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*Investigating the depiction of masculinity in isiZulu literature of the Apartheid and Post-apartheid epoch*

**Sanele Mthembu**

**Investigating the depiction of masculinity in isiZulu literature of the Apartheid and Post-apartheid epoch.**

*By Sanele Mthembu*

Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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At the

University of the Witwatersrand

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Supervisor: Dr, E.B. Zungu

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research is my own unaided work, otherwise all other sources I have used are indicated by means of referencing. It is submitted for the Master of Arts at the University of Witwatersrand and has not been submitted for any other examination in any other university.

_____ _____

Sanele Mthembu (1630941) Date

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this study is to investigate the portrayal of masculinity in isiZulu literature of the apartheid and post-apartheid epoch. The novels under discussion are S, Nyembezi's, *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* (1960), I, S Kubheka's *Ulaka LwabeNguni* (1988), N.C Msimang's, *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* (2005) and E.D.M. Sibiya's *Ngiyolibala Ngifile* (2010). The study examines ways in which African epistemology is underpinned as an aesthetic of protest in African languages literature written in the apartheid and post-apartheid epoch. Furthermore, the study investigate how these African epistemologies are incorporated in the representation of masculinity. Using Marxism and Afrocentrism as a theoretical framework the study further investigates socio-political and socio-economic abberations highlighted by the African languages' novel writers in these different eras. The whole bulk of African languages has been considered a failed enterprise on the premise that it has failed to respond to the socio-political milleiu of its emergence. This study therefore counter-argues through proposing that these critics used critical paradigms that are fundamentally mismatched for the types of narratives with which isiZulu literature and African languages literature in general are engaged.

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# CHAPTER 1

## 1. Introduction and backgrounds

The aim of this study is to critically analyse the ways in which the African episteme of personhood underpins and plays out in the depiction of masculinities as an aesthetic tool to critic social-economic and socio-political ills, in the apartheid and post-apartheid literature. The literary works to be analysed are Nyembezi's *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* (1961), I.S Kubheka, *ULaka LwabeNguni* (1988), N. T Msimang, *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* (2005), and E.D.M Sibiya, *Ngiyolibala Ngifile* (2010).

The novels chosen in this study are written in both the apartheid and post-apartheid epoch. *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* and *Ulaka LwabeNguni* are both written in the apartheid epoch, *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* and *Ngiyolibala Ngifile* are written in the post-apartheid epoch. Choosing novels of different decades is crucial as this gives an overview of the thematic engagement of these works. This is important for this study in understanding whether the Zulu novel is growing and socially committed.

Literature is the mirror of society. It is inspired by societal conflicts, needs and expresses solutions. This social aspect of literature is expressed by Amuta (1989) as an important transition in making literature socially relevant through making it an object of intellectual dispute.

Amuta (1989) asserts that socially committed African languages literature entails writing about the day to day issues, and also assuming the role of teacher by guiding the society and tackling public issues. Amuta further denotes that this implies mediating in the socio-political, socio-cultural, economic and religious world inhabited by the writer. Furthermore social commitment infers that literature is obligated to face the socio-historical challenges of time and space.

Moreover, Marx (cited in Canonici and Mathonsi 2009) explain that the stimulus for the work of literature rises from the social milieu which is always characterised by some form of class struggle for the control of the means of production.

Conflict constitutes the main interest and challenge in most forms of human relations, eventually causing human advancement. Literature is therefore an important source of inspiration.

Literary works are not mysteriously inspired, or explicably simple in terms of their authors' psychology; literary works are forms of perception, particular ways of seeing the world, which is a social mentality of an age (Eagleton 1976:6). This is the rational within which isiZulu literally work has been harshly judged. It is viewed as contradicting the definition of social commitment and thereby considered to be irrelevant. IsiZulu prose has been accused of not being socially committed, and therefore of being a childish and purposeless form of literature.

In the observation of South African and foreign critics, African language literature continues to be an unsuccessful enterprise. In their view, both old and new literature fails to respond to the socio-political and historical realities within which it emerges. For example, Grobler (1995: 56) reiterates the view that persists inside and outside South Africa: that African language writing in this country is immature and childish. Kunene (1994) goes further by expressing his disappointment on the failure of African language literature written in the apartheid era by dubbing it a pro-colonial tool and noting that some critics have dismissed the whole body of African literature as irrelevant, emasculated and inconsequential. Sirayi is quoted by Bongela (1998) in the preamble of limbali zikaMpahleni, who shares a similar sentiment that:

> It does not reflect socio political dynamics surrounding its emergence. It gives the impression that what happens in the country does not involve the Africans hence the production of literature that promotes church ethics and school going community. Even here this sensitive issue such as segregated religious communities, educational and moral systems are not treated (Zulu 1999: 290).

However, Ntuli (1987), Mtuze (1995), Canonici (1998), Zulu (1999), Mathonsi, Mazibuko (2002 and 2009) and Mhlambi (2012) blazingly argue and share a view that it is not completely true that African writers abstained entirely from writing about the burning political issues or were not socially committed. In consensus, they argue that much of the literature that is written by Africans in African languages does not

explicitly state its combative intention, but uses the indirect form and disguised protest in highly elevated language; it is the use of metaphor and symbolism which therefore makes it socially committed. Mhlambi (2012) goes further to argue that a redefinition of social commitment in literature will broaden the conceptual use of the term, because through the study of dominant trends and discourses in African languages literature (IsiZulu), a pattern of themes that the writers were committed to raising emerges.

Mhlambi further claims that the dominant western and postcolonial critical approaches from which these critics articulate their views operate on assumptions that fail to look at the role and centrality of the broader concerns usually covered by this literature. Citing Barber (1994:3) Mhlambi points out that these western and postcolonial critical approaches block a properly historical localised understanding of any scene of colonial and post-independence literary production. Instead it selects and over emphasise one sliver of literary production over the other. These critics used critical paradigms that are fundamentally mismatched for the types of narratives with which isiZulu literature and African languages literature in general are engaged.

This study therefore seeks to argue that the whole bulk of African languages literature in the apartheid and post-apartheid era has been able to combat and to address socio-political issues in Afrocentric ways, and has improved in the post-apartheid literature. One of the issues that the African writers both in apartheid and post-apartheid era write about broadly are gender issues as a form of raising concerns in society; particularly, the masculinity crisis brought about by colonialism, which disrupted the economic, family, gender and spatial structure of the Africans. However, masculinity has been understudied in the context of Zulu prose.

As such, the study seeks to address, problematise and insert the discourses of masculinities in the apartheid and post-apartheid isiZulu literature, and consequently bring forth newer nuances of reflections of Africa languages literary criticism. The construction and depiction of masculinities in African languages literature is left unscrutinised and most likely to be assumed. The study will comparatively analyse the masculinity themes addressed in the apartheid and post-apartheid isiZulu

literatures, and further explore how the concept of African personhood influences the depiction of masculinities in both apartheid and post-apartheid literature, and the extent to which it is used to politically engage social issues.

### 1.1. **Masculinity in South Africa**

Around the world black men have been central to discussions of crime and violence. Particularly in South Africa, gender-based violence has increased tremendously in recent years. This therefore warrants focus on men and their issues.

Hadebe (2013) claims that men's risky behaviour particularly in South Africa is fuelled by men's own interpretation of what it means to be a man, or the construction of masculinity. This is often in the spotlight as a result of the escalating level of gender-based violence rape, lack of social fathering, alcohol and drugs abuse. Men appear as perpetrators of the most horrific social ills.

Issues of gender have been on the centre stage globally for many years. Initial major concerns on gender have focused more on the subjugation of women. Brod (2002) explains that this is because of the discrimination the female gender has experienced in the past from their male counterparts and currently experience. Morell (1998) further argues that the dominance of men in many facets of society has resulted in issues on men and masculinities being assumed. Chow (2003) also maintains that it is important for the gender studies to include both men and women, so as to better understand the gender dynamics in the society. She notes that: "Gender is relational and social: hence the focus of gender studies should not be on women per se but on power relations between women and men and between men themselves". However, recent gender studies have also included men. The topic of men and masculinity in Africa has only recently received attention, but it is part of a much bigger and internationally significant debate on men and masculinity, which has gained great traction in the last few years (Ouzgane, 2011). The pioneering works in masculinity are Connell (1985, 1996), Morrell (2001) and Ouzgane (2005 and 2011) in Africa.

Morrell (1998) asserts that over the last 25 years, increasing numbers of researchers in the USA, UK, Europe and most recently Africa have begun to devote themselves to

the study of masculinity. There are several different origins for this work. In the field of psychology, discourse about male sex roles are not novel, but in the 1970s, these began to be contested. An effect of this contestation was the gradual rejection of the sex-role theory and an increasing emphasis on the importance of social factors. As a social factor, masculinity is viewed as a social construct. Masculinities are socially constructed. Social construction means existence and being influenced by social and human interaction. This is linked to early psychoanalysis, and the Social Sciences first took the shape of a social-psychological concept, the 'male sex role'. The "role" approach emphasised the learning of norms for conduct and has been popular in applied areas like education and health. However, sex role theory is inadequate for understanding diversity in masculinities, and for understanding the power and economic dimension in gender especially in Africa (Connell 1987). Accordingly, recent research by Ouzgane and Morell (2005 and 2011) on men and masculinities has moved beyond the abstractions of the "sex role" approach, to a more concrete examination of how gender patterns are constructed and practiced, particularly in Africa.

### 1.1.1. Masculinity

Morrel's definition of masculinity emphasises the point that it is a social construct. Morell (1998:607) defines masculinity as a collective gender identity and not a natural attribute. It is socially constructed and fluid. Morell explains that there is not one universal masculinity, but masculinities. Morrell's definition is useful in analysing masculinities in the novels as their construction is influenced by diverse factors.

Masculinities are constructed in different ways for different societies. This has to do with what it means to be a man in different societies. For example in isiXhosa the process to manhood begins with circumcision (Ulwaluko). Boys are required to go up the mountain for a number of days for training into manhood and after circumcision, boys consider themselves *indoda*, meaning man. The behaviour and attitude of the boy who has become a man changes. Whereas, in isiZulu, masculinity is associated with

the man's wealth in terms of cows. This is seen in proverbs like *ubuhle bendoda izinkomo zayo*, which means "the beauty/worth of a man is the number of cows he has." This is not true for every man, and therefore the term masculinities is adopted, because not every man describes their own masculinity with these attributes.

Furthermore, Barker and Ricardo (2005) maintain that a gender analysis of men must consider the plurality of masculinities in Africa. As such, there are various descriptions of what constitutes manhood in Africa, such that manhood is: socially constructed; fluid over time and in different settings; and plural. There is no typical man in Africa and no single version of manhood. There are numerous African masculinities, urban and rural, and changing historically, including versions of manhood associated with war, or being warriors and others associated with farming or cattle herding. There are indigenous definitions and versions of manhood, defined by tribal and ethnic group practices, and newer versions of manhood shaped by Christianity, and by Western influences, including the global media.

IsiZulu culture has its own description of what constitutes manhood. It also has its own construction and versions of masculinities, which are deeply imbedded in the Zulu philosophy of personhood. Through contact with colonialism, which transformed gender, economic and spatial settings, new meanings of what constitute masculinity in the isiZulu community were introduced.

As will be noted in the literature review, studies that engage with masculinity theories to understand the construction and representation of manhood have focused on African literature written in English. Critique in isiZulu literature has not explored masculinity in the apartheid and post-apartheid literature. Furthermore, these theories and definition of masculinity are limited in so far as their framework of individualism is concerned. This is contrary to the African communitarian ontology, which then limits understanding of what it means to be a man in Africa. This then results in the mismatch of solutions for African masculinity problems.

### 1.1.2. African personhood, being and masculinity

This study is premised on Ouzgane (2005) and Mfecane's (2018) African-centred theories of masculinity. They argue that the reliance on global-north gender theories which are premised on the western philosophy of individuality limits the understanding of what it means to be person (and a man) in Africa. This individualistic ontology is clearly reflected in writing which defines masculinity as being about individual's man's quest for to accumulate those cultural symbols the denote manhood (Kemmel 1994: 125).

In contrast, within African societies, personhood is seen as relational and is achieved through social interaction rather than in isolation, since the individual is ontologically situated in the network of relationships, hence the maxim *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu,* meaning a person is a person through other people **(**Menkiti 2004:174).

Families become primary locations for engendering communitarian persons, followed by the larger community. It therefore becomes critical for individuals to exercise individual needs as a service to society, rather than to purely fulfil individual desires at the expense of the community.

Secondly, contrary to the western visual ontology and individuality, African thought believes that human beings are a product of a whole. This includes society and supernatural forces (Mfecane 2018:296). This means that the construction of masculinity happens in an environment that is made up of individuals, *amadlozi* (the ancestral community or the living dead), *abathakathi* (witches) and other metaphysical elements that are believed to influence human action and outcome. This is seen in the literary work *Ulaka LwabeNguni*. AbaNguni is used to refer to the ancestors. This displays the importance of this archive in isiZulu literature.

Thirdly, naming is also an important element of a person's incorporation into the African society. Zungu (2016) explains that from the time the child is born s/he is introduced to his living-dead by a personal name through a ceremony *imbeleko.* The name-bearer will be affected wherever he is because the name forms part of his identity/personhood.

Bhengu (1975) also notes that a name is a mark of personal identification. He explains that it can be a symbol of honour and respect for the physical environment in which humans flourish negatively or positively. This philosophical element of personhood is also key to understanding how masculine identities are constructed within isiZulu culture. It is worth noting that as far as African societies are concerned, personhood is something at which someone could fail, at which they could be competent or ineffective. Hence the overarching necessity to learn the social rules that the community lives by. This philosophy of *Ubuntu* is in many ways endemic to African language literature.

Ojaide (1992) further affirms that even modern African literature has a social focus. He notes that this literature is different from that which focuses on the individual. It is the communitarian spirit which informs the characterisation, where a group rather than an individual is emphasised. This affirms that literature in African languages is deeply embedded in African philosophy.

It is important to investigate the western perception of 'black' and black masculinity. This will establish the origin of some stereotypes about masculinity in Africa. Furthermore, it will solidify reasons for the use of Afrocentric philosophies to study masculinity.

The above context allows us to understand why the Eurocentric view of what constitutes "manhood" in Africa does not work well as a framework of understanding African masculinities.

### 1.1.3. Eurocentric view of black masculinity

To colonise means to subjugate the 'other'. Subjugating the other necessitates a clear distinction in the perception of the 'other' and self. For Europe to subjugate and colonise Africa, meant that in European thought Africa and Africans had to be seen as something different, something 'not us', and therefore subjugatable.

For this reason, colonial scientific scholarship relied heavily on the creating, defining and managing difference and "othering". The difference between Africa and Europe, and Africans and Europeans, was emphasised, and similarities were denied.

In occidental epistemology, Africans and the rest of the global south have been established as the peripheral "Other" and Europe as the centre. The African has been denied equality as human beings and consigned to the animal world. Eurocentric knowledge further established the stereotype of the African/ black as sub-human and subservient to the white European human. This view gave birth to the justification for colonisation: The objectives of colonisation were: commerce, conquest, Christianisation and civilisation. This section examines how this process of dehumanising black Africans evolved.

The western philosophical definition of being is different from that of Africans. This results in a philosophical disjuncture in studying black men in Africa.

To understand how Eurocentric epistemology views black people and a black man in particular, it is important to trace how western philosophy defined what it meant to be human. This will help establish if this body of knowledge considers an African to be human or sub-human, and birth of the system of classification. Two scholars who have traced these thoughts of the Eurocentric view of humanity and racism in Africa are Achille Mbembe (on the post colony: 2001) and Sylivia Wynter (coloniality of being: 2003).

Wynter (2003) begins with the conception of 'Being Human" from the 14th -15th century European Judaeo-Christian medieval period and continues to the enlightenment period and the contemporary thought.

**Medieval definition of human**

Wynter asserts that the Judeo-Christian Medieval founding narrative in Western Europe defined human as divinely created being in terms of the biblical Genesis account of origins. A being created by God and with godly attributes.

Secondly, the Greco-European philosophers who were the founding fathers of knowledge in Europe were obsessed with hierarchy. This hierarchy had ramifications in the Christian doctrine, which created the hierarchal chain of classifying life and matter called the *Great chain of being*. It is worth noting that all forms of knowledge at this period were theocratic.

*The Great chain of Being*

The great chain of being shows the philosophical thought processes of what makes a human in the western world.

The Great Chain of Being is a hierarchical structure of all matter and life, thought in medieval Christianity to have been decreed by God. Its major premise was that every existing thing in the universe had its "place" in a divinely planned hierarchical order, which was pictured as a chain vertically extended.

("Hierarchical" refers to an order based on a series of higher and lower, strictly ranked gradations.). The hierarchical ordering of the world and being can be traced back to the Greek philosophers Aristotle and Plato (Lovejoy: 1939).

According to this idea, everything in the world had its position fixed by God: The Earth was the centre of the universe and the stars moved around it in fixed routes. In Heaven, God ruled over the archangels and angels. On earth there was order everywhere. Society reflected this order with its fixed classes from the highest to the lowest – kings, churchmen, nobles, merchants, and peasants. The animals had their own order too, the lion being the "king". Plant life and minerals also reflected this order. Among the trees, the most superior was the oak; among flowers, it was the rose. Among the minerals, gold was the most superior (Lovejoy 1939)

The Hierarchical degree: God> Angels> Human>Animal>Vegetable>Minerals

**See illustration A**

Steppat (2006) explains that for medieval and Renaissance thinkers, humans occupied a unique position on the ***Chain of Being***, straddling the world of spiritual beings and the world of physical creation. Humans were thought to possess divine powers such as reason, love, and imagination. The anthropocentric framework placed humans at the pinnacle of nature. A passage from the Politics in the 1600s (Ogunnaike 2016:788) supports this view.

"After birth, plants exist for the sake of animals, and the other animals for the sake of humans – domesticated animals for both usefulness and food, and most if not all

wild animals for food and other assistance, as a source of clothing and other utilities. If, then, nature makes nothing incomplete or pointless, it is necessary that nature has made them all for the sake of humans" (Ogunnaike 2016:788).

**Enlightenment period definition of human**

In the turn of the century, the enlightenment period (1800) disarranged and disregarded the theocratic epistemology and definitions of what it means to be human. The maxim "I think, therefore I am" by Descartes modernised anthropocentricism and the Great Chain of Being; this time taking God out of the equation. Man became the center of the universe (Mbembe 2001)

The human subject was God-like and therefore required subservient animals in the Chain to serve him, as man has served God. The evolution of man and the evolution of race theories (Charles Darwin) placed Europe and a White men (race) at the helm of the *Great Chain of Being*. Any form of aesthetic, culture, life that existed outside the Eurocentric world was considered sub-human or inhumane by western thought. Black bodies began to be equated to animals. This gave birth to scientific racism. Ogunnaike (2016) explains that Voltaire, epitomizes these attitudes in his "Essay on the Moors":

> Their round eyes, their flat nose, their lips which are always thick, their differently shaped ears, the wool on their head, the measure even of their intelligence establishes between them and other species of men prodigious differences… If their understanding is not of a different nature from ours, it is at least greatly inferior. They are not capable of any great application or association of ideas, and seem formed neither in the advantages nor the abuses of our philosophy… As a result of a hierarchy of nations, Negroes are thus slaves of other men ... a people that sells its own children is more condemnable than the buyer; this commerce demonstrates our superiority; he who gives himself a master was born to have one (Ogunnaike 2016: 46).

Here the "Moors" or Black Africans in general are judged to be lower on the "hierarchy of nations" due to their physical appearance, different or lack of European

modes of thinking, and lack of the love of liberty. In this revised Chain of Being, which proved so influential during the Enlightenment, Enlightened European man sits atop the chain, and all of nature is ranked below him, based on its similarity to or participation in the nature of this new ideal. (Ogunnaike 2016:799).

In his 1822-8 Lectures on *the Philosophy of World History* Hegel's evolutionary theory established a sequential continuum with evil, ignorance, darkness, the past, the "primitive" of the non-white races of humanity on one end and good, knowledge, light, the future, "civilization", progress, and the white race on the other. Hegel used Aristotelian arguments for the right and duty of the conquest, subjugation, and even elimination of the dark side of the continuum by the light.

**Apartheid views of black men in South Africa**

The above became an established normative vocabulary to speak about Africans. The concept of the sub-humanity of black people is the premise and justification for colonization and the violation of black people. Therefore, according to the occidental knowledge system, a black man is not human.

This gave birth to the dichotomous juxtapositioning of the Black and White bodies in South Africa. White bodies being the epitome of civilization, beauty, morality, intellect etc. While black bodies were the epitome of, evil, ugliness, immorality, and nativism. Apartheid is therefore a reiteration of colonial and scientific racism. Secondly, separate development or Apartheid in South Africa was therefore premised on the long-established views of blackness in the world. It is for these reasons the Afrikaners justified apartheid as "God ordained". In light of the above, it is therefore of critical important to establish the concept of masculinity within an African paradigm and epistemology. It is pivotal that Africans define themselves, because western concepts are contrary to the African meaning of being.

## 1.2. **Research problem**

The focus of this research is on the development of African languages literature, the African philosophy of personhood (indigenous knowledge systems) and masculinity in South Africa. Of particular interest is the application of masculinity theories in isiZulu literature. African languages literature, particularly isiZulu, is considered to have failed and to continue in failing to address socio-political challenges facing the community, and is seen as concerning itself with childish themes. This, the researcher argues, is a limited view of how writers express themselves in African language literature; and how the society conceptualise socio-political and economic problems. The critics have not considered how African epistemology of personhood informs literature. This is reflected in how the writers portray masculinity; however, there is limited literature focusing on masculinity as presented in African languages prose, because masculinity frameworks are westernised in their view of how masculinity is constructed.

An African centred idea of masculinity has not been developed and used to closely read and critique African languages literature; this therefore limits understanding of African languages literature's social commitment. Similarly, African-centred theoretical tools for understanding gender issues have not been established and applied in African languages literature, which further limits an understanding of how African languages literature engages with gender issues.

The hypothesis for this study is that an African philosophy of personhood and other concepts underpins how African writers depict masculinity, and that this is used as a symbolic agency to engage is socio-political issues.

## 1.3. **Aim**

This study aims to unearth the concepts of African personhood in the depiction of masculinity and analyse the extent to which these representations play a role in addressing socio-political and economic issues in isiZulu apartheid and post-apartheid literature. The major objectives for this study are:

a) To investigate the extent to which the portrayal of masculinity plays a role in addressing the socio-political and economic issues in literature

b) To explore how the philosophy of African personhood is incorporated in the depiction of masculinity

c) To identify socio-political issues addressed by the apartheid and post-apartheid literature.

d) Lastly to compare how apartheid and post-apartheid literature depict masculinity and thereby measure improvement.

## 1.4. **Research questions**

Therefore, to address this problem, the following **research questions** are asked:

a) To what extent is the depiction of masculinity used to address socio-political issues isiZulu literature?

b) In which way does the African philosophy of personhood play out in depiction of masculinity?

c) Which socio-political issues are addressed in the apartheid and post-apartheid literature?

d) What are the similarities and differences in the depiction of masculinity in the apartheid and post-apartheid isiZulu literature?

## 1.5. **Rationale**

Research on gender biases and African-literature social commitment has been carried out by African scholars. Scholars such as Barber (1994), Canonici (1995), Mathonsi (2005), Mazibuko (2009), and Mhlambi (2012) have carried out studies arguing for the social commitment of African languages literature. However, little work has been done in African languages in the area of understanding masculinity and African philosophy. The current issues facing African men, who are at the centre of debates around immorality and violence, demonstrate that western ideas do not offer solutions to the problem. Furthermore, African writers have written about masculinity issues and their source in African novels. However, the whole canon of African languages novels has been dismissed on the basis of not being committed in critiquing social issues. Moreover, the greater issue is not the whether African languages literature has critiqued the social ills or not, but that the theoretical framework within which the novels are read fails to extrapolate the deep philosophical meaning in African languages. Therefore, these theories are limited in their view.

Canonici (1995:155) has argued that "A Zulu work should be of enduring cultural relevance and value in order to be acknowledged as a classic. The Zulu milieu will reflect the Zulu philosophy of life and culture, customs, idiosyncrasies and positive aspects, as manifested in a careful use of language and of the traditional imagery bank." Therefore, it is critical that in studying masculinities in works of literature, one should focus on the deeper meanings and critiques of problems from the African epistemology.

This study is therefore important in the sense that it places a central focus on the African philosophy of understanding humanity, particularly masculinities. Secondly, it inserts the study of masculinities within African languages literature. The study seeks to add to and broaden literature in the area of African Languages literature critique, indigenous knowledge systems, African philosophy and masculinities.

## 1.6. The literature review

The review will provide insight on the development of literature in the missionary, apartheid and post-apartheid eras, explore social commitment in African languages literature and the thematic development, and examine previous studies. Reviewing these eras will also assist in locating the challenges of African languages literature. It will also give a brief discussion on the conceptual development of masculinity, and studies done across the African diaspora on masculinity in literature.

### 1.6.1. Development of literature in African languages

#### a. Missionary era

Oral traditional forms of literature have pre-existed the colonial era in Africa, however, beginning with the missionary era does to the post-apartheid era does not seek to suggest that African aesthetics revolve around the colonisation of Africa. However, beginning with this epoch reveals some of the literary challenges that erupted through colonisation

Mtuze (1994:129) states that one simple or even simplistic but workable way of according some legitimacy to apartheid literature is to divide the whole literary spectrum into phases - starting with the missionary literature, then the literature of the apartheid era, which would be followed by the post-apartheid literature. This section offers a brief view of the development of literature in African languages.

Gerard (1971) in his work *Four African Literatures*, Ntuli (1993) and Maake (2000) have offered an extensive study on the history and content of African languages literature. Gerard's main point in this broad survey is that there is a lack of scholarship in these writings. These scholars are used as a point of reference for the review of African languages literature and their thematic development.

Like most of African literature, Zulu literature of the 19th and 20th century falls into two distinct categories: one concerned with traditional life and customs, the other with Christianity. These two broad areas of early literary activity combined in the 1930s in an imaginative literature that focused on a conflict that profoundly preoccupied

Southern African writers for decades - the conflict between the urban, Christian, westernised milieu and the traditional, largely rural African past.

This period of African languages development reduced writing in African language to developing school material. Schools needed written material for reading and linguistic skills development.

The missionaries collected folklore material such as folktales, proverbs and riddles Mhlambi (2010). Mathonsi (2002) calls the stories written in this period "the elite stories," because they reflected a world view as seen through the dialectic of *amabhinca/amaqaba*,(uncivilised/barbaric),and*amakholwa/izoni*(believers/unbelievers). He further quotes Malan, who notes that this period had a strong thematic emphasis on an uprooting and acculturation process, as an increasing number of blacks were subjected to western-urban struggle. The themes reflected the historical dynamics of the 'civilising mission' of the missionaries. In Southern Africa, as in many other parts of colonized Africa, Christian mission activity often encouraged converts to renounce their precolonial practices and beliefs and to embrace an essentially Western ethos. Kunene, who refers to this process as deculturation, claims that many southern African writers were channelled into themes that made for an exercise in "self-devaluation." Gerard (1971: 174-98)

John Langalibalele Dube has been dubbed the father of isiZulu literature for his first isiZulu novel he wrote "*INsila kaShaka* (Shaka's Bodyguard) "(1930), later followed by B.W Vilakazi's *Noma Nini* (1936). The works of these scholars become educational with the purpose of giving a historical account of the African people. Moving into the apartheid era, the moralising theme, and rural-urban dichotomy theme was solidifying.

**b. Apartheid era**

1948 saw the rise of Afrikaner nationalism culminate in the victory of the Nationalist Party. This was followed by a decade of suppression, loss of land and political power, urbanisation, marginalisation and alienation. "This period is characterised by intense political activity and violent social change" (Mathonsi 2002:72).

Through the Bantu Education Act of (1953) and the Land Act of 1950, the Nationalist Party made it a point to confine black people to the limit of rural outlook. Nyembezi makes the following comment about the African literature of this period:

> Then the decades of the expected maturity arrived - from the 1960s to the 1990s, but the Seeds of vibrant originality sown during the previous period were cruelly trampled over and squashed, possibly by both the apartheid-appointed censors and by the fear that they would object to any 'committed' writing and destine it for the dustbin. Fear, self-imposed censorship, and possibly more than a little laziness hampered vigorous developments of literatures that had appeared very promising at their emergence (2: V)

In literature, the *Jim comes to Joburg* themes predominated, and perpetuated the colonial ideology of keeping Africans in the rural areas and out of towns, while reinforcing the idea of the self-destructive African. This was also because of the curtailment of the freedom of speech, which reached its climax at the banning of the ANC and the Sharpeville massacre in 1961. Ntuli (1993) observes that the propaganda programme and censorship succeeded in blurring perspectives on the developments elsewhere in Africa. Of this period Mathonsi (2002) argues that although some writers glossed over these issues, other writers were successful in engaging with socio-political issues. He (Mathonsi 2002:14) further argues that some African languages literary authors wrote as if there were no sensitive and urgent issues affecting the community, glossing over the problems or issues that affect the lives of the people, avoiding going straight and hitting it hard, or lacking depth, for fear of touching a sensitive matter at the bottom. They wrote mainly for the school market, and therefore their literary work was immature.

Further, in spite of censorship, there were writers, like Vilakazi in the missionary period, who skilfully tackled thorny issues in literature. Ntuli (1993) comments on the Zulu literature of this period:

> It has been observed that writer avoid tackling controversial issues because their works are often screened for the school market. It is a fact, though, that we still find poems and stories which refer to some of the well-known thorny issues, so

tactfully that the work is good art and not a mere propaganda (Ntuli, in Gerard 1993:153-154).

Using a Marxist approach, Ntseki (1999) and Kunene (1992) also argue that the milieu and characterisation within which Nyembezi places his character in the apartheid era reveals a commitment and maturity. They therefore refute the notion that the whole body of literature in this era was not socially committed.

The works of Kubheka, *Kungavuka abaNguni* (1973) *ULaka LwabeNguni* (1988) and *Umthathe uzala umlotha* (1993) emerge from this period.

His theme is also concerned with the urban/rural and African/western dichotomy and dialectics. The initial setting of Kubheka's three novels is the farming area around Ladysmith, producing an atmosphere of rural traditional life, where his characters can be easily delineated against a rather flat background. But the plots of the three novels then move to urban and peri-urban settings, to large schools, hospitals and universities that become the stage on which the main characters must face those life conflicts for which education normally had not prepared them. Many scholars had hoped that the falling of the apartheid regime would also mean African languages literature would be unshackled from rural-urban ideological theme and restriction and begin to write about more compellingly sensitive issues. This would then form a canon of African languages literature of the post- apartheid.

### c. Post-apartheid era

Post-apartheid literature is any literature that thematically tackles issues after the 1994 democratic South Africa. Grobler (1995) asks a series of questions regarding the emergence of the new dawn on post- apartheid literature.

In light of the notorious restrictions falling away, Grobler (1995) argues that there are some pertinent questions which open up interesting possibilities for future research. Some of these questions are as follows: will African-language writers be able to prove

beyond doubt that the restraints were indeed the reason for the 'immature' state of African-language writing in South Africa? Will the abolition of the hateful restrictive measures necessarily result in the emergence of masterpiece after masterpiece?

In response to these question Zulu (1999) analyses Mngadi (1996) *Asikho Ndawo Bakithi* to display development and maturity of isiZulu literature. Mngadi's (1996) *Asikho Ndawo Bakithi* (*We are nowhere*) speaks about the anguish of members of the oppressed Zulu society of the 1980's. Zulu (N.S.) concludes that isiZulu has grown in addressing socio-political issues. He (Mngadi) has also written *Iziboshwa Zothando* (2004), a novel about the relationship between black and white people. In *Ababulali Benyathi* (2005) Mngadi focuses on power issues in the democratic era.

Kunene (1989), Canonici (1998) and Swanepoel (1996) had predicted that the literature of this period would engage in issues that affected all South Africans, although some have pointed out that there is no significant change in the obstacles of the past, such as readership, aesthetics, and publication processes etc.

Mathonsi and Mazibuko (2009) also respond and argue that writers in African languages (isiZulu) have gained the confidence to address themselves in adult issues in the Zulu community since the 1994 democratic election. They are able to tackle political, sexual and socio-economic factors that they did not previously engage in. Thorny issues like politics and sexuality have been tackled by authors in the post-apartheid South Africa in particular.

Most African literature scholars have done an extensive critical work on the analysis of African languages novels. Valuable scholarly criticism has also focused on collectively giving an overall view of both the missionary and apartheid literary production in vernacular fiction. It has also provided a scholarly critique of the hegemonic worldviews presented in the text, which is usually comprised of western lifestyle and African traditional lifestyle.

For example Mathonsi's work (2002) titled *Social Commitment in Some Zulu Literary Works Published during the Apartheid Era* highlights how some works were socially committed, contrary to the popular belief that African-language literature is

simplistic, underdeveloped and incapable or unwilling to address the issues that deeply concern black Africans.

Canonici (1985), D.P, Kunene (1994) and Ntseki (1999) have also done some extensive critical work on Nyembezi's life and novels, to understand the social commitment through realism. Furthermore, Mathonsi and Mazibuko (2009) also trace the growth of African languages literature in the post-apartheid terrain.

Some critical works have shifted and focused on the gender contradictions in the Zulu literature. Using a feminist theory, Gumede (2002) aimed to discover how isiZulu texts written by men portrayed women.

Most, if not all, these critical works on gender have focused on representation of women and the setting in African languages literature. Therefore, there is a gap in literature in studying masculinity in African languages literature of the apartheid and post-apartheid. These scholars have now traced how masculinity is represented and how men are portrayed in African languages literature.

### 1.6.2. Masculinity globally

Morrell (2001) states that masculinity is a term that refers to a specific gender identity, belonging to a specific male person. While this gender identity is acquired in social contexts and circumstances, it is "owned" by an individual. According to Gilmore (2005), the behaviours that require men to perform acts in the quest for power and status among other men and women are collectively defined as masculinity.

For Connell (1996), masculinities are multiple and are actively constructed through institutional and cultural contexts. Masculinities are constructed differently within different cultures over different periods of time. The theory explains that there is no one distinct mould of masculinity that exists everywhere. Connell (1996) notes that there are different forms of masculinity in any context and that there are different contributors to the formation of masculinities. Some cultures measure violence as a form of masculinity whereas in some other cultures this form of behaviour is frowned upon. In the Zulu culture, if you are the best in stick fighting, you are considered

manly or heroic. Connell (1996) acknowledges that there is also a differentiation between the middle and working class, the very rich and the very poor, as to what types of behaviours are considered masculine.

### a. Strands of masculinities

For Connell (1996), masculinities are constructed differently within different cultures over different periods of time. Connell (1996) notes that there are different forms of masculinity in any context and that there are different contributors to the formation of masculinities.

Connell's (1996) work on masculinities states that masculinities are constructed through social interaction. It establishes six major conclusions of masculinities but for this study we will look at three.

### b. Hegemonic masculinity

The term hegemony is a philosophical term developed by an Italian intellectual Gramsci, which refers to the power that one social group holds over the others. The term was then adopted into the gender studies to understand the masculine hierarchy.

This type of masculinity is dominant over other forms of masculinities. Connell (1996) believes that hegemonic masculinities have a distinct set of practices from that of non-hegemonic practices. Connell (1995:77) understands this hegemony as dominant, aggressive, superior and violent compared to other masculinities, because it subordinates other men. Men embrace the hegemonic, for example, in stick fighting, physical work and rugby. By doing so, they prove that they are strong warriors, which is one way to shape and construct normative ideals of masculinity. Hence men engage in such activities to demonstrate power.

Connell also states that power is a social structure, which is concerned with control, authority and the construction of hierarchies between institutions and organizations, and over and amongst people. This indicates that men use control, authority, strength and being competitive and aggressive to demonstrate power, both among men

themselves and between men and women. For example the market economy has been dominated by men, which has left women with significantly less access to the market. In the Zulu context, men often use the number of cattle they own or multiple sexual partners as an indication of being "man enough".

For example the proverb *ubuhle bendoda izinkomo zayo* (Paraphrase: the worth a man is measured by a number of cows he has), indicates a type of hegemonic masculinity.

### c. Marginal masculinities

Connell states that there are also marginalized masculinities, gender forms produced in exploited or oppressed groups such as ethnic minorities, which may share many features with hegemonic masculinity but are socially de-authorized" (2000:31). Immigrants in any country might feel marginal, because they are minorities. Marginal masculinity appears in exploited and oppressed groups. It shares many of the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity, but has no power to act in society.

Connell states that the interplay of gender with other structures such as class and race creates further relationships between masculinities (2001:41).

Class relationships render the man who has fewer or no resources marginal. In Zulu culture, a man that has cattle, a wife, and children often frames masculinities through those that do not have these things. Men that do not have resources may always look up to those that have them and may share hegemonic characteristics or aspire to hegemonic masculinities. The global change in the nature of the labour market, which resulted in massive unemployment of men, may make men feel marginal. This means that men who have benefited from the labour market might feel that the new legislative changes that empower women reduce their chances of employability.

### d. Subordinated masculinities

The power relations amongst men produce subordinated masculinities. The dominant group sets the constraints for and defines the subordinated group(s).

The conduct and desires in subordinated masculinities are contradictory, because some men choose to be subordinated. This means that some men could choose to

remain subordinated instead of challenging and rejecting hegemonic masculinity, which gives an indication that subordination is not always imposed. Connell (2001:39-40) asserts that some heterosexual men are expelled from the legitimacy of patriarchy because they are found "not real men," and thus do not meet the normative expectations of what it means to be a man. In Zulu culture men that are not married and in Xhosa culture men who are uncircumcised are regarded as *abafana (boys)*, which is a derogatory term. They are often prevented from sharing a meal with married and circumcised men.

The following section looks at ways in which the critical work displays how masculinity plays out with an African context and literature.

### e. Masculinity in African literature

Morrell and Ouzgane (2005) in their work *Men in African film and Fiction* argue and reject the notion that all African men are the same. They argue that masculinity is constructed through time, space and culture.

Jackson and Balaji (2011) also argue that masculinity should not be limited to western notions of masculinity, because what makes a man is determined by his culture. This assertion is insightful, as this study seeks to deconstruct the narrow perspective of viewing masculinities through western lenses alone.

Mate (2017) applied these African-centred theoretical frameworks to examine the representation of masculinity in selected popular works in Kenya. He concludes that masculinity in Kenya is strongly influenced by the socio-economic nature of the post-colonial Kenyan society, and that it is full of disparities between the few rich people and a majority poor. This breeds a group of men who are violent, self-centred and inhuman because of their harsh urban life. The study also finds that there are fewer adherences to traditional values of communalism in urban centres.

Granqvist (2006) also examined hegemonic masculinity as presented in a collection of novels under the Spear book brand. His study focuses on post-colonial masculinities in Nairobi. Granqvist argues that factors such as colonialism and globalisation have had a strong impact on the changing faces of masculinity among Kenyan men of

different races. He argues that Kenyan men are in a masculine crisis. Granqvist limits his study to the urban post-colonial setting but this study goes further by also interrogating post-colonial rural masculinity.

Odhiambo in *Wild Men and emergence Masculinities In the post-colonial Kenyan Popular Fiction* (2005) chapter approaches the sexual experiences and masculinity representation in the post-colonial Kenyan popular literature from the 1970s. He argues that Kenyan post-colonial popular fiction dramatizes the sexual anxieties and tension experienced within Kenyan urban male. In the works he analyses concludes that 'maleness is depicted in an intensely sexualised manner. A type of masculinity which assumes the characteristics of wild male is apologetically celebrated in this fiction. Men who are sexually wild and insatiable appear to be unable to form emotionally stable relationships with women and appear to be out of control.

This paper is important in understanding post-colonial experiences of sexuality and masculinity. Odhiambo concludes that personal freedom created new identities and new subjectivities, especially in the liberated African man. Even new sexual identities were forged. This paper shed light in understanding the aspect of how sexuality is linked to masculinity. This literature review reveals that there is gap in African languages literature in analysing masculinities in the context of apartheid and post-apartheid literature. It (the review) enables the researcher to use theories of masculinity in an African context as a point of departure.

## 1.7. **Theoretical framework**

Mathonsi cites Amuta's (1989) argument that African-language literature can be discussed only within the framework of political discourse essential to the dismantling of colonial rule and western hegemony. Therefore, two theories that the researcher seeks to use in instrument of analysis are Afrocentricity theory and Marxist literary criticism. These theories are fitting paradigms to view the socio-political and socio-economic setting of the novels.

### a. **Afrocentricity theory**

Afrocentricity is a theory which asserts that African history and culture should inform any analysis dealing with African issues.

Asante (1998), who popularized the term, defines Afrocentricity as a philosophy that looks at matters at hand from an African viewpoint; that we misunderstand Africa when we use viewpoints and terms other than that of the African to study Africa. When Africans view themselves as centered and central in their own history, they see themselves as agents, actors, and participants rather than as marginal and on the periphery of political or economic experience.

Afrocentricity is a theory designed by African scholars like Ngugi wa Thiongo, Marimba Ani, Chinua Achebe, Magome Ramose, Maulana Karenga, Ali Mazrui and Tsehloane Keto. They assert that Africans have lost their centeredness and are now living in a borrowed space.

Methodologically, Afrocentricity is intended as an answer to the intellectual colonialism that undergirds and serves to validate political and economic colonialism. In regards to theory, it places African people at the centre of any analysis of African phenomena in terms of action and behaviour. It is described as a devotion to the idea that what is in the best interest of African consciousness is at the heart of ethical behaviour, and seeks to cherish the idea that "Africanness" itself is an ensemble of ethics (Chawane 2016: 80).

These ideas resonate with Mfecane's (2018) African centred understanding of masculinity. This theory (it is believed) would be instrumental as a tool of analysis as it considers the uniqueness and culture of Zulu masculinity. This theory will help the researcher to view literature and how masculinity is depicted from the African epistemological point of view. This will help conceptualised critique masculinity crises in an African-centered framework.

### b. Literary Marxism

Ouzgane and Morrell (2005) concur that when studying African masculinities, one should start from a position of diversity, because the variations are infinite. Leach (1994) also explains that masculinities are constructed socially, historically and politically, and interpreted from a cultural perspective. He argues that masculinity is a cultural ideology that defines the appropriate role that men must fulfil.

The Marxist theory position resonates with the masculinity scholars' supposition that literature should be analysed in characteristically historical materialistic terms; as an integral part of society which in turn rests on an economic foundation. The Marxist position is that the moving force behind human history is its economic systems, for people's lives are determined by their economic circumstances. A society is shaped by its forces of production, the methods it uses to produce the material elements of life. The economic conditions underlying the society are called material circumstances, and the ideological atmosphere they generate is known as the historical situation. This means that to explain any social or political context, any event or product, it is first necessary to understand the material and historical circumstances in which they occur (William, 1977: 140).

Marxist literacy criticism places socio-economic and political structure and their influence on the society's construction of identity and paradigm at the centre. Marxist theory is based on the political and economic theories of Karl Marx. It holds that the society is propelled by its economy which is manipulated by the class system. The theory aims to unmask our limited view of the society structures and reveals how our socioeconomic system is the ultimate source of our experience.

Marxism is not an African theory however it is relevant in isiZulu literature as a theoretical tool to search out the depiction of inequities in society, and imbalances of goods and power among people. The function of literature is to make the populace aware of social ills and sympathetic to action that will wipe those ills away. Marxist critical theory suggests questions to work as a lens of critiquing literature:

- What are the characters' economic situations?

- What happens to them because of their economic status?
- How are the characters' lives influenced by social, political and economic forces?
- What social forces are represented in the text? (Ryan R, 1982: 59).

This Marxist frame of reference is relevant for this study, since it is concerned with understanding the socio-economic system and how masculinity is portrayed within that economic situation. Apartheid and post-apartheid settings are highly political and propelled by the economy. Therefore, these theories will inform the literary work studied.

The study analyses the setting and characters in the text. Therefore, the texts will be analysed within these philosophical frame of reference.

## 1.8. **Methodology**

Given the objective of study, a qualitative research design is considered the most appropriate. The decision to use this design is motivated by the fact that it allows the researcher to explore meanings, and describe and promote an understanding of human experience. De Vos (2002), Strauss and Corbin (1990: 11) note that qualitative research design can refer to research about a person's life, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, and feelings, as well as about organisational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between nations." The selected design is in line with the aim of this study, namely to explore the concept of African personhood in the depiction of masculinity in the apartheid and post-apartheid literature.

The selected novels are written in the apartheid and post-apartheid era: Sibusiso Nyembezi, Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu (1961), I. Kubheka, Ulaka LwabaNguni (1988), Umsebenzi uyindlala (2005) and Ngiyolibala ngifile (2012). The secondary sources are books, theses, dissertations and journal articles to further substantiate the argument. The following method was used to collect and analyse data.

### 1.8.1. Text analysis:

The researcher used primary sources based on selected novels. The selected novels are written in the apartheid and post-apartheid era: Sibusiso Nyembezi's Inkinsela *YaseMgungundlovu* (*The Rich Man from Pietermaritzburg*) (1961); I. Kubheka's *Ulaka LwabaNguni* (*The Wrath of abaNguni*) (1988); N.C Msimang, *Umsebenzi uyindlala* (*Work is Scarce*) (2005); and *Ngiyolibala ngifile* (2010) by E.D.M Sibiya. Each text will be analysed to illustrate the ideas raised by this research and substantiation of the findings.

This study adopts textual analysis as its data collection and analysing instrument. Textual analysis is relevant for this study because it allows for an interpretative close reading and use of the text per the definitions. McKee (2003) points out that textual analysis is an interpretation of the text to obtain a sense of the way in which, in a particular space and time, people make sense of the world around them and the variety of ways in which it is possible to interpret reality. Reddy (1993) postulates that the aim of textual analysis is to observe attitudes, behaviour, concerns, motivation and culture of text production. The underlying principles of text analysis as put forth by Flick (2004) resonates with Reddy (1993) and McKee's (2003) definitions, respectively. Principles of text analysis according to Flick (year) are:

- Social reality is understood as a shared product which makes sense to the members of a community.
- The communicative nature of social reality permits the reconstruction of constructions of social reality to become the starting point for research.

This is important, as this study reads and reconstructs the text as a model of reality. The setting being the representation of the reality

The text, according to these scholars, should therefore be read as a model of social life. It is socially constructed and can therefore be deconstructed. This is because texts are produced within an institutionalised context of writing and action, space and time. Texts represent the values, beliefs, rituals and practices of a community.

The literary texts will be analysed with the focus on the portrayal of masculinity within them. Narrative categories such as characterisation, events, setting/milieu and context allowed for the researcher to understand the lived experiences of the characters, and consequently understand the lived experiences that have shaped the author and his conception of masculinity.

Texts are conventional expressions of the lived experiences of the author. They tell both about the social context of their production and provide us with the means to share experiences.

## 1.9. Elucidation of basic terms

These are the some of the terms that analysis will be focusing on:

- **African Epistemology**: epistemology is derived from two Greek words episteme which means knowledge and logos meaning study. Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the foundation, nature, scope, validity and limit of human knowledge. African epistemology as Aja in Etim (2013) defines it, is Africa's way of carrying out its inquiries into the nature, scope and limits of knowledge. Ozumba (2001) further states that African epistemology is grounded in the rich African cultural heritage

- **Novel**: A novel may be defined as a picture of real life and manners and of the time is it written. The novel gives a familiar relation of such things, as pass every day before our eyes such as it happens to our friends (Msimang 1986).

- **Characterisation**: characterisation a sum total of techniques employed by an artist in presenting characters in the literary work of art, so that such characters are perceived by the audience/reader as persons endowed with moral as well as physical qualities (Msimang 1986). Msimang further holds that because characterisation is the creation of images, these imaginary persons must be grounded in reality in order for them to be convincing.
- **Milieu/setting**: Abram (1981) defines a setting or milieu as general locale, place, historical time and social circumstance in which the narrative or dramatic work occurs. Social circumstance means the society's way of life at the time and place the story takes place. It embraces the society's customs and beliefs.
- **Literary onomastics**: The word onomastics is derived from the Greek word *onoma,* which means name. Onomastic therefore is the study of names and naming systems. Literary onomastics is the subdiscipline of onomastics which is about the naming of characters (and other names) in novels, poetry and drama (Koopman 2002: 10)

- **Apartheid**: The word *apartheid* means "separateness" in the Afrikaans language, and was a political and social system in South Africa during the era of white minority rule. It enforced racial discrimination against non-whites, mainly focused on skin colour and facial features. This existed in the twentieth century, from 1948 until the early-1990s. Post-apartheid arguably means the post-1994 or the democratic era in South Africa.

- **Literature**: Literature is a form of artistic communication achieved when harmony (or balance) is created between form and content, that is, when form (style) is shaped to convey content in a fitting manner. Style is not supplementary to content. When the writer conceives an idea or figures out an action, he does so in words. The way he arranges words and images (form) constitutes his style, which is governed by the concept (Canonici and Mathonsi 2009:110).

## 1.10. **Structure of the dissertation**

The dissertation is separated into 2 sections:

Section 1 focuses on Apartheid-era literature; that is to say all novels written between 1948 and the early 1990s'. The section examines ways in which African epistemology (personhood) underpins these works to portray masculinity and critique social realities.

Section 2 focuses on post-Apartheid literature.

**Chapter 1**: An introductory perspective to the research. It highlights the background, aim and research questions for this study, literature review, theoretical framework and methodology.

**Chapter 2**: Analyses masculinity in S'busiso Nyembezi's *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* (1960) to understand the socio-economic influences in the construction of masculinity and ways in which African personhood is used to critique the social setting.

**Chapter 3**: Reads *ULaka LwabaNguni* (1988) *Ukuhlonipha* (respect) and the living dead role in the construction of masculinity and African personhood. It further looks at the ways Kubheka uses these African archives to critique the apartheid regime and imperialism.

**Chapter 4:** Commences the second section, which focuses on the post-Apartheid literature.

It begins with Nelisiwe T Msimang's *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* (2005), and it examines the relationship between socio-economic issues and sexuality in the post-apartheid South Africa masculinities.

**Chapter 5**: This chapter examines *Ngiyolibala Ngifile's* (2010) depiction of the negotiation of masculinity, the rape continuum and poverty in post-1994 contemporary urban South Africa.

**Chapter 6:** Presents the conclusion and recommendation for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

**Rural-urban dichotomy: Socio-economic impact in the construction of masculinity in *Inkinsela YaseMgungudlovu* (1960).**

### 2.1. Introduction

*Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* (*The Rich Man of Pietermaritzburg*) narrates a conundrum of the complexities of the rural-urban bifurcation in the apartheid milieu. The economic environment and systematic inequality created by the Apartheid regime to marginalise black people for their own capitalistic ends constructed a different strand of African/black masculinities. The chapter argues that in many ways, the characterisation of men in *Inkinsela* depicts and criticises the "powers that be" at the time, by explicitly showing ways in which colonisation disrupted the economic, gender and epistemological archives of Africans. Therefore, this novel, even though written in the Apartheid era and is assumed to be uncritical of the apartheid setup, does in many ways critique the Apartheid system and therefore remains socially committed.

The aim of this chapter is to understand the interplay of masculinities in the rural-urban dichotomy, which was created by the apartheid regime for socio-economic and capitalist purposes. It also analyses African epistemology as key aesthetic of criticising western imperialism.

The analysis of Sibusiso Nyembezi's work, written in the apartheid era (1960) will focus on ways in which the socio-economic setting influences how masculinity is constructed in the Apartheid era. This is because Marxism denotes that the society is propelled by means of production. The socio-economic situation is important in understanding the dynamics of gender construction. The chapter will also look at strands of masculinity found in the novel and how are these portrayed. The focal point of the analysis is how the African concept of personhood used to portray and problematize these masculinities. The textual analysis will place attention on the milieu in which Nyembezi places his characters, the characterisation, and the conflict and argument raised by Nyembezi through his work.

## 2.2. Biography of Prof. Sibusiso Nyembezi

Prof. Sibusiso Nyembezi was a towering linguist, scholar and publisher. Nyembezi would have turned 100 this year, alongside departed fellow South African writers Es'kia Mphahlele, Peter Abrahams and Noni Jabavu. Nyembezi was born in Vryheid in northern KwaZulu-Natal, and was a relatively marginal figure in South Africa's literary canon in comparison with some writers of his generation who wrote in English or went into exile.

In 1948, Nyembezi succeeded the eminent Zulu poet, Prof. Benedict Wallet Vilakazi, as lecturer in Bantu studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, after Vilakazi's untimely death in 1947. He later taught at the University of Fort Hare, only to resign along with other colleagues in 1959, in protest against the implementation of the Bantu Education Act.

He became a publisher at Shuter & Shooter from 1960 until his retirement. Nyembezi's effect on the shaping of modern Zulu is expansive. His output includes the seminal *Inqolobane Yesizwe*, a survey of various key aspects of Zulu culture and traditions. He co-authored, with Otty Nxumalo, the Zulu primary school language reader series *Igoda*. His other novels include *Mntanami! Mntanami!* But his best known novel remains *Inkinsela yaseMgungundlovu.*

## 2.3. Summary of *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu*

Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu is a novel by Sibusiso Nyembezi published in 1963. It is set in the urban to rural (semi urban area) area of Nyanyadu.

The people in the novel are westernized agriculturalists, governed through customary law and ruled by a chief. Change has therefore taken the form of a switch to a money economy, to school education and to Christianity.

The city life is not very far away geographically, but it could be hundreds of miles away for all the local people care. Into this peaceful environment suddenly Ndebenkulu (Big Lips), who presents himself as an *Isikwaya* (Esquire) and *Inkinsela (VI.P.),* and who immediately sets the aim of change by a comparison with the

standards of white people. He says, in fact, that he is known by many respectable whites: he speaks their language, and possesses several cars. He has close business ties with them, and he offers to put them at the service of the local people, who are rather distressed by the Government's Land Rehabilitation Act of 1945.

The Act requires black farmers to limit their livestock in order to avoid soil erosion. The prospect of reducing their number of cattle, which constitutes the core of their wealth, is extremely bewilding to them. Ndebenkulu ('Big Lip') proposes to sell the cattle for R160 per head – a huge price for the 1940's - and to make all men in Nyanyadu very rich.

After long discussions, Mkhwanazi (Ndebenkulu's host) and the men of Nyanyadu agree to the sale, in spite of the objections of MaNtuli (Mkhwanazi's wife) and other women and young men, who mistrust Ndebenkulu. Mkhwanazi's son, Themba, brings in a detective, who recognizes Ndebenkulu as a conman and a trickster that has been active in several parts of the country. The conman is arrested as he is about to board the train to Pietermaritzburg with Nyanyadu's cattle.

## 2.4. Analysis of Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu

### 2.4.1. Setting: individualism vs collectivism

*Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* is set in Nyanyadu and Pietermaritzburg, the city founded by the Voortrekkers following the defeat of Dingane at the Battle of Blood River, and was the capital of the short-lived Boer republic, Natalia. Britain took over Pietermaritzburg in 1843 and it became the seat of the Natal Colony's administration with the first lieutenant-governor, Martin West, making it his home.

Nyanyadu in northern Natal is an old place, a pretty famous place, in fact. The name of the place is taken from that of the nearby Nyanyadu Mountain. If you are travelling to this place, either from Durban in the south or Johannesburg in the north, the best route to take is the one that goes straight to the town of Dundee.

The changing political and agrarian setting transformed the meaning of what it means to be a man in South African context, urban and rural. Nyembezi seems to be

following the apartheid literature trend of writing about the apartheid rural- urban divide. He places Ndebenkulu as a crook coming from the urban area to fool people from the rural area. In doing so, he uses an African oral literary aesthetic of the trickster, one man against the community, who breaks rules of the philosophy of ubuntu for his selfish endeavours. Through the setting which has resulted in the philosophical or cultural bifurcation between rural (iNyanyadu) and urban (uMgungundlovu), Nyembezi displays the two forms of masculinities; the first being that of Ndebenkulu, who has adopted an individualistic form of existence. In Ndebenkulu's words, this is common in his newly developed culture. He is alone and defines himself based on his possessions; what constructs his masculinity is the urban culture where individual possessions are dominant over communitarian values. In a meeting with other black men, Ndebenkulu portrays his hegemonic urban individualistic masculinity

> *Ndebenkulu: Ngikujwayele ukukhuluma ezinhlanganweni zabantu nabelungu. Mgcinisihlalo ngingumuntu onezindawo zami. Angisiye umuntu ohluphekayo nomuntu olambayo. Lapho ngivela khona ngiyahlonishwa kakhulu. Akekho noyedwa umlungu ongaziyo othi lapho engibhalela angalendelisi ngelesikwaya emva kwegama lami (Nyembezi 1960)*
>
> I am used to speaking in huge meetings with white people. I have my own place. Chairperson I have my own places, I am not poor. Where I come from I am much respected, not even one white person who writes to me forgets to write esquire before my name.

There are two classes and strands of masculinity here, produced by different settings: the men of Nyanyadu, who are considered poor and backward by Ndebenkulu, and Ndebenkulu, who portrays himself as better because he thinks, behaves and talks like a white man. Nyembezi displays ways in which Ndebenkulu undermines the community he visits by projecting hegemonic masculinity

The setting portrays and critiques two forms of ontologies; an urban, individualistic, visual ontology which is Eurocentric; and a rural, communitarian Ubuntu ontology. When Ndebenkulu announces his impending arrival, Mkhwanazi quickly goes to all

the men in the area to announce that a visitor is coming to them. Mkhwanazi demonstrates the communitarian values that Ndebenkulu undermines and abuses.

### 2.4.2. Historical milieu and making of the rural-urban masculinities.

In the first two decades of the union of South Africa after the Anglo Boer war, segregation became a distinctive feature of South African political, social, and economic life, as whites addressed the "native question." Blacks were "retribalized" and their ethnic differences highlighted. New statutes provided for racial separation in industrial, territorial, administrative, and residential spheres. This barrage of legislation was partly the product of reactionary attitudes inherited from the past, and partly an effort to regulate class and race relations during a period of rapid industrialization, when the black population was growing steadily.

Rural and urban South Africa began to be organised differently and became bifurcated. Segregation or decentralised despotism would create something more than a territorial segregation between coloniser and the colonised, civil and uncivilised, but an institutional segregation. Entrance into an urbanised area was later considered a privilege for the civilised.

"The African gentleman who adopts the higher standards of civilisation and desires to partake in such immunity should be allowed to partake, provided he does not bring with him followers" Lord Lugard (the colonial officer) citing Milner (Mamdani 1996). This meant that being in a 'civilised' space with 'civilised citizens' in the civilised urban area was a privilege for the civilised natives. Citizenship was therefore a privilege.

Mamdani (1996) argues that the need for labour in the 1900s necessitated the formation of law that would both maintain and crystallise racial segregation, and ensure migration from communal land to the urban, heavily industrialised areas ruled through civil law.

The 1911 Mines and Works Act and its 1926 successor reserved certain jobs in mining and the railways for white workers. The Natives' Land Act of 1913 defined less than one-tenth of South Africa as black reserves, and prohibited any purchase or lease of

land by blacks outside the reserves. The law also restricted the terms of tenure under which blacks could live on white-owned farms. The Native (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 segregated urban residential space and created "influx controls" to reduce access to cities by blacks.

When the Afrikaans National Party, with its apartheid ideology, took over South Africa in 1948, it was faced with problems of black urbanisation and industrial competition between black and white workers; this also necessitated a similar rule of segregation, but this time through force, legislation and systematic propaganda through the print and visual media.

> Black urbanization in 'white' areas and the systematic underdevelopment of homelands also brought a constant struggle for state control over both urban and rural areas. The state apparatus was massively enlarged, and nominative administrative control expanded to all areas of everyday life. This totalitarian extension of state control was a necessary component of apartheid social engineering, but it was a losing battle from the start: the consequences of a failed policy could not be contained by policing. But the repressive use of superior force prevailed for an astonishingly long time (Dobler 2014: 84).

### 2.4.3. Ubuntu

Upon his arrival, Ndebenkulu is received by a family to whom he is not even related. This act of welcoming strangers is innate to African philosophy (*muntu ngumuntu ngabantu*).

Ndebenkulu enacts a form of white-supremacist hegemonic masculinity, which reflects the prevalent view at the time, of white people as superior and black people as inferior. Through the urban and rural settings, Nyembezi introduces the reader to the inequality, the prejudice and hegemonic struggles of the separated spatial milieu. He shows how different spaces construct different strands of masculinities. One form of masculinity (displayed by Ndebenkulu) is philosophically displaced from the

African form of personhood, through the adoption of an individualistic and capitalistic materialistic view of life. Another strand of masculinity is societal.

### 2.4.4. Economic milieu: Isibaya and negotiation of masculinity

Ndebenkulu's main aim is to steal cows from the African people of Nyanyadu. The cows or the kraal (*isibaya*) is pivotal and central to an African livelihood. The location of *Isibaya* indicates this centrality. Even the negotiation of masculinity depended on the number of cows a man owned. Secondly, transition from boyhood to manhood depended on *ilobolo* (cows). Therefore, taking away this central institution displaces how masculinity is constructed in African epistemology.

*Isibaya* in isiZulu is traditionally located at the centre of the homestead, surrounded by a circle of dwellings. This means cattle were often the first things every family member saw as they emerged from their huts at dawn. Each new day would have been greeted by an encounter with the family's most prized possession.

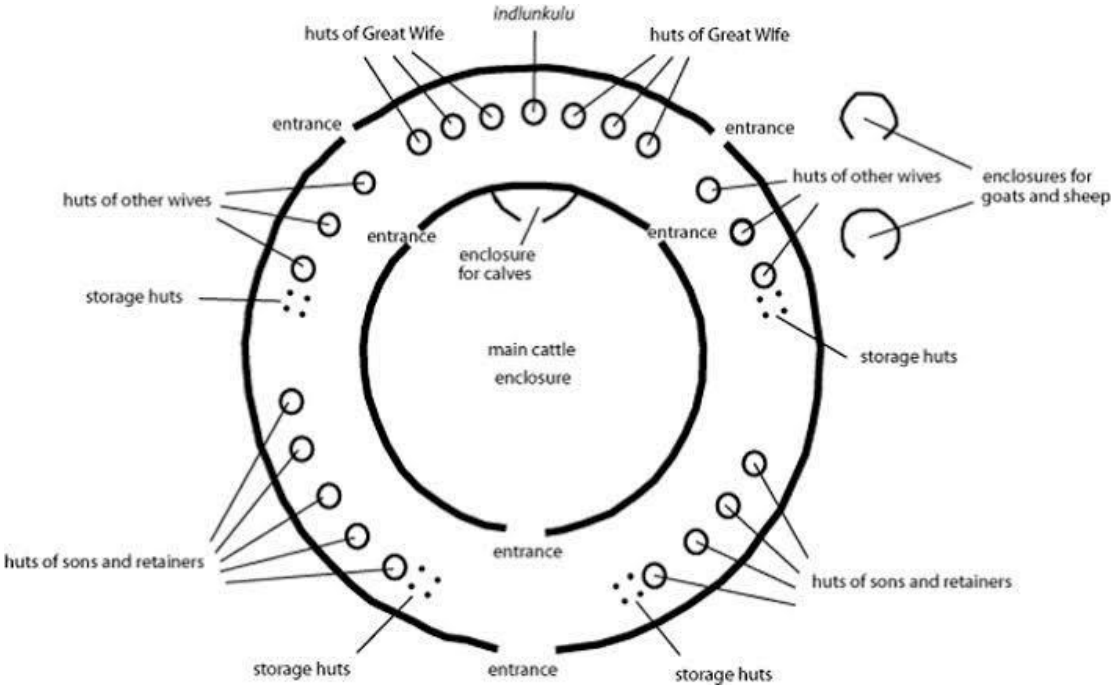



Table 1. (Source: http://www.google.co.za )

The above table displays the centrality of *isibaya*, therefore undermining isibaya means undermining the whole African family, economic and gender structures.

South Africa experienced the effects of the capitalist economy, which was imposed on isiZulu speaking people of Natal, and which differed from the homestead economy. Shope (2006) notes that with the intrusion of colonial capitalism, a new tool for securing the resources (whether it was cash, cattle or consumer goods) the wage-based labour system, was introduced. This suggests that the shift from a homestead economy to a new mechanism for securing resources resulted in the evolution of a new Zulu masculine identity. Shope (2006:64-71) further states that a man, as a result of the new free market economy, had to sell his cattle for cash to purchase goods from the colonists and migrated for work to the cities. Hence, the shift from a homestead economy to new mechanisms of securing resources not only divided the homestead economy but also introduced a dual economy. This means that subsistence activities survived to provide for one sector (homestead economy), and on the other hand the white rule introduced a market sector.

The missionaries shared the sense that livestock enabled Africans to sustain their independent existence, and to resist the invasive reach of the Christian political economy. As Willoughby once put it, "The whole cattle-post system has been alien to our work.... The frequent absence of the people at their posts has been a break in all their learning, as well as an influence of an alien order." Efforts to persuade men to harness their beasts to agricultural production might have been reasonably successful. But, for the most part, the missionaries had failed to displace, or even decenter, the "alien order", that enduringly resistant "barbarism," inscribed in animals. (Commarrof 1991: 208)

The Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission of 1903-5 (South Africa 1905:54), concluded:

> The desire to possess cattle has been in the past a strong incentive to Natives to earn money. Natives have often been heard to say that cattle were their bank and the means of securing their money in a visible and reproductive manner. The destruction of cattle by rinderpest and other cattle plagues has made the investment of money in the manner above

> stated more difficult.... Money is the great medium of business where formerly cattle were used.

The dual economy, which divided the homestead economy (the division of labour along gender lines), contributed to two broad camps: rural life and the urban workplace. Shope explains that the major forms of masculinity which emerged in the twentieth century were shaped by two major experiences and traditions. The first was that of the workplace, primarily the mines. The second was rural life, which became increasingly impoverished as more and more people were crammed into smaller and smaller plots of land (Morrell 2001:13). Rural life was dominated by the chieftaincy, which controlled all access to land and the sexual division of labour, and the urban-workplace was dominated by men.

This indicates that the nationalist masculine identity was now divided into two broad camps, namely: the rural *umnumzane*, which was a "respected" man, and the urban migrant labourer "boy."

The migrant labour system contributed to the division of the homestead economy, which resulted in several strands of masculinity. Vilakazi (2001) demonstrates how the different characteristics of masculinity unfolded among the Zulu labour migrancy. The division of labour along gender lines produced different notions of being a man among the Zulu people. Vilakazi (2001:76-78) emphasizes that the influence of labour migrancy constructed characteristics of masculinity such as *igxagxa, abaqhafi* or *tsotsis, uswenka, isoka, isishimane* and *umahlalela* emanating from the many impacts of material western ways on African kinship. He also notes that migratory labourers' characteristics of masculinity represented the Western cultural tradition.

Carton (2001:135) notes that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the shift from homestead economy to labour migrancy created tension between the homestead heads (subsistence farmers) and cash-earning men and sons. Rankhotha (2002:53) asserts that "although boys would typically labour for their fathers as shepherds, access to schooling gave them the chance to escape from household responsibilities". Hence, the household heads complained about youth who had lost

respect for parents, drifted away from cultural practices, consumed alcohol and cohabitated.

Therefore, Nyembezi appears to display and critique the economic system, which is forcing men to sell their cattle, and which may displace their own sense of humanity and being, as this is centred on *isiBaya*.

When Ndebenkulu is angry that he fell from *inqola*, he threatens to take away all Mkwanazi's cows. In return, Khwanazi is angry at his family. His wife, MaNtuli, tells his child Themba why his father is angry at what happened.

> *"Uyihlo uthukutheliswe ukuthi kucishe kwadliwa isibaya sakhe' (Nyembezi 1960:53)*
>
> Your father is angry because they almost took all his cows.
>
> *Amadoda athi ezwa ethinta izinkomo, ahlalela phambili, ngoba inkomo kuyinto enkulu kubo*. (Nyembezi 1960: 86)
>
> When men heard him speaking about cows, they came and sat in front to hear him well, because cows are important to them.

Nyembezi shows how all the men in the village were perplexed and disgruntled upon hearing that they might lose their cows. This displays ways in which men in African economic episteme construct their wealth and being (manhood) around their cows, and the way in which this might be lost through a westernised man. Symbolically, Nyembezi is critiquing the western philosophy of life, which centralises materialism to the point of tricking African men. Apart from dispossessing Africans of their possessions, colonialism dispossessed the African man of his being.

### 2.4.5. Ndebenkulu (esquire): mimicry and enacting white hegemonic masculinity

Mimicry is a term in post-colonial discourse that defines the ambivalent relationship between coloniser and colonised. When the colonial discourse encourages the colonial subjects to mimic the coloniser's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of those traits. Rather the result is a blurred copy of the coloniser, which can be quite threatening. That is because, according to Bhabha (1994), mimicry is never far from mockery, since it can appear to parody whatever it mimics. Mimicry therefore locates a crack in certainty of the colonial dominance, an uncertainty in its control of the behaviour of the colonised.

Homi K. Bhabha's views are also extrapolated from Frantz Fanon's analysis of colonial psychological fragmentation inherent in the colonial black male subject. Fanon argues that the black male only claims identity through the approval from the world of the white, which creates a destabilising 'double consciousness" (1952). According to Bhabha's reading, the educated, colonised middle class mediates between the white elite and the black underclass, and thus mimics the white ruling class; the colonised class becomes almost the same but not quite white(Bhabha 1994:88). The menace of mimicry then emerges from this double vision.

Through the portrayal of Ndebenkulu, the study shows that another factor shaping masculinity is the mimicry of whiteness. How they think about being white, and everything that has to do with whiteness: wealth, desire and form of dressing.

For example, when *Ndebenkulu* introduces himself in the letter, he introduces himself as the Esquire (Isikwaya).

> *MaNtuli: "Nakhu nawe yise kaThemba uyasho uthi isikwaya abelungu abakhulu. Okusabala ukuthi nomuntu omnyama usuke emkhulu uma kuthiwa uyisikwaya"*
>
> *(Nyembezi 1960: 11)*

Mkhwanazi you've just said that the esquires are important white people, so it means if a black person is an esquire it means he is important.

Nyembezi shows that colonialism made being associated with whiteness a measuring rod for the importance and worthiness of respect of a black person. Therefore, masculinity is constructed and negotiated through whiteness. Women like MaNtuli construct or think about how important a man is through the lenses of his association white men.

Mkhanazi and the men he mentions also think of *isikwaya* as very important because of their association with whiteness.

> *Uyabona izikwaya lezi mina ngike ngizwe MaNtuli kuxoxa amadoda lawa avela ekusebenzeni ngezikwaya zabelungu, abelungu abacebile. Bengingazi ukuthi kukhona nezikwaya zabantu (Nyembezi 1960:11)*

> MaNtuli I usually hear men who work in town talking about white esquires, esquires are wealthy. I didn't know there were black esquires.

When Themba is sent to go to town to fetch Ndebenkulu, Ndebenkulu speaks English to display this association. When he arrives in Nyanyandu and lives with the Mkhwanazi family, Mkhwanazi is fond of him, to the extent that he disregards his own family.

Mkhwanazi's association with Ndebenkulu begins to yield fruits when Mkhwanazi starts speaking English like Ndebenkulu. Ndebenkulu is seen as a hegemonic masculinity and Mkhwanazi is marginalised, with language becoming the key marker of a "better" masculine identity.

> *Ehhe, washo UMkhwanazi waze wakuphinda ngesiNgisi*
> *Suka lapha Yise kaThemba musa ukungihlekisa ngokukhulumisa okukaNdebenkulu,*
> *Phela isiNgisi usithanda kabi lo mfokazi, usuke engakayiqedi inkulumo engakasifaki isiNgisi (1960:40- 41)*

Yes Mkwanazi said, and even repeated in English.

> Stop it baba, you speaking like Ndebenkulu makes me laugh. This fellow loves English so much that he doesn't finish speaking with putting an English word.

Mkhwanazi's masculine identity is affected by Ndebenkulu, who is a representation of whiteness and colonisation. The bifurcated masculinity of Ndebenkulu and Mkhwanazi begins to reflect even on basic philosophies of time:

> *Ndebenkulu: Kusobala Mkhwana ukuthi nisengabantu basemakhaya impela, isikhathi lesi anikasazi kahle.*
>
> *Mkhanazi: Lokho phela kwenziwa ukuthi phela abantu abanawo amawashi, babheka ilanga. Thina nje esijwayele ukusebenzelana nabelungu abakhulu siyakuqonda lokhu ukuthi isikhathi sibaluleke kangakanani (Nyembezi 1960: 77-78)*
>
> Ndebenkulu: it is clear to me that you are really rural, you don't even understand the time.
>
> Mkhwanazi: that is because people do not have watches so they use the sun because we usually work with white people, we understand that time is very important.

The conversation takes place while they are waiting for men to come to the meeting held at a school, and most men are late. Nyembezi uses this concept to show different world views, the hegemony of the western knowledge and the epistemic violence of colonisation.

The concept of time in African indigenous knowledge differs from that of the west. Mbiti (1969) has argued that the western concept of time is linear, whereas the African concept of time is epochal and wrapped around events and activities. He argues that numerical calendars are not African, and what exists in Africa is a phenomenon calendar, in terms of which the events that constitute time are reckoned. Nyembezi also raises the question of African epistemology through his characters, and the concept of time. Colonialism also disrupted African thought and reckoned it as barbaric.

Men who had already arrived are heard complaining about Ndebenkulu's view that people who do not keep time are barbaric.

> *"Uthi abantu abangagcini isikhathi abaphucuzekile"*

"He said people who don't keep time are barbaric"

The old man responded with "*abantu laba sebaphenduka abelungu"*

"Black people have turned to white people" (Nyembezi 1960: 78)

### 2.4.6. Literary onomastics and two ontologies:

Another African epistemological aspect used in the novel is naming. Naming in the African ways of knowing plays a critical role in understanding identity and identity formation. Names in African indigenous knowledge systems are purposeful.

Zungu (2016) denotes that names identify people and link name-bearers to different identities, as projected and perceived by the community. She further notes that isiZulu names form part of indigenous knowledge; names in the Zulu culture are given to address issues of a communal nature.

Koopman (2001) also explains that the reasons for giving names in the Zulu society can be circumstantial or at some point refer to the wider clan, including reference to the ancestral spirits. Hitherto, names in literature are deeply embedded in the African philosophy and form part of the identity of the character. The personhood of the character, whether good/bad can be deducted in the name. Nyembezi names the antagonist Ndebenkulu (the one with the big lips) metaphorically big mouth, to highlight the type of person he is. Ndebenkulu speaks highly of himself and sees himself as more civilised and progressive then other men.

The text shows that Ndebenkulu sees himself as a better man because he meets with but is not employed by white people, and because he speaks English.

In a meeting with other black men, he says,

"*Ngikujwayele ukukhuluma ezinhlanganweni zabantu nabelungu"*

*Mgcinisihlalo ngingumuntu onezindawo zami. Angisiye umuntu ohluphekayo nomuntu olambayo. Lapho ngivela khona ngiyahlonishwa kakhulu. Akekho noyedwa umlungu ongaziyo othi lapho engibhalela angalendelisi ngelesikwaya emva kwegama lami (Nyembezi 1960: 89)*

I am used to speaking in meetings with black and white people.

> Chairperson I have my own places, I am not poor. Where I come from I am much respected, not even one white person who writes to me forgets to write esquire before my name.

There are two classes and strands of masculinity produced by aspiration to whiteness: the men of Nyanyadu who are considered poor and backward by Ndebenkulu; and Ndebenkulu himself, is seen as better because he thinks, behaves and talks like a white man.

In *The Negro and Language*; the opening chapter of Black Skin / White Masks (1954), Frantz Fanon explains the psychological phenomenon of language and black people: a man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language. The world expressed by English is the Eurocentric world, which is depicted as civilised. Therefore, a black man denounces his language (which has been presented as barbaric) to associate himself with the civilised world. He further explains that the black man has two dimensions. One with his fellows, the other with the white man. "A Negro behaves differently with a white man and with another Negro". This self-division is a direct result of colonialist subjugation.

This self-division is what Du Bois dubs *double consciousness* and explains that:

> It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder (in Gilroy 1993)

Nyembezi portrays this two-ness through the character of Ndebenkulu and latter Mkhanazi masculinities, as a direct result of colonisation and subjugation.

### 2.4.7. Themba (hope) and humour

While Fanon argues that white gaze forces black men into self-alienating mimicry of white men, Homi K. Bhabha refashions mimicry as a form of qualified resistance to

colonial authority. He reads ambivalence and mimicry as paradigms of resistance in which irony and parody become psychological empowerment.

The masculinity of Themba, Mkhwanazi's son, plays a critical role in the novel. Nyembezi uses this character to humorously show flaws in the mimicking masculinity of Ndebenkulu. Themba is better educated than the others in the home. From the outset, Themba laughs and mocks the name Ndebenkulu, and challenges his father. He is sent to town (Thisayidi) to get Ndebenkulu and bring him to Nyanyadu. Their first meeting does not go well, as Themba is quite annoyed and angered by the arrogance of Ndebenkulu. He gets him to ride Carriage (ikalishi) and places his 'most expensive bag' in a way that angers Ndebenkulu. When they get to KwaMkwanazi, Ndebenkulu falls. His fall from the carriage becomes a joke to Themba and he laughs at his faked accent.

Furthermore Themba, from the influence of his mother, suspects the criminality of Ndebenkulu. When he hears that some of the men have agreed to sell their cows, he tells his young friend Diliza:

> *Lo mfokazi ubona ukuthi kukwantuthu lapha, ufice izilima.*
> *Ezakhithi (izinkomo) zohamba ngifile (Nyembezi: 1960:143)*
> This man thinks, this is a rural place, he thinks he met fools here
> My father's cows we be sold over my dead body

He even attempts to bring evidence proving that Ndebenkulu is a thief. His are brought into fruition as this man is arrested. Themba's masculinity is crucial to the message Nyembezi's message. Themba means hope. He brings hope to his family and protects it against a thief. He protests against hegemonic white masculinity (in a black body). Humour is used by Themba in the sense that Bhabha reads it: as a parody and as resistance. Nyembezi's work qualifies as protest literature through the characterisation of Themba, who brings hope and denounces hegemonic masculinity.

## 2.5. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to read *Inkinsela YaseMgungudlovu's* depiction of masculinities and prevalent African philosophical concepts as a way of showing resistance to the apartheid regime. This, the chapter argues, qualifies this work as socially committed.

The chapter displays that the ways in which Nyembezi uses the dichotomy of his rural-urban setting. It is influenced by the writing of the apartheid era, however, Nyembezi uses this to decipher and contrast two opposing **ontologies**. He shows this by introducing the concepts of materialism and individualism through Ndebenkulu, and the philosophy of ubuntu shown to him by the family and the community. This exhibited how apartheid stratification and separate development influenced gender construction in the apartheid era. Reading on masculinity shows the ways in which Nyembezi successfully used Ndebenkulu's masculinity and antagonism to display the failures and hypocrisy of colonialism. He shows humorously the extent in which hegemonic masculinity is constructed through whiteness in colonial spaces.

He does this by using the literary onomastics embedded in Africa indigenous knowledge systems, by naming Ndebenkulu and Themba. Ndebenkulu speaks highly of himself and his achievements. He emulates whiteness. The names grants us access to the character of Ndebenkulu. On the other end, there is Themba (Hope) who opposes this hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, Nyembezi plays on the conflict of the centre and the margins, and shows through Themba how the margins can resist the centre. The margins are the rural areas of the black people who have been disposed of their land and resources by the urban, white centre.

*CHAPTER 3*

***Ubuntu: Ukuhlonipha* and the living-dead in the construction of masculinity in *Ulaka lwabeNguni.***

## 3.1. Introduction

This chapter's reading of *uLaka lwabeNguni* delves into the portrayal of masculinity in the rural/urban andAfrica/western dichotomy. The main objective is uncover the ways in which the apartheid-era African languages literature uses indigenous knowledge systems to critique the apartheid regime's ideology and imperialism. African languages literature in this era has been accused by scholars (Kunene) of being thematically pro-colonial, childish and avoiding socio-political issues. Many scholars argue that the rural-urban theme, prominent in the apartheid era Africa language literature, was used as a critical ideological tool for deepening and rationalizing the divide of the apartheid rule.

The theme is that "Jim comes to town" and squanders his/her life because the township life is presumably not suitable for black people and is then justifiably forced to go back to the rural areas. It was prominent in the Apartheid era and used as a tool to perpetuate the ideology of separate development. The motif also focused on the dialectic between the African and Western, rural/urban and tradition vs modernity. This theme can be seen in most isiZulu novels and films, including *Ulaka LwabaNguni* (1988), *Kungavuka abaNguni*, *Mntanami Mntanami* (1967) and in films such as *uDeliwe* (1975).

This conflict constitutes a constant motif in most early literatures in South Africa, as stated by Scheub (1985:493):

> These two broad areas of literary activity (i.e. Traditional Zulu life and the new Christian ways) were to combine in the 1930's in imaginative literature, thereby producing the crucial conflicts which have profoundly concerned Southern African writers for decades: the urban, Christian, westernized milieu versus the traditional African past.

Is it upon this basis and more, that a number of scholars consider African languages literature as to have lacked rigor and commitment in countering these ideologies.

As Mhlambi (2012) has noted:

> In the view of many commentators, the picture with regard to African-language literature is bleak. To many critics, African-language literature both in the present and the past is a failed enterprise. In their view it is a literature dominated by the demands of the school market, and it has tended to produce repetitive and childish plots. It is a literature that has failed to respond to the socio-political and historical realities from which it has emerged.

She further argues that one feature of African-language literatures that is often misunderstood by postcolonial theorists is its apolitical nature; that it does not engage directly with the political topics of land dispossession, racial capitalism, racial repression, and exclusion, etc., which have deeply affected Africans in South Africa. Given this characteristic, some critics have dismissed it as socially and politically inconsequential.

In response to such criticism, Mathonsi (2002 and 2012) and Mtuze (1995) counter that this perception is misguided and uninformed. They argue that not all the literature in African languages published in South Africa during the apartheid period showed a lack of commitment to confronting or reflecting the weighty social problems that civil society in South Africa faced. They point out that there were some committed works from oral literature.

Mhlambi (2012) argues that these critiques use a Eurocentric philosophical lenses to read the African languages canon, and that a new approach in reading African languages literature is imperative.

It is upon this premise that this chapter reads *Ulaka lwabeNguni* within the framework of African personhood and other Afrocentric episteme. The chapter argues that *Ulaka*

*lwabaNguni* is socially committed, and that it critiques deeper social ills as perceived in an African ontology and framework. The previous analysis of the novels by Kubheka have focused on Kubheka's structural ingenuity. This reading shift from that focus, and reads the interplay of masculinity within the rural/urban, western/African dichotomy in the apartheid era. Secondly, it zooms in on the ways in which African concepts are used by Kubheka to critique the apartheid ideology.

Kubheka's three novels (Kungavuka AbaNguni, Ulaka LwabaNguni and Umthathe Uzala Umlotha) present thought-provoking and disturbing reflections on modern life, and excesses and abuses in the process of transformation from a rural to urban society. The researcher has chosen to analyse the novel *Ulaka LwabaNguni* because of its suitability for the purpose of the study (Mathonsi 2012).
Furthermore Mathonsi has commented on the ingenuity of *Ulaka LwabaNguni*'s social commitment, and states that:

> Ulaka LwabaNguni is one book which is not alien to the aspirations and experiences of the masses when most modern African language books are sociologically conditioned by both the colonial and the apartheid milieus. The book reflects the writer's imaginative response to social reality. The author has seemingly known and experienced cultural imperialism and racial-political domination, that is why he is a cultural nationalist and a teacher who wants to instil dignity in his own people (Mathonsi 2012: 208)

The Publishers have also praised this novel by saying of this novel, the novel is indeed a work of great art. The author does not only create suspense in narrating the story, but also portrays social conflict based on racial prejudice experienced in the world of the characters in the novel. Quoted in Hlengwa and Kubheka (1993).

### 3.2. Summary of the *uLaka LwabaNguni*

The novel presents three main characters, Sikhwama Mkhize, a farm worker; his wife, maGumede and their son, Mphakamiseni. When the novel begins, maGumede is deliberating on Sikhwama's having accepted his condition on the farm. As soon as Sikhwama comes back from work on the white farm, he starts cooking sheep's tails. maGumede, who, at face value, is against the disgusting odor caused by cooking the sheep's tails, actually objects to the spirit of acquiescence and servitude adopted by the family head, Sikhwama. As long as they stay on the farm, they have no prospects of improving their lives. Her frustration is further fuelled by the fact that they have a young son, Mphakamiseni ('Raise him up!'), whom she does not want to be condemned to the same type of servitude that they have endured. There is no school for the children on the farm, and the farmer and his wife show no respect for their workers. Sikhwama is used to this type of life and work, and has no great esteem for school education (Mathonsi 2012: 210).

MaGumede, on the other hand, convinces her husband to send Mphakamiseni to her brother, Joseph Gumede, a school teacher. The opportunity for changing Mphakamiseni's life and opening up endless avenues for progress and advancement comes when Joseph agrees to raise him as his own son and educate him. Thus the social elevation of Mphakamiseni begins. From the fact that Joseph is always addressed by his Christian name, we understand that he may not share any aspect of traditional life. Thus Mphakamiseni grows up away from his own parents and culture, and eventually goes with his uncle to Clermont, from where he is sent to Mariannhill to complete his matric. The boy does well and even qualifies for the Medical School where he qualifies as a doctor. However, the type of education that he has received from his uncle makes him despise the uneducated (*amaqaba*), and refuse to visit his biological parents. By this time, however, he is so alienated from his rural roots that he has even changed his name in MacPherson, as if the name alone should enable him to become a Scot. The author does not tell us whether MacPherson ever thinks or dreams of his parents, and the break with his African origins seems complete. The Mkhize family, on the other hand, have left the humiliating farm life. One day

Mphakamiseni sees his mother walking in Durban with a friend. MaGumede rushes to him, but Mphakamiseni is ashamed to associate himself with *iqaba* and uncultured woman and runs away. At their new place, MaGumede develops an illness and goes to hospital. At King Edward VIII Hospital she looks with anticipation at the prospect of seeing her doctor son and to be treated by him. On enquiry, she is told that there is no Mphakamiseni working there but there is a Doctor Mac (MacPherson abbreviated). The young doctor again refuses to have anything to do with her, and declares that such a primitive woman cannot be his mother (Kubheka and Hlengwa 1993).

MaGumede gets very upset once again. On a subsequent visit to King Edward VIII Hospital, MaGumede again approaches Mphakamiseni and calls him her son. Mphakamiseni, however, rudely disowns his mother publicly. Out of sheer embarrassment, MaGumede runs out of the hospital and is crushed by a passing car and dies. Sikhwama, Mphakamiseni's father, accuses him of killing his own mother through the arrogance acquired by means of his studies and of his westernization. When the accident happens, we think Mphakamiseni has won the day, but his failure totally suppress his conscience causes culture and blood to re-appear in his stony heart. Remorse sets in, but Mphakamiseni tries not to show any emotions. His mother then begins the process of re-educating him in the human values (*ubuntu*) that he had thrown out of the window. The process is long, with his mother, who keeps appearing in dreams, nearly succeedingto making Mphakamiseni do the right thing: a proper burial and *ukubuyisa* (restoring the spirit of the deceased) ceremony for his mother. All she wants is recognition of her role in his life. She gave him life; made it possible for him to study and break away from the servitude of farm life. She demands the respect that is due to her as a mother, a respect that must extend to her beliefs and to the rituals to which she was accustomed. Mphakamiseni, however, keeps delaying for no apparent reason, except personal comfort. He buys a car, furthers his studies, marries and buys a house. Eventually the ancestors get angry, and take revenge on the young doctor, his wife and their unborn child. The final car accident causes a massacre that destroys the whole family, and even the possibility of a future.

## 3.3. Analysis of *Ulaka lwabaNguni*

### 3.3.1. *Ubuntu- Ukuhlonipha* as a rite of passage to manhood

*Ulaka LwabaNguni* (the wrath of the Nguni ancestors) falls upon Mphakamiseni because of his disregard and disrespect for his parents and his greater family, the ancestors. Kubheka uses the concept of *ukuhlonipha* to criticize the influence of western education which alienates black people from their people and their way of life. Mphakamiseni's upbringing in his westernised uncle's house has made him lose the core African values that construct manhood. To lack respect (*ukuhlonipha*) in the African knowledge system means to not be fully human according to the system of *Ubuntu.*

The philosophy and ethical system of *Ubuntu* relies heavily on good kinship. Therefore *ukuhlonipha* (respect) becomes central and is praised in the Zulu/African culture. Masculinity and the quality of a 'good man' is constructed vis-a-vis the ability to respect and obey seniority and the environment. Vilakazi (1962:73) states that respect for seniors is one of the fundamental values that determine the identity of a Zulu person.

He explains that *ukuhlonipha* is to show appropriate respect for authority and seniority (1962:73). Hammond-Tooke concurs that the virtues of a "good man" in the Zulu society are, namely: respect for seniors, loyalty to kinsmen, and freedom from suspicion of witchcraft, generosity, meticulous observance of custom, loyalty, kindness and forbearance. Therefore the personhood/manhood depended on the adherence to these qualities.

In Africa indigenous thought, failure to adhere to the principles of *ukuhlonipha* is considered failure to be part of the community or rather be considered a failed human being.

Mbiti holds that as far as African societies are concerned, personhood is something at which individuals could fail, at which they could be competent or ineffective, better or worse. Hence, the African emphasized the rituals of incorporation and the overarching necessity of learning the social rules by which the community lives, so

that what was initially biologically-given can become something to attain. Mphakamiseni is a typical example of a man who has failed in the ethical system.

While prominent Zulu men would typically obey a superior, for example their king or chief, they would also demand respect from juniors. People failing to demonstrate proper reverence – such as unruly youths – risked being punished as ill-disciplined outcasts who invited the wrath of lineage ancestors, a dreaded fount of misfortune.

Ben Carton's work (2012) at turn of the century in southern Zululand and northern Natal shows how the spread of colonial influence via the imposition of taxes and the settler control of the economy gave generational struggle a new edge, which involved open defiance of the authority of the elders and flagrant disregard for custom, including the showing of respect (such as *hlonipha*) and authority for patriarchal control over ritual.

He further explains that the imperative to earn bride wealth in a declining rural economy devastated by rinderpest, forced young men either to seek work in the colonial economy or to modify or reject the customs altogether. Young men, in particular, did not turn their backs on the emerging labor market. They saw it as an avenue - and perhaps their only avenue - toward greater social status and autonomy, in a world of increasing colonial land appropriation and growing magisterial encroachment on domestic affairs, invariably at the behest of a weakened African patriarchy whose own authority needed buttressing by the Natal Native Code. -. Their responses reflected both options: entering the labor market, but becoming economically independent in the process, and in ignoring the traditional way of living.

In *Ulaka LwabaNguni*, Kubheka's (1988) second novel, he returns to the themes of Western against African, rural versus urban, traditional versus modern education. He displays how western forms of knowledge corrupt Mphakamiseni's manhood in his failure to honor his parents and his ancestors. Through disrespecting his parents, he has further disrespected the greater family. His pride or manhood emanates from his individualistic inclinations and title he has got through western education. Therefore, Kubheka in this rural-urban motif, questions the western forms of knowing and clears

displays ways in which he alienates and project supremacy over black people. In the same way, Joseph Gumede wants to be addressed with his Christian name only. The author's milieu and conflicts places western education and *Ubuntu* in the battle field. He further shows how masculinities in African knowledge systems can never be separated from the collective, *abantu* (the people). The construction masculinities in this novel show the ways in which Africans place people through *ukuhlonipha* before self. Therefore, to be a man in an African society, according to Kubheka in the novels, Mphakamiseni should have observed the ethical system of *ukuhlonipha*. His failure to do so results in him not becoming the'man that African society expected him to be.

This, Kubheka also shows, is the direct result of colonialism. Colonialism disposed the Mkhize family of all them means to take care of themselves systematically leaving them with a predetermined choice of working on farm. It has left them with only one option for educating their son - sending him to be educated in a western context which then corrupted his personhood and his manhood.

The various societies found in traditional Africa routinely accept the fact that personhood is a thing which has to be attained, and is attained in direct proportion to one's participation in communal life, through the discharging of the various obligations defined by one's own society.

### 3.3.2. Mphakamiseni – the living dead and masculinity

The anger of the Nguni ancestors' is directed at a proud young doctor who has cut off all links with his African past, to the point of making himself a Scotsman by changing his name to MacPherson, and cannot see the need to acknowledge his biological mother, because she had contributed very little to his upbringing. He publicly denounces her mother.

This leads to maGumede's words, on calling upon the whole Nguni clan - the living and the dead - to participate in her anger.

She loudly and clearly expresses this in the words:

> "We, sizwe sabeNguni! Kodwa umuntu uyofa nini aphumule kulolu sizi? Ngabe yisilingo? Ngabe yisiqalekiso sani sona lesi? Zonke izinsuku pho? Yonke imihla namalanga?
> Yilumbo ngibafunge aBaNguni!"

(You people of the Nguni tribe! When shall one ever be delivered from hardship? Is it a test? What sort of a curse is this? Everyday? Day after day? I swear by the Nguni people, it is wizardry! (Kubheka 1998:1)

MaGumede's cry for help, calling the Nguni tribe, comes from the place of understanding that the living and the living dead can hear her and that they know her son.

In African epistemology, what constitutes the character of a man is not just his own individual ontology and being, but his community of the living and the living dead. John Mbiti (1969), stats that we could call the inhabitants of the ancestral community by the name of the "living dead."' For the ancestral dead are not dead in the world of spirits, nor are they dead in the memory of living men and women who continue to remember them, and who incessantly ask their help through various acts of libation and sacrificial offering.

His being as a man is not only constructed by his individual ontology, but by the whole community of the living and the dead. The living dead have an influence in the land of the living. In African religion there are the ancestors who are the intermediaries between man and God. Disclaiming your ancestors is like crushing the bridge that takes you to God, and then to still hoping to reach him. Sikhwama believes that the survival of at least one child is due to the ancestors' intervention (Mathonsi 2012). Mphakamiseni's emotional instability is caused by his failure to acknowledge his parents when they were still alive, as well as the living-dead.

A balanced family for an African society is that which consists of the ancestors and the living. *Abaphansi* (ancestral spirit) enjoy as much right as *abaphilayo* (the living).

The ancestors look after and protect the family from harm and guide them from pitfalls and traps of life (Koopman 2002).

Mphakamiseni puts more emphasis on his right as an individual and totally forgets to open up and invite others into his world. He leaves it until too late to provide him the opportunity to be helped. To the ancestors (*izithutha*), because of his failure to commit and align himself with either side, he is like a man who has committed an unpardonable sin. In this regard, the author's point of view is:

> *Iphutha labakuye ekubambeni kwakhe imfundo ngomsila acabange ukuthi imbeke endaweni engcono nephezulu nefanelwe ngabafundile kuphela*. (Kubheka, 1988:220)
>
> (The mistake he made was to grab education with its tail and think it had elevated him to the position that is suitable for the school-educated only.)

Mphakamiseni's masculinity shifts from that of traditional, and his act of defying his own family (of the living and the living-dead) who have made him who he is results in his misfortunes. His western education amounts to nothing and alienates him from his own people. He becomes a pseudo-white. In African culture, as Kubheka shows, taking care of your parents is an integral part of *Ubuntu* and it becomes spiritual.

### 3.3.4. Naming as protest of pseudo-whiteness

Naming is an important cultural attribute of formulating identities. It is pivotal in the birth and association of humans into the Zulu family Suzman (1994) notes that, traditionally, personal names are unique and meaningful, emerging from circumstances at the time of the child's birth. She explains that fathers and grandfathers were the name-givers. The giving of a name to a child is significant within the larger family, with the consequence that the child is rarely the focus of his or her name. Zungu (2016) further notes that naming in African culture is communal. She further notes that names can also project aspirations of the parents.

Ngubane (2013) also explains that personal naming is viewed as a significant process of bestowing a name upon a child as a symbol of identity. Colonialism in South Africa affected cultural identity formation. Ngubane, in his study of the shifts in the naming

practices in South Africa (2013) finds that, previously, personal names were in the isiZulu language, with socio-cultural meanings and reasons attached to them. During the colonial and apartheid period, naming practices changed to include English or colonial names and those foreign to the Zulu people.

Neethling (2003) asserts that having a Xhosa/Zulu name and an English name is clearly a legacy of colonialism, which was carried forward into the apartheid era, when blacks remained in subservient positions and had no economic or political power.

Therefore, this displays that naming is not just a practice with no significance; it is a cultural and a political statement. As a result, in e post-apartheid South Africa, some have denounced their English names as a sign of freedom. However, in the text, *uLaka Lwabanguni,* Mphakamiseni changes his name from isiZulu to English. Mphakamiseni was a name given to him at home because of the aspirations his mother had for him:

> *Ngifisa sengathi angandiza njalo aye phezulu emazulwini angavumi ukubheka emuva hleze abuye alingeke akhumbule lapha kwamh/aba engcindezini. (Kubheka, 1988:92-93)*
>
> *(*'I so wish he could continually go up to the heavens. And never want to look back lest he be tempted to long for the life of slavery here on earth.)

After Mphakamiseni has become a doctor, he identifies himself as Dr. Mac, short for Macpherson. When his mother searches for him at the hospital, she cannot find him because no one knows him as Mphakamiseni. Kubheka uses naming, understanding it's deep meaning within Africans. He uses it to show a transitional change in identity and further critiques this as *ilumbo* (debauchery). Taking an English name symbolizes adopting and assimilating with the colonial culture in the Apartheid and colonial context. Colonialism seems to have creeped in in how masculinity is constructed in South Africa. Kubheka portrays this as part of what makes abaNguni angry.

## 3.5. Conclusion

This chapter sought to demonstrate the influence of African philosophies in the construction of masculinity as portrayed in the book, *Ulaka LwabaNguni*. It further displayed the ways in which Kubheka uses African philosophies to criticize western cultural and mental imperialism.

*Ukuhlonipha* (respect) is a central part of *ubuntu*, and is shown here as a tool used to demonstrate how western education moved black people/black men away from their own traditions and philosophies of existence within their communities, and how this affects the way in which they interact with others. Through the character Mphakamiseni (raise him up), Kubheka shows how he did not want to associated with his family once he had become a doctor.

He further shows the conflict between individualism and collectivism, and shows in broader sense the disadvantages of western individualist nature. The chapter also showed the role of the living dead in the construction of masculinity. Therefore, to understand ways in which men in Africa think about themselves and others, these ideas of how African society thinks about identity in Africa are important. It is also important to acknowledge the influence of colonialism in the identity construction of black men.

## *CHAPTER 4*

## *Umsebenzi Uyindlala (Work is Scarce)* (2005): The economic and phallic potency in the construction of masculinity in post-apartheid South Africa

### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter builds on the last chapter on masculinity. However, in this chapter the analysis focuses on how masculinity is constructed and portrayed in the post-apartheid literature. The chapter will focus on how the author critiques phallic potency or the use of sex and money to dominate and control female bodies and negotiate their masculinity.

The tackling of contemporary issues in African languages literature discredits the argument made by critics that the themes in African languages literature are childish.

In this novel Nelisiwe Msimang, tackles the theme of unemployment and ways in which men in positions of power use that advantageously to give positions and jobs in exchange for sexual favors. The overarching thematic issue that Msimang deals with is the issue of poverty and joblessness. The economic system that the characters exist in leads them to make decisions not out of choice, but imposed by their socio-economic circumstances. This trajectory falls into the Marxist analytical view of literature. Marxism focuses on the relationship between the perceived lower working class of society or proletariat, also known as the Infrastructure, and the Superstructure, or upper class of society, referred to as the bourgeoisie in Karl Marx's (1818-83) discussions. A Marxist analysis of a text explores the ways in which the ruling influencers of society can be said to oppress the lower class, while acting with their own interests. This includes the act of commodification and exploitation of the labour of the working class. In this case the upper class is gendered and uses economic ability and the phallus to oppress the feminine lower class. This text can be read within a Marxist feminist framework.

Marxist feminism refers to a set of theoretical frameworks that have emerged out of the intersection of Marxism and feminism. Marxism and feminism examine forms of systematic inequalities that lead to the experiences of oppression for marginalized

individuals. Marxist feminists argue that a feminism that aims at improving women's subordinate situation cannot ignore the material realities of women's lives under the capitalist system (Holmstrom, 2002). A feminist perspective aims at explaining women's oppression under capitalism, and they signal critical engagement with historical materialism. Historical materialism refers to the recognition that the production of life is a systemic process and takes place through a system of cooperative activities within which individuals collectively provide for living needs. Historical materialism addresses the existence of a material reality that conditions the social, political, and intellectual processes and highlights the social construction of reality under capitalism (Armstrong & Armstrong, 1985).

In this chapter the portrayal of male characters will be analysed to understand ways in which the author critiques or perpetuate masculinity stereotypes in literature; in particular, it will look at how economic and phallic potency is used by men to negotiate their masculinity and ways in which the author problematizes or be silent on this issue.

### 4.2. Summary of *Umsebenzi Uyindlala*

This novel is set in the democratic South Africa. Nunu, the protagonist, livedwith her grandmother and brother Bongani in Groutville in the mission. Nunu's parents are deceased because of AIDS. Nunu has been trying without successto apply for jobs and take her family out of squalor and poverty. At times they are assisted by Vika, Nunu's boyfriend. After many failed attempts, she gets a letter from the Durban municipality for an interview. The moment she is interviewed, one of the managers in the municipality, Mike, gazes at Nunu cunningly. Mike is apparently known for his love for women. Nunu gets a job and it isthe beginning of her problems and struggles with Vika. Vika knows Mike and his ways, therefore it made him uneasy.

Nunu's lack of skill lands her in the arms of Mike for assistance to get used to the job and working at the municipality.

Mike tries everything in his power to separate Nunu from Vika. Mike then tried using numerousschemes to lure Nunu into sleeping with him. One fateful day, Mike picks

up Nunu for a lift to work; at the same time Vika comes to pick her up. Upon seeing Vika, Mike drives off swiftly and speeds to a hotel, where he tries desperately to get Nunu to be intimate with him as a gesture of appreciation for all he had done for her. Nunu refuses and tries with all her powers to distance herself from Mike.

At work, the story of Mike's nepotism and his abuse of power begin making the rounds. He is then fired by an Indian manager. As the story reaches its climax, Vika gets a new electricity tender and his life gets better. While the story speaks about Nunu, there is also an interplay of masculinities with the story. Furthermore, the post-1994 setting warrants analysis in order to make full meaning of the power play within the story.

## 4.3. Analysis of *Umsebenzi Uyindlala*

### 4.3.1 The state of black women, post-1994, and masculinity.

The title of the Novel, *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* (Work is Scarce) and the female character warrant that the text be read within a historical materialism paradigm. For that reason Marxist feminism and an Afrocentric theory are fitting tools in analysing the plight of black South African women in the capitalistic post-apartheid South Africa.

The post-1994 democratic victory did not yield equal gains for black women and men. Gender inequality remains a huge and complex problem in the democratic South Africa. Although there is a plethora of policies for women's empowerment the reality is that black women still face nuances of alienation in terms of social class, structural inequality, epistemological access, language and sexual abuse (Akala 2018:50).

The novel *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* is set in the post-1994 milieu and narrates the dire situation of women's struggles around getting a job and a lack of skills; which results in them and thereby ending up as prey for men who exchange jobs for sex.

The women's struggle and the origin of these problems, as set out in the *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* narrates is multifaceted. Apart from the general marginalisation of black people, women's struggle originates from the number of different nuanced factors that Hassim (1991) has dubbed a triple tragedy, caused by racism, social class and sexism.

Race uses colour as a major factor to extol the supposed superiority and privilege of one group, and the inferiority and subservience of the other race. Racism, as Lorde (1984:110) defines it, is the belief in the inherent superiority of one race over the other and therefore the right to dominance: it is an ideology that justifies dominance. In the South African context, racism, colonialism and apartheid are correlated. White people exercise dominance and privilege (social, economic and political) over black people. Racism also intersects with sexism, as it places white men at the pinnacle of the race hierarchy and black women at the bottom. The index of sexism uses the same prism of masculinity being inherently superior to femininity. Sexism promotes biases, stereotypes and prejudicial positions against women.

The intersection of racism, social class and sexism, manifested in the apartheid legal system, which barred women's ownership of land, and denied epistemological access over their male counterparts. Meinjties (1996) explains that the form of customary law codified under the Apartheid regime denied women adult status; by placing land in the hands of men. Walker (1993) further explains that black women lacked protection, and were denied access to meaningful education, housing, transportation and economic opportunities, due the colour of their skin and gender.

Msimang (2001), writing on education, argues that apartheid and colonial education system fostered gender inequality. It reproduced dominant hegemonic views of stereotypical masculinity and femininity. Msimang further argues that the exclusionary nature of missionary education contributed in the perpetuation of patriarchal ideologies. Furthermore, Bantu education prepared and educated black boys and girls differently to prepare them for different gender roles. Girls were prepared for domestic work (housekeeping) and some for teaching in lower grades.

Verwoerd's 1954 speech (in Tumner and Rose 1975: 265) nurtured these gender stereotypes:

> Since a woman is by nature so much better fitted for handling young children and as the great majority of Bantu pupils are to be found in the lower classes of the primary school, it follows there should be far more

> female than male teachers in the service. The Department will ... declare the posts of assistants in lower and, perhaps to a certain extent in higher primary schools, to be female teachers' posts.... This measure in the course of time will bring about a considerable saving of funds, which can be devoted to another purpose, namely, to admit more children to school. (Rose and Tunmer 1975: 265).

The socio-economic setting of this novel displays ways in which the society has been constructed to perpetuate the marginalisation of women in the post-1994 era. Nunu finds herself in a milieu where she is without agency nor education to take control of her life. The socio-economic conditions created by the apartheid system, together with the neo-colonial democratic government fail women such as Nunu economically.

These legacies and consequences of the apartheid gendered education are seen in the novel, *Umsebenzi Uyindlala*. Nunu's job hunting yields a positive result. She is excited that she will work as a secretary in an office in Durban.

> *Okwakobani nje ukuba umabhalane womuntu osezintanjeni zazo zonke izindaba zeTheku. (Msimang 2005:19)*
>
> *(*Wow just imagine, being a secretary to a person who is responsible for the whole business of Durban.)

Gabisile, Nunu's friend, also contends that she is lucky to get a job this high status, because in their time, jobs such as this were not available. This is the only job Nunu can get because of her level of education. Therefore, her aspirations are limited by her education.

On the other hand, Bongani, Nunu's brother, is confined to a wheelchair, because he was shot while at the University. Bongani has been given the opportunity to attend university whereas Nunu, as a girl does, has not. This demonstrates the continued unequality in access to education in post–1994 South Africa. As a result, Nunu falls into the predatory hands of Mike, who has to train her for the new job. Mike then demands sexual favours in exchange for the job and training. Mosetse (1998); Hill and

St Rose (2010) and Mutekwe et al. (2011) explain that girls and women aspire to take up jobs that are considered suitable for females.

The gender inequality and power dynamics in this novel display the failure of the democratic government to transform and decolonise South Africa post 1994. This situation leads to the normalising of sexist and patriarchal tendencies.

There are other masculinity issues at play here, like Bongani powerlessness, Vika's construction of his own masculinity, and Mike's hegemonic masculinity.

The central issue is the way in which the society and apartheid and post-apartheid laws in particular have privileged men. Their masculinity is then constructed around that privilege.

### 4.3.2. Writing for the male gaze

The other factor that fuels these patriarchal tendencies is ways in which the author, writing on women's issues, writes for the male gaze.

Rose (2010) states that the depiction of women in textbooks and school structures is also to blame for entrenching the inferior positions allocated to them. She explains that in most cases, society and social institutions assign "important or meaningful roles that require serious work and intellectual capability and capacity to men". Roles such as being a granny, a mother, a queen, a princess or a witch feed into the narrative that women are domesticated, and ought not to be taken seriously outside their homes.

In the novel, all the women have no agency and any serious position in the society or work. Gogo is portrayed as a powerless rural woman. She also depended on her son for livelihood. Nunu and Gabisile also never hold any serious positions at work.

Additionally, Schoeman (1998) argues that the diminishing of women's worth is due to a stereotyped portrayal that is associated with their bodies, and views them as the glamorous possessions of men.

In the introduction of the character Nunu, she is described as beautiful and sexually desirable.

> U*Nunu lona muhle. Esiswini lapha uyilamba lidlile. Buka ngoba ezinsizweni zonke ayikho engazidlisi satshanyana. Buka ngoba zonke zishaya ngendlebe etsheni. (Msimang 2005:1)*
>
> Nunu is beautiful, she has a figure, all the men want her, but they can't get her.

Nunu's skill and schooling is never mentioned. This, therefore, begins to justify men's control and power over her. The obsession and sexualisation of the female body in the novel normalises a masculinity that is constructed around the control of and access to the female body.

**4.3.3. Competitive masculinities:**

The central figure, the protagonist of the narrative is a woman. , However, the female body is represented as a contested space, functioning as a tool for men such as Vika, Mike and Bongani to negotiate their masculinity. Throughout the novel, the author does not grant Nunu agency; however the men prove their masculinity through their potency and economic ability to take care of her and her family on her behalf. Vika and Mike are competing to take care of her and win her affections. Nunu's body becomes fetishized as a trophy to be won by an able man.

This resonates to how isiZulu proverbs construct masculinity "*ubuhle bendoda zinkomo zayo*." Their ability to perform in terms their construction of masculinity will determine who wins Nunu. Economic ability determines "manhood". This is one of the characteristics of hegemonic masculinity.

According to Cheng (1999), hegemonic masculinity is characterized by numerous attributes such as domination, aggressiveness, competitiveness, athletic prowess, stoicism, and control. This is first displayed in Vika's unhappiness when Nunu shows him her the letter for the job interview. Vika is Nunu's boyfriend, and has been supporting her and her family financially. He is waiting for his tender to come through.

*Siqede siyivule, isiphongo sijuluke ngaleso sikhathi, kuphele konke lokhuya kumthanda kwakhe akade ekuzwa esikhathini esingesingakanani. Kunalokho afikelwe ukuzonda lo muntu obhale le ncwadi ebizela umntakwabo ukuthi azobhala isivivinyo sokuqashwa emsebenzini. Useqedile nje ukufunda incwadi… umuntu wakhona amane abe isibumbatha nje.*

*Nunu "Vika mntakwethu wavele wathula."*

*Vika, "ukuthi ngizwa le ndaba yakho ingangigcwali nje kahle. Umphefumulo wami awuvumelani nokuthi uhambe uye kosebenza. Angazi noma ukuthi mina ngijwayele ungumuntu engihlala ngimthola lapha ekhaya noma inini yini. Ngizizwa ngiba nokungathandi okukhulu ukuthi uhambe uyosebenza. Ngize ngicabange nokuthi kube yimina engizijuba ukuthi nginilethele yonke into eniyidingayo lapha ekhaya inyanga nenyanga. Kuphela nje nina nibhale konke enikudingayo. Mina kube umthwalo wami ukuthi nginithengele konke enikudingayo. Angazi ngempela, ngizizwa ngimangqikangqika ngokuthi uye kosebenza! (Msimang 2005:32-33)*

(And then he opened the letter, he sweated, and all his love for her just flew away and he started hating the person who wrote this letter calling the love of his life to a test. When he finished reading the letter, he just became cold.

Nunu: Vika, why are you quiet?

Vika: It's just that this doesn't sit well with me. I don't agree with you going to work. I always find you here at home whenever I need to see you, so I do not like that you are going to work. I think I should just provide for you and your family monthly; you will just write what you need and I will buy it. I really don't feel good about you going to work

Vika's disappointment with Nunu's interview reveals his perception of it as an attack on his ability to perform his socially constructed masculine responsibility of providing

for Nunu and her family. Secondly, his anger is fueled by losing control of her female body. Nunu's financial independence challenges his imagined role.

> *Vika "Kanti wena into oxabene nayo ukuthi ungethembeli kumina yini?" ( Msimang 2005:33)*
>
> (Vika: what you don't want is to depend on me?)

Katherine Wood (in Morell 2001) explains that violence occurs in situations where the 'girlfriend' is perceived to be of line by behaving in ways which threaten men's sense of authority in the relationship. She further notes that underlying this construction in the explicit notions of hierarchy, 'ownership' of women and their place within a sexual relationship. The problematic entitlement over Nunu's body is portrayed by the author as 'true' love and jealousy. The author does not problematize this toxic hegemonic masculinity which seeks to control time, space and the female body to prove his manhood.

> *Vika "uyabona indaba yokuhlala emaflethini angizwani nayo! Kuthiwe ungokabani njena uma usuhlala emafulethini?" (Msimang 2005:33-34)*
>
> Vika: I do not like this thing of staying in flats. Who would people say you belong to when you stay there?

Although the authors' intention is to problematize toxic masculinity, she nevertheless writes for the male gaze, and presents Nunu as a female without agency or ability to do things for herself. When Nunu is about to go to an interview, the narrator describes Nunu's choice of dressing as problematic: *Uqgoke isiketi esimnyama esibuye sibe sifushane ngendlela yokuthi ungaze uthi ubesiqgokele ukuba kubonakale amathanga akhe agcwele nokuhambisana nezitho zakhe (Msimang 2005:9).*

She is wearing a skirt so short you would swear she wanted to show off her big thighs.

> *"Lokhu ayikho namuhla, uyikho ngenxa kaVika," (Msimang 2005:37)*
>
> (What she is today is because of Vika.)

### 4.3.4. Bongani: marginalized masculinity

Morrell (2001) explains that masculinity is socially constructed in a process that involves contestation between rival understandings of what it is to be a man; therefore hegemonic masculinities create a cultural image of what it means to be a 'real man.' Man who falls short of these images fall outside the corridors of power. Part of that non-hegemonic masculinity is the category of marginalized masculinity:

> Marginalized masculinity is a form of masculinity in which a man does not have access to the hegemonic masculinity because of certain characteristics he has such as his race. However, men who have a marginalized masculinity still subscribe to norms that are emphasized in hegemonic masculinity including aggression, suppressing emotions such as sadness and physical strength. Men of colour and disabled men are examples of men that experience marginalized masculinity (Connell 1996:57)

In the novel Bongani, the brother of Nunu, who was shot and became disabled perceives his masculinity as marginalized. He looks at himself as useless because he does not meet the social standard of what constitutes a man.

> *UBongani naye ngalena uziququdelwa ngokwakhe, ecabanga ukuthi ukuba akenzelwanga phansi yiBhunu elamdubulayo ngabe usaqeda kudala ukufunda eyunivesithi. Ngabe usewasebenza kudala. Kwazi bani, mhlawumbe kwakuganwa lokhu ngabe kade aganwa. Unkosikazi wakhe ngabe uyena ogqigqizela lapha ekhaya. Kazi yena benogogo wakhe bazokwenzanjani mzukwana uNunu waya ukoshada? Futhi lokho akukude. Kuseduzane. Ingani nakhu nje useyosebenza. UVika angase noma inini bamthuke eseqhamuka nje esezocela udadewabo. Bese sebeba yini-ke bona lapho? Ngabe kungcono nanxa kunenhlamvana ebhajwe emgogodleni, uyakwazi njengabanye abaphila nayo, ukuzenzela izinto eziningi. Manje okwakhe khona kwasuke kwehluka. Wakhinyabezeka ingunaphakade. Buka nje ibhadi aba nalo. Wasuke wafa kwesingezansi. Uyinto yesihlalo noma inini. Into eyophunyuzwa*

*ukufa. Noma lokho kufika emqondweni wakhe izinyembezi zithi pho pho pho. Uma izinto zimmele kanjena kungcono khon ukufa. Zonke izimali zakhe aziqhamuki… ngisho nalena yempesheni ayibhalisela kudala akukho lutho oluzwakalayo ngayo. Leyo mali ngabe kuningi ukusiza ekwenzayo lapha ekhaya. Ngabe kwayena akawona umthwalo ongaka kuNunu (Msimang 2005:27).*

> Bongani in the other room is also deep in thoughts, thinking about how he would have finished at the university had the Afrikaner not shot him. He would have been working. Maybe he would also be married. His wife would be busy working at home. What would he and Gogo do when Nunu leaves for marriage? And that is close. She is going to start working and it's possible that Vika would just come at any time and ask for her hand in marriage. And what would become of them (Bongani and Gogo)? It would have been better if the bullet was blocked in the spine, he would be able to do a lot for himself. However, his was a different story, he was disabled for life. This is a misfortune. He will be in the wheelchair forever, only death will give him peace. As he is thinking about that, he can't stop crying. If things are like this, death is better, even all his pension money is not coming through, he would be using that money to assist, and do a lot at home. He wouldn't be a burden to Nunu.

Hegemonic masculinity is viewed as the ideal standard of acceptable masculinity, and one to which men aspire (Connell, 1995). On the other hand, according to Sithole (2013), the construction of disability suggests that people living with disabilities are incapable. This makes it difficult for men living with disabilities to negotiate their masculinity within the hegemonic standards of masculinity.

In the novel, Bongani's agony is this incapability to provide for himself and his family, which is a 'normalised' and accepted standard of masculinity; therefore he feels that his manhood, *ubudoda bakhe* is marginalized and says that only death will give him peace.

Shuttleworth (2012) also shows that research on gender and disability suggests a conflict between masculinity and disability. They add that, given that both masculinity and disability are socially constructed, this is due to the cultural and social expectations of masculinity, as well as the construction of a disabled identity. This raises questions such as how do disabled men negotiate the intersection of these two social categories of experience?

### 4.3.5. Mike hegemonic masculinity and economic phallic potency

The author zooms in on the most critical elements of the antagonist' performance of masculinity. While the narration centres on Nunu, the thematic development of the novel is solidified by Mike's antagonism. His antagonism is in his performance of masculinity.

As a senior staff member and manager in the novel, he wields enormous decision-making powers. He uses these powers to get Nunu a job:

> *Lalela ke Nunu, awumangali ngani ukuthi kubo bonke labaya enabhala nabo isivivinyo, kuphumelela wena wedwa?*
>
> *Ngemuva kwalokho aqale esemzeka ngayo yonke into eyenza ukuze agcine ethola lo msebenzi. Aze amtshele nanokuthi, yena (uNunu) wafeyila kodwa ngenxa yakhe wagcina esebizelwe ukuthi kuzoxoxwa naye. (Msimang 2005:172)*
>
> (Listen, why are you not surprised that in all those people you wrote the test with, you succeeded? After that he started telling her about the strings he pulled so that she got this job even though Nunu failed.)

Mike reminds Nunu that she got a job because of him. He further tells Nunu that she should be grateful and thank him for this because work is scarce.

> *Okumele ukwazi ukuthi umsebenzi uyindlala. Ngakho ke akulula ukuwuthola. Osewutholile kumele uwucubuzele amagabade ukuze uhlale ungowakho noma nini.*
>
> *Hawu awusangibongi nokungibonga, ngakuhawukela, ngakufaka emsebenzini, uyindlala kanje?* (Msimang 2005: 150)

> What you should know is that work is scarce. Therefore, it's not easy getting one. If you get one, you should do something to show that you appreciate it so that it stays yours. You don't even thank me for getting you a job knowing very well that work is this scarce?

Focusing on his hegemonic masculinity demonstrates theconnection between phallic potency, economic ability and negotiating masculinity. Having money and power is not enough, the culmination of his power is control and access to Nunu's body.

In fact, money and power are used to achieve access to sex and domination of women.

The novel displays the detrimental effect of hegemonic masculinity, which is elusive and never satisfied. As Connell has pointed out, thehegemonic mode of masculinity is always an impossible ideal; one which the male strives towards but never achieves. He furthers argues that the need for assertive maleness to perpetually prove itself through public display only serves to expose the anxieties that shadow the masculinist ethos.

Mike builds his being and manhood aroundhis ability to dominate economically, politically and sexually.

In a Marxist view, there is a limited amount of power in society, which is held by one person or group at the time - the ruling class. The ruling class owns the means of production and they control the workers. It further argues that under capitalism, the ruling class uses its power to exploit the working class. Connell (1995) explains that there is a direct link between masculinity and power. She adjudges that gendered relationships in institutions and social struggles are controlled by power.

Hegemonic masculinity (portrayed by Mike) wields economic power, and uses it as a tool of domination to exploit women sexually. The portrayal of this power imbalance showsways in which the post-apartheid malecentralizes power (whether phallic or economic) as a main tool for performing their manhood.

The author does justice to the portrayal of this form of masculinity as detrimental; however, the main protagonist, Nunu, is not granted agency by the author, as she

appears to be powerless and cannot decide for herself. Although hegemonic masculinity silences women and other men, the author does not problematise or question this patriarchal tendency. The author does not explicitly call the acts of rape, rape.

> *Azame ukum'bamba uziphu wesiketi ethi uyawuqaqa, kube uyenzile indaba! Kube uyenzile indaba! "Manje ungiqaqelani uziphu wesiketi? Kanti uqobo lwakho uhlose ukungenzani? Lalela lapha! Mina anginendaba namsebenzana wakho lowo olokhu ungicefezela ngawo. Ukuhlupheka mina ngikwejwayele! Kusasa lokhu ungangiyekisa kuwona! Ngeke kwadilika nqulu kumina! Ngesikhathi esenza konke lokhu, dephu dephu ebusweni ngezinzipho ephindelela uNunu. Ngokunyazima kwehlo abe bomvu tebhu igazi ebusweni uMike. Ununu azame ukubaleka (Msimang 2005: 120)*
>
> He tried to pull down the zip and she got angry! "Why are you pulling down my zip? What are you doing? Listen carefully, I don't care if you gave me a job. I am used to squalor. If you want me to leave, you can do it as soon as you want! I don't care."
>
> When he was doing all these things, she scarred him on his face with the nails and he bled and she ran.

**4.3.6. Vika: emasculation**

Masculinity as it has been defined, is concerned with performing the expected 'norm' of being a man.

Vika has projected his manhood and negotiated his masculinity as a provider and protector of Nunu and her family. He has played his role as a man. We are introduced to him getting angry at the fact that Nunu wants an existence beyondhim. This is because traditionally, the meaning of manhood and masculinity has been that of an economic provider (Ratele in Morrell 2001).

When they discuss the letter for the job interview, Vika does not take it well because he feels that he will not have the same access to Nunu as he had before. He tries to convince Nunu that if his tender comes through, he will be able to take care of them:

> *Kanti ukuba sebengiphendulile, ngabe ngithi hlala ekhaya. Ngizonondla nonke. (Msimang 2005:33)*
>
> So if I had answered I would have said stay at home. I would take care of you.

The first point that Msimang raises about men and emasculation, is the feeling of not being able to be the man that they feel they should be. The word emasculation has also come to mean rendering a male less masculine, including by humiliation. It can also mean to deprive anything of vigor or effectiveness. He feels he is deprived of his presumed role as a provider and his ability to visit Nunu. Masculinity also constructs social reality of institutions and the identities of women. Vika's control of space, time and economic power has a colonial and cultural history in South Africa.

> Women's role was predominantly a domestic one; it included child nurturing, feeding and care of the family. They were not expected to concern themselves with matters outside the home – that was more properly the domain of men. Economic activity beyond the home (in order to help feed and clothe the family) was acceptable, but not considered 'feminine'. However, with the rise of the industrial economy, the growth of towns and (certainly in the case of indigenous societies) the development of the migrant labour system, these prescriptions on the role of women, as we shall see, came to be overthrown, (Meinjties 1996: 53)

Meinjties (1996:53) explains that the law denied women adult status. This barred them from owning or inheriting land or moveable property, and from accessing credit. In addition, whereas motherhood was the sole responsibility of women, guardianship and custody of children rested with men. These restrictions put women in a precarious situation, for the regime failed to guarantee their political, legal, socio-economic and reproductive rights. Treating women as weak, irrational, undeserving of any rights,

and as always attaching them to a male figure is entrenched in innatist views of the dominance of masculinity and inferiority of femininity.

Rifkin (1980) maintains that instead of current laws challenging gender inequality, they concretise male domination. Likewise, the emergence of capitalism did not transcend the patriarchal or cultural exclusions of earlier civilizations. It excluded women from the public gaze of monetary exchange by relegating them to the private space of the home and family (bride price, polygamy, child marriages and sex slaves). This was a reassertion of patriarchal and cultural hegemonies by supremacists, which objectified, commodified and essentialised women.

The segregated and gendered nature of education under the apartheid regime substantially reduced black women's position in society. The few women who managed to rise above their patriarchal disadvantage to venture into education, received inferior education aimed at cementing their roles as nurturers and home-makers. Molteno (1984) argues that Bantu Education syllabi did not prepare black women to hold any prestigious positions in society. It entrenched salient segregation, gendered roles, and acceptance of the status quo, with subordinate positions for blacks and superior ones for whites. They were taught basic communication skills and basic mathematics meant for semi-skilled work.

This is the position Nunu finds herself in, in the post-apartheid South Africa. She is forced to depend on the men around her because of the position in which the socio-political, economic and patriarchal system has placed her as a woman. Vika uses these normalized factors to negotiate his masculinity through Nunu's dependency. There is aproblematic representation and normalization of Vika's attitude towards Nunu. The author sharply critiques Mike's hegemonic masculinity, but accepts as normal Vika's paternalism and control. Instead the author constructs a problematic image of Nunu. Msimang writes that all Nunu was, was because of Vika. As previously noted, this takes away Nunu's agency regarding Vika. While Nunu fights Mike, who tries to sexually assault her, she doesn't criticize or frown upon how she is treated by Vika. This is problematic, as it normalizes the image of a partenalistic masculinity, while it criticizes rape and hegemonic masculinities.

Secondly, while Nunu appears to be the symbolic centre of Vika's experiences, what he fears most is not just losing Nunu but being emasculated: losing Nunu to another man.

Masculinity is not only about concepts of manhood, but also about men's relationship to their sexuality and bodies. Masculinity also constructs the social reality of institutions and the identities of women.

## 4.4. Conclusion

Democratic South Africa is baffled by several issues. Gender, socio-economic and political inequality are some of the challenges for the young democracy.

The isiZulu literary canon, which in apartheid era was censored and prevented from speaking out about such issues, has begun tackling the economic issues head on. Zulu (1999) holds that after the unbanning political organisations in 1990, writing about socio-political and economic issues such as liberation and the effect of apartheid was no longer prevented by the censorship board. She further notes that the socio-political content of these novels has marked the beginning of literary era that will continue well into the new millennium. Her paper was written in 1999, and from the analysis of this novel, written in 2005, it is clear that she was right about the content of post-Apartheid novels.

This novel *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* was analysed through a Marxist feminist and Afrocentric theory, to understand the interaction of the economy and gender issues as written portrayed the novel. Such themes show that African languages literature has grown tremendously. The setting and the plot also linked the problems in the post-partheid South Africa to the legacy of apartheid. Furthermore, the author does reject the "Jimmy comes to Joburg" thematic tradition, but raises other issues in the urban environment.

The analysis centred on the construction and negotiation of masculinities within the novel, focusing on the characters of Bongani, Vika and Mike.

The next chapter is also an analysis of post-Apartheid isiZulu literature and rape.

## CHAPTER 5

**Portraying the rape continuum and violent masculinities in the post-apartheid South African literature: *Ngiyolibala Ngifile* by E.D.M. Sibiya (2010)**

### 5.1. Introduction

> "I make the assertion that rape is not a moment but a language… and I untangle and decipher the knots and codes of this language, to surface its structure, underline its histories, understand its rules" (Gqola, 2015: 22).

This chapter critically analyses ways in which Sibiya portrays violent masculinities in his theme of rape in the novel *Ngiyolibala Ngifile.* This chapter will further delves into the framework/ paradigm within which Sibiya defines rape and its consequence in the post-apartheid trajectory. The epicentre of analysis, however, is the relationship between the negotiation of masculinity through sexual violence, economic power and space.

The central objective is to understand the literary aesthetic that the author employs to relate African personhood, sexual violence and the construction of masculinity in the Post-apartheid literature. The epistemically engineered global-south, post-Apartheid face of violence is the black man. This reality reaffirms that violence perpetrators and victim are an engendered binary: women being the victims in that binary and men being the perpetrators. Binaries are constructed through power.

Therefore, rape as the violence across the binaries functions as a tool to portray power over the *Other* (women). In defining the process of creating gendered binaries, Thomson (2009) holds that part of gender power is celebrating attributes associated with masculinity and ordering the world in terms of binaries or opposites, with nothing in between. "If masculine and feminine are opposites, then when masculine is celebrated, feminine as its opposite is debased."

In her article arguing that rape is an invisible part of South African legacy, Armstrong (1994) writes that in the situations of conflict, rape as a means of asserting male power

over the women tends to increase in incident and intensity. This is certainly the case in South Africa.

Armstrong (1994) also notes that rape is often reported in media in a way that sensationalizes the sexual aspect, while playing down the fact that, in essence, rape is a form of violence used by men to assert their authority and power over women's bodies and minds. For many men, female consent to intercourse is simply not considered an important issue. Where this attitude is prevalent, women are less likely to demand the right to say no.

Gqola (2015) further defines rape as a communication of patriarchal power, reigning in, enforcing submission and punishing defiance. In her argument, she insists that rape is not sex but violence. Rape is mythologically defined as a sexual violence that in often is a consequence of what the victim has done to provoke the perpetrator. On the contrary, rape is in fact concerned with power and using phalacentricity to affirm patriarchal power. Rape is not a South African invention nor is it a distasteful form of sex. It is a sexualized form of violence. This chapter begins by tracing the grammar that South African colonialism used to define what constitutes rape, in order to understand how it informs the contemporary view of rape and masculinity in post-apartheid South Africa. It is pivotal to historicize the contemporary issues in order to decipher their construction. Scully notes that:

> We still have much to learn both about black women's experiences of rape and the ways in which colonialism involved complicated linkages between representations of sexuality and of race. We need to unite the previously disparate historiographic concerns with rape as a metaphor, or as an index of social tensions, with a study that takes rape seriously as an act of violence by men against women. We must give attention to the ways in which multiple narratives about the meaning of rape in colonial societies helped to solidify and, at the same time, to complicate the meanings of and relationships between race, sexuality, class, and honour. Understanding how colonization shaped our contemporary society is important (Scully 1995: 337)

### 5.1.1 Rape and violence in the apartheid South Africa

Rape and violence are not a post-Apartheid aberration, but predates the colonial era in Africa. However, the complexities within which rape exists in the contemporary, post-colonial South Africa can be traced back to the recent history of colonialism and imperialism.

The author of the page the conversation.com denotes that many feminist scholars have shown that gender is deeply intertwined with the colonial project of racism. The feminist research suggest that neither the logic nor the effect of racism within colonial and post-colonial context can be properly grasped without clearly understanding the gender dimension.

According to Igbelina-Igbokwe (2013:85), colonisation deepened the gender chasm through entrenching and reinforcing discriminatory gender division of roles for women and men, which encouraged the supremacy and importance of men's roles over women's' roles. The economic systems introduced by colonialism denied women the use of public space and confined them to the domestic sphere. The implication was the further marginalisation of women and the negation of their economic, political and social roles.

Morrell (2012) has noted that the present day socio-political landscape of the country is a clear product of its colonial and apartheid past. From the beginning of the European settlement in 1652, the country's history has been marked by a brutal, violent struggle over land, with the forcible dispossession of the indigenous population. After 1806, when Britain took control of the Cape, there followed a century of military expansion, inland migration, the start of exploitation of mineral resources, and armed conflict between the settler groups which notably culminated in the South African War (1899–1902). In 1910, South Africa came into being as a country, but remained a British colony until 1961.

Furthermore, colonization of Africa has been informed and enforced through various types of violence. It also drew extensively on creating the *Other,* sustaining and institutionalizing difference, including sexual difference. Once race science had

designated the *Other* as inferior or sub-human, this legitimized the use of violence to control and use them.

> Paradoxically, while the process of classifying an individual's racial identity arose out of a complex identification of class, sexual, and racial markers, once that person had been identified as belonging to a given group, the ambiguity of how to deal with that individual often evaporated in the face of the logic of colonial categorization (Scully 1995:345).

Thomson (2009) therefore concludes that in thinking about rape, colonialism and the construction of community or a national identity, it is useful to note that in a patriarchal society, racial purity and sexual purity are not mutually exclusive. As the female body is the locus of reproduction, it becomes a site of immense concern to the male patriarch.

In the colonial society, the black female body became a contested and owned space. Black females did not own their own bodies; therefore, raping and violating a black woman was not criminalized.

In historicizing rape, Stoller in Gqola (2015) states that until the abolishment of death penalty, no white man had been hanged for rape, whereas only black men were hung for rape of white woman. No black or white men were convicted of raping a black woman. If a rape victim was black, the crime was not seen as serious as it would have been if the victim was a white woman. In colonial scholarship, sexual domination has figured a social metaphor for European supremacy.

In tracing rape in the 1800s at the Cape, which was centre of European rule, race played a part in determining who was most likely to appear in court as a victim of rape and who was most likely to be charged with the crime. The majority of the women involved in the cases of rape or attempted rape were black or coloured. Black and coloured men also overwhelmingly made up the number of men charged. This class and racial profile of rape victims arose in part because of the dovetailing of race and class status in the nineteenth-century Cape, although a stratum of white laborers is evident in the records.

According to Armstrong (1994), during the apartheid years, it became obvious to activists concerned with gender issues that rape statistics were escalating and no one was commenting on it. It was unquestionable that rape was intertwined with the racial injustice of the apartheid system. As Heather points out, 'right up to the moratorium on the death penalty, no white man had ever been executed for rape, whereas the majority of people who were hanged in this country were actually hanged for raping white women.' However, instead of being perceived as a an abuse of human rights around which anti-apartheid protesters could mobilise, Heather believes that rape 'was seen as being just part of life', particularly for poor black women, who have experienced the triple oppression of race, class and gender. Discriminated against economically, politically, and culturally, they have suffered abuse at the hands of both black and white men.

### 5.1.2. The continuum of rape in the post-apartheid South Africa

The democratic, post-apartheid South Africa has been dubbed the rape capital of the world. According to scholars, at least one in three women would be raped in her life.

Statistically, the police recorded 41,583 rapes in 2018/19, up from 40,035 rapes in 2017/18. This means an average of 114 rapes were recorded by the police each day. The rape rate increased from 70.5 in 2017/18 to 72.1 in 2018/19 (Africacheck.org).

But the police's rape statistics should not been viewed as an "accurate measure of either the extent or trend of this crime", the Institute for Security Studies warned. There is no recent, nationally representative estimate of how many women are raped in South Africa each year.

Moffat (2006) argues that contemporary sexual violence in South Africa is fuelled by justificatory narratives that are rooted in apartheid practices, whichlegitimated violence by the dominant group against the disempowered, not only in overtly political arenas, but in social, informal and domestic spaces.

In South Africa, gender rankings are maintained, and women regulated through rape, the most intimate form of violence. Thus, in post-Apartheid, democratic South Africa,

sexual violence has become a socially endorsed punitive project for maintaining patriarchal order. Men use rape to impose subordinate status on to an intimately known 'Other' – women.

Furthermore, in the colonial era, the sexuality of the colonized people was constructed so that nothing which was done to a black woman would be classified as rape. There were two reasons for this: firstly, black women were portrayed as being so primitively sexual that no sexual advances were unwelcome. Secondly, because black men were demonized as "natural rapists", this meant black women were always already raped, by black men.

This legacy endures in South Africa. Today rape is normalized. It is not taken seriously by society and it is left mostly unpunished by the criminal justice system.

The novel in question, *Ngiyolibala Ngifile* (2010) by E.D.M. Sibiya, narrates the rape continuum in the democratic South Africa. The story centres around a young girl, who has been raped by her politically powerful father, who is a Minister. The analysis will focus on the masculinities presented in this work. The focal point for the analysis is to understand ways in which masculinity is portrayed in post-Apartheid African languages literature. The aim is to solidify the argument that African languages literature has grown in presenting literary work that is committed to engaging socio-political issues. Furthermore, it aims to understand whether the author's presentation of masculinity critiques or supports the stereotypes and construction of masculinity in the post-Apartheid milieu.

The authors' biography is presented before the analysis of the book.

## 5.1. Biography of E.D.M. Sibiya

Dumisani kaMzondeni kaMshiyeni wakwaSibiya was born in eNquthu, and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (1999). He obtained his BA Honours in African Languages (2000) and his Master of Arts Degree (in Publishing Studies) in 2001 with distinction, from the same university. His area of research was the role of media in the development and promotion of African Language Literatures in South Africa, with specific reference to IsiZulu literature. After completing his Master of Arts, Sibiya accepted a teaching post at the University of the Witwatersrand as a Junior Lecturer in the School of Literature and Language Studies, where he taught African Literature, IsiZulu and Media Studies (2001-2004).

Sibiya has won numerous awards for his creative work. His debut novel, *Kungasa Ngifile* (winner of the Sanlam Prize for Youth Literature) appeared in 2002. He has published a collection of short stories, *Imikhizo* (winner of the Muntu Xulu Shuter & Shooter Award for Short Stories), and his second novel *Ngidedele Ngife* also won the Sanlam for Prize for Youth Literature in 2006 and was shortlisted in the prestigious M-Net Literary Awards in 2006. Another award-winning novel from his writing quill is *Ngiyolibala Ngifile, which* was published in 2010. The latter won the Sanlam Prize for Youth Literature in 2010 and the K Sello Duiker Memorial Award in 2011 respectively. Sibiya has written, contributed and published several other books ranging from short stories to folklore and poetry. His novels are:

1. Sibiya, EDM. (2002). *Kungasa Ngifile*. Cape Town: Tafelberg
2. Sibiya, EDM. (2006). *Ngidedele Ngife*. Cape Town: Tafelberg
3. Sibiya, EDM. (2010). *Ngiyolibala Ngifile*. Cape Town: Tafelberg.
4. Sibiya, EDM (2012). *Amazolo Ayizolo*. Cape Town: Via Afrika

### 5.3. Summary of *Ngiyolibala Ngifile* (2010)

The novel narrates the critical and relevant South African enigma of rape; a conundrum Gqola (2016) has dubbed a "South African nightmare."

Sibiya explores the theme of rape in correlation with the sub-themes of violence (political and criminal) and political power from transitional South Africa (1990-1993) to the post-apartheid South Africa. Political power is gendered and masculinized in ways that remain unacknowledged. Sibiya portrays this through the way in which rape manifests the masculinized political power.

As in most of his novels, Ngiyolibala Ngifile opens with a tense and emotionally-charged tense scene, the mood and sentences revealing a great tragedy. Khanyisile, who is the main character, is weeping her heart out in the presence of her mother maKhoza, after telling her that her father Madonsela has raped her. Khanyisile is the only daughter of maKhoza and Madonsela, who is a powerful and seasoned political figure, and who is also a newly elected Member of Parliament and Minister of Social Welfare. Khanyisile and maKhoza are on their own in their new house in Midrand, while is Madonsela in USA on official business.

MaKhoza is in both in shock and filled with disbelief that Madonsela (her husband) is capable of raping his only daughter.

> *Makhoza: "Angiyikholwa mntanami le nto ongitshela yona! Angiyikholwa ngempela! Lutho lutho ngiyaphika, uthi uyihlo wenzani?"*
> *"Wangidlwengula ubaba mama! Mama! Mama!" ziloke zigeleza izinyembezi, Khanyisile answers. Sibiya (2010:4)*
> *(*Makhoza: I really do not believe what you are telling me. I don't believe it! Never, what are you saying?
>
> Khanyisile: He raped me mama, my father raped me!

She begins to narrate in detail how it all happened.

As she narrates the story, we are led to Themba Nxumalo, who was Khanyisile's boyfriend. After Khanyisile became pregnant with Madonsela's child, she couldn't

communicate with Themba about what had happened, because of the shame that is associated with rape. Themba and Khanyisile parted ways.

MaKhoza's disbelief or complacence leads her to asking Khanyisile to keep the rape a family matter and not report it to the police, in order to protect the dignity of Madonsela. The victimization of Khanyisile by her mother leads her running away from home. She finds herself in the cruel city of Johannesburg, where she is almost raped by a group of homeless young men. She is saved by an old man who names himself Ngwane.

Ngwane is actually Khanyisile's biological grandfather, who parted with the family because of political conflicts and assassinations. It is the same conflict that led to Madonsela's exile in Zambia. He then returned after the second democratic election to be elected a Cabinet Minister by his political party.

Through conversations with Mkhulu Ngwane, Khanyisile is convinced that she has to report the rape to the police. She does so, and the police officers take the case seriously, which leads to the arrest of Madonsela.

## 5.4. Analysis of *Ngiyolibala Ngifile*

### 5.4.1. Context and setting

Sibiya strategically uses realism and verisimilitude in setting the novel in post-Apartheid, politicized, contemporary South Africa. The author sets the historical context of his narration in the beset year of 1990 to the 1994 transition to democracy. During the transition, there were numerous political assassinations in South Africa. According to Nelson Mandela, speaking on Hani's death, these sought to undermine the transition.

> In the historical framework which is so often alluded to in the African novel, the author then situates the weal and woe of the group which lives the historical events in its own community ( Schipper 1985: 559).

*Baningi abantu ababebeyizinkubela bedutshulwa ngamaphoyisa ayephethwe ngumbuso wabandlululo ngoba nje belwela amalungelo abo okuthi baphiliswe njengabantu bonke, bakhululeke benze abakufisayo emhlabeni nasezweni lokhokho babo.*

*Ngisho nokubanjwa kwezigebengu ezazisoconga abalwisana nengcindezelo wakubona ephepheni esekhona eSoweto. Kwavela nokuthi zazithengiwe, zithenjiswe izishaqane zemali uma zikwazile ukuphehla udweshu. Zazibanjwe ngamaphoyisa zisawuqhuba umsebenzi wazo wokubulala kwelinye ilokishi. Phakathi kwazi kwakukhona izinsizwa zomdabu ezimbili, owendiya nomhlophe (Sibiya 2010: 49 and 55)*

There are a lot of people who are disabled today because they were shot by the Apartheid police officers. They were shot for fighting for their rights; just to be treated as human beings and to do what they want in the land of their ancestors. Even the fact that the criminals who murdered the struggle heroes were arrested, he saw on the newspapers in Soweto. It was revealed that they were hired to cause a conflict. They were caught on the act of killing in another township. Those guys were; two black guys, a white person and an Indian.)

Setting the novel in this the bloodbath Apartheid scene begins to qualify this work as protest literature.

As the narration develops, Madonsela, who is an active political figure, takes his family to Soweto, running from assassinations, and then he is exiled to Zambia. Upon his return he is given a position as Minister of Welfare. He then moves to Midrand (a historically white suburb). The author uses realism in the setting to create an authentic and tangible motif and characters. This assists the author and the reader of the text to understand reality through the text. Many African novels refer "realistically" to African history, mainly recent history. They often do this directly, mentioning historical names and places, referring to well-known events like wars, battles, conflicts, strikes, and the like. This is what Philippe Hamon, in his essay on realism,

has called "mega history," the corresponding real history which doubles the (illusion of) reality of the literary text.

For Sembene (1975), there is no question about the describability of reality. He believes in it and he sees it as the task of the writer to put reality into words:

> The African writer must stand in the midst of society and at the same time observe this reality from the outside... I participate in the developments of society and note these. I am a fighter, I know what I want to change in society and this facilitates my work as a writer. You are right in stating that my works develop along with the society in which I live, with its ups and downs, its defeats and its victories. . . . We started from a colonial system. This system is now partially hidden behind the facade of the black bourgeoisie. My work as a writer is narrowly associated with the struggle lot teal independence. In Africa we first thought that in 1960 with Independence paradise would come. Now we know better. The whites have left indeed, but those in power now behave in exactly the same way. . . . We are faced with the reality of our own bourgeoisie in power which wants to be exactly like the white bourgeoisie. These people are easy accomplices of imperialism in Africa. We must have the coinage (Schipper 1985: 559).

Historicising the narration is also important in understanding character development and how the problems originated. The novel can thus be said to critique rape and the powers that be in the democratic neo-colonial South Africa.

Sibiya places his characters in the South African spaces and trajectories which have constructed the post-apartheid masculinity.

The first one is a critical part of South African history, the 1990-1994 transitional years of South Africa to democracy. This is important because this period in South African history represented a shift in the strands of masculinities. The Apartheid masculinites had been constructed through violence. Violence was normalized and rewarded. The apartheid black masculinities consisted of dispossessed and marginalized men.

Therefore, the liberation struggle formed violent masculinities. The transition, therefore, challenged these violent masculinities to transform.

The author further shows the multifaceted settings that constructs masculinities in South Africa. He does this by showing the movement from the location, with Madonsela's family running away to Soweto after their house is burnt down because of political wars. Soon after that, he is exiled to Zambia, and returns 10 years later, and is given a Ministerial position Now that he has the money, he moves to the suburbs, in Midrand, where life becomes completely different. Sibiya further portrays life in the city of Johannesburg, and also shows Madonsela in USA for a government meeting.

Sibiya has successfully moved away from the Apartheid African languages literature portrayal of settings: from rural to urban, Jimmy comes to town. He produces a strong motive for the movements: political violence and rape. Both these complications of the post-apartheid South African can be traced back to Apartheid. Through the historicised setting, the author show that masculinity in the democratic South Africa is not 'naturally' violent, but traces the problem as 'nurtured' and socialised by Apartheid. This therefore critiques both the Apartheid regime and the neo-colonial ontology's construction of masculinity. The realistic milieu which has moved from Apartheid literature setting of rural to town, displays growth in African languages literature in writing about social issues.

### 5.4.2. Strands of masculinities in *Ngiyolibala Ngifile*

#### 5.4.2.1. Madonsela's hegemonic masculinity

This novel centres around a woman, Khanyisile's rape experiences. However, this reading focuses on how masculinities play out in the text. This is because the critique of gender in literature has focused on women's struggles, studied through a feminist paradigm. This reading does not by any means nullify the women in the text; however, it focuses on understanding the men, who are antagonists, perpetrators and

beneficiaries of women's marginalisation. This forms part of understanding and solving the gender issues in South Africa

The first character that this reading focuses on is Madonsela, who is the husband of maKhoza, and the father of Khanyisile. He has raped and impregnated his only daughter. Madonsela's profile represents post-apartheid/post-struggle masculinity in South Africa. He was involved in the struggle for emancipation from apartheid. He led a political organisation; and because of the bloodbath and political assassinations, he was forced to Soweto and later to exile in Zambia. He comes back from exile to get a position in parliament and as Minister as a reward for his effort and the sacrifices he made during these difficult times.

He is respected by everyone, including his daughter Khanyisile, who admires him.

> *Ume ehamba kungathi kuhamba inkosi yesizwe esithile. Uphahlwe ezinye izicukuthwane. Uswenke uyaconsa. Wayehamba ephahlwe njengophawu lwenhlonipho.*
>
> *(*When he walks you would swear a king of a certain nation is walking. He is surrounded by VIPs as a sign of respect. He is well dressed.)

Xaba (2001) explain that post-struggle masculinity refers to the type of masculinity that was dominant during the days of Apartheid (in the 1970s and 80s). Men were recruited and left the country to join the liberation movements, responding to the call to over-throw the apartheid regime. Upon the dawn of democracy, these comrades and political leaders came back home to assume leadership, and swiftly transformed from militancy to maintaining order. It is also worth noting that this gender identity was constructed around the characteristics of opposing the partheid system and political militancy. Boys attempt to position themselves, consciously, or unconsciously, in alignment with hegemonic standards as a central mechanism for establishing/maintaining an effective masculine identity. This form of militant masculinity was what most boys/men at the time sought to cultivate. Xaba further notes that this masculinity was also constructed side-by-side with the "street"

masculinity, which was disparaging towards women, and that struggle masculinity was therefore tainted with negative behaviours towards women.

Examining Madonsela's character, his construction of masculinity centres around the politicised and violent space. Madonsela's masculinity shifts contextually as he is positioned by the conflicts and the milieu he exists at the time. This resonates with the Connell and Morell, who state that masculinity is constructed historically and contextually.

His masculinity is constructed by the violent political setting in South Africa. The war between political parties and the broader context of Apartheid resulted in the internalization and appraisal of violent masculinities as heroic. Hegemonic masculinity was then constructed around heroism and violence. Therefore, each man with political aspirations positioned themselves in relation to that hegemonic standard of masculinity for example, Nelson Mandela, who established his political reputation with youthful militancy.

In the South African context, violence was condoned and legitimized as a first line tactic in resolving conflict and gaining ascendency. Hegemonic masculinity refers to that which constitutes a ''real man'' or forms of ''successful masculinity.'' These standards or norms of masculinity or masculine behaviour are often culturally informed or culturally bound.

In this sense, hegemonic masculinity is used to refer to expected norms of masculine behaviour and self-presentation, conventions (Mfecane 2008), or ideal standards of masculinity (Joseph and Lindegger 2007).

Madonsela is a political leader and in terms of this political context is seen as a "successful man" because of his strength in leadership and sacrifices he made during the struggle against apartheid. His family was assassinated because of his politics, and the level of violence he has endured gained him ascendency and an important role in the society.

When there is a mass killing, Madonsela goes to the scene to see what has happened. This introduces us to Madonsela in his role as the prominent leader.

> *"Nokho amanye amaphoyisa ashesha ukumbona uMadonsela. Alikho alalingathi kalimazi, kwazise phela ungomunye wabaholi abaqavile kwezombusazwe kuleli lokishi" (sibiya 2010: 48)*
>
> Some police officers were able to easily identify Madonsela. They all knew him; he was one of the prominent politicians in that location.

As the story progresses, with the assassination of his political friend Ndlela and his family, Madonsela is forced to leave his home and move to Soweto. He is then helped by a friend to escape to Zambia, as people are still hunting him. He comesback to South Africa after 10 years.

After being chased by a group of people who wanted to kill him:

> *Wabuyela esihlotshone ayeshiye kuso oMakhoza noKhanyisile wabachazela ngosekwenzekile, qede wabafaka emotweni bagcwala iziganga bengazi lapho babebalekela khona. Bazithola sebeseSoweto. Ngokuzwa umoyana wokuthi kuyasolakala sengathi wasinda kulokhu kuhlasela, wagcina eye ekudingisweni. Wasizwa ngothile ukuthi afudukele ezweni laseZambia, nokuyilapho ahlala khona iminyaka ecela eshumini. (Sibiya 2010:19)*
>
> He went back to the relative's house where he had left Makhoza and Khanyisile; he explained what had happened to them. He took them and they left. They got to Soweto. When he heard rumours that they know he survived, he went to exile. He was assisted by someone to escape to Zambia and he stayed there for 10 years.

Coming back to the democratic South Africa grants him respect and recognition. He is further able to maintain his identity as an ideal form of man in post-Apartheid South Africa.

The author develops his character, showing how the world views him as a "perfect/respected man" whom no one would believe capable of rape. Sibiya presents this type of "perfect" masculinity and shows that irrespective of power or perfection,

he is capable of raping; that rape is not only perpetrated by unknown, marginal and ugly men. This is a critical point in a society where men are protected by their status. Khanyisile notes this when her mother, maKhoza, asks her to sweep the rape under the carpet because of her fathers' status:

> *Cabanga igama lethu lethu lizohudulelwa phansi kanjani, uyihlo esevele ngobubi emaphephandabeni*
>
> *Khanyi answers: Ngiyabona mina manje ukuthi umuntu ocatshangelwayo kulesi simo ngubaba, hhayi mina. (Sibiya 2005: 47)*
>
> Think for our name, our reputation, if your father is shown in a bad light.
>
> Khanyi: it is clear to me that the only person you are thinking of is my father, not me.

These 'powerful' men construct their masculinity around rule and control; therefore they deem themselves untouchable. Mandonsela rapes Khanyi because he understands that his power would protect him. Furthermore, as a compensation for their sacrifices, they view luxury, expensive cars, clothes and women as something they are entitled to have in excess.

The political transition of the ANC into government was accompanied by changes in the gender order. ANC leaders were forced to create new gender norms and behaviours in order to meet the democratic requirements of women's rights and equality. This became problematic, as the women's rights values were a world away from struggle masculinity. Therefore, the way they viewed and objectified women did not likely change. This is reflected in the way Madonsela sexualises his own daughter. The African concept of family seems to be thrown out of the window.

Xaba (in Morell 2001:105) further notes that struggle masculinity considers all women to be fair game. Thereafter, the former liberators become enemies of the people. These are the questions and problems raised by Sibiya in his work - the problems and contradictions of post-Apartheid South African masculinity. He critiques and challenges how these men perform their masculinity by using violence to validate their manhood. Sibiya has successfully traced how this masculinity is historically constructed through political violence and the repercussions of such constructions.

The novel does not glorify hegemonic masculinity, and shows its detrimental effect through constructing it as antagonistic.

Khanyisile in this novel is given agency to challenge this hegemonic masculinity. Her mother begs her not to go to the police station to open a case against her father. Instead of listening to her mother, she runs away from home and prefers to live on the street. Running away symbolises defiance against hegemonic masculinity. She represents the protest of femininity against systematic silencing by hegemonic masculinity. She leaves her stable home and lives in a dangerous town in order to report her father.

> *Kodwa noma sekuthiwani, umaKhoza wayengeke akumele kuboshwe umyeni wakhe. Wazimisela ukuthi uzokwenza konke okusemandleni ache ukuthi umyeni wakhe agcine engabashwanga*
>
> *Mntanami, ngicela impela uyigudlule le ndaba yokuvula icala, ngiyakuncenga. Ngizokwenzani noma yini oyifunayo empilweni yakho. Ngahlupheka kakhulu Khanyisile ngeke ngisalunga ukuphinde ngibuyele ekuhluphekeni. (Sibiya 2005: 42-43)*

No matter what happens, Makhoza was not going to allow her husband to be arrested. She told herself that she is going to do all that is in her power to make sure that her husband is not arrested.

My child please, just ignore opening a case, I beg you. I will do whatever you want. I have suffered enough, I won't allow myself to go through that again.

Khanyisile finally runs away and gets her father arrested. At the police station, the police officers instantly believe her, in contrast to her mother. Madonsela's arrest displays the symbolic fall of a neo-colonial form of masculinity which perpetuates violence against women. Sibiya has been able to successfully show how these masculinities are constructed, of these and to critique them. He shows that rape is not stereotypically only committed by poor people who have limited access to sex because they do not have money; he shows rape as violence.

### 5.4.3. Boys and violence

#### 5.4.3.1. Construction of violent masculinity

In many ways, the socialisation of boys in Southern Africa has been and continues to conduct through violence. Violence is understood as a rite of passage "*ukudoda*" from boyhood to manhood. Violence is normalised and incorporated into the society as a necessary ingredient for becoming a man. As Tahar-Ben (2005) says, to be a man is an illusion, an act of violence that requires no justification.

In pre-colonial South Africa, the Zulu nation incorporated boys into violence as a 'normal' way of being. Stick fighting or "*ukuqhathwa*" was part of the natural order of "manning-up". Unlike *amaXhosa,* AmaZulu do not go through the process of circumcision as a rite of passage.

Morell explains that:

> The customary importance of stick fighting certainly appealed to Zulu kings (ca 1810–1879). They conscripted male youths who had honed-in the pastures of childhood the fencing skills, *ukungcweka* or *ukubiya*, needed for stick fighting and, later, national service. But it should be noted that many new recruits in *amabutho* entered the army with little experience battling an opponent to death with a spear; this weapon was forbidden in *ukungcweka* and *ukubiya.* Boys who fenced tended to use the *umshiza or ibhoko,* the striking stick and blocking stick, respectively. Moreover, their pre-military sparring accentuated risk-averse simulations such as parrying blows, exercising 'pure' restraint and revering 'fair' play. To wit, enfolded in the verb *ukungcweka* was the noun *ngcwele,* denoting something pious such as a truthful virtue commonly recognised by the exclamation *Ngqo!* (Morell 2012: 35).

Martial play was integral to stick fighting, a favourite activity of Zulu herd boys, who fenced with cattle switches to while away time in pastures (Morell 2012:35). Ndukwana kaMbengwana (1903), an oral historian of the Zulu kingdom explains that a boy who received his original stick knew he held more than a weapon or switch. His stick epitomised a customary obligation to shield his lineage resources from any harm,

especially the cattle his patriarch sacrificed when propitiating the ancestors (*amadlozi*). Ndukwana elaborated on the dimensions of male socialisation underlying this responsibility: 'Boys. (Little boys) would go out with boys who herded calves, and so learn. Even a small boy carries his stick – grows up with it. It would be cut for him by his elder brother'. Hence, the stick functioned as a signifier of generational deference and homestead security; only under certain fleeting circumstances did it symbolise something martial.

Stick fighting becomes an integral part of masculinity construction, as a result non-violent masculinity or man who choose not to participate in the fights are labelled as *umnqolo* (mama's boy) or *amagwala* (cowards), to shame them. The fighting matches are umpired either by a stick-fighting champion *(ingqwele*; plural *izingqwele*), a headman of young men *(induna yezinsizwa*), or 'war captain' *(igoso* or *umphathi wezinsizwa*). Most referees ensured that each competitor protected himself with some kind of long blocking stick, *ubhoko,* and the *umsila*, a short stick slid through the back of a cowhide shield (serving as a handle).

*Ingqwele* is a type of hegemonic masculinity that all men in the community seek to emulate; this, Connell (1996) explains is the normative, standardised way to manhood. At times, hegemonic masculinity is simply used to describe ''conventional and stereotypic'' forms of masculinity. These expected norms lead to pressure to conform to these standards or ideals by some boys on others (Lindegger and Maxwell 2007), or by boys or young men on themselves.



(picture 1)

(Source:https://www.google.com/-in-pictures-pride-and-power-as-zulu-men-show-off-stick-fighting)



(picture 2)

(Source: Morrell 2012: Inkatha regiments)

The practice was carried through to the Apartheid era, and used to forge Zulu nationalism through Inkatha Freedom Party.. In this era the popular image of Zuluness and manhood was a man who carried a traditional weapon. As a result the Zulu King Zwelithini (1995) in a rally said "a call to ban traditional weapons is an insult to Zulu manhood" (see picture 2). Furthermore, a popular phrase at the time was, a Zulu man without a stick is like a Christian without a bible and a soldier without an arm.

The original cause of violence in the Apartheid era was the National Party government, which responded to non-violent anti-Apartheid protests with violent mass killings (Sharpeville massacre 1960, Soweto uprising 1976). This pushed the

liberation movements to retaliate against violence with violence. This Cock (in Morrel 2001: 43) argues, also socialised the youth into a militarised masculinity.

At the same time, other masculinity traits were being constructed in urban areas. They formed their identity diasporically, drawing from the black America style of gangs. These gender constructions have remain unchanged through the post-Apartheid South Africa. Thus pre-colonial South Africa boys have always been socialised through violence. However, the Apartheid regime transformed the construction of masculinity and form of violence.

#### 5.4.3.2. Sexualised violence

The conditions of Apartheid affected the construction of masculinity, and as a result, political freedom alsoaffected a whole facet of the African population, socially, economically, culturally and sexually. The highly unequal society meant while somegain economically, others kept being marginalised and competed for the scarce resources. Economic freedom meant, amongst other things, access to sex. Therefore masculinity or manhood meant getting both the money and women as a symbol of success.

The homosocial competition for access and masculinity, although centred around the female body, is not about the female body, but about the violent hierarchy structuring the relations between men themselves. Women, argues Ouzgane (2005), are not the centre of men's experience, men are. He further argues that misogyny is fuelled by the fear of emasculation by other men, the fear of not being manly and the fear of humiliation. This is not in any way an attempt to reduce women to symbols, but a focus of men's experiences and the way in which men's mimetic rivalries play out.

In the text, Sibiya portrays the dispossessed masculinity, who dwell on the streets and attempt to rape Khanyisile. Through these characters of *Otsotsi,* Sibiya shows two characteristics of rape and masculinity; firstly he successfully debunks rape as crime committed by strangers or ugly, dirty criminals, but by fathers and other male relatives, who then make women and girls vulnerable to other attackst.

Secondly, he displayed these mimetic rivalries of masculinity through the characters.

When the gang attempt to rape Khanyisile, the self-appointed leader of the gang, Jet, who places a knife at Khanyisile's throat argues that he should be the first one to rape her. In that argument others say that he likes making himself a leader "*iboss*".

> *Ningabhedi nina, imina engibeke igoni kulo mntwana, so yimina engizoqala, kubhodla izwi eduze kwakhe kuze kunyakaze nommese entanyeni.*
> *Uyanya wena Jet, uyazi kuqala mina, namanje kuzoqala mina, man! (Sibiya 2005:*
> *(Don't* speak nonsense, I was the first to put this knife on this girl. So I will start (the rape)
> Don't speak nonsense Jet, you know I always start, I will start.

The conflict amongst these young men displays the homosocial competition amongst men and obsession to be on top in the social and sexual hierarchy; in this case resulting in sexual violence. Masculinity, therefore, is not only about the dialectical relationship between men and women, but between men. Furthermore, and unfortunately, the female body and access to it through rape and dominance becomes symbolic of power amongst gang rapists.

> *Braza, ningalokhu niphikisana, hlabani icherry leyo nisishiyele sonke silambile.*
> *Yifa njandini, kudala uzenza iboss lapha kimi kanti uqhosha nozero.*
> Braza, stop arguing and rape this woman, we all want our turn.
> Die you dog, you think you are a boss but you have nothing.

Killing each other displays the second role of violence and men. Violence amongst gangs is used to resolve conflict.

Beinart shows how violence is an accepted way of resolving disputes amongst African men, that its intensity and form varied over time and place, but importantly, it is not part of an 'unbreakable cycle'. African male associations and gangs, it suggested, played a key part in belonging and regulating the extent to which violence is actually used. Sibiya successfully shows how patriarchy is detrimental not only to women, but to men as well.

Mhlambi (2010) also argues that the gang's attitude to women in the post -Apartheid South Africa also reflects shifting attitudes that have come to define modern African gender relations. The colonial reconfiguration of African gender relations along European lines at the beginning of the nineteenth century contributed to an erosion of respect for African womanhood (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997), and by the post-Apartheid period, the position of African women had worsened. During the rapid urbanisation of the twentieth century, labour in major industries was reserved for males and the women's supporting activities were denounced and criminalised.

This is reflected by MaKhoza's character, who is forced to sell clothes to earn a living. She is told by Madonsela to stop selling because he has promised to take care of her. Secondly, the way in which the young men treat Khanyisile displays their thoughts about women. The objectification of women results in normalising of violence against women.

The presence of women in urban areas gave rise to survival behaviours or what Musila (2009) terms "gynocratic transgressions" that were soon to alienate and disempower them in the racist political economy of South Africa. "Phallocratic anxieties" (Musila 2009) significantly contributed to twisted perceptions of African women in the cities. Sibiya portrays this in his presentation of violence in the city. He shows how these boys normalise violating and using a black female body s a tool for negotiating masculinity, ascending the sexual patriarchal ladder, and using sexual violence to validate their manhood.

Rape, as Gqola (2016) explains, therefore has nothing to do with sex, but is concerned with power. Men use rape to construct and negotiate their own masculinity and power over the Other, who is a woman. The Otherness of women has been socially constructed throughout history, space and time. Madonsela's wealth and heroism silence his wife and he believes that it can also silence Khanyisile. This is not the case in the novel. Sibiya ends the novel with Madonsela being arrested. This is usually not the case in South Africa, however, in his work, Sibiya shows that there are other possibilities. This text is important in showing the interplay and intertwining of the colonial/post-colonial space, power, masculinity and rape.

## 5.5. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to analyse the construction of masculinity as displayed by Sibiya in *Ngiyolibala Ngifile*. The analysis shows that Sibiya uses social realism to present a South African post-colonial setting. He further historicised the South African politics.

Reading masculinity in this work shows that the major factor that affect masculinity in the post-partheid (or neo-Apartheid) South Africa is the effect of colonisation on how women are perceived, which normalises violence against women. Colonisation objectified black female bodies, and African men's perception of women therefore still follows this pattern. Secondly, politics and violence constructed the post-apartheid man. In this work, Sibiya was successful in displaying how the negotiation of masculinity plays out, and the author was successful in not justifying rape.

Moffat (2006) noted and argued that contemporary sexual violence in South Africa is fuelled by justificatory narratives that are rooted in the apartheid practices that legitimated violence by the dominant group against the disempowered, not only in overtly political arenas, but in social, informal and domestic spaces.

# CHAPTER 6

## 6.1. Conclusion

### 6.1.1. Summary of the study

The aim of this study was to understand the concept of African personhood in the depiction of masculinity in African languages literature. It set out to understand how men construct their masculinity in an African (isiZulu) context. The texts that were analysed fall under two periods of African languages literature writing: apartheid and post-apartheid literature. The four novels of analysis were: S. Nyembezi, ***Inkinsela yaseMgungundlovu*** (1960), I.S. Kubheka, ***Ulaka LwabaNguni*** (1988), C.T. Msimang, ***Umsebenzi Uyindlala*** (2005) and E.D.M. Sibiya, ***Ngiyolibala ngifile*** (2010).

The overarching objective was to denounce the argument of some scholars, who have dismissed the whole bulk of the Africa languages canon as irrelevant, childish and pro-colonial.

This, the study argued, is a liminal view of the African languages approach literature. The study therefore chose to study ways in which masculinity is depicted, as a way of criticizing the colonial construction of gender and the extent to which colonisation dehumanised and negatively transformed gender in the marginal spaces. Furthermore, the study set out to use Afrocentrism and Marxism as theoretical frameworks. This was done to centralise theories in an African context and understand African problems with African frameworks.

The objectives of the study, which were to understand the construction and portrayal of masculinity in both the Apartheid and post-Apartheid eras necessitated that the study be divided into two two: Apartheid and post-Apartheid literature in African languages.

The first novel to be critically analysed was Nyembezi's classic, *Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu*. In *Inkinsela*, the aim was to understand ways in which the rural-urban stratification or dichotomy influence the construction of masculinity.

The rural-urban dichotomy is the purposeful geographical architecture of Apartheid. The colonial governance constructed this for capitalistic and economic reasons, to benefit the white minority by systematically impoverishing the rural subsistence farmers and creating a desire amongst the rural black population to move to the cities for better opportunities. This was done to provide labour for the capitalist mining companies and factories.

When the Apartheid government took overin 1948, it introduced the Bantustan system, in order to decrease the population of black people in the cities. Therefore, various forms of propaganda were created to discourage black people from living in the cities. Literature was also used for this purpose.

This study finding shows that while Nyembezi uses the similar rural-urban dichotomy in his settings he, however, displays disapproval of the apartheid system of dispossing black people of their wealth. He further mocks and shows the type of displaced masculinities that colonialism created - men who desire to be and consider themselves white.

He depicts what Du Bois called "the double consciousness" of black people. Fanon w explains the psychology of black people in colonial societies. In his text, Black Skin / White Masks, he explains that "the black is not a man." By this, he means that black people do not experience themselves as human. Because racism dehumanizes black people, they live in a sort of "non-being", in which they question the very reality of being a human. In order to achieve the feeling of being human, black people aspire to be white, according to Fanon. When white people are considered the only humans; black people try to be white in order to be human. But the white person, too, by dehumanizing others, is "sealed in his whiteness" like the black person. Whites, too, fail to become fully human, because of their dehumanization of others.

The finding shows that masculinity in the Apartheid era is confounded by this bifurcated identity. Through the character of Ndebenkulu, the findings show that Nyembezi's work was critical of colonialism and its effect on identity. Furthermore, the dichotomy even affects displaced men to an extent of their change in the philosophy of existence.

Nyembezi shows two separate ontologies and personhoods: the individualist person of Ndebenkulu's character, who is obsessed with his possessions; and the second ontology of *ubuntu* and communitarian values.

This work also shows that men in the Apartheid era still constructed their masculinities around their wealth in terms of cows. Therefore, stealing these possessions from them further dislocates the men and how they define themselves. Nyembezi further uses the character of Themba as protest masculinity against white hegemonic masculinity.

The following chapter is also an analysis of the novel written in the apartheid era-, *Ulaka LwabaNguni,* written by I.S Kubheka. The analysis focused on the concepts of the living-dead and *inhlonipho* as a form of masculinity construction and rite of passage for boys. The finding also showed that I.S. Kubheka used African indigenous knowledge to critique westernisation and its corrupted education.

African men are socialised into *inhlonipho* as a central philosophy of recognising the other. This construction of personhood is breakable; its brokenness can be considered a curse, and the wrath of the ancestors may befall you. Therefore, what makes a man according to this philosophy, is his mastery of *inhlonipho* and reverence for the living-dead.

The main character receives a western education and soon disregards his parents and others. His masculinity is changed by western education. The analysis showed that Kubheka uses these knowledge systems to criticise western philosophy, which corrupts the being of a man.

What befalls him is as a result of disrespect, and the wrath of the ancestors. Kubheka also highlights that what makes a man according to African philosophy is not just his individual self but his inclusion in a whole community of the living and the living-dead, who make him who he is.

The accident that befalls him is as a result of his disregard of his parents and the living-dead.

This chapter proves that African idea of masculinity is different from the occidental visual ontology idea, which denotes that a 'man' is made only by his own being and thought.

The maxim, "*Cognito ergo sum*," (I think therefore I am) is critiqued through this work.

The following chapters focused on the post-apartheid strands of masculinities in the works of C.T. Msimang, *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* and E.D.M. Sibiya, *Ngiyolibala Ngifile*.

Both these works showed that the post-apartheid literature has moved from writing on the rural-urban dichotomy to tackling critical post-Apartheid problems. The main issues they raise is sexuality and the economy in the post-Apartheid South Africa. *Umsebenzi Uyindlala* portrays how masculinity centralises the phallic. In this novel, a man demands sex in exchange for a job. The sexualised space displayed here seems to be a post-Apartheid aberration.

However, this novel does not historicise the relationship between hypersexuality and masculinity. Secondly, the problem within this novel is how the women have no agency at all. Msimang also showed ways in which masculinity and disability intersect. But she depicts disable masculinity as stereotypically subordinate, without any agency or power of any sort. The analysis of the last novel shows the ingenuity of African languages writers. The novel covers the theme of rape, and explores the connection between political violence and sexual violence. Unlike Msimang, Sibiya successfully shows, that men in the South African context have a history of socialisation of violence. Sibiya's plot displays ways in which the power structures developed and how the contemporary issues link to the Apartheid era.
He displays violent masculinity and criticises the stereotype of who commits rape. He does this by showing that there is no distinction between a powerful man, a millionaire, and a person on the street; if they all rape, they are rapists.

### 6.1.2. Findings of the research

#### 6.1.2.1. The Afrocentric concepts in isiZulu literature

The study set out to explore how African-centric concepts are used in the portrayal of masculinity in isiZulu literature. These concepts are used to criticise "apartheid" and address social issues. This, the researcher argues, shows how African literature uses an elevated language and concepts to engage in social criticism and therefore these works have matured. The main question of the research was to understand ways in which African philosophy underpins literature in African languages. The research findings show that African concepts underpin the writing in African languages literature. These concepts are used to combat western imperialism. These are also used as a way of constructing masculinity in African epistemology.

*Inkinsela YaseMgungundlovu* used the concept of *ubuntu* as an African system that constructs masculinity. Nyembezi displayed competing ontological philosophies and showed how the western philosophy of individualism corrupted what is considered as good in the African ecology. Ndebenkulu's individualistic nature "which he adopts in the urban areas," constructs the type of hegemonic masculinity rooted in materialism. Materialism is embedded in capitalism and that, in South Africa, is the motivation of colonialism. Therefore, Nyembezi succeeds in showing the ways in which individualism and colonialism corrupted the African men, and his philosophy of good neighbourliness.

Secondly, literary onomastics, the act of naming, plays a major role in portraying how the rural urban divide affected masculinity construction.

Ndebenkulu (Big Mouth) speaks a lot, and speaks about himself a lot. Nyembezi uses the act of naming, an African indigenous system to help a reader access the flawed character of Ndebankulu. Furthermore, in *Ulaka LwabaNguni*, major African concepts that construct masculinity are used to critique colonial epistemology.

Kubheka writes *uLaka LwabaNguni* premised on the philosophy of *Inhlonipho* of the living (parents) and living-dead. He portrays how the living-dead have an effect on and a part in constructing manhood; therefore they must be respected. Disregarding

the living and the living-dead may have major repercussions, as shown in the life and death of the central characters.

Therefore, the major concept is the influence of the philosophy of *inhlonipho* and the living-dead in the construction of masculinity. Kubheka criticises western education and epistemology, and shows how it affects the way in which a man thinks of himself in an African context. This, he argues in the text, has dire repercussions.

Lastly, the post-Apartheid text shows the interplay of masculinity in post-Apartheid South Africa. However, it can be noted that the authors were explicit in their criticism of the social issues. No highly elevated languages or hidden philosophies were used to criticise the system, but they directly addressed the problems of the democratic South African and its effect on masculinities.

This, therefore, shows that the lifting of censorship of African languages literature has freed the writers to express themselves freely. Furthermore, the themes these authors chose show a great improvement in tackling burning social issues. Lastly, the setting of the novels show a great move from the urban-rural milieu. Therefore, African literary work has improved drastically. However, there is a shortage of theoretical frameworks of analysing such literary works.

#### 6.1.2.2. Construction of Masculinity in South Africa

The second research question focused on understanding the factors that construct masculinity as portrayed in isiZulu literary works. The texts above displayed that men in South Africa are socialised by many factors.

The major factors that construct masculinity, as presented in these works are, colonialism, the rural-urban divide, sexual violence and the economy.

### a. Colonialism

Throughout the texts, space and time played a major role in how masculinity is constructed. The colonial space that South Africa exists in; the inequalities of opportunities, which are directly linked to colonialism, constructs different strands of masculinity, with different groups of men who seem to be competing for the limited resources. Furthermore, colonialism, as depicted in *Ngiyolibala ngifile,* necessitated the militarisation of masculinity. This has consequently overlapped into post-Apartheid South Africa; which struggles with normalised violence. Colonialism and Apartheid dispossessed black people of their land, wealth, knowledge and culture. It disrupted the identities of men in South Africa.

The colonial experience and imprint of these black men, as presented in the literary works, plays a major role in how they project themselves and think about themselves. This is because colonialism formed a hierarchy of existence, which places the white man and whiteness at the pinnacle of what it meant to be a man. It created an unholy trinity of beauty, whiteness and manliness. Therefore, black men in these works are chasing after a form of beauty which leads them to pseudo-whiteness. Furthermore, men construct their own manhood in the image of this hegemonic white masculinity.

Failing to reach this form of masculinity results in various forms of violence, as presented by Nyembezi and Kubheka.

### b. Rural-Urban Dichotomy

The rural-urban setting, which again links to colonialism, has created different strands of masculinities, which are also seen in the post-Apartheid South Africa. The binaries that Nyembezi and Kubheka wrote about did not only produce educated men, but they show that school education in the colonial milieu is not enough. It has separated black men from their core values of what it means to be human in Africa. They show that the dichotomy was more than economic, but created men who are individualistic and self-centred. This is contrasted with the African philosophy *Ubuntu*- humanness, which places us before I.

### c. Sexual violence and economy

Both these books by Msimang and Sibiya link sexual violence and the economy.

Sexual violence also plays a role as a factor that men use to negotiate their masculinity and gain power and control. Therefore, beyond sexual violence, post-Apartheid masculinities are confounded with this power struggle.

The same power struggle is also reflected in the abuse of economic power. Like Mike (*Umsebenzi uyindlala)* and Madonsela (*Ngiyolibala Ngifile*) having money and economic power translates into easy access to and the abuse of women. Therefore, the great struggle of the previously marginalised African men in the post-Apartheid South Africa is better management of power.

## 6.2. Recommendations

Mhlambi (2012) has shown the limitations of many theoretical frameworks. She argues that this has led to the whole bulk of the African languages literary canon being disregarded as irrelevant. This misguided view, argue Mhlambi and Mathonsi, is a result of not understanding the Afrocentric aesthetics which the authors employ in their writing, and the issues they critique. Therefore, this shows t the limitation of in theoretical frameworks used in studying African languages literature.

Furthermore, Mfecane (2018) also argues for the use of Afrocentric theories in studying masculinity, as the western concepts are limited in understanding "being" in the African context. The meaning of what constitutes a 'man' within an African context is very different to that of European philosophy. Therefore, employing western philosophical concepts in studying African masculinity limits the understanding of men in Africa.

In light of these critiques of Eurocentric views in studying African problems, one can recommend that future research should focus on developing Afrocentric theoretical frameworks of studying masculinity. Furthermore, African theoretical frameworks should be developed for studying masculinity in African languages literature. These theories would assist in analysing and centralising African problems within an African epistemology.

Future studies and African languages writers may focus on ways in which masculinity issues affect women. Centralising men does not by any means imply the marginalisation of watering down of feminine issues. It means understanding problems from the source.

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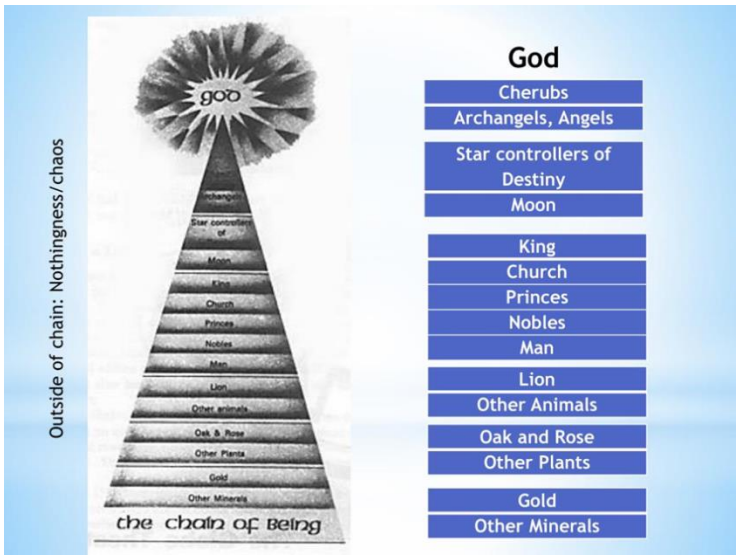
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**Illustrations 1**

1. **The great chain of being**




(source: https://www.britannica.com/topic/Great-Chain-of-Being)

**Illustration 2**



https://www.google.com/-in-pictures-pride-and-power-as-zulu-men-show-off-stick-fighting-