

# RE-IMAGINING DEMOCRACY: IN SEARCH OF SILENCED VOICES

## “Never The Subject”

By *Malwande Mthethwa*

African bodies have been raised and taught that we exist with dependency on anything other than ourselves.

Phecelezi abelungu.

Even if you deny access to your story they'll take it anyway.

So you better sell.

This much I can tell.

Learn to capitalize mntanami.

Newspaper headline – that's your name.

All so that you can put your young through school, so they may grow and feed into the same system that crippled you.

African bodies have been raised and taught that in order to survive one needs external acceptance.

Izimali zabaseNgilandi.

For whiteness is the land of milk and honey.

For there our potential escapes from poverty lie.

For there we will have to lose ourselves in order to deal with life's expenses.

For to lose yourself for a life of potential wealth is better than to remain in your truth which really may not be your truth as the generations pass by.

Object. Object. Object.

Being an object is how to pay the bills.

Being an object is how to maintain this western lifestyle which we have been accustomed to.

Zibuze ukuthi muntu onsundu, le mvelaphi ofunda ngayo ezincwadini, imvelaphi eyabhalwa ngubani?

Yabhalwa ngolimi lwabani?

Because for the most part the truth which you think is yours, is read out from the pages of western theorists.

For to be a chapter in those books is a method of survival.

For how would you survive without monetary means?

Monetary gains.

Object. Object. It is too expensive to be the subject.

For to be a subject mntanami,

To force yourself into the field of subjects may cost you your whole life.

A life which may have been worth only a few coins to begin with.

Object. Object.

It is too expensive to have been the subject.