cultural knowledge and context based on my position as a researcher as explained in chapter 1. My rationale for doing so was that since the textbooks were produced and used in Malawi, the visual images were selected to be relevant to Malawian meanings. Therefore, if an image of a woman was depicted, for example, looking down whilst alone or in a group visual image, this to me signified thoughtfulness because of my cultural knowledge. It would also mean something else if the woman shown looking down was talking to a man. However, not all signifiers were difficult to interpret; others were straightforward and unambiguous. After extrapolating the meanings, I then had to code the data into categories and themes which makes the process of visual semiotic analysis challenging and laborious. Nevertheless, I found the method useful and enriching for my study as it supplemented findings from visual content analysis.

### **8.5 Personal-professional reflections on the study**

Experiencing this study on textbook analysis on the portrayal of women in history textbooks has been useful to me both personally and professionally. At a personal level, the study has addressed my unanswered questions which I have had since my primary school education. As I explained in the rationale and motivation of this study in chapter one, I had always wondered why few women were included in history and for those that were mentioned it was their “bad” side which was highlighted and in addition, they were also mainly portrayed as wives and mothers. However, through engagement with this study my curiosity has been satisfied for I have not only found some answers as to why women are with some exceptions marginalised and stereotyped but have also come to understand the power of patriarchy in determining the fate of women in textbooks and the society as a whole. Therefore, through doing this study I would argue that the situation of women in society and their portrayal in

the cultural artefacts (i.e. textbooks) can improve if there is a change in the patriarchal mind-set of the people in power and who produce the books, both men and women, as this, in my opinion, is one of the root cause of the problems facing women and their portrayal as historical characters in textbooks.

Professionally, this study has broadened my research knowledge for my previous research experience was interactive field research involving interviews as well as historical research which entailed the study of archival sources. However, through this study, I have been thoroughly exposed to textbook research and different methods of experiencing textbook analysis which has broadened my knowledge of research. In addition, the study exposed me to the knowledge of the nature and role of textbooks and history textbooks respectively.

### **8.6 Implications of the study**

In this section I discuss the implications of the study on policy and practice and further research. The implications are based on the findings as discussed in chapter seven and summarised in section 8.3 above. I begin with implications on policy and practice and end with those for further study.

It was found in this study that women are marginalised in different ways in the way they are portrayed in the Malawian junior secondary school history textbooks studied. I recommend therefore that the marginalisation of women in its various manifestations needs to be addressed in order to improve the portrayal of women in future history textbooks in Malawi. For instance, it was established that women were under-represented in the textbooks both in the visual images and verbal text. Furthermore, it was found out that women were included superficially in the verbal text mostly in a sentence or two and rarely in full-length paragraphs, excluded from the tables of contents and topics and sub-topics in the verbal text. These findings have implications for the need for increased representation and detailed coverage of historical experiences of women in the textbooks. However, this has to start at the level of curriculum development where selection of content for the subject is analysed as textbooks in Malawi are produced in response to the syllabi. Therefore the Ministry of Education through its curriculum development unit, the MIE needs to train personnel on the issue of gender and who will subsequently be able to develop

curricula that ensure equal representation of and detailed discussion of historical experiences of both women and men. This will entail careful selection of history topics which highlight roles and activities or experiences of both women and men. Once the curriculum incorporates more topics on women just like those on men, the textbooks will obviously follow suit because publishers will want to ensure a market for their materials to make a profit which is their primary goal for publishing textbooks (Apple, 1991; Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991).

Although there is a policy on ensuring gender sensitivity in the curricula and school textbooks as explained in chapter one, there is a need for political will to execute it because what was found in this study reflects very little of the policy being implemented in the textbooks. In the case of history the policy needs to emphasise a balance in the selection of subject matter for history for both women's and men's historical experiences. Such a policy will compel history curriculum developers to be rigorous in the process of selecting subject matter for the subject to ensure that they cater for women and men equally. In this way equal representation of and reference to women and men in the curriculum will be ensured. Consequently textbooks as interpretations of the curriculum would likely manifest the same pattern. Publishers would consequently include topics and subtopics on women's issues in the tables of contents and the narrative text, mention and refer to women in an equitable manner to men in the text and depict more women in the visual images. In this way marginalisation of women in the textbooks would be reduced. The competition to ensure their textbooks are approved by the Ministry of Education upon satisfactory fulfilment of the requirements of the curriculum would compel publishers to adhere to the requirements in the curriculum. There is also a need for strict evaluation measures to be instigated by the Ministry of Education to ensure that publishers meet the gender sensitivity requirement in the curriculum.

Stereotyping of women in the roles and activities as established in this study also needs to be addressed in future history textbooks. Although the policy on removing gender role stereotyping in textbooks exists as emphasised in chapter one, the finding in this study reveals that its implementation in history textbooks is still distant. For instance, women were still dominantly portrayed in stereotypical roles as wives and mothers and in domestic roles which reflect patriarchal definition of the roles of



women. These findings have the implication of perpetuating the patriarchal status quo in society which can be counterproductive to women's development in the long term. I therefore suggest that the Ministry of Education should initiate strict measures to ensure that gender role stereotyping is addressed in textbooks and this should start at the level of curriculum development. Curriculum developers who should comprise a team of both men and women should be strictly mandated to select subject matter on women that does not portray them almost exclusively in stereotypical traditional roles. Evaluation procedures should ensure that publishers abide to such curriculum specifications. However, this does not mean neglecting the roles of women as wives and mothers and in the domestic sphere as that would be denying historical reality. Although the findings showed evidence of a few women in exceptional roles, there is a need for increased inclusion of such women in textbooks. In a developing country such as Malawi, women need to be portrayed more in these roles than in stereotypical traditional feminine roles. There is much history that has been produced on women's achievements which curriculum developers and textbook producers can access. Therefore, the policy of removing gender role stereotyping in textbooks should be re-emphasised and reinforced particularly for history textbooks. History curriculum developers and textbook producers need to be reminded of the policy against gender role stereotyping during curriculum review and revision and textbook production.

Reviewing the visual images, it was also noted that women were portrayed mostly in group visual images together with men which is a move towards gender equality in the visual images. However, two observations have implications for textbook publishers. Firstly, the fact that most of the group visual images represented more men than women indicates a need for publishers to ensure equal representation of women and men in the visual images. This could be effected by having some visual images with equal representation of men and women, some with more representation of women than men and others with more representation of men than women. I am aware of the fact that some of the visual images may be photographs where publishers cannot do anything to change the reality of the past but such photographs can be supplemented by visual images that are produced or illustrated by the publishers themselves. Secondly, there is a need for publishers to include more visual images of women on their own either in groups, pairs or individuals as

this will show the capability and agency of historical women. Portraying women mostly in group visual images would send a wrong message to learners that the former did not have the agency and capability to initiate actions on their own but that they relied on men. Some of the visual images that could be used are available in the archives and only need the ingenuity of the publishers for their retrieval.

Bearing in mind the lack of national history in the textbooks studied, I would recommend that the government, through the Ministry of Education, review the history curriculum and ensure that what is taught, particularly at junior secondary school level, includes substantial components on the history of Malawi. Such a curriculum should also incorporate the experiences of both women and men of Malawi. In this way the serious marginalisation of Malawian women in future history textbooks might be avoided because the publishers would likely respond to the topics stipulated in the curriculum.

### **8.6.1 Implications for further research**

It was noted in chapter 1 that the study concerned itself solely with women at the expense of their relation with men. The latter were mentioned only to justify the representation of women. Consequently, we do not know much about how the women are portrayed in relation to men. Further research therefore could be conducted on the analysis of gender portrayal in these textbooks to find out how females are portrayed in relation to males as historical characters.

This study was also limited in its scope to cover only junior secondary school history textbooks. Consequently our knowledge of how women are portrayed in secondary school history textbooks is limited to this level at the expense of the senior level. Further research therefore needs to be conducted on senior secondary school history textbooks to explore how these textbooks portray women. This would present a holistic picture of how secondary school history textbooks in Malawi portray women.

Furthermore, as this study dealt only with history textbooks, further research could be conducted on textbooks of other subjects in Malawi such as English, physical

science and agriculture to discover how women are portrayed in those textbooks and establish reasons for their portrayal.

In conclusion I would like to think that this study is hopefully just the beginning of many studies that could be conducted on history and textbooks of other subjects in Malawi. Should such studies come to fruition it would reduce the novelty of textbook research in Malawi.

### **8.7 Contribution of the study**

In my view this study has added some knowledge to the existing body of literature on the portrayal of women in school textbooks. However, I do not claim to have produced totally new knowledge about how women are portrayed in history textbooks or textbooks in general but new insights were promulgated.

It was noted from the literature reviewed that most of the studies in history textbooks were conducted in the USA and Europe (see for example, Cains & Inglis, 1989; Chick, 2006; Commeyras & Alvermann, 1996; Osler, 1994) and some in Asia like Taiwan (Su, 2007) and Russia (Muravyeva, 2006) and others in Africa, most particularly in South Africa (Fardon & Schoeman, 2010; Schoeman, 2009). Studies in textbooks of other subjects showed a similar pattern. Consequently, the African context is poorly represented in terms of studies conducted in history textbooks as well as other textbooks. As for Malawi; no study in history textbooks, as far as I know, has previously been conducted. This study therefore contributes to the knowledge on the portrayal of women in history textbooks from a contextual position not previously researched. This in itself is a major contribution to the existing body of knowledge, not only in terms of the portrayal of women in history textbooks, but to textbook research in general.

It was established from the discussion of the findings that the results of this study mostly confirmed those of previous studies both in history and textbooks of other subjects. Specifically it was noted that marginalisation, stereotyping and silencing of women, as well as the limited representation of women as exceptional historical characters as found in my study, correlated positively with the results of other studies conducted in different parts of the world (see for example, Chick, 2006; Fardon &

Schoeman, 2010; Fournier & Wineburg, 1997; Frederickson, 2004; O'Kelly, 1983; Osler, 1994; Schocker & Woyshner, 2013; Schoeman, 2009; Schrader & Wotpika, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 1991; Su, 2007). In confirming the findings of previous studies from a different geopolitical position which have not been previously researched, my conclusions add new knowledge to our existing understanding of the portrayal of women in textbooks and more specifically history textbooks.

However, it must be emphasised that my study did deviate from the existing literature in some ways. For instance, less frequent mentioning of women in the verbal text and marginalisation of Malawian women as findings were not fully supported by the literature reviewed. These findings therefore contribute new knowledge to literature on the portrayal of women in history textbooks. Furthermore, although the portrayal of women as exceptional historical characters was supported by some literature, I noted that there were differences between my study and previous studies. Whilst most of the studies did not indicate the portrayal of women as leaders (see for example, Hanson, 1999; Higgins & Shoar-Ghaffari, 1991; Lee & Collins, 2009), this study established the depiction of women in a wide variety of leadership positions. Women in this study were shown as religious leaders (priestesses), political leaders, state leaders and spiritual leaders (goddesses) which is a new contribution of knowledge to the existing literature. Only on two occasions were women shown, in the literature that I reviewed, as leaders in previous studies on history textbooks (Osler, 1994; Shrader & Wotpika, 2011) and one instance in textbooks of other subjects (Hardin et al, 2006).

### **8.8 Limitations of the study**

According to Marshall and Rossman (2006), all studies have limitations which may originate from the research design or the conceptual framework. My study is no exception and it too had its own limitations. One of the limitations of the study concerned the sample. I was limited in terms of the choice, number and level of textbooks to be studied. I analysed three textbooks used at junior secondary school level and the textbooks were produced by only two publishers because these were the only textbooks that were produced in response to the new curriculum. The implication of the limited sample on my study was that the results of the study could not be generalised to senior secondary school history textbooks used in Malawi

because such textbooks were not represented in the sample. However, since the study is qualitative in nature which does not aim at generalising, the conclusions drawn only apply to the three textbooks analysed as the sample was representative of itself and not of a repertoire of secondary school history textbooks in Malawi (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2011; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Sarantakos, 2005).

Another limitation of the study was that it relied only on the analysis of textbooks without involving women through interviews. As a result, interpretations made and conclusions drawn were only those of me as the researcher which were influenced by my position as explained in chapter 1. However, this limitation was not a large problem to this study as feminist research is biased and value-laden research (Cohen et al., 2011).

As a qualitative study, it is not immune from some of the limitations of qualitative research. One of the limitations of qualitative research is that its results cannot be generalised to other contexts because the findings are applicable to the specified sample (Christensen et al, 2011). Therefore my study was limited in the sense that its results could not be generalised to other future history textbooks at junior secondary school level.

## **8.9 Conclusion and final reflections**

The aim of this chapter was to conclude the study by reflecting on the process of the research project, drawing conclusions on the research findings, analysing its implications for policy and practice and suggesting areas or possibilities for further research. To bring the study to closure this conclusion was presented in eight major sections.

In the first section I summarised and reviewed the study through a brief synopsis of what is covered in each of the eight chapters of this thesis. This was carried out in order to show how the findings were arrived at. I then summarised the findings by relating them to each of the research questions to show how adequately the study achieved its purpose. In the third and fourth sections, I reflected on the effectiveness of the methodology and its methods in addressing the research questions and the

influence of the study on my personal-professional growth as a woman and an academic and researcher. This was followed by a discussion of the implication of the study on policy and practice and further research in section five. In sections six and seven I highlighted the contributions and limitations of the study while in this last section, I present a summary of the chapter and make a final reflection.

Based on the findings of this study and results of previous studies on history textbooks, it could be argued that the portrayal of women in textbooks is determined by a complex of factors such as the social and political context of the nation, patriarchy, historiography and the nature of textbooks. However, out of all these factors, patriarchy plays the most dominant role. I make this argument because patriarchy by its nature is inherent in all these factors. It is patriarchal beliefs which have, consciously or unconsciously, influenced historiographers to ignore women in history. A similar trend can be traced in the process of textbook production and the way women are viewed in society which is reflected in the textbooks. Therefore, unless patriarchy is uprooted in the minds of people, the oppression of women in society in all its manifestations, which permeates history textbooks, will largely remain the same as evidenced by the corroboration of findings between this study and previous studies conducted in history textbooks. A change in the patriarchal attitude towards women in society would have a positive impact on the portrayal of women in textbooks. Although it is not easy to uproot patriarchy as manifested in Malawian history textbooks, because it is so deeply entrenched in the culture and mental constructs of the society that spawned the books, a continuation of the efforts that are already underway will hopefully bear some fruit in future.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: Data Analysis Instrument for the Visual Images

### Representation of women in the visual images

#### Number of visual images portraying women

- (a) Number of visual images featuring women
- (b) Number of visual images featuring men
- (c) Total number of visual images showing people

#### Number of women portrayed in the visual images

- (a) Number of women depicted in the visual images
- (b) Number of men depicted in the visual images
- (c) Total number of people portrayed in the visual images

### Type of visual images featuring women

#### Single Visual Images

- (a) Number of single visual images of women
- (b) Number of single visual images of men

#### Pair Visual Images

- (a) Number of pair visual images of women only
- (b) Number of pair visual images of women and men
- (c) Number of pair visual images of men only

#### Group Visual Images

- (a) Number of group visual images of women only
- (b) Number of group visual images of men only
- (c) Number of group visual images of both women and men

**APPENDIX B: Table showing number of visual images featuring women and men from Textbook A**

<b>Caption of visual image showing women</b>	<b>Caption of visual image showing men</b>
Greek goddess Athena (p.53)	Front cover page (a group visual image of three men)
Captives being led to a slave market... (p.110)	Front cover page (visual image of one man)
	Captives being led to a slave market... (p.110)
	Using the shaduf in early Egyptian civilisation (p.14)
	The sphinx – Pharaoh Khafre’s pyramid (p.16)
	Greek athletes at the Olympic games (p. 51)
	Tug of war (p.52)
	Wrestling (p.52)
	Discuss throwing (p.52)
	Great Greek philosopher Socrates (p.59)
	Roman soldiers representing the two major divisions of their army (p.67)
	Inventor James Watt and his steam engine (p.94)
	George Stephenson and the Rocket (p.96)
	Levi ZilioMumba (p.133)
	James Frederick Sangala (p.133)
	Dr H. Kamuzu Banda (p. 135)
	Back cover page
<b>Total = two visual images</b>	<b>Total = 17 visual images</b>

**APPENDIX C: Table showing number of men and women depicted in the visual images from Textbook C**

<b>Page</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
Front cover page	4	4
3	0	1
7	0	1
10	0	1
25 (fig. 3.3)	2	0
25 (fig. 3.4)	1	1
26	0	1
27	0	1
31	0	1
33	0	1
36	0	1
37	0	1
47	4	7
51	7	22
54	0	1
55	0	1
56	0	1
57	0	1
72	0	11
<b>NB:</b> The pages go on up to back cover page	<b>NB:</b> This process was continued up to the back cover page	<b>NB:</b> This process was continued up to back cover page
	<b>Total number of women = 29</b>	<b>Total number of men = 143</b>

## **APPENDIX D: Data Analysis Instrument for the Verbal Text**

### **Representation of women mentioned in the text**

- Number of women mentioned in the text
- Number of men mentioned in the text
- Total number of both men and women mentioned in the text

### **Frequency of mentioning women in the text**

- Number of times of mentioning women
- Number of times of mentioning men
- Total number of mentioning both women and men in the text

### **Sections where women are included in the text**

#### Table of contents

- Number of topics or subtopics reflecting women
- Number of topics or subtopics reflecting men

#### Topics and subheadings in the text

- Number of topics or subtopics reflecting women in the narrative text
- Number of topics or subtopics reflecting men in the narrative text

#### Reference to or inclusion of women in the narrative text

- Sentences and paragraphs referring to women in the narrative text



**APPENDIX E: Number of women and men mentioned in the text (each listed and counted once) from Textbook A**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
One  <b>Men = 4</b> <b>Women = 0</b>	Herbert Hoover, p. 1  Dr David Livingstone, p. 4  Dr Banda, p. 4  Jesus Christ, p. 5	None
Two  <b>Men = 2</b> <b>Women = 0</b>	Raymond Dart, p. 7  Dr. L. S. B. Leakey, p. 7	None
Three  <b>Men = 9</b> <b>Women = 1</b>	Menes Narmer, p. 13  Alexander the Great, p.13  Harkhuf, p. 15  Jean Champollion, p. 15  Pharaoh Khufu (Cheops), p. 16  Pharaoh Khafre, p. 16  Kashta, p. 18  Piankhy, p. 18  King Ezana, p. 19	Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt, p. 15
Chapter four  <b>Men = 13</b> <b>Women = 0</b>	Al-Fazari, p. 21  Bekri, p. 21  El Masudi, p. 21  El Yakubi, p. 21  Abdullah IbYacin, p. 23  IbnBekr, p. 23  Sundiata, p. 23  Sumangulu, p. 23  Mansa Kankan Musa, p. 24	

	<p>Al Saheli Abu Isaak, p. 25</p> <p>Ibn Battuta, p. 25</p> <p>Ali Kolen, p. 26</p> <p>Sulayman Nar, p. 26</p>	
<p>Chapter five</p> <p><b>Men = 10</b></p> <p><b>Women = 0</b></p>	<p>Sir Apollo Kagwa, p. 27</p> <p>KabakaSuna II, p. 29</p> <p>John Speke, p. 29</p> <p>KabakaMutesa, p. 29</p> <p>Henry Morton Stanley, p. 29</p> <p>KabakaMwanga, p. 30</p> <p>President Milton Obote, p. 30</p> <p>Ptolemy, p. 31</p> <p>El Idrisi, p. 31</p> <p>Hassan Bin Ali, p. 31</p>	
<p>Chapter six</p> <p><b>Men = 21</b></p> <p><b>Women = 1</b></p>	<p>NyatsimbaMutota, p. 37</p> <p>Matope, p. 37</p> <p>MwenemutapaNyahuma, p. 39</p> <p>Changa p. 39</p> <p>Changamire, p. 39</p> <p>MwenemutapaChikuyo, p. 39</p> <p>MwenemutapaChioko, p. 39</p> <p>KalongaMazizi, p. 41</p> <p>KalongaChinkhole, p. 41</p> <p>KalongaChidzonzi, p. 41</p> <p>KalongaMazula, p. 41</p> <p>KalongaSosola, p. 41</p> <p>Mbona, p.42</p> <p>Undi, p. 42</p> <p>Lundu, p. 42</p>	<p>Makewana, p.42</p>

	<p>Kamphwiti, p. 42</p> <p>Kanyenda, p. 42</p> <p>Chulu, p. 42</p> <p>Mwase, p. 42</p> <p>Mkanda, p. 42</p> <p>Kabunduli, p. 42</p>	
<p>Chapter seven</p> <p><b>Men = 5</b></p> <p><b>Women = 0</b></p>	<p>Hammurabi, p. 46</p> <p>Sennacherib, p. 47</p> <p>Ashurbanipal, p. 47</p> <p>Nebuchadnezzar, p. 47</p> <p>Cyrus, p. 48</p>	
<p>Chapter eight</p> <p><b>Men = 22</b></p> <p><b>Women = 0</b></p>	<p>Homer, p. 51</p> <p>Solon, p. 53</p> <p>Aristophanes, p. 55</p> <p>Sophocles, p. 55</p> <p>Euripides, p. 55</p> <p>Assychlus, p. 55</p> <p>Pericles, p. 56</p> <p>Thales, p. 57</p> <p>Democritus, p. 57</p> <p>Hippocrates, p. 57</p> <p>Archimedes, p. 58</p> <p>Pythagoras, p. 58</p> <p>Euclid, p. 58</p> <p>Herodotus, p. 58</p> <p>Thucydides, p. 58</p> <p>Socrates, p. 59</p> <p>Plato, p. 59</p> <p>Aristotle, p. 59</p>	

	<p>Phidias, p. 59</p> <p>King Phillip, p.59</p> <p>Pindar, p. 60</p> <p>King Darius III, p. 60</p>	
<p>Chapter nine</p> <p><b>Men = 29</b></p> <p><b>Women = 1</b></p>	<p>Virgil, the Roman poet, p. 63</p> <p>Aeneas, p. 63</p> <p>Romulus, p. 63</p> <p>Remus, p. 63</p> <p>Tarquin Superbus (the Proud), p. 63</p> <p>Pyrrhus, p. 65</p> <p>Hannibal, p. 66</p> <p>Hannibal Barca, p. 66</p> <p>Publius Scipio (Scipio Africanus), p. 66</p> <p>Pontius Pilate, p. 68</p> <p>Pompey, p. 68</p> <p>Julius Caesar, p. 68</p> <p>Augustus Caesar, p. 68</p> <p>Brutus, p. 68</p> <p>Cassius, p. 68</p> <p>Octavian, p. 68</p> <p>Horace, p. 69</p> <p>Livy, p. 69</p> <p>Claudius, p. 69</p> <p>Nero, p. 69</p> <p>St. Peter, p. 69</p> <p>St. Paul, p. 69</p> <p>Hadrian, p. 70</p> <p>Constantine, p. 70</p>	<p>Agrippina, wife of Claudius, p. 69</p>

	<p>Attila, p. 70</p> <p>Alaric, p. 70</p> <p>Charles the Great (Charlemagne), p. 71</p> <p>Emperor Justinian, p. 72</p> <p>Cicero, p. 72</p>	
<p>Chapter 10</p> <p><b>Men = 19</b></p> <p><b>Women = 2</b></p>	<p>Joseph, father of Jesus, p. 74</p> <p>Saul, p. 75</p> <p>St. Mark, p. 76</p> <p>St. Athanasius, p. 76</p> <p>Emperor Domitian, p. 76</p> <p>Emperor Trajan, p. 76</p> <p>Emperor Diocletian, p. 76</p> <p>Maxentius, p. 77</p> <p>Emperor Theodosius, p. 77</p> <p>St. Benedict, p. 79</p> <p>St. Francis, p. 79</p> <p>St. Dominic, p. 79</p> <p>Muhammad, p. 80</p> <p>The Prophet Abraham, p. 80</p> <p>Ishmael, p. 80</p> <p>Angel Gabriel, p. 80</p> <p>Adam, p. 80</p> <p>Issa, p. 80</p> <p>Charles Martel, p. 81</p>	<p>Mary, Mother of Jesus, p. 74</p> <p>Khadija, wife of Muhammad, p. 80</p>
<p>Chapter 11</p> <p><b>Men = 30</b></p> <p><b>Women = 6</b></p>	<p>Lorenzo de Medici, p. 84</p> <p>Petrarch, p. 84</p> <p>Dante, p. 84</p> <p>Boccaccio, p. 85</p>	<p>Laura, wife of Petrarch, p. 84</p> <p>Juliet, p. 85</p> <p>Mona Lisa (name of a portrait of woman painted by Leonardo de</p>

	<p>William Shakespeare, p. 85</p> <p>John Milton, p. 85</p> <p>Fra Angelico, p. 85</p> <p>Botticelli, p. 85</p> <p>Donatello, p. 85</p> <p>Leonardo de Vinci, p. 85</p> <p>Michelangelo, p. 85</p> <p>Raphael, p. 85</p> <p>Pope Julius II, p. 85</p> <p>Johann Guttenberg, 86</p> <p>William Caxton, p. 86</p> <p>Gelilei Galileo, p. 86</p> <p>Nicholas Corpenicus, p. 86</p> <p>John Kepler, p. 86</p> <p>Isaac Newton, p. 86</p> <p>Martin Luther, p. 87</p> <p>John Wycliffe, p. 87</p> <p>John Huss, p. 87</p> <p>Desderius Erasmus, p. 87</p> <p>Pope Leo X, p. 87</p> <p>John Tetzal, p. 87</p> <p>John Calvin, p. 88</p> <p>John Knox, 88</p> <p>King Henry VIII, p. 88</p> <p>Pope Clement VII, p. 88</p> <p>Ignatius Loyola, p. 89</p>	<p>Vinci), p. 85</p> <p>Catherine of Aragon, wife of King Henry VIII, p. 88</p> <p>Mary, daughter of King Henry VIII, p. 88</p> <p>Anne Boleyn, lover and later wife of King Henry VIII, p. 88</p>
<p>Chapter 12</p> <p><b>Men = 23</b></p> <p><b>Women = 0</b></p>	<p>James Hargreaves, p. 92</p> <p>Richard Arkwright, p. 93</p> <p>Samuel Crompton, p. 93</p>	

	<p>John Kay, p. 93</p> <p>Edmund Cartwright, p. 93</p> <p>James watt, p. 94</p> <p>JethroTull, p. 94</p> <p>Lord Townshend, p. 94</p> <p>Thomas Coke, p. 94</p> <p>Robert Bakewell, p. 94</p> <p>Thomas Telford, p. 96</p> <p>John Macadam, p. 96</p> <p>Henry Ford, p. 96</p> <p>George Stephenson, p. 96</p> <p>James Brindly, p. 97</p> <p>Samuel Morse, p. 98</p> <p>Alexander bell, p. 98</p> <p>Guglielmo Macaroni, p. 98</p> <p>Orville Wright, p. 98</p> <p>Wilbur Wright, p. 98</p> <p>Abraham Darby, p. 98</p> <p>Henry Cort, p. 98</p> <p>Henry Bessemer, p. 98</p>	
<p>Chapter 13</p> <p><b>Men = 29</b></p> <p><b>Women = 2</b></p>	<p>Marco Polo, p. 100</p> <p>Prince Henry, p. 102</p> <p>King John I, p. 102</p> <p>Bartholomew Diaz, p. 103</p> <p>Vasco da Gama, p. 103</p> <p>King John II, p. 103</p> <p>Ahmed bin Majid, p. 104</p> <p>Christopher Columbus, p. 104</p> <p>Amerigo Vespucci, p. 104</p>	<p>Queen Isabella of Spain, p. 104</p> <p>Queen Elizabeth I, p. 108</p>

	<p>Ferdinand Magellan, p. 104</p> <p>Vasco de Balboa, p. 105</p> <p>Pope Alexander VI, p. 105</p> <p>Sebastian del Cano, p. 106</p> <p>Hernando Cortes, 106</p> <p>Montezuma, p. 107</p> <p>Francisco Pizarro, p. 107</p> <p>Atahualpa, p. 107</p> <p>John Cabot, p. 107</p> <p>King Henry VII, p. 107</p> <p>Sebastian, p. 107</p> <p>Richard Willoughby, p. 107</p> <p>John Chancellor, p. 107</p> <p>Martin Frobisher, p. 107</p> <p>Humphrey Gilbert, p. 107</p> <p>John Davis, p. 107</p> <p>Henry Hudson, p. 107</p> <p>John Hawkins, p. 107</p> <p>Sir Walter Raleigh, p. 107</p> <p>Sir Francis Drake, p. 107</p>	
<p>Chapter 14</p> <p><b>Men = 12</b></p> <p><b>Women = 1</b></p>	<p>Bishop Bartholomew de Las Casas, p. 111</p> <p>Seyyid Said, p. 112</p> <p>Thomas Clarkson, p. 114</p> <p>Granville sharp, p. 114</p> <p>William Wilberforce, p. 114</p> <p>James Somerset, p. 114</p> <p>Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, p. 114</p> <p>William Pitt, p. 115</p>	<p>Harriet Beecher Stowe, p. 116</p>



	<p>Abraham Lincoln, p. 115</p> <p>President Monroe, p. 116</p> <p>Sir John Kirk, p. 116</p> <p>Barghash, p. 116</p>	
<p>Chapter 15</p> <p><b>Men = 9</b></p> <p><b>Women = 0</b></p>	<p>King Leopold of Belgium, p. 120</p> <p>Otto Von Bismarc, p. 121</p> <p>Savognan de Brazza, p. 121</p> <p>Gomani I, p. 122</p> <p>Mponda, p. 122</p> <p>Zerafi, . 122</p> <p>Makanjila, p. 122</p> <p>Jumbe, p. 122</p> <p>Mlozi, p. 122</p>	
<p>Chapter 16</p> <p><b>Men = 34</b></p> <p><b>Women = 1</b></p>	<p>Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, p. 125</p> <p>Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, p. 125</p> <p>CaselyHayford, p. 127</p> <p>Dr Joseph Danquah, p. 127</p> <p>Sir Henry Coussey, p. 128</p> <p>Mahatma Gandhi, p. 129</p> <p>Sir Charles Arden Clarke, p. 130</p> <p>Sir Harry Johnston, p. 130</p> <p>Sir Alfred Sharpe, p. 130</p> <p>John Chilembwe, p. 131</p> <p>Dr. Robert Laws, p. 132</p> <p>Levi ZiliroMumba, p. 132</p> <p>Kames Frederick Sangala, p. 133</p> <p>Charles J. Matinga, p. 133</p> <p>Charles Mlanga, p. 133</p> <p>John Dickson Phiri, p. 133</p>	<p>Rose Chibambo, p. 137</p>

	<p>Harry Tung'ande, p. 133</p> <p>Issa (Isaac) Macdonald Lawrence, p. 133</p> <p>H. B. Dallah, p. 133</p> <p>Charles Chinula, p. 134</p> <p>Robert Armitage, p. 136</p> <p>Viscount Monkton, p. 136</p> <p>Orton Ching'oliChirwa, p. 137</p> <p>Henry MasaukoChipembere, p. 137</p> <p>DunduzuChisiza, p. 137</p> <p>Willie Chokani, p. 137</p> <p>Augustine Bwanausi, p. 137</p> <p>KanyamaChiume, p. 137</p> <p>Ian Mcleod, p. 137</p> <p>Mr. Michael Blackwood, p. 137</p> <p>Mr. TDT Banda, p. 137</p> <p>Mr. SattarSacranie, p. 137</p> <p>Mr. RA Butler, p. 138</p> <p>Sir Glyn Jones, p. 138</p>	
<p>Chapter 17</p> <p><b>Men = 7</b></p> <p><b>Women = 1</b></p>	<p>Dr W.E. Du Bois, p. 141</p> <p>Marcus Garvey, p. 141</p> <p>Jomo Kenyatta, p. 141</p> <p>SekouToure, p. 141</p> <p>Thabo Mbeki, p. 145</p> <p>Denis Sassou-Nguesso, p. 148</p> <p>Alpha OurnarKonare, p. 148</p>	<p>Gertrude Mongella, p. 148</p>

## APPENDIX F: Frequency of mentioning women and men in the text in Textbook B

### Chapter 1

- Men = 9 times, Women = 2 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p.3 (Augustus Caesar); p. 7 (Mutesa); p.8 (Ali-Bakri); p.9 (Chilembwe, Dr Banda, President Banda, President Banda); p. 12 (Dr Ron Clarke, Professor Phillip Tobias)
- **Women's names and pages:** p. 10 (Mrs. Ples, Mrs. Ples)

### Chapter 2

- Men = 2 times, Women = 0 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p.15 (Menes); p. 20 (Pharaoh Ptolemy)
- **Women's names and pages:** None

### Chapter 3

- Men = 2 times, Women = 1 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p.27 (Taharqa, king of Kush); p. 32 (King Ramses of Kush)
- **Women's names and pages:** p. 32 (Nefertari, wife of Ramses)

### Chapter 4

- Men = 3 times, Women = 0 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p. 39 (Ali-Bakri); p. 40 (Ali-Bakri, Ali-Bakri)
- **Women's names and pages:** None

### Chapter 5

- Men = 64 times, Women = 0 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p. 45 (Sundiata, Musa); p. 47 (King Charles V, Sundiata, Sundiata Keita, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata); p. 48 (Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Uli, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata, Sundiata); p. 49 (Sundiata, Sundiata, king Uli, Uli, Uli, IbnKhalidun, king Musa, king Uli, Uli, Uli, king Musa); p. 50 (Musa, king Musa, Mansa Musa, IbnKhalidun, King Chales V, Musa), p. 51 (Musa, Mansa Musa, Ibn Battuta, Mansa Musa, Mansa Musa, Musa, Musa, Musa); p. 52 (Ibn Battuta, Sundiata, Musa); p. 53 (Sundiata,

Sundiata, Musa); p. 56 (King Musa, Musa, Ibn Battuta); p. 57 (king Musa, Musa, king Jata, Musa); p. 58 (king Uli, Sonni Ali the Great, Sonni Ali)

- **Women's names and pages:** None

## Chapter 6

- Men = 78, Women = 0 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p. 61 (Kintu, Kabaka Mawanda, Kabaka Mutesa, Mawanda, Mutesa); p. 62 (Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa); p. 63 (Mawanda); p. 65 (Mawanda, Mutesa); p. 66 (Mawanda, Mutesa, Mwanga); p. 67 (Burton, Speke, Richard Burton, John Speke); p. 68 (Speke, Burton, Speke, Speke, James Grant, Speke, Grant, Kabaka Mutesa, Speke, Grant, Samuel Baker, the Bakers, Samuel Baker, Stanley, Henry Morton Stanley, Stanley, Stanley, Mutesa, Alexander Mackay, Stanley); p. 69 (Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa, Mutesa); p. 70 (Mutesa, Alexander Mackay, Mutesa, Mwanga, Kabaka Mutesa, Mwanga); p. 71 (Mwanga, Mwanga, Mwanga, Mwanga, Mwanga, James Hannington, Hannington, Mwanga, Mwanga, Kikewa, Kikewa, Kikewa, Kalema, Mwanga, Kalema, Mwanga, king Mwanga); p. 72 (Frederick Lugard, Lugard, Mwanga)
- **Women's names and pages:** None

## Chapter 7

- Men = 9 times Women = 0 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p. 76 (Ptolemy); p. 78 (Ibn Battuta); p. 82 (Al-Masudi); p. 84 (Prophet Mohammed, Ibn Battuta); p. 85 (Vasco da Gama, da Gama, Vasco da Gama); p. 86 (Vasco da Gama)
- **Women's names and pages:** None

## Chapter 8

- Men = 31 times, Women = 0 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p. 89 (Matope); p. 90 (Matope, Matope); p. 95 (Mutota, Mutota, Mutota); p. 96 (Mutota, Mutota, Matope, Mutota, Matope, Mutota, Mutota, Mutota); p. 97 (Mutota, Mutota, Mutota); p. 98 (Mutota); p. 101 (Father Goncalo da Silveira, Silveira); p. 102 (king Mutapa, king Gatse Lucere, Gatse Lucere, Gatse, Mamvura, Mamvura); p. 103 (king Nyakunembire, king Changamire, Nyakunembire, Changamire, Changamire)
- **Women's names and pages:** None

## Chapter 9

- Men = 16 times, Women = 11 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p.109 (KalongaChimkole); p. 110 (KalongaChimkole); p. 111 (Undi, Undi, Lundu, Kamphwiti, Kamphwiti); p. 112 (Lundu); p. 114 (Chimkole); p. 115 (Mzura, Mzura,Mzura,Mzura,Mzura); p. 116 (Mzura, Mzura)
- **Women's names and pages:** p.111 (Makewana, Makewana); p.113 (Mwali, Mwali, Mwali, Nyangu, Makewana); p. 114 (Mwali, Chauwa, Makewana, Mwali)

## Chapter 10

- Men = 46 times, Women = 0 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p.120 (Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Homer); p. 121 (Alexander the Great); p. 122 (Homer, king Minos); p. 125 (Hippocrates); p. 126 p. 126 ( Pythagoras, Euclid, Pythagoras, Archimedes, Socrates, Socrates, Socrates, Socrates, Plato, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Aristotle, Democritus, Thales, Thales,Thales,Thales); p. 127 (Herodotus, Herodotus, Thucydides, Pericles, Pericles, Pericles, Phillip, Phillip, Alexander, Alexander); p. 128 (Pindar, Alexander, Aristotle, Alexander,Alexander,Alexander, Homer, Aristophanes, Aeschylus, Sophocles)
- **Women's names and pages:** None

## Chapter 11

- Men = 28 times, Women = 2 times
- **Men's names and pages:** p. 130 (Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar); p. 131 (Romulus, Remus, Romulus, Remus); p. 132 (Lucius TarquiniusSuperbus, Lucius Junius Brutus, Lucius Tarquinius); p. 134 (Julius Caesar, Pompey, Julius Caesar); p. 135 ( Julius Caesar, Octavian, Augustus Caesar, Augustus Caesar,Augustus, Augustus Caesar,Julius Caesar, Augustus, Horace, Virgil, Livy, Diocletian); p. 136 (Alaric, Romulus, Augustulus, Odoacer)
- **Women's names and pages:** p. 131 (Rhea Silvia); p. 132 (Lucretia)

Total number of times of mentioning men = 288 times

Total number of times of mentioning women = 16 times

Total number of times of mentioning for both men and women = 304 times

Average of mentioning women =

Average of mentioning men =

## APPENDIX G: Sentences and paragraphs which feature women in the verbal text from Textbook A

Chapter 1- None

Chapter 2 - None

Chapter 3

(1) “The people of the Nile valley conducted trade with people of the Middle East. They also traded with people in the south of Egypt such as Axum and Nubia. **Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt once sent ships to Axum to buy ivory and ebony (hard wood).** Another famous Egyptian trader, Harkhuf once went to Nubia and brought many gifts including a dancing dwarf for the Pharaoh” (p. 15).

(2) The Kushites adopted many Egyptian ideas and customs. They also worshipped many gods including some of the Egyptian gods. Their chief god was Zpedemac – the lion god. They built temples for their gods. The largest of these temples was built to god Amon-Ra at Jebel Barkal near Meroe. **Pictures of gods, kings and queens were carved on the pillars of these temples (p.18).**

Chapter 4 - None

Chapter 5

(3) **“The Kabaka selected a wife from each clan” (p. 29).**

Chapter 6

(4) “There were two important religious shrines within the kingdoms. These were at Msinja near Dzalanyama Range and Khuluvi in Chikwawa. **The shrine at Msinja was under Makewana while that at Khuluvi was under Mbona.** The most important religious ceremony was rain-making whereby the people prayed for rain from ancestors during drought” (p. 42).

Chapter 7

(5) **“Some of the well-known gods worshipped by the Sumerians were Nanna, the moon goddess, Utu, the sun god, Ata, the sky god, and Enil, the god of the air” (P. 46).**

(6) “The laws were in cuneiform writing on stone pillars and copies were sent to all parts of the kingdom. **The laws show that there was emphasis on justice, division of classes and equality for women who could own property and engage in business” (p. 46).**

- (7) **“On religion, the people [Assyrians] worshipped the goddess of love, Ishtar and the goddess of war, Assar”** (p. 47).
- (8) **“Nebuchadnezzar also constructed the famous ‘Hanging Gardens’. These were trees and shrubs planted on a terraced roof. It is said that he built the Hanging Gardens to please his wife who longed for the mountainous landscape of her home area since Babylon was a plain. The Hanging Gardens are among the seven wonders of the ancient world”** (p. 47).

## Chapter 8

- (9) **“The Olympic games were open only to all free-born Greek men. This meant that women and slaves did not participate.** The games were not only a sporting event, but also a religious occasion” (p. 51).
- (10) **“The Greeks thought of their gods as men and women like themselves though of course they possessed more than human power.** Each god usually represented some aspect of nature” (p. 52).
- (11) **“At first, it was a monarchy – ruled by a king. Later this was changed when one of the rulers Solon declared that every Athenian citizen, except women and slaves should take part in the law making assembly.** Thus Athens became a democracy” (p. 53).
- (12) **“From the age of seven, Spartan boys were taken from their homes and sent to military barracks. Here they learnt to use weapons of war, to be courageous and to speak briefly. They achieved this by playing tough games and sports, taking long route marches and sometimes finding their own food. The girls also played tough games so that they should become strong mothers who will bear healthy babies”** (p. 54).

## Chapter 9

- (13) **“Claudius was assassinated in AD 54 under the order of his wife Agrippina who wanted Nero, a son by her first husband, to become emperor”** (p. 69).

## Chapter 10

- (14) **“Much of the influence of the church in Europe was through the work of ‘Monks’ and ‘Nuns’. These were men and women who chose to live a life dedicated to the service of God and lived apart from ordinary life. Their communities were called monasteries for monks and convents for nuns. The monks and nuns were said to be in Holy Orders. An Abbot led the monks while an Abbess led the nuns. The**

**most influential groups of monks were the Benedictine and Cistercian Orders” (p. 78).**

(15) “Work of the monks and nuns

**Both the monks and nuns did a lot of work that improved the way of life during the middle ages.** They improved farming methods and breeds of sheep and cattle. They cared for the sick, aged, and the poor. They also taught people to read and write especially Latin. They produced valuable books by making copies by hand” (p. 79).

(16) **“Muhammad was an orphan having lost his father a few months before his birth on 20<sup>th</sup> August 570 AD; and while still a child, he also lost his mother.** The orphan child was brought up by a grandfather and later on by his uncle. In the footsteps of prophets of old, he too acted as a shepherd. **When he was twenty-five years old, he began working for a rich noble, twice widowed, forty-year old business lady, Khadija and carried her caravans laden with goods to Syria and other distant places and returned with much profits. His honesty and integrity made a deep impression on Khadija and the two later got married” (p. 80).**

## Chapter 11

(17) **“One well-known humanist writer was Petrarch. He was one of the best known poets from the city of Florence. He wrote love poems in honour of his wife Laura” (p. 84).**

(18) **“William Shakespeare is one of the greatest poets and playwrights (person who writes plays) of all time. His famous plays include: Julius Caesar, Macbeth, Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet and so many others” (p. 85).**

(19) **“However, conflict with Roman Catholic Church developed when King Henry the VIII wanted the Pope to annul his marriage to his wife Catherine of Aragon. For some time, King Henry had been thinking of marrying a new wife since he wanted a son to succeed him after death.**

**His wife Catherine had only one daughter, Mary, and she was already past child-bearing age. This problem was made more urgent by King Henry’s deep love for Anne Boleyn. This love had important consequences for England. The pope, Clement VII refused to annul the marriage of King Henry to Catherine. King Henry defied the Pope and married Anne Boleyn” (p. 88).**

## Chapter 12



- (20) **“At first, the entire process of cloth making was done by hand in the home. Domestic workers (mainly women) spun the cotton strands into thread or yarn.** After spinning the thread, it was given to weavers (usually men) who wove the thread into cloth using a handloom. As demand for cotton cloth grew, there developed big businessmen who brought cotton to the spinners and later took the thread to the weavers” (p. 92).

### Chapter 13

- (21) **“In Spain, Columbus persuaded the councilors of the deeply religious Queen Isabella to let him look for “lost Christians” believed to be living somewhere on an island of the Atlantic Ocean. After many delays, the Queen finally agreed to support Columbus in his voyage.** Columbus was mandated to “discover and acquire islands and main lands” for Spain” (p. 104)
- (22) **“This feat meant Francis Drake became the first English man to sail around the world. He was subsequently rewarded by Queen Elizabeth I by being knighted i.e. he became ‘Sir’ Francis Drake”** (p. 108).

### Chapter 14

- (23) **“The plight of the slaves in the Southern plantations was brought to the knowledge of many north Americans by Harriet Beecher Stowe. In 1852, she wrote a novel titled Uncle Tom’s Cabin. This book narrated horrifying stories of slaves based on true stories of runaway slaves. This made many people in North America to start campaigning against slavery”** (p. 116).

### Chapter 15 - None

### Chapter 16

- (24) **“Malawi, which was then known as Nyasaland, was declared a British Protectorate on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1891. Sir Harry Johnstone became the first ‘Her Majesty’s Commissioner and Consul-General.** The country was known as ‘Nyasaland Protectorate’ from 1891 to 1907” (p. 130).
- (25) **“The federation brought together the three Central African British territories of Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia under one central government which was referred to as the Federal Government. This was headed by a Governor General who represented the Queen.** There was also a federal Assembly with members from all three territories”(p. 134).

- (26) **“Other notable leaders were Henry Masauko Chipembere, Dunduzu Chisiza, Willie Chokani, Augustine Bwanausi, Rose Chibambo and Kanyama Chiume.** Between 1960 and 1964, the M.C.P, led by Dr Kamuzu Banda, was involved in a number of constitutional talks with the British government aimed at giving Nyasaland self-government” (p. 137).
- (27) **“On 6<sup>th</sup> July 1964, Nyasaland attained its independence and took the name Malawi. Dr Banda continued to be Prime Minister. The Governor became Governor general, representing the Queen.** Consequently, he had no executive powers (could not initiate policies)” (p. 138).

## Chapter 17

- (28) **“At the time of publishing this book, the president of the Pan-African Parliament, Gertrude Mongella, was the Head of State of African Union; Denis Sassou-Nguesso, president of the AU state of the Republic of Congo was the Chair of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government; and Alpha Ournar Konare was the chairman of the African Union Commission, which serves as the Secretariat of the Pan African Parliament and a civil service of the African Union”** (p. 148).

## **APPENDIX H: Sentences and paragraphs which feature women in the text from Textbook B**

### **Chapter 1**

- p. 2 “It (history) includes all people: leaders and ordinary people, women and men.”

### **Chapter 2**

- p. 15 “A dynasty is a succession of kings and queens who all belong to the same family.”
- P. 16 “the Egyptians had many gods. There was Ra (the creator of the universe), Mut (the goddess of the sky and often the divine mother of reigning Pharaoh), Amon, Ptah, Osiris and his wife Isis. Apart from these, the other main gods were Horus (the god of the sky), Seth (who represented evil), Hathor (the goddess of the sky and queen of heaven) and Anubis (the god of the dead). The people of each nome worshipped their own gods as well. Even though the Egyptians had many gods, they were still unified because of the pharaohs. The reason for this was that the people believed the pharaohs were sons or daughters of gods (the goddess Mut was their mother).

### **Chapter 3**

- P. 31 “They embalmed bodies and buried their kings and queens in pyramids in the same way that Egyptians did.”
- P. 32 “The temple was built by king Ramses (another one of the five Kush kings of the 25<sup>th</sup> Dynasty) for the Egyptian gods Ra and Amun and for himself and his wife , Nefertari.”
- P. 32 “The reliefs show, for example, a war that was fought (known as the Battle of Kadesh) and Ramses and Nefertari with gods performing religious rituals.”

### **Chapter 4**

- P.39 “When the king died, he was succeeded by his sister’s son. This type of succession is called ‘matrilineal’ and means through the mother’s line.”

### **Chapter 5**

- P. 52 “Their women were of surpassing beauty, and are shown more respect than the men. These people are Muslims, punctilious in observing the hours of prayer, studying the books of law, and memorizing the Koran. Yet their women show no bashfulness before men and do not veil themselves, though they are assiduous in attending prayers. Any man who wishes to marry any one of them may do so, but women do not travel with their husbands, and, even if one desired to do so, her family would not allow her to go. The women have their ‘friends’ and ‘companions’ amongst the men outside their own families.” (an observation by Ibn-Battuta)
- P. 53 “Anyone who was in the same room as the king had to lie down on the ground and throw earth over his or her head.”
- P. 63 “The household of the Kabaka contained many thousands of women who had been captured in war and large quantities of loot and tribute paid by the conquered rulers.”

## Chapter 6

- P. 63 “While the food was left to the women, the men did things like building, carpentry, making bark cloth, metal objects and tools, doing government administration and making war.”
- Pp. 67-68 “The first European explorers to reach the Great Lakes region were Richard Burton and John Speke. They both reached Lake Tanganyika in 1858 and Speke also reached Lake Victoria (he named it after the queen of Britain) in the same year.”
- P. 68 “In 1862 Speke and Grant met two other European explorers, Samuel Baker and his wife. The Bakers were also searching for the source of the Nile River. Samuel Baker was later appointed by the ruler of Egypt to lead an expedition from Egypt along the Nile River. He then worked for the kingdom of Bunyoro, the old enemy of Buganda.”

## Chapter 7

- P. 82 “In India the tusks of African elephants were large enough to be used for the bangles worn by Indian women when they married. These bangles had to be destroyed when the wife or her husband died.”

## Chapter 8

- P. 98 “The Queen Mother, the king’s sister and the nine main wives of the king were also very important in the administration of the kingdom. The Queen Mother and the main wife had many followers and servants and lived in their own enclosures. No man was allowed to enter the main wife’s enclosure. The

king used some of his main wives to take charge of dealing with foreign traders.”

- P. 98 “ ... Another way of paying tribute was by providing labour. Everyone paid something. This is what a Portuguese visitor wrote in 1552: No one comes to speak with the king or his wife without bringing him something...”
- P. 102 “The Prazeros married African women and their descendants became part Portuguese and part African.

## Chapter 9

- P. 108 “The Phiri formed large chiefdoms that were ruled by royal matrilineage. This means that a new king or Kalonga was selected from the male members of his mother’s family.”
- P.110 “It was the responsibility of the tribute-paying chiefs to collect tribute for the kalonga. These chiefs could also grant or sell muzinda to village headmen, which was the right to conduct the initiation of young girls.”
- Pp.110-111 “If a village headman received muzinda, he had the right to collect payment from the villagers for his services of conducting the initiations of young girls.”
- P. 111 “Undi was established to the west of Maravi by a member of the Phiri clan. He had disagreed over who was to become the next kalonga. Undi was allied to the priestess Makewana (the mother of all children). Together, Undi and Makewana maintained their independence from the Kalonga. The kingdom of Undi was organized in the same way as the Maravi kingdom”
- P.112 “When the kalonga died, a new one (from the brothers or nephews of the dead kalonga) was chosen from the royal matrilineage. There were always long negotiations before a new kalonga elected. An important role in the selection of a new Kalonga was played by the female members of the royal matrilineage (mbumba).”
- P.113 “Third, the kalonga was in charge of the rain-making beliefs of the proto-Chewa. The religion of the Proto-Chewa had a strong tradition of female priestesses. The priestesses took care of the shrines associated with rain-making. As you have already seen earlier in this chapter, the first Kalonga married Mwali, the most important priestess of the Proto-Chewa rain-making shrines. Mwali was a member of the Banda clan. This gave the kalonga a respected position among the Proto-Chewa. Thereafter, the senior wife of the Kalonga was always called Mwali. The kalonga family was believed to have rain-making powers”

- P.113 “Over time, ancestor shrines were established throughout the kingdom. These shrines were for chiefs at all levels. The most important shrines were for the most important chiefs. At the top of this hierarchy was Nyangu, the mother of the first Kalonga and of all the Phiri clan.”
- Pp.113-114 “The religious beliefs of the Proto-Chewa were strongly connected to rain-making. They worshipped a High God. They believed that the messenger of the High God was a large snake called Thunga or Nsato. The snake was the husband of the priestesses who cared for the rain-making shrines (usually found on top of a hill), throughout the kingdom. Thunga’s visits were a way for the priestesses to communicate with the High God when rain was needed at the end of the dry season. The priestesses could also limit flood damage, make the soil fertile for farmers and grant success to hunters. Each shrine was related to a particular area of land and it was served by a group of priestesses. The most important priestess was Makewana, whose shrine was at Nsinja, which was the headquarters of all shrines. The priestess of the oldest shrine was Mwali, whose shrine was at Mankhamba on the shores of lake Malawi. Another important priestess was Chauwa, who was believed to be the daughter of Makewana and the sister of Mwali. The priestesses were always female and they were always members of the Banda clan.”

## **Chapter 10**

- P. 128 “The Iliad is about the Trojan war and the Odyssey is about Odysseus, King of Ithaca, who returns home from the Trojan War to reclaim his wife and his throne.”

## **Chapter 11**

- P. 131 “According to legend, Rome was founded during about 753 BC by Romulus and Remus, the twin sons of Rhea Silvia (the daughter of the king of Abba Longa).”
- P. 132 “Lucius Tarquinius Superbus (534 to 510) is said to have been the seventh and last king of Rome. His tyrannical rule was overthrown when his son raped Lucretia, the wife of a family member, who then committed suicide. As a result the people were encouraged to revolt against the king and they banished him from Rome.”

## **APPENDIX I: Sentences and paragraphs which feature women in the text from Textbook C**

### **Chapter 1**

- P.2 “The Old testament tells the story of the creation of the world and of the first people, Adam and Eve.”
- P.2 Jesus mother was Mary and his father was Joseph, a carpenter
- Pp.4-5 “Another reason for the spread of Christianity was that Christ’s message – hope, salvation and a better future – was well received and understood by the many of the Empire’s oppressed people, especially women and slaves.”
- P.6 “During his (Nero) reign, crucifixions of Christians were common. Men, women and children were thrown to wild animals to provide entertainment for the people. Some were even covered in pitch (a flammable substance, like tar used on roads) and set alight to serve as human torches.
- P.7 Constantine’s mother, Helen, was a Christian and this may also have encouraged him to embrace Christianity
- P.8 “Peter travelled about in his missionary activity, accompanied by his wife and finally died the death of a martyr in Rome. . A martyr is a person who is put to death because he or she has refused to renounce or give up his or her religious beliefs.”
- P.9 “One of the most important branches of the Christian church during the Middle Ages were the monasteries. Monasticism is a way of life practiced by people (monks or nuns) who have abandoned the world for religious reasons and devote their lives, either separately or in a community to spiritual perfection. Typical of Western Monasticism were abbeys, which were self-contained communities of monks ruled by an abbot or of nuns ruled by an abbess.”

### **Chapter 2**

- P.14 “Mohammed was born in the city of Mecca, in Arabia, in the year 570 AD. He was orphaned at a very young age and was reared by his grandfather and his uncle. At the age of 25 he married a wealthy widow, Khadija, whose trading business he was managing.”
- P.14 “The Quran also shares some similarities with the Old Testament, for example, the story of Lot and his wife, who was turned into a pillar of salt.”

### **Chapter 3 - None**

### **Chapter 4 - None**

### **Chapter 5**

- P.47 “In pre-industrial times, , the spinning of wool into thread was done by women on a spinning wheel, while men wove the thread into cloth on a handloom. Dealers distributed the wools to the women and the thread to the men and later collected the finished products from them.”

### **Chapter 6**

- P.57 “He (Christopher Columbus) had to wait nearly 20 years before king Ferdinand of Castile and Queen Isabella of Aragon employed him to sail west and claim for Spain any Islands he discovered.”

### **Chapter 7**

- P.65 “Historians estimate that between 17 and 34 million Africans were taken to North Africa and the middle East during this period. Most of these were women and children.”
- P.67 “When the Arabs conquered North Africa in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, their armies often took women and children as slaves.”
- P.74 “The plantation owners considered it cheaper to use the labour of a slave until his or her death and then import a new one from Africa, rather than take care of them and allow them to settle down and raise children who might also work on the plantations. The owners also preferred to purchase young male slaves, so the number of female slaves imported to the Americas was relatively small.”
- Pp.80-81 “A freed slave named Olaudah Equiano, one of the few Africans to write down his experiences as a slave, described the voyage: “...This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become unsupportable, and the filth of the necessary tubs (toilets), into which the children often fell and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women and the groans of the dying rendered the whole scene of horror almost inconceivable.”
- P.81 “Slaves were often chained together. Men and women were kept in separate compartments.”
- P.87 “The slave trade robbed Africa of millions of young and healthy men and women who would have made a strong contribution to the economic well-being of their societies.”



## **Chapter 8 - None**

## **Chapter 9 – None**

## **Chapter 10**

- P.127 “Nkrumah also tried to win the support of market women, who held very influential positions in the community and of trade unions.
- P.132 “The British Parliament passed a bill formally granting independence to the Gold Coast, and, on 22 February 1957, Queen Elizabeth II signed the bill into law.”

## **Chapter 11**

- P.141 “In terms of education, the NAC wanted the government to take over the educational system from the mission societies...Government control would encourage education for girls, who often did not have the chance to attend mission schools.”
- P.147 “Other important leaders of the struggle for independence were Dunduzu Chisiza, who was called home from his studies in Birmingham in 1958 to become secretary-general of the NAC, and Rose Chibambo, who was called upon in the same year to organize the NAC Women’s League.”