

Childless Mothers and Motherless
Children: Fantasies of Postcolonial
Reproduction in The No. 1 Ladies'
Detective Agency.

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Source: Matatu: Journal for African Culture & Society . 2015, Vol. 47 Issue 1, p221-245. 25p.

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Abstract:

Mma Ramotswe, the heroine of the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency novels and their adaptations, is proud of "be built African lady unlike these terrible stick-like creatures one saw in the advertisements." This crisis of the 'trad 'modern' erupts in the representation in the novels and television series of Mma Ramotswe's sexuality and moti failures to acknowledge or negotiate the inconsistencies of its deployment of the 'traditional' and the 'modern', dilemma of (national) reproduction when sex is not an option. Further, neither text integrates its explicit celebr values' with the professional opportunities that 'being modern' affords Mma Ramotswe. Attempting to negotiat the texts divest Mma Ramotswe of any 'modern' sexual attitudes or actions - the ones that produce offspring - her with those fruits: children. Both written and visual representations systematically negate any possibility that might participate in any reproductive activity of her own. A mother without children to children without mothe figures postcolonial reproduction as a sexless, passionless transaction, while both texts align any sex with the pr betrayal, and death.

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