



# Thetha Sizwe:

Contemporary South African  
Debates on African Languages  
and the Politics of Gender  
and Sexualities

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## Editors:

Nompumelelo Zondi  
Gabi Mkhize  
Evangeline B. Zungu  
Siseko H. Kumalo  
Vasu Reddy

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## Introduction

*Siseko H. Kumalo, Vasu Reddy, Nompumelelo Zondi, Gabi Mkhize and Evangeline B. Zungu*

### Background

The pre-history of this volume can be traced back to April 2018 when the Department of African Languages at the University of Pretoria, together with the universities of KwaZulu-Natal and the Witwatersrand, jointly convened a three-day conference titled *Thetha Sizwe: Intersections, Practices, and Identities*. The conference's remit was to explore and problematise contemporary and current debates circulating on the gender turn in African languages and literatures by probing assumptions and received notions with consideration for breaking out of dominant models that uncritically foreclose debate and discussion. Gender and sexualities are contested and loaded terms, encompassing facets of identities and practices that overlap and intersect in complex and varied ways. Socially constructed, they are neither identical nor entirely separable but bound up and complexly imbricated while demonstrating sociocultural and historical definitions that define the loci of enunciations from where one speaks. Our assembly of speakers included scholars of African languages and literature (as well as participants from cognate disciplines, including gender studies), whose aim lay in unravelling and contesting these constructions. Such an unravelling, which presupposes a conceptual unsettling of sedimented paradigmatic thinking, was envisioned as a catalytic tool that would facilitate unabashed theorising from the Global South and, more pointedly, theorising that is rooted in and uses the languages of those who have been at the receiving end of sustained historic epistemic harms, symbolic and physical violence, erasures and colonial oppression.

The conference title, *Thetha Sizwe*, loosely translated as 'let your voice be heard', appropriately opened up a space for active debate, discussion and dissent. As a linguistic injunction, *thetha sizwe* is not purely a communicative plea but rather about the politics of voice, silence and, indeed, the capacity to hear and listen. Acts of listening, as envisioned by the organisers of the conference, instantiate(d) processes of speaking back to colonial power, actioning the 'deprovincialisation of Africa' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018)—a deprovincialisation that unshackles Africa, her languages

and her people from the role of students seen to be receiving instruction from European masters (modernity's thinking) who arrogantly appropriated the title of 'teacher' vis-à-vis colonised people and their territories. Indeed, languages remain central to the make-up of who we are, not merely *how* we communicate but also how such relationships become possible *in* and *through* language.

Central to the remit of this conference was the idea of rethinking gender and sexualities using African languages and literature. The motivations behind such a move were precipitated by the realisation that social categories of understanding our worlds—modes predefined by colonial imposition and violence—were and are in need of new inflexions that have been historically silenced. The conference generated provocative interventions that engaged questions of morphology, syntax and the gendered meanings of prescribed texts for secondary schools. The focus on texts used in secondary schools also signals our understanding that, while these debates are being vigorously engaged in the arts, humanities and social sciences at the university level, the process of gendered socialisation begins from the very moment of birth—natality signals the moment at which the human reaches for the ontological status of 'fully becoming human'. In this regard, African languages—as a cluster within the South African university—recognise the need to engage with theory that is responsive to our local context while potentially being poised as a key contributor to fields such as Indigeneity studies, African American studies and Africana philosophy.

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Subsequently, the discussion coalesced around the gendered meanings and politics of African languages in the context of epistemologies and decolonial humanities. This engagement styles local languages as crucial to global shifts in decolonial struggles that aim to re-imagine new worlds. Importantly, the intersections, practices and identities that were treated, analysed and interrogated in this conversation highlighted the entangled relationships between various connecting points, modes of being and knowledge that connect us as human beings in complex relationships that manifest as embodied experiences of the self. To this end, the volume we have assembled contains some papers from that conference (as well as additional commissioned essays) that have been reworked into arguments that have much to contribute to current debates within African languages and their relationship to the politics of gender. These matters are dauntingly large, and we recognise that the contributions and insights featured in this volume open up further questions, and here, perhaps, we make a start.



## Focus and structure

*Thetha Sizwe: Contemporary South African Debates on African Languages and the Politics of Gender and Sexualities* takes the task of developing theory in the indigenous languages of the country seriously, which means that it heeds Nyoka's (2020) contention of the importance of getting to the business of developing decolonial praxis as opposed to merely theorising about it without doing the work. In and through this book, *ka ngangoko si thetha*, our systems of dialoguing with each other and with our audiences, wherever they might be located, are premised on an ethical feminist approach, one that attempts to align the ethical with aesthetics while delivering on the decolonial demands of our local contexts.

As such, this volume brings to the fore important feminist epistemological approaches to and critiques of gender issues, while deconstructing hegemonic masculinities through language in countering patriarchy and compulsory heteronormative cultures. In Part I, *Aesthetic Modalities of Critique Using Language as an Interrogation of Culture*, women's knowledge and understanding of traditional poetic genres and their determination to eradicate residual oppressive cultural structures is examined. The volume begins by making a strong case for the notion of our use of the aesthetic, as it facilitates a reimagination of the political using the pedagogic space—which is liberated from the traditional classroom space, as the chapters in this section demonstrate. The contention we hold is that, in contexts of cultural exchange, the polis—where there are public gatherings and meetings in full view of the polity—becomes the classroom, where ideas are shaped, contested, exchanged and used in the crafting of cultural narratives that are liberatory in their potentialities. This capacity to use these pedagogical exchanges—as they are rooted in the aesthetic object, be it in the traditional sense of the novel that is used as a contestation tool (see Chapter 5) or the music that is composed as a mode of influencing cultural change (consider Chapter 6)—is what inspires us to explore, in Part II, the act of *Theorising from the Aesthetic Critique, Decolonising Possibilities and Creating New Worlds*. In this way, our curatorial decision(s) suggest an alignment of the ethical with the aesthetic, keeping with the instruction we find in Cornell's (1995) feminist analysis.

## Part I: Aesthetic Modalities of Critique Using Language as an Interrogation of Culture

Such an alignment is best seen in the arguments presented in Chapter 2, 'Understanding Culture to Fight Patriarchy: Knowledge and Practice of *Oriki* among Yoruba Women in South Africa'. Using the analysis of poetic traditions that have been safeguarded by women over centuries, Chapter 2 draws the readers' attention to the reality of shifting the gaze of oppressive cultural practices by demonstrating how modes of critique have always been embedded in the practice of *Oriki*. The chapter demonstrates feminist struggles in action, while elegantly drawing from African feminist positions as a mode of augmenting the use of the aesthetic.

10 In keeping with this thematic node, Chapter 3, 'Critiquing Dominant Patriarchalised African Languages through Feminist Approaches', interrogates the shifting diversity (in the teaching and learning of African languages) beyond literacy and language artistry to incorporate larger socio-cultural contexts. This line of argument follows from the second chapter in the volume by demonstrating how feminist positions can be (and, indeed, are) used in contesting dominant and hegemonic cultural practices while allowing cultural development to flourish in line with the temporalities that define our current age. It is for this reason that the aesthetic, here, is aligned with the pedagogic—a reality that is reminiscent of Wicomb's notion of the ironic that is always embedded in power (and, by implication, in culture too). To substantiate the symbiotic relationship between pedagogy and the aesthetic, the book introduces two essays written in isiZulu, allowing for the formulation of praxes analyses, as they destabilise fixities in our reading of the social landscape(s) in which we are located.

Chapter 4, 'Ukulondolozwa Kwezilimi Zomdabu zase-Afrika Ngemikhosi Yabesifazane Esizweni SamaZulu', demonstrates the feminist struggle insofar as African feminism aligns itself with intending to preserve and cultivate pride in and an affirmation of African heritage, traditions and beliefs. In contesting the piecemeal pace at which the inclusion of indigenous languages has unfolded in the country, this chapter aligns the ethical with aesthetics insofar as a feminist politics is intended to correct the socially misaligned aspects that define our worlds. Through this chapter, the reader is invited into a space where women take control in championing the preservation and use of language, which amplifies the argument the reader finds in the previous chapter—insofar as Chapter 3 concerns itself with pedagogy. What we bear witness to in Chapter 4 is the liberation of pedagogy, when knowledge and teaching become a public affair through the public ceremonies that encode historical meaning to the place of women in the use and function of language.

Chapter 5, 'Iqhaza Elibanjwe Ngababhali Besifazane Bamanje Ukudiliza Imingcele Yobulili', gives credence to the social role and critique encountered in Chapter 2 and sustained in Chapter 4, with the focus being on pedagogy and the aesthetic in Chapter 3. In this chapter, the relationship between knowledge and the aesthetic object, with pride of place being given to the novels developed in isiZulu by women writers, aptly demonstrates what is meant by a conception of aligning the ethical with aesthetics. Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrate how women are active participants in preserving language as active combatants in the struggle against hegemonic masculinist conceptions of society, culture and its linguistic instantiations. They allow us to mount feminist struggles and substantiate the claim made by Kunene (1992: 30) when he argues that 'when language becomes an issue of nationalism, the political authority shifts to the masses, reactivating the need for a common language to mobilise the people and to provide the mythical force necessary for national reassertion.' The combative element is unleashed and allows for the mobilisation of women, as seen in how they use language not merely as gatekeepers but as active participants in the contestations of social and political power through the act of writing.

The final chapter of this section, Chapter 6, 'Fighting Women's Cultural Subjugation using Metaphors, Euphemism and Sarcasm in Izingane zoMa Musical Renditions', highlights systems of subversion and social critique inherent in the artistic expression of women's songs and modes of creation. This ideal is cogently expressed by Zondi (2020: 3) when she contends that '[e]very society has a system of laws, social ethics and precepts to which all members of that society are expected to conform, certain obligations and codes of conduct that everyone is expected to abide by and respect.' The contestation of this reality, and its fixity, is also captured by Zondi's study, which demonstrates how women challenge these fixities in ways that are performative and that allow for social critique, demonstrating how the aesthetic allows the social conditions to reach for the ethical arrangement of the political conditions under which women exist. Akin to what the reader encounters in Chapter 5, Zondi (2020: 9) maintains that 'women perform what is commonly known as *izigiyo* (a poetic song genre that refers to specified solo dance songs), but which, within the Zwelibomvu community, is known as *ukushoza* or *ukujoqa*'. What the reader encounters in Chapter 6 is an amplification of these modes of critique rooted in music—music that challenges and contests fixities that attempt to cage women into silences of their 'own unsayable transgressions' (Morrison 1993). This amplification challenges monolithic narratives about women that silence women into being inactive participants in their own oppression and problematises perceived ideas of nationhood, predicated on cultural fixities that attempt to affix women's roles into the confines of domesticity.

## **Part II: Theorising from the Aesthetic Critique, Decolonising Possibilities and Creating New Worlds**

Part II of the volume turns to the manifestation and institutionalisation of gender and power through language and begins with Chapter 7, '*Thokoza Ngwenyama!*—Unsettling Gendered African Language(s) Using *Umsamo*'. In this chapter, the focal point is the need to regard language as an institution, in and of itself, while carefully drawing out the implications of this shift. In drawing attention to the institutionalisation of language that the reader finds in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, Chapter 7 demonstrates how this reality can and should be contested using the androgynous space of *Umsamo*, which locates the physical world in conversation with the metaphysical, in all its splendour, as ungendered and ambiguous. It is ambiguity, so the chapter argues, that facilitates the capacity of birth—that is, natality—in all its forms of creation, be it concomitant creation vis-à-vis the aesthetic or birth in the form of new life, liberated from the oppressive modes of understanding and seeing the world that defines our realities.

Continuing with exploring modes of institutionalisation, Chapter 8, 'Interrogating South African Reality and Probing the Interconnections of Language, Hegemonic Masculinities and Patriarchy', brings the case of 'language as institution' home, suggesting ways in which we can strive for an egalitarian society. The proposition of an egalitarian society is predicated on an analysis of the proverbs that are used in everyday speech, demonstrating how language can maintain systems of oppressive realities over those who are considered to exist at the margins of society.

The institutionalisation of power through language is further explored and interrogated using the realities facing women in the Xitsonga cultural practices of (re)marriage. The argument advanced in the chapter contends that, owing to the conception of culture as static and unchanging, practices that are oppressive and require substantive resistance can take root in the lives of the marginalised owing to the discourses of culture and power that are sustained and maintained without question. Chapter 9, 'Intersectionality and (Re)marriage: A Perspective of the Xitsonga Sociocultural Identity', questions these fixities and proposes new ways of seeing and being in the world that allow women's voices to flourish and find legitimacy in their own cultural topographies.

Taking this analysis further, Chapter 10, 'Unholy Unions: Analysing the Constitutionality of Levirate Marriages in Zulu Custom', illuminates our understanding of the reasons why feminist struggles are required and what they induce and unlock in their facilitation of justice and freedom under the constitutional democracy that now prevails in the country. This chapter and the preceding one facilitate new ways of seeing while inspiring questions that are too broad to be undertaken in

this volume; one is the possibility of having a dual governance system that rests on contemporary Western conceptions of democracy and traditional authority. In such a context, is it impossible to inspire ideas and ways of seeing that are epistemically racist insofar as Western modernity critiques and predefines the *Other* along with their systems of being? While this question is not taken up systematically in the volume, there are some implications and intimations to it, which we find in Chapters 9 and 10.

The final chapter assists us in answering this question—not exhaustively but rather in a circuitous way—as it demonstrates modes of subversion and the subtle resistances that women have at their disposal, even as they might exist within constrained and constraining social conditions. Using the concept of ‘verbal ungovernability’, Chapter 11, ‘Feminism and Literacy: Tortured and Traumatized Femininity in Njabulo Ndebele’s *Death of a Son*’, analyses how contemporary writers (understood doubly as the cultural workers in our country) are determined to dismantle culturally embedded social barriers, while also advancing feminist paradigms in deconstructing patriarchal hegemony. Such an approach is undertaken to work towards an ethical direction, one that aligns the aesthetic with the ethical in how we think about the social order in South Africa, insofar as the country is defined by post-trauma structural realities that we have—so far—failed to address systematically. This contestation is seen in ideas of nationhood at the dawn of democracy and how sociocultural histories consolidate nationhood and women’s representations in post-apartheid South Africa.

## Conclusion

In sum, the volume presents readers with an ability to prize the function and role of the literary figure, the poet and the musician as cultural workers, once again. The volume does this by appealing to these different aesthetic forms as a mode of demonstrating how they contribute to the formation of the polity by way of analysing the social, linguistic and cultural dimensions that define the lives of gendered and sexual subjects as they are subjected to imported ideals of culture—an importation that came from colonial imposition. *Thetha Sizwe* charts a space that enables us to begin dialoguing as a mode of creating, be it in the creation of political possibilities, aesthetic analyses that demonstrate modes of social critique against oppressive systems of existence, or pedagogical strategies (praxes) that facilitate the transcendence of bigoted and violent modes of existing in the world. It primes the canvas for a painting whose muse is the incredible richness that lies untapped in our local languages. We can only trust that the readers appreciate our attempts at venturing in the direction of creating theories that respond to the realities of our people and the

contexts wherein we find ourselves. It is an intellectual and political intervention that confirms that this task is without end and that requires ongoing engagement. We are assured that we have much more work to undertake.

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# Chapter 1

## ***Thetha Sizwe: Challenging Gender Fixities through Interventions from the Margins Using African Languages***

*Siseko H. Kumalo, Vasu Reddy, Nompumelelo Zondi, Gabi Mkhize and Evangeline B. Zungu*

### Introduction

Our purpose in this argument is to respond to a dearth that defines the debate that is curated in, and in part addressed by, the intervention in this chapter. Empirical studies of gender and language have, essentially, been conducted in northern contexts (notably the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Europe) as motivated in, for example, *Gender and Language in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Atanga, Ellece, Litosselliti and Sunderland 2011) and *Language and Gender* (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2013; Talbot 2020). Although not fully grounded in a specific focus on gender and language, some formidable shaping texts have emerged that cover, in part, the layered and dynamic complexities of Zulu identities (see, for example, Carlton, Laband and Sithole 2008), with the gendered perspectives being strongest in a volume that proposes a compendium of things Zulu yet lacking in teasing out some of the underlying political nuances in terms of language. More recently, taking a self-reflective and confessional approach to a history of language, written as a linguistic biography in literary theoretical terms, Sanders (2016) offers some persuasive psychoanalytical insights into the history of Zulu, which he claims are critical to shaping subjectivity. (Though not directly addressing gender, some useful insights speak to issues of gender, masculinity and coloniality.) Most recently and resonating very well with the question of politics and language (including race), Rudwick's (2022) linguistic anthropological insights draw on insights from isiZulu and Afrikaans speakers about power, ideology and gender, reflecting over two decades of solid linguistic research in South Africa.

Beyond a few exceptions in the Southern (African) contexts (see, for example, De Kadt 2002; Milani 2015; Mateveke 2017; Reddy and De Kadt 2006) and intermittent papers in the *South African*

*Journal of African Languages* addressing gender and language, there is a dearth of interventions that foreground the dynamic tensions and opportunities in African languages, in particular. The contributors to this collection endeavour to address this dearth by proposing some theoretical tools contained in this volume. The landscape, however, has changed since this observation, even as these changes continue to play out in the non-heteronormative gender economy—Fiereck, Hoard and Mupotsa's (2020) 'Time Out of Joint: The Queer and Customary in Africa' being but one example in an edited special issue of *GLQ* that delicately analyses the relationship between customary conceptions of gender, language and the political, to demonstrate the multivariance(s) of sexuality in Africa and our need to study it. Central, here, is the prospect of how language includes and excludes, but more importantly, how language is often used injuriously to also name and shame. Herein lie the imbrications reinforced in predominately heteronormative culture, patriarchal language and the social institutions that regulate and govern society. As indicated earlier, it is the aim of this chapter, within the overall context of this volume, to contribute to the study of this inter-relational confluence that—using the Foucauldian notion of governmentality (Lemke 2015; Macleod and Durrheim 2002)—bears down on the lives of the sexual subject and being. The connectedness of gender, culture, language and society (see Jourdan and Tuite 2006; Stanlaw, Adachi and Salzman 2017), combined with context, location, position and history, gives us an impetus to interrogate the political conditions of possibility under which sexual subjects exist on the African continent, while also responding to the dearth first identified by Atanga et al. (2011). Our intervention is not predetermined, singular, insular or outside the growing body of scholarship that is considering such questions and analyses (see, for example, Nyeck 2021) in nuanced conceptual terms.

Additionally, and as precursors to Fiereck et al. (2020), antecedents that take the political seriously (see Epprecht 2004, 2013; Nyeck and Epprecht 2013) as it is interwoven with the confluence of culture, gender, language and social institutions that bear down on the subjectivity of the sexual subject—*Queer in Africa: LGBTQI Identities, Citizenship, and Activism* (Matebeni, Monro and Reddy 2018)—add a critical and incisive voice to arguments about the politics of gender and sexualities in African contexts. Keeping in mind our preoccupation, which deals with the concepts of gender—as a set of ideas—and language, as it defines—willing and unwilling life (including representing those that are perceived to be abject)—the possibilities of those who are 'spoken of' (*abo ku thethwa*



*ngabo*).<sup>1</sup> *Queer in Africa* explicitly applies to the relationship between language and gender in the analysis presented by Mary Hames (2018), wherein she thinks through the phenomenon of ‘Lesbian Students in the Academy: Invisible, Assimilated, or Ignored?’<sup>2</sup> Moreover, Hames’ interventions motivate a useful contribution in response to the shortfalls identified by Atanga et al. (2011) and to which we propose a response within this argument.

Concerning the theorisation of gender and sexuality on the continent using African languages, this gap must be qualified in that we (here) wish to take a moment to articulate and extrapolate what is embedded in the concept of *Thetha Sizwe*. Additionally, it cannot go unstated that the theorisation to which we refer should not be taken to mean that African languages lack theoretical depth and sophistication, for the objection to such an assertion lies in the question, ‘how would African intellectual and political thought have developed insights into the complexities of African societies that boast of laudable civilisation across the continent if they did not have theory?’ As such, when we refer to theorisation, the proper concept—possibly—is one that seeks to take the reader into the confidence of a nuanced, rich and deeper understanding of our languages, linguistics (and their politics and politicisation) that is deferential in kind and illuminating to academe. We must be clear in indicating that the discussion we are curating with the theoretical articulation suggested by this chapter is not an exhaustive one implying closure but rather one that must and ought to inspire further thinking and similar projects in other disciplines.

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In our engagement below, the concept of *Thetha Sizwe* is representative of two meanings.

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1 Readers familiar with the Nguni language cluster will note that, here, we refer to the idea of ‘uku thetha’ as it finds expression in the language of isiXhosa. This conception of ‘speaking’ has radical implications when read against Matebeni et al. (2018) insofar as they address themselves to the life/lives of those who are always spoken of as a mode of being ‘managed’ and ‘tolerated’ in an anti-Queer, cis-heteronormative, patriarchal society that is always violent to ‘feminised’ (Kumalo 2019) and, necessarily, Othered bodies. It is here that Thetha Sizwe finds its interventionist agenda, seeking to subvert discourses of power that are exclusionary owing to their hegemonic dominance.

2 Without taking away from the analysis presented by Hames (2018), it is useful to note that the conception of ‘*inkonkoni*’ (which is orthographically represented as ‘*unkonkoni*’ (Hames 2018: 143) outside of its common orthography as written here), encountered in her analysis, is itself misrepresented insofar as it is viewed as a derogatory concept by her study’s participants. This volume, perhaps, will demonstrate how critical interventions of language might illumine our understandings in ways that go beyond the common parlance vis-à-vis the use of certain terms within the everyday world that is defined by structures of power, domination and the Othering of those who are always located as subjects of hegemonic identities. Less pretentiously, if one interrogates the word, they will find its meaning to be a designator for the sacred object used by traditional healers in the process of divination, which—in itself—is already revealing of the concept ‘*inkonkoni*’, those who exhibit same-sex desire. The commonalities would be surfaced in an etymological analysis of the two concepts. However, it is not within the scope of this essay to apply itself to this distinction.

The first instance suggests the call and response—a dialogical approach of a speaker addressing a hearer. *Thetha Sizwe*, in such a schema, has epistemic implications insofar as the hearer hears the speaker through the social conferral of credibility to the speaker by their hearer. In other words, ‘epistemic implications’ reveal that the communicative concept of *thetha sizwe* has cognitive, conscious, cerebral overtones: it implies knowledge effects and is about knowing. As the editors of the collection, we subsequently wish to pose a series of questions to our readers: do you hear the epistemic claims contained in the music, literature, poetry and art of our genders, sexualities, languages and culture(s)? Are you ready to engage in such an exchange, which has left us (in our collective efforts to bring this text to completion—as contributors and editors) in awe and deep admiration of the capacity of our people and their languages? With the legislative moves that seek to see the use of indigenous languages in the scientific system of the country, are we—as members positioned within academia—ready to take the function, knowledge, depth and opportunities that lie in our languages seriously?

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While this book is not an analysis of thematic considerations that define the scholarly area of epistemic justice, insofar as such questions as those posed above are of an epistemic justice inclination, the kinds of contributions that constitute this volume demonstrate its saliency to this disciplinary area of interest. This is to say that the chapters contained in the book outline, through systematic engagement with gender, sexuality, music, literature, poetry and cultural institutions, *how* a living conception of epistemology informs resistance and theorisation in spaces that have always been located at the margins. Such an informing process might even allow the reader of epistemology to broaden their horizons with respect to how they understand, think about and theorise epistemic justice and epistemology as a fundamental subset of philosophy proper. Importantly, what such a conception of *Thetha Sizwe*—in the dialogical format—does is that it enables us to liberate ourselves from the hubris that has always held the position of a need to capacitate our languages through notions of ‘intellectualisation’ (cf. Kumalo 2020, when he writes about developing theory using historical artefacts in Boucher’s *Language, Culture and Decolonisation*). Simply, what is motivated in this chapter and demonstrated in this volume is that African languages have always been intellectual in the function of intellection. Surely, therein lies the intellectual capacity of indigenous languages. In other words, we motivate that it is pre-given as a communicative expression and invitation that requires further engagement. For this reason, the collection suggests what we consider a new concept vis-à-vis debates of intellectualisation.

Secondly, the concept is denotative of a national speech act, in the sense of a nation speaking—a matter that is taken up in Chapter 7 by Kumalo and Zondi when they use the work of Veena Das to

think through the concept of language as institution. The concept of a national speech act is not only limited to this chapter, however; it is also found in the thinking of theoretical contributions that engage feminist styles of resistance in women's writing, women's music and the uses of poetry that mount a socio-political critique. *Thetha Sizwe*, in this secondary function, builds from the first conceptual move in that the questions we posed are answered in the affirmative. We are actively forging ahead with African languages in their upward trajectory and use in the scientific system of the country, therefore let the nation speak! African languages need to resist the paternalistic intervention that they need capacitation. On the contrary, our languages need attention, historical tracing and study, but more importantly, they need the space from which to speak! While we hear the epistemic claims that are contained in the life stories, music, literature and gender and sexual narratives of our people, we simultaneously recognise the nation (in its concomitant capacity to create, insofar as we do not abjure the categories of Blackness and, more importantly, Blackness as it is representative of indigenous ways of life and being).

*Thetha Sizwe* as a national speech act, as the nation speaking, is a fundamental intellectual shift insofar as we recognise that the histories of our people, the oppression of colonial invasion and epistemic slighting are all an ongoing intellectual and political project that require(s/d) correcting and repair since the dawn of democracy in South Africa. In the concept of recognition lies a deeply fundamental human act that understands that we are not invalids waiting to learn from the great traditions of colonial masters. In isiZulu alone, we have a plethora of literary genres that give us a home, a base from which to speak, a language that commands respect and deferential treatment by any scholar who takes themselves seriously—and here we list *inganekwane* (folktale), *insumansumane* (myth), *umlando* (historical narrative), *inkondlo* (poem) and indaba. In styling *Thetha Sizwe* as a national speech act, we seek to dislodge the deeply epistemically racist assumptions that our languages need appropriating—a claim that comes from scholars who know very little about our languages and yet have the intellectual hubris to claim that African languages ought to borrow from languages such as English. Such a position is not merely punted by us, as the volume editors, without scholarly substantiation and evidence but is self-evident in the two chapters of the book that are written in isiZulu. *Thetha Sizwe*, as a recognised national speech act, shifts the gaze from a colonial centre and takes the notion of inter-epistemic exchange seriously.

Recognising this gap—insofar as such connections are sorely lacking in the theorisation of the location of our languages—and continuing in the trajectory of Fiereck et al. (2020), this volume takes a cue from these studies in responding to the need to scrutinising the diversity theorised by Matebeni et al. (2018), as it exists in Africa—and in our case—at the southernmost tip of the African

continent. The objective lies in showcasing the relationship between language, cultures and conceptions of gender and sexuality (and their politics) while deploying sexuality (closely aligned to gender) as a lens through which to use the linguistic richness that has for so long been silenced, repressed, if not erased. It is important to note that before the historical fact of colonisation that was not predicated on an existential necessity, the multivariance of genders and sexualities that existed in Africa and in the societies in which we apply ourselves, in the analyses presented in this volume, were not exclusionary and constricted as they are today (cf. Murray and Roscoe 2021). The contention, expressed in the notion of enabling the room for sexuality to act as a lens, is to counter the reinforced socially constructed heteronormative restrictions that came to define our societies shaped and influenced by colonial strictures of reading and ordering our worlds. This claim finds its confirmation in the scholarship of Amadiume (1987), Mudimbe (1988), Mignolo and Vásquez (2013), Mohanty (1991; 2003) and Oyěwùmí (1997), to mention a few scholars who have critiqued and problematised western epistemic colonialism and paradigms, and ways of seeing and structuring the world and decolonising knowledge (Alcoff 2007, 2011, 2017).

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To this end, multivariance<sup>3</sup>, as explored in this chapter, is an appeal to culture and its centrality, specifically in the context of language, for language is always rooted in and expressive of culture. Culture is a conundrum, especially in human and social contexts, because beyond its root meaning of shared values, ideas and symbols that pattern our lives, it is simultaneously elusive and illusive and indeed implies complex systems of articulation and understanding that are deeply and inherently contested. This appeal has previously been theorised by Kumalo and Gama (2018) in their analysis of Trengrove's *Inxeba*, wherein the authors make a case for the need to transform and change the fixities that define cultural conceptions. They make this proposition by appealing to how Trengrove subverts the socially constructed cultural space of 'manhood' and initiation within the Xhosa custom of *ulwaluko*. This contestation and subversion allow for a revisionist approach to interpretations of culture and its constructions, circulation and reproductions. There can be binary approaches: one that sticks with culture as it is inherited (implying that it is uniform and static) and a secondary approach that contests culture and its trajectory (which recognises and rethinks its dynamism and fluidity). In this volume, the essays/analyses/arguments demonstrate modes of subversion that counter grand narratives that respond to subaltern and marginalised voices (Spivak and Riach 2016) within the scheme of the perceived role of culture as a monolithic social institution

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3 By multivariance, we imply the rich diversity of African languages, their conceptual dimensions, which further imply that we need recourse to the idea that all languages do not simply represent a grammar, syntax and semantics but they are—in their use—fundamentally complex, contested and multidimensional.

that is uniform and unchanging. Responding to this conundrum, in their argument, Kumalo and Gama (2018: 2) suggest the notion of ‘action-as-legislation’, which they define as follows:

[m]anhood, as we use it in this paper, is in line with the Arendtian ([1954]/1994:441) suggestion which posits action as legislation. Action, in terms of manhood, denotes acting in such a way that the principles of an individual’s action could become the general law, and to be a man of goodwill represents a constant concern—not with obedience to the existing laws but with legislating through one’s actions.

The relationship between genders, languages and cultures can thus also be better served using a discourse analytical framework that remains scarce (Atanga et al. 2011) on the continent. In addressing this gap, this collection highlights and engages the issues/questions shaping languages, cultures and genders in South Africa while drawing from contexts a bit further afield, such as Nigeria. As outlined in note 2 in this essay, the reader is invited to think with us when we suggest that conceptions of sexuality require space for articulation and realisation, using an altogether different and fresh vocabulary—as suggested in this volume through the use of African languages—that has suffered at the hands of violent repression, owing to the impositions of coloniality and colonialism. To suggest a fresh vocabulary means a system of recognition(s) as attached to the questions we posed above; a fresh vocabulary can and ought to be found in our languages by recognising *Thetha Sizwe* as a national speech act. In other words, we are searching for epistemic freedom as a corrective to epistemic violence. It is important to bear in mind that as this is a nascent area of scholarship, there will and should be contestations—rooted in the process of correcting misreadings that are informed by a lack of understanding of historical (indigenous) terms that have been refracted, owing to the incongruencies created by colonial imposition.

To say that this is a burgeoning area of scholarship is rooted in our observation of work dedicated to studying African languages and cultures as they contribute to how we understand the world(s) we inhabit. Put another way, a study of this nature that locates culture in conversation with language (insofar as we treat the languages of the margins that have always been ‘Othered’) is novel and is a rationale of this volume. While we acknowledge that there has been work on language in disciplines such as sociolinguistics and lexicography, and cultural anthropology, sociology and political studies have paid attention to the uses of culture, the merging of the two—as they concern the lived realities of peoples of the South—is something rare, which culminates in our positioning this argument as one that gives birth to a nascent area of study that we hope will inspire more engagement in this direction.

Returning to the facilitation of breathing (life) into African languages and cultures in our theorisation, we must motivate how we conclude that these epistemic frameworks have been at the receiving end of injustice(s). The claim that the ideas and modes of life that are recuperated, explored and interrogated in this volume have been at the receiving end of silencing and repression is rooted in Mazrui's (1978) seminal argument, wherein he demonstrates how colonial education went to the extent of shaming the existing moral codes around sex and sexuality in Africa. His (Mazrui 1978: 26) exposition of the issue treats the importation of a Victorian moral economy that created a society 'where the novel was read in family gatherings; where, therefore, the novelist was expected to avoid topics which might cause embarrassment to the young, especially young girls.' Moreover, and with this thinking in mind: 'This is why the early missionaries, who were also founders of Africa's early schools, were somewhat shocked at what they considered a rather loose sexual morality among the Africans' (Mazrui 1978: 26). In correcting this problem, which was only a problem insofar as it was an ethnocentric arrogance (accompanied by violence), the colonial missionary education *pioneers* unsurprisingly 'sought to bring under control both in schools and in the villages as a whole [...] sex in all its manifestations. And they sought to do this by proceeding to discourage "important areas of African cultural life, on the assumption that these contributed to moral laxity and sinful appetite."'

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The ideas in this volume re-member these modes of life while exploring their nuances, multivariance and textures by drawing from culture, language and literature. Such an approach resurfaces the relationship between literary studies and cultural practices to the extent that the two are intimately interwoven—for an aesthetic object (for example, a literary text, a work of art, a piece of music) can only be truly appreciated if its audience is familiar with its substantiating (situational) cultural practices. This relationship takes us back to the one on the intricate modes of existence between language and culture.

Put differently, the collection pushes the conceptual move by substantially drawing on studies that relate to women's experiences as a way of demonstrating that women need to lead the way in discussions that subvert patriarchal power. Moreover, the need to position women in this way inspires allyship with all genders and sexualities that have been relegated to the realm of a confined and domesticated life that has restricted the capacity to participate in public affairs and the polity. Positioning the volume in this format is informed by an appreciation of the pride of place assigned to conceptions of understanding society that are liberated from the categories that were imposed on the continent through bifurcating gender economies that established systems of hierarchy and, subsequently, domination. The rationale behind such a move is premised on feminist philosophy,

specifically the thinking of Drucilla Cornell (1995: 78) when she makes a case for an ethical feminism, which indicates ‘the aspiration to a nonviolent relationship to the “Other” and to “Otherness” in the widest possible sense. This assumes responsibility to struggle against appropriating the ‘Other’ into any system of meaning that would deny her difference and singularity.’

The work presented in this volume thus takes as its overarching question the interrogation of what it would mean to resist systems of domination that deny most women their singularity, which is to say, their agency and epistemic status as actors within the structural inequalities of society—as has been the case since the imposition of systems of power that construct our worlds in diverse ways in the (post)-colonial era. We recognise that our societies, having internalised imported moral economies, have dramatically shifted from what they were before colonial imposition. This is not, however, to advocate for a project that attempts to recover a lost world, as such an approach would merely be symptomatic of essentialist thinking, which has already been troubled by a series of scholars who have treated the matter in the past, be they writing in the post-colonial tradition (Mamdani 2001, 2017) or the decolonial tradition (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018; Nyoka 2020; Sithole 2020). Rather, the objective is to enlist in resistance struggles while demonstrating how this structure of resistance has always persisted and continues to persist in the linguistic dimension that shapes African languages. Enlisting in such a struggle also reveals the differences that define how two world views differ. But instead of simply using difference as a point of contention, we aim to demonstrate how such differences can assist in waging war against hegemonic strictures of thinking that lock people into cages of inferiority and hopelessness, to borrow from Morrison (1993).

In so enlisting in the theoretical (proverbial) struggle against patriarchal dominations, we do not do this alone but employ the tools and resources of feminist intellectuals in their multiplicities (and in their differences) as they exist on the African continent and regionally. Such a plethora of ideas concerning the liberation of women—as said, liberation is theorised by feminists and queer thinkers, which also privileges the singularity outlined by Cornell’s (1995) ethical feminism—draws from the aesthetic objects produced in the indigenous languages of the country. The appeal to an indigenous and decolonised local aesthetic does not foreclose our ability to draw from theoretical feminist developments—as outlined by African feminists across Africa (cf. Mama 2007; Tamale 2020). Moreover, and importantly, our privileging of the aesthetic allows us to advance Cornell’s (1995: 77) feminist call to struggle, wherein she draws our attention to ‘what has been traditionally thought [of] as the aesthetic in feminist politics.’ In this instance, Cornell (1995) privileges the function of imagination insofar as imagination allows us to rethink and fashion new worlds, which advances our objectives while taking care to substantiate our reasoning against being seen as attempting to conjure up past and extinct worlds.

In keeping with this line of thinking, we should clear up the distinction between re-membering and fashioning new worlds. In the first instance, we take re-membering to mean the project of attending to the displacement, dislocation and abjection (indeed pathologising) moves that have torn apart cultures, belief systems and moral economies—to the extent that such a project has instituted structures of domination and oppression.<sup>4</sup> These systems of domination and oppression have been diagnosed as coloniality in the contemporary age, where the ghost of coloniality still defines our conceptions of the world. Re-membering means attending to this ghost (exorcising it) to prime (and redraft) the canvas for imagining new worlds, which, of course, is the second conceptual move that we attend to. The exorcism, here, is done by appealing to the concept of dialogue as an iterative process (*Thetha Sizwe*)—both individual and communing together, which signifies the process of creating (in the aesthetic sense) as a collective. This process of creation is what gives rise to the notion of the national speech act, to which we referred above. Creation, in this regard, becomes a collective project, a public affair—revolutionary in the Arendtian (1966–1967) sense of *Revolution and Freedom* (see Hiruta 2019).

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As is already well known, it is only aesthetic insofar as the artist(s) has an audience that will receive the object and respond to its capacity to express, capture and be a symbol of the beautiful and sublime. In this sense, the communicative correlation is clear: just as *thetha sizwe* is about the capacity to ‘hear and speak’; similarly, language and literature induce the prospect of layered meanings that enable ongoing reinterpretation precisely because we can hear, speak and listen. The aesthetic, so construed, is a dialogical process informed by the pioneering work of Bakhtin (1982), which is also captured by the notion of the call and response that is embedded in the notion of *Thetha Sizwe*—speak and let us hear; create and let us receive that which has been created. *Thetha Sizwe* is thus, in some instances, also different from simply allowing the nation to speak (denotative of a collective process of governance that allows the polity to co-create its own possibilities). In the aesthetic component, that of an audience, we find the notion of *Thetha Sizwe* as it carries its double meaning: first, *Thetha*, denoting a community with which one dialogues in the process of speaking (and speaking is but another mode of acting and creating). In the second sense, *Sizwe*, as denotative of the aesthetic at work, we find the notion of hearing—here, the aesthetic that can be understood as the poetic compositions that are under investigation in the treatises compiled in the collection, the music that is analysed in these treatises, and the novels and writing strategies that

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4 Here, oppression is used in line with Anne Cudd’s (2006) *Analysing Oppression*, insofar as her analysis has allowed for the detailed study of systems that instantiate oppression and allow us to attend to the manifold challenges that come with this reality.



are interrogated. Our curatorial decisions in shaping this volume together with authors have been given the act of motivating the process of speaking and being heard and co-creating knowledge insofar as these strategies are emblematic of the design and sequence of the chapters. In this idea of hearing, *Sizwe* moves from a noun (*iSizwe*—a nation) to a verb (*sizwe*—action-in-hearing as the act that inspires doing, which corrects that which is socially problematic or an illness that requires our attention).

In dealing with a social issue, collective dialogue appeals to and underwrites the philosophies of African people(s)—who find generative modes of addressing social ills through mediated dialogue and conversation. In this regard, creating becomes a focal point of analysis since creating can mean creating either music, poetry, paintings, literature or a polity that is ethically conducive to the flourishing of all within said polity. Collective imaginings of new worlds attend to the contemporary scourges that define society all around us, with gender-based violence being but one example of the social issues that require collective struggle in addressing the behaviour of men and the violence perpetrated against women and children in South Africa.

The process of dialoguing in priming a canvas for new aesthetic possibilities does not denote the ascription of definitive categories that have led to where we are—in need of new modes of thinking and theorising that borrow from systems of thought that were once thought mythological and fictitious by a system captivated by its own ‘narcotic narcissism’, to borrow once more from Morrison (1993). Ours is cautious in an attempt not to recreate the problems identified by Cornell (1995) as we go about re-memembering our disavowed cultures, worlds and modes of being. In her own words (Cornell 1995: 77):

Indeed, the labelling process has served as a *pharmakon*, both ‘curing’ and ‘poisoning’ our minds by closing them to the important ethical and political issues that are advanced by re-thinking the significance of the limit of the symbolic order, of the world structured not only by conventional meaning but by the fantasies that give body and weight to our form of life.

We read this labelling process as the rigidities of the social structures imposed by language and culture, creating the falsities of worlds unchanged, unchangeable and unchanging. With the feminist struggle in mind, a struggle that aims to create an alignment of the ethical with the aesthetic, *Thetha Sizwe* offers some tools to begin building this new and imagined world predicated on the ethical relationality between the self and the *Other*. Put simply, the conceptual frame of this

volume encourages modes of unlearning—and re-learning that culture is not a static phenomenon but rather a dynamic process; all fixities about it can be challenged, altered and changed. *Thetha Sizwe* accentuates language as a powerful tool that societies can mobilise in the feminist struggle to reclaim power in an African perspective while constructing identities and expressing individuality aligned to collective struggles.

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Part I  
Aesthetic Modalities of  
Critique Using Languages as  
an Interrogation of Culture

## Chapter 2

### Understanding Culture to Fight Patriarchy: Knowledge and Practice of *Oríkì* among Yoruba Women in South Africa

*Adebola Fawole*

#### Introduction

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Women's knowledge and understanding of oral arts and the culture that produces them may be the key to advocating against and eradicating the oppressive aspect of cultures and reinforcing the positives. This is especially true where women have to be at the forefront of fighting against patriarchal practices. Such agitation is better done from a position of knowledge, if not power. Weapons to debunk the practices are often embedded in the oral arts, known by different names in different cultures. In Yorubaland, most of the cultures and traditions are embedded in the *Oríkì orile* of the people, as it doubles as the oral repository of history and an identity marker for different lineages in Yorubaland. Identity lies at the heart of every person, whether it is acknowledged or not. As humans, we have an innate desire to belong to someone or something or have someone or something belong to us. We crave nomenclatures to label us as this or that, and we hold on tightly to those identification markers that we like and cherish while attempting to wipe away those we think are a burden to us. Nowhere does this play out more than in the diaspora, where there is a need to blend in or stand out depending on individual preferences and prevailing circumstances.

That women are the main players in the drive to maintain cultural identities and native languages is a known fact (Holmes 1993: 161; Roberts 2005: 260; Hatoss 2003: 75). They are also often champions of upholding language use, sustaining or eradicating cultural practices, and maintaining peace (Fawole 2018: 100). However, they cannot play this role effectively if they have little or no knowledge of the culture or language in question. A lack of knowledge about some of these practices may be the reason why some women continue to insist on cultural practices that are harmful to women, even in the diaspora. Many people in diaspora either largely abandon their culture to assume their host country's culture, become very westernised and lose their identities in



the process, or go to the opposite extreme of nostalgic practice of their culture without adequate understanding of such practices except for the fact that 'it is our culture'.

An example of this may be found in female genital cutting (FGC), which is practised by some people, even in the diaspora. Reasons given for the continuation of cultural female-inimical practices in the diaspora often range from the need for identity, to a desire to uphold traditions, and a lack of knowledge about these practices in their home cultures is often not considered a factor in continued practice. Cassman (2007: 128) argues that the drive to eliminate the practice of FGC may be failing because there is a lack of 'a true understanding of FGC—why it began and why it continues'. She believes that both the proponents of the practice and those fighting to end it need to have a firm understanding of the issues surrounding it to willingly give it up and succeed in stopping it. If those who insist on continuing the practice understand its origin and its ill effects on women, they may be more receptive to ending its practice in the diaspora and in their home countries. Knowledge of these traditions would guard against a nostalgic and adamant return to patriarchal practices in the diaspora.

It is a known fact that women are often the enforcers of practices that are harmful and demeaning to womenfolk. Nkealah (2016: 7365–7366) questions the clamour of some women for cultural practices in her critique of Acholonu's motherist theory of 1991. She wonders how women in the diaspora find it 'easy to glamourise the life of a rural woman' when they have escaped such a life. Nkealah notes that it is 'ironic that someone so far removed from the rural environment can be waxing lyrical about the innocence and unsophistication of its women'. Nkealah further argues that Acholonu's presentation of rural African women is unrealistic. The development of such romanticised ideas about cultural practices can be linked to a lack of understanding of such practices and a sense of nostalgia where everything appears beautiful from afar.

Haideh Moghissi (1999: 210) reports that in the diaspora, 'patriarchal values and sexist norms are revitalized within the family as well as in the community, and the voices of dissent are muted and dismissed as outside influences'. Thus, in cases where people feel the need to be recognised as distinct groups, traditions and cultural practices are likely to be enforced for fear of being rendered faceless in society. Males are often the ones at the forefront of upholding cultural practices in the diaspora, especially if they favour the patriarchal system. A combination of yearning for home, a lack of knowledge about some practices and a desire to maintain identity in the diaspora help to foster the practice of cultures and traditions inimical to women in the diaspora. This chapter will focus on exploring the knowledge that women in the diaspora have of their traditional oral arts as repositories of historical facts and cultural practices.

## Background

The practice of oral art has been an effective way for women to teach children language and literary skills and to pass on historical and cultural facts. Different forms of oral literature, like songs and various genres of poetry, have been learnt by women through oral literary performances. While many forms of oral art are passing into oblivion, their usefulness cannot be overlooked, and efforts should be made to ensure their continuity.

### Yoruba *Orìkì* and Zulu *Izibongo*

Zululand is home to many foreigners, including the Yoruba people from the Southwest region of Nigeria. Apart from the isiZulu language being of the same Niger-Congo language family, there are many similarities in the cultures of the two African groups. One of these similarities that the Yoruba community from Nigeria residing in King Cetshwayo district share with their hosts, the Zulus, is the culture of praise-singing. This is called *Orìkì* in the Yoruba culture and *Izibongo* in the Zulu culture. In these cultures, the forms are described as praise poetry. *Orìkì*, as a genre of Yoruba oral literature, is described as descriptive composition of attribution or appellation epithets, pithy or elaborated, which are addressed to a subject that may be human or inanimate (Vidal 1969: 53; Barber 1991: 313). Like in the Yoruba culture, Gunner (1986: 33) refers to the *Izibongo* as 'powerful cultural symbols' that 'appeal in a very direct way to their listeners' emotions and attitudes' as they document many historical facts. Turner (1994: 59) distinguished four different categories: the praise of ordinary people (*izibongo zabantu kumbe izihasho*), of inanimate things (*izibongo zezinto ezingaphili*); of kings and great people (*nezibongo zamakhosi/izibongo zabantu abakhulu abagqamile*); and of clans (*izithakazelo kanye nezibongo*).

Although *Orìkì* and *Izibongo* are generally accepted as praise poetry, it should be noted that they contain, in addition to the praise elements, historical facts, warnings and anticipation for the future. In Yoruba culture, *Orìkì* range from a single word to full-length poetry that employs elaborate use of poetic devices. Olajubu (1978) and Awe (1974) identified different types of *Orìkì*, which are discussed below.

- a. *Orìkì abiso* is one of the names given to a child during the naming ceremony on the eighth day. A Yoruba child is given many names, as not only the parents but also the grandparents and, in some cases, other elders in the family name the child. *Orìkì abiso* is given in addition to other

names, and it is often the duty of the paternal grandparents to do so. It is considered a special name and used by parents and elders as a form of endearment. Parents use the *Oríkì* often in greeting the child or when the child has done something that is praiseworthy. Examples are Abike, Arike and Asake for female children and Akanji, Ayinla and Ajayi for male children.

- b. *Oríkì oruko* (personal praise name) is the descriptive praise of a person who has previously borne a particular name. It is usually attached to a specific name such that it comes to mind when the name is mentioned. For example, the epithet '*Ogidiolu Onikanga ajipon*' is added to the name Ajayi. Other examples include Ojo, usually praised as '*Olu kuloye*', '*Morenike Akaba*'. All people who bear such names are praised in a similar fashion.
- c. *Oríkì inagije* is usually acquired by a person in the teenage years and reflects the negative characteristics of that person. *Alokolohunkigbe* is an example of *Oríkì* for a person who steals. *Agbalowomeri* is used to describe someone who is known to collect bribes.
- d. *Oríkì alaje* is similar to the *Oríkì inagije*, but it reflects positive characteristics. It often focuses on the person's physical appearance. An example is *Aguntasolo* for a person who is tall and wears his clothes well. A dark-skinned person is praised as '*adumadan*'; a light-skinned person is called '*apon'bepo're*', while a slim person is referred to as '*opelenge*'.
- e. *Oríkì borokinni* consist of praise for all types of things, not just humans. They are words that give vivid descriptions of their subjects. Some of them are extensive descriptions, as is found in the *Oríkì* of a lazy person or the cassava plant. An example of such praise among the Yorubas is for food.
  1. *Iyán lóúnjẹ*  
Pounded yam is food
  2. *Ọkà loògùn*  
Oka is medicine
  3. *Àírí rárá*  
Only when there is nothing to eat
  4. *Là n'jẹkọ*.  
Do we eat cornmeal

- f. *Oríkì orile* is a compilation of the descriptive epithets of a lineage. Each lineage in Yorubaland has its own *Oríkì orile*, which is usually quite long and detailed. It is not only used to praise members of the lineage, but, as Olajubu (2012: 35) noted, it is 'a tool for identity reinforcement, validating the authority of some groups while denying others access to power.' *Oríkì* can perform these functions because the *Oríkì orile* is the 'archives' (Olajubu 2012: 36) of the Yoruba people's history based on their lineages.
- g. *Oríkì ilu* was identified by Awe (1974) as referring to praises of places. *Oríkì ilu* is primarily concerned with the foundations and reputations of a town. For example, Idepe (in Okitipupa, Ondo State, Nigeria) has her *Oríkì* as:

1. *Oma Jegun a bean meji, Onaja ke he e waro*  
We are the descendants of Jegun
2. *Ji irere ti le uba bi ne, n'ode usoyen* (Usen)  
We were born at Ode-Usoyen (Usen)
3. *Oma Jegunyomi Abejoye*  
The child of Jegunyomi Abejoye
4. *Oge ffun ye se Oba Usen*  
By the white-robed Jegunyomi The Oba of Usen

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Another is the *Oríkì* of Iwo in Osun State:

1. *Iwo olodo oba, omo ateni gbola, teni gbore nile odidere*  
Iwo, of the river Oba, that spreads mat to receive riches and gifts in the land of the parrots
2. *Iwo ti ko nilekun beni koni kokoro, Eru wewe ni won fi n dele*  
Iwo that has no door or key. They use slaves to guard their homes
3. *Iwo lomo Olola ti n san keke, Iwo lomo oloola ti n bu abaja*  
Iwo children with the keke facial tribal marks, Iwo children with the abaja facial tribal marks
4. *Iwo todidere pepepe tenure te ka rogodo.*  
Iwo that the parrot tried to pronounce, and its beak curled up.

- h. *Oriki ile* is the praise of homesteads in Yorubaland. Apart from divisions along lineage and town lines, families are also divided into compounds, each with its own praise. An example is Ile Owolake in Ogbmoso, Oyo State. The compound is praised as '*Owolake; omolage*' (We take care of money; we pamper children).
- i. *Oriki orisa*: Lindon (1990) also identified *Oriki orisa*, meaning *Oriki* of the gods. He cited the example of *Oriki* of Sango, the god of thunder and lightning, who has a set of 171 *Oriki* in which he receives at least 30 different appellations, some of which are repeated several times. For him, the significance of all names in Yoruba culture must be seen as an important ingredient of *Oriki* or praise. It repeatedly focuses the attention of the worshippers on the person of the *orisa* and helps to direct the whole recital as a prayer to him. The praise hymn may have a short introduction, such as a simple expression of respect and worship and a number of praise names and titles that are used as acclamations. Worship and acclamation may be repeated at some points in the body of the hymn and at the end. This feature also has the effect of focusing attention on the *orisa* as personally present. A set of *Oriki* for Sango begins thus:

*Iba Sango. Olu koso, jigi l(i) oko, ewon.*

Sango, I bow down. Chief of Koso! Strong-in-the-farm! Chain!

- j. *Oriki Oluwa* is a category of praise that emanated from the praise of gods as a result of people's conversion from African traditional religions to Christianity and Islam. *Oriki Oluwa* is a compilation of the names and descriptions of God according to the faith in question. Evangelist Bola Are made this type of *Oriki* very popular among Yoruba Christians in churches' praise and worship sessions.

As similar as the use of praise poetry is in the Yoruba and Zulu cultures, slight differences are noticed in its composition and performance. Gunner (1979: 239) noted that due to the heroic nature of the contents of the *Izibongo*, they are considered male territory, and women are not documented as performers. This is contrary to the Yoruba culture, where women are the main performers of the *Oriki orile*, even though they are performed by men as royal chanters or musicians. In the olden days, young wives were expected to learn the praise poem of their husbands' lineages and perform it during family occasions.

Barber (1991: 315) noted that in the Yoruba culture, although men are sometimes found performing *Oriki*, its chanting remains mainly the domain of women, as the performance of *Oriki* is often a domestic task for which the performers are not paid. Awe (1974: 333–334) noted the following about women as chanters of the lineage *Oriki*:

The wives married into a lineage are traditionally the custodians and transmitters of the lineage's *Oriki* and the *Oriki* of the important personalities within it. They are expected to show identification with and pride in their adopted lineage by learning to recite the *Oriki* of its forebears

38 Women's role as primary caregivers of children in most families makes them responsible for maintaining and continuing oral literary arts like *Oriki*. When women cease to practise them or teach the younger generation, the arts will pass into oblivion, and so will the historical facts and cultural practices contained within them. Thus, women are pivotal to the survival of the oral arts, the encouragement of literacy and even the continued existence of languages. This role becomes all the more important in the diaspora, where many people may wish to continue communicating in their native language and practising cultural practices to maintain their identities. It has also been noticed that the art of *Oriki* performance has reduced greatly in Yorubaland, unlike the Zulu culture, where the *Izibongo* is still considered relevant in contemporary times and is practised at official government functions like the entrance of the President to the National Assembly.

## Theoretical framework

Feminists use the concept of 'patriarchy' to describe the power relationship between men and women. The term literally means 'rule by the father'. In political theory, patriarchy refers to particular organisations of the family in which fathers have the power of life and death over the family members. It can refer narrowly to the husband's supremacy within the family and, therefore, to the subordination of his children and wife. As a broader concept, patriarchy is used to characterise society, which is dominated by men within the family and outside. It characterises a society that reproduces male dominance in all areas of its life, in education, work and in its socio-political institutions (Elson 1995: 1). Muller (1975: 4) offers a broader definition of patriarchy 'as a social system in which the status of women is defined primarily as wards of their husbands, fathers and brothers', where wardship has economic and political dimensions. Ortner (1972: 5) argues that,

the universality of female subordination the fact that it exists within every type of social and economic arrangement and in societies of every degree of complexity, indicates to me that we are up against something very profound, very stubborn, something that cannot be remedied merely by rearranging a few tasks and roles in the social system, nor even by rearranging the whole economic structure.

Patriarchy, as it exists in different societies, seeks to subjugate women. If society is to be rid of it, women are expected to be at the forefront of the fight against it. Hence the need for feminism in its diverse outlooks.

## Types of feminism

Feminism has fragmented into several different schools of thought, often reflecting very different emphases and doctrines. The main schools within feminism have acquired something of an orthodox status. Liberal feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism are the three substantive schools most often cited. It is now advisable to include the more recent views of postmodern feminism as a separate category, partly because these have generated such intense interest over the last decade.

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- a. Liberal feminism.** Early feminism, particularly the 'first wave' of the women's movement, was deeply influenced by the ideas and values of liberalism. In the first major feminist text titled *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, with Strictures on Political and Moral Subject*, Mary Wollstonecraft, argued that women should be entitled to the same rights and privileges as men because they were human beings. Liberal feminism combines feminist ideals with humanist tenets, that is, gender justice based on humanism. The philosophical basis of liberal feminism lies in the principles of individualism, the belief that the individual human is all-important and, therefore, that all individuals are equal. Liberals express this belief in the demand for equal rights: all individuals should enjoy an equal opportunity to enter and participate in public life. Any form of discrimination against women in this respect should clearly be prohibited. Liberal feminism is essentially reformist: it seeks to open up public life to equal competition between women and men. Women are judged not only by their talents and abilities but also by social and economic factors. If emancipation simply means the achievement of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, other forms of social disadvantage, such as social class and

race, are ignored. Liberal feminism may therefore reflect the interests of white, middle-class women in developed societies but fail to address the problems of working-class women or those in the Third World.

**b. Socialist feminism.** Socialist feminism improves the understanding of relations between class and sex. Friedrich Engel's *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* pointed out that women are often looked at and treated as the property of men. As such, a woman's position is reduced to that of a commodity meant to be used and disposed of. It advocates the economic independence of women. Socialist feminism explains the nature and modes of women's oppression. According to it, women's oppression is deeply embedded in existing social and economic structures. It challenges the power relations in the patriarchal capitalist system and argues that equality of opportunity can never be possible in society as long as there are fundamental differences in wealth, privilege and power. Thus, socialist feminists' struggle is not against male domination alone but against systems of exploitation that disempower women.

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**c. Radical feminism.** Radical feminism is chiefly concerned with the issues arising out of pornography, prostitution, sexual harassment, rape and women battering. To be liberated from sexual oppression, radical feminists prescribed a strategy to create an exclusively female sexuality through various methods. They are against heterosexuality and traditional roles of women as faithful housewives and child-bearing machines. Radical feminism sees the oppression of women as the fundamental and most basic form of oppression. All other forms of oppression stem from male dominance. The purpose of this oppression is to obtain psychological ego satisfaction, strength and self-esteem. The radical feminists argue that women's liberation requires a biological revolution. They believe that only through technology can women be liberated from the fundamental inequalities of the bearing and rearing of children.

**d. Postmodern feminism.** The late 1980s saw a steady growth of feminist interest in post-structuralism, deconstruction theory and postmodernism, initially from the areas of literary and cultural criticism. Postmodern and post-structuralist feminism concentrates on the paradigm of language. Its concern is primarily with deconstructing existing language and texts. Language is a potent weapon to undercut and expose patriarchy across the whole domain of culture and literature.



**e. African feminism.** Several feminisms have been identified on the African continent, reflecting the complexities that simultaneously being an African and a feminist (or even African and a woman) entail. Okome (1999) claims that intellectual feminism, in condemning aspects of African culture such as polygamy, genital excision and forced or early marriages, echoes the paternalistic attitude and tone of ‘Western’ feminists towards African women. Such feminism, which opposes intellectual feminism, also tolerates practices that violate women’s rights recognised in many international protocols. So, while popular feminism corresponds to African women seeking to maintain their cultural identity, opening up spaces for women to earn a living and properly care for their families, and seeking better living conditions for women and children, this valuing of family and culture above all else can also include being involved in polygamous relationships and women’s own acceptance of genital mutilation and very early marriage.

### **Contemporary theorisations of African feminism**

Feminism in Africa can be seen to originate from a range of sources, in addition to the ‘Western’ women’s movement. These include Africa’s colonial and postcolonial history, including its own nationalist movements, as well as subsequent and socio-political factors that include political activism like that of Winnie Mandela and Albertina Luthuli and their fight against apartheid in South Africa and competing for and winning the highest office in the land like Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in Liberia. Steady (2005) argues that feminism is a strategy African women have developed and adopted to fight for their survival. Most Black women in Africa and the diaspora have developed these characteristics—not always by choice but because of circumstances and the need to challenge the status quo without abrogating their time-honoured roles as nurturers in society.

The chapter is framed by African feminism, which, according to Ekpa (2000: 29, cited in Nkealah 2006: 135), ‘seeks to give the woman a sense of herself as a worthy, effectual and contributing being’. African feminism springs from a background of rejection of the feminist movement developed in the Western world, which, according to Oyekan (2014: 1), developed in three waves. The first wave was from the 19th century to the early 20th century, the second from 1960 to the late 1980s and the third from the early 1990s to the present. The first and second waves were rejected due to the belief that they catered to the needs of white, Western, educated women and were not very suited to women of colour. This perception has led to the evolution of various theories for a new agenda, as detailed in Nkealah (2017).

African feminism aims to reshape cultures for the benefit of women in various communities. African feminisms consist of various forms of feminism targeting African women both in Africa and in the diaspora. Nkealah (2016: 7365) notes that these types of feminism are 'modelled on oral literature, cultural practices, familiar flora and fauna, indigenous customs and religious philosophies that form the totality of the theorists' African worldview.' Feminism, in whatever form, involves opposing patriarchal practices and emancipating women. Fighting patriarchy requires background knowledge of the practices and the ability to use knowledge wisely.

In this chapter, I subscribe to the 'cameline' feminist model proposed by Nkealah (2017: 122). She bases her model on the characteristics of a camel, which has the 'ability to draw on its own resources to survive in extremely harsh conditions and to protect itself from danger' (Nkealah 2017: 123). She argues that the camel 'is structurally designed to withstand extreme environmental conditions.' In addition to this, the camel has ample knowledge and understanding of the environment and thus adapts to or fights the adverse conditions in which it finds itself. Such a theory helps explore the behaviour of women in terms of how they use knowledge of their cultures to bring about the eradication of patriarchal cultural practices within and outside their linguistic and cultural societies.

Nkealah's feminist model bridges the gap between educated or privileged women and underprivileged or uneducated African women. The model fits the present study as it explores how women navigate the existing cultural knowledge found in oral art to defend themselves against patriarchal practices in the diaspora and, at the same time, promote healthy practice of these arts in their host communities. Just as the camel eats and stores its food for later use, women are expected to strive to gain knowledge about practices inimical to them to help create a better world for future generations. Each identified theme is analysed against the model to see how the women adhered to it.

## Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative design using focus group discussion to collect data. This design was adopted mainly because it allowed the researcher to engage with the participants in a targeted, goal-oriented, knowledge-producing conversation and to allow the participants to express themselves freely (Brinkmann 2014: 287). The focus group discussion provided the opportunity to explore questions emanating from the participants' responses, thereby eliciting a deeper understanding of the topic under focus.

The participants were all Yoruba women married to Yoruba men and resident in the King

Cetshwayo district municipality of KwaZulu-Natal. Twelve families were identified and approached as possible participants; however, only nine participated in the study. This group of women was purposively targeted in the belief that they were in the best position to provide insights into questions raised in the study, as Yoruba women married to Yoruba men and living in the diaspora. The nine women were recruited based on their willingness and availability to participate. They were between the ages of 31 and 60, had been married for at least five years, had at least two children and all had post-secondary school education ranging from teachers' certificates to doctorate degrees.

The purpose of the study was explained to each woman, and informed consent forms were signed before the commencement of the discussion. The group discussion lasted a total of 55 minutes and was conducted mainly in English. The discussion was audio-recorded and later transcribed for thematic analysis. Where Yoruba words were used, they were translated into English. The pre-prepared questions were used only as a guide, and other issues raised by the participants were adequately discussed. To gain insight into the knowledge, perception and attitudes of women regarding *Oriki*, questions were asked about their understanding of what *Oriki* is, their ability to chant it, how they acquired their knowledge of it (if they engaged in the practice in diaspora), and what their views were about its usefulness and the need to preserve and continue the practice, even in diaspora.

### **An example of how cultural practices are embedded in *Oriki* (the Oluoje lineage *Oriki*)**

Yorubas regard 'some forms of oral literature as quasi-historical records' (Awe 1974: 333). They believe that oral arts like the *Oriki* are authentic historical accounts. Examples of how cultural practices are embedded in *Oriki orile* are given below. The first *Oriki* is taken from the *Oriki* of the Oluoje lineage, while the second is from the Foyanmu family. Both highlight practices peculiar to women of the families who have just given birth.

New mothers in the Oluoje lineage were usually served an unseasoned soup of okra leaves and *ewura* yam prepared without salt or palm oil. This is mentioned in their *Oriki*.

1. *Omo sakiti won-in omo ilasa o ganro*  
Children of the okra leaves that are not affected by the rock salt
2. *Omo osonu ile won ogbo aalo*  
Children of the strong-willed people that do not yield to pacification

3. *Omo ilasa o b'omi tutu re omo Adeori o*  
Children of Adeori; of the okra leaves that are not friendly with cold water
4. *Olu Oje emi l'olomitutu yio f'ilasa se?*  
Olu Oje, what will cold water do to the okra leaves?
5. *Omo obe tii o le'po tii o ni'yo*  
Children of the soup that has no palm oil or salt

The soup (*ilasa oganro*) referred to in the *Oriki* is a slimy green soup made from okra leaves. It is less favoured than its more common look-alike, the *ewedu* soup made from jute leaves. *Ilasa* is usually prepared as a seasoned, tasty soup with melon seed, but the one mentioned in the *Oriki* is unseasoned and thus very unpleasant to eat, especially for a new mother. It is mandatory for every woman who has just given birth in the lineage to eat the soup and considered taboo for mothers to refuse to eat the prescribed soup after delivery. It is believed that failure to comply will result in the death of the child. The mother is not expected to eat much of the *ilasa oganro*. This is because the *Oje* people believe that the more the mother eats, the more bad-tempered her child will be.

44 This custom started during the reign of Onpetu Olusopo, whose wives refused to give his slave-wife good food after she gave birth to a child. She was given unpalatable food like *ilasa oganro* by the other wives assigned to take care of her. To her surprise, different types of food were prepared for the naming ceremony of the child. In annoyance, she cursed all women married into the Oluoje lineage. She said if they did not eat what they served her, their babies would die.

Another example is the *Oriki ile* of the popular Foyanmu compound in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Southwest Nigeria. The compound is praised as '*Foyanmu, kerubeko*' (squash the pounded yam as a drink and let the pap be afraid). Pap made from blended and sieved fermented maize is often mixed with water as a refreshing drink on a hot day. It is not considered a palatable or desired meal for a new mother who is believed to need warm or hot food to recuperate quickly and lactate well to feed the newborn baby. However, members of this family use pounded yam instead of pap. New mothers in the family are given the squashed, pounded yam to drink instead of hot pap as befitting a woman who has just given birth to a baby. As is the case in the story of the Oluoje lineage, this started as a result of a curse placed on the entire family by a maltreated woman. The name '*Foyanmu, kerobeko*' (squash the pounded yam as a drink and let the pap be afraid) has since become the name and praise title of the family.

It should be noted that the above excerpts are rendered as praise for members of the lineage and are considered a custom to be proud of. However, an understanding of the origin of the practice reveals them to be less than praiseworthy as it shows feminine insensitivity to other women in their drive to curry the favour of men in a patriarchal society.

Incompleteness or omission of facts behind practices is often noted in *Oriki*, as noted by Awe (1974). She also noted that 'many *Oriki* are compact, allusive, and obscure. Often, their meaning is not apparent until it is explained in a separate narrative which is not part of the performance of the *oriki*' (Awe 1974: 348). While the stories are not fully documented in the excerpts, they immediately raise questions in the curious mind. The fact that these practices are chanted as praises makes it sacrosanct for them to be learned by women and passed on to younger generations.

## Presentation of findings

### Knowledge of *Oriki*

As the study focused on assessing the women's knowledge of *Oriki*, the women who participated in the study were asked questions about their awareness, knowledge, use and learning of *Oriki* and its practice in their parents' and their husbands' families.

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#### *Awareness*

All the women indicated that they were aware of the practice of *Oriki* in its different dimensions but had little knowledge of the content of the lineage *Oriki Orile* or the meanings of the *Oriki abiso*. They reported that they all had *Oriki abiso*, which were still often used by their parents whenever they spoke with them on the phone. This response to the awareness of the practice is expected because of its pervasiveness in its various forms in the Yoruba culture. While the language used in other forms of *Oriki* may be difficult to understand, it was surprising that the women did not know the meaning of *Oriki abiso* or *Oriki oruko*, which could be considered simple Yoruba and thus easy to understand. In this regard, the participants failed to measure up in terms of empowering themselves with knowledge to understand the culture into which they were married. Unlike the camel, which converts its food to fat for storage in its humps, the women had not stored up knowledge to use in the fight against the patriarchy.

### *Use*

Being aware of and having a basic knowledge of *Orìkì* does not guarantee its use. Most women reported that they rarely called their children or husbands by their *Orìkì abiso*. They could not give reasons for this, even though they stated that they understood that these are special names and that they felt special and proud when their own parents called them by them. Some women also noted that their children did not have personal praise names because their parents-in-law had not named them. It is customary for the paternal family to give a child the *Orìkì abiso*. Most of the women said that although they knew their husbands' *Orìkì abiso*, they never called them the names, and the few who did only did so occasionally.

All the women could recite a few words of their families' *Orìkì orile* but knew nothing of their husbands', even though they were aware of it as they had heard it being chanted during special occasions in the family. While it appears that the practice of giving children *Orìkì oruko* or even calling them by it is not common among the women interviewed, other types of *Orìkì* are still evidenced in different aspects of life. For example, *Orìkì* is the basic ingredient for both religious and secular musicians. God is eulogised in all religions as it is believed that praises and thanksgiving create a conducive atmosphere to receive answers to prayers. The fact that *Orìkì* is highly descriptive makes it useful in composing songs using the many descriptive names to praise God.

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*Orìkì* is also still in high demand by secular musicians who may be paid to compose songs to praise notable individuals. Such compositions are used for political campaigns. Carter-Enyi (2018: 87) noted that politicians hire musicians to sing their praise. These praises are often founded on the *Orìkì orile* and embellished with other types. Using the *Orìkì orilè* of a political candidate to compose his praises 'lends veracity to a politician's claim of heritage and connection to a village' (Carter-Enyi 2018: 88) in such a way that the people feel a positive affinity for him and may thus vote for him as one of their own. Every culture has its positive and negative aspects, and using the *Orìkì* at home would have provided an excellent opportunity for the women to teach their children about the endearing aspects of the Yoruba culture. Again, in the aspect of use, the women failed to conform to the cameline model. African feminism is rooted in the African worldview stemming from cultural practices (Nkealah 2016: 7365). Apathy towards cultural practices does not contribute positively to fighting patriarchy.

### *Teaching and learning Oríkì orile*

Teaching new wives the lineage *Oríkì* used to be the responsibility of older women in the family, but this is no longer the case because families no longer live together. All the women interviewed noted that only the elderly and the uneducated women chanted the lineage praise during family gatherings. They also did not receive any training from their husbands' female relatives after marriage. Education also seems to be a factor in the teaching and learning of the lineage praise. The women who had educated mothers-in-law were not sure that they knew the praise, but those with uneducated mothers-in-law were sure that they knew it. They all attributed their lack of training to the fact that they lived far away from their in-laws and so did not have the opportunity to learn from the older women in the family who lived in their villages. They lived in towns and cities when they were in Nigeria. The situation seems irreparable now that they live outside the country. Their lack of training means they will be unable to teach their own daughters-in-law in the future. Thus, it appears that the knowledge and practice of the art are slowly dying out as it is not passed on to the younger generation.

Although the mother camel has no need to teach her young to store up fat in its humps because it is innate, she still has to train her child to survive in the desert. Each generation needs to be trained by the one before it to ensure continuity. The failure to use and train younger women in oral arts does not eradicate the practices discussed in them, but it obliterates their rationale and makes it difficult to argue against them.

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### **The importance of *Oríkì***

The participants were asked how important they perceived the practice of *Oríkì* to be in the Yoruba culture. All the women noted that they were aware of its immense importance. They noted that it serves as a historical archive and that it is a useful bolster for the pride and image of their children and husbands. Many recognised *Oríkì* as a link to their culture, as an identity marker. Although the women displayed a lack of in-depth knowledge of the practice of *Oríkì*, they were aware of its cultural significance and expressed sentiments about resuscitating its practice as they remembered the pride and joy they felt when it was chanted when they were children. This, they noted, informed their decision to give their children praise names. This nostalgia is, however, not put to practical use as they do not call their children by these praise names. The women reported that their husbands' parents gave their children *Oríkì abiso* even when they were born in the diaspora. One of the

women reported giving her granddaughter a praise name according to the custom.

It should be noted that all the women who participated in the study were members of the Association of Nigerian Residents in King Cetshwayo District (ANRU). They met once each quarter to discuss Nigerian issues and how they could contribute to their host community. Many looked forward to the meetings as they provided opportunities to bond with fellow Nigerians and eat Nigerian cuisine, suggesting a need to retain their identities as Nigerians and to keep in contact with other Nigerians in the diaspora. This underscores their need to be connected to their home country. Asekun and Arogundade (2017) noted that Nigerians in the diaspora actively seek to identify with the country. However, the lack of communication in their native language and the practice of their culture may suggest the contrary.

### **Expressed desire by children**

48 Awareness and use of *Oriki* obviously entail the use of the Yoruba language, and this led to the question of the use of Yoruba language in the families of the interviewed women. The use of the Yoruba language in the nine families fell into three categories. Of the nine women, only one reported that Yoruba was the main language of communication in her home. She and her husband communicated with the children in Yoruba. Three of the women reported that while their children understood the language, they could not speak it, while the remaining five families communicated only in English with their children, although they said they communicated with their husbands in Yoruba. The children, thus, did not communicate in the Yoruba language. Hence, although the children heard the language being spoken by their parents, they did not use it as their parents spoke only English with them.

However, women with grown children reported that their sons had expressed a desire to learn the language as they grew older and often blamed their mothers for not allowing them to learn it. One participant reported that her 21-year-old son, who lived away from home, often phoned to ask for the meaning and correct pronunciation of Yoruba words. Another participant disclosed that her son, a married man, was now attending a Yoruba language class to improve his proficiency in the language. The trend of not communicating in Yoruba raises red flags about the use of *Oriki* since it is language dependent. It is noteworthy that only the male children expressed a desire to learn the Yoruba language and that they blamed their mothers and not their fathers for their inability to speak it.

The desire expressed by the children appears to be a cry for help to experience their culture and



maintain their identities in the diaspora. It appears that the camel in Nkealah's cameline feminist model relies only on its innate structural design, crafted to 'withstand extreme conditions', and not on teaching its young the skills needed to survive, thrive and flourish in the environment they live in.

## Discussion

The fact that the interviewed women were aware of the practice of *Oriki* but lacked the knowledge of the contents of their *Oriki orile* is worrisome and lends credence to Gunner's (1986: 31) observations about people's attitude to oral art as 'something to be preserved and noted down, but not something to be taken seriously, not an important channel of communication for contemporary life'. While the women may feel nostalgic about the oral art, their lack of knowledge and practice of it points to a negative attitude towards their culture. This assumption is tenable, as most do not communicate with their family members in Yoruba. It is seen as a language and culture they hold dear as they strive to meet with other Nigerians, but it is not one that they want to pass on to their children.

Unfortunately, the gradual loss of language and culture is evident not only in the diaspora but is indicative of what is happening in Nigeria, where Balogun (2013) and Ayeomoni (2006) raise a concern about the reduced use of Yoruba among young children in preference for English. Aladesote, Johnson, Agbelusi and James (2016: 1) listed six factors responsible for the decline of the Yoruba language. These are the lack of commitment to indigenous language, habitat displacement, colonial legacy, devastating ferocious diseases and defective language planning. Of all these factors, I consider the first one the most germane, as language and culture are likely to survive if the users are committed to keeping them alive.

The women's attitude towards *Oriki* runs contrary to Nkealeah's cameline feminist model. In failing to learn about the culture often contained in the oral arts, they inadvertently refuse to empower themselves to fight against patriarchy from within the culture.

While the mothers may not appear too interested in the practice of *Oriki* and the maintenance of their native language in the diaspora, their male adult children seem keener to learn and engage in cultural practices. Female children appear less interested in the culture and are also not grounded in the host Zulu culture. This leaves them ungrounded in their own culture and that of their hosts. The interest of adult children points to a need to pass on correct knowledge to them. Browne (2014: 2) identified 'diasporic identity' as a major factor affecting change in attitudes to harmful cultural

practices. She warns of the danger of ‘second generation children’ using ‘traditional practices for their own purposes’. Knowledge about cultural practices becomes germane, especially in South Africa, with recurrent xenophobic attacks where victims may feel a need to preserve their identities in the face of hostilities.

The concept of reactive ethnicity becomes germane in this discussion as it may increase ‘ethnic identification and consciousness’—a desire to assert their cultural practices in the diaspora (Çelik 2015). This is often a reaction, for example, among African Americans seeking information and practising cultures, inimical or not, from where they believe their places of origin to be. Situations like this can be counteracted by equipping the younger generation with knowledge of the history behind these practices. Reactive ethnicity may not be far-fetched in South Africa, with the recurrent and incessant xenophobic attacks. Diasporas may, as a way of feeling a sense of belonging in the face of rejection by the host community, seek to continue practices they may have stopped before.

Nkealah’s cameline feminist model must be considered to counteract the negative effects of reactive ethnicity. Women, who should be at the forefront of the battle for emancipation from patriarchal practices, become enforcers of patriarchal practices due to a lack of knowledge. Women need to actively seek information about their cultures, just as a camel learns about its environment to strategise its survival. Fighting patriarchy requires a firm understanding, appreciation and appraisal of the negatives and positives of one’s culture to know what to retain or discard for feminine emancipation.

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## Conclusion

Knowledge about oral cultural arts goes beyond mere awareness to being instrumental in combating inimical practices. Women’s knowledge and understanding of oral arts and the culture that produces them may be the key to advocating against and eradicating the oppressive aspect of cultures and reinforcing the positives. Women play an important role in maintaining culture and language, and if the situation of carrying on patriarchal practices in Africa and the diaspora is to end, the knowledge about these practices must be understood and the information passed on to the next generation so that such practices are not accepted as cultural practices or part of positive group identities.

Zondi’s various studies on Zulu women and their use of oral arts (2008, 2012, 2015, 2019) emphasise how women may use the medium of oral arts to articulate their concerns in society and make their voices heard against patriarchal practices. They are able to achieve this only because

they have not discarded their traditional oral arts but continue to compose new works to meet contemporary challenges and pass on the arts to younger generations. This is a lesson that should be learnt by Yoruba women, who not only have little or no knowledge about their traditional arts but also increasingly fail to communicate with their children in Yoruba. The notion that the oral arts are for uneducated women needs to be discarded, and efforts should be made to get female children interested in them. The fact that sons accuse their mothers and not their fathers of failing to teach them their culture and language attests to the role that women play in this regard and underscores the power they wield in bringing an end to many non-feminine-friendly cultural practices.

Yoruba is fast becoming an endangered language, and with it will disappear the stories behind traditions and cultures that male children may strive to keep alive to retain their identities in the diaspora. Keeping them alive will ultimately mean continuing practices that should be abolished. It is time for women to go back in history, obtain weapons, and equip their sons and daughters to destroy present and future threats to womanhood. There should be a concerted effort to record these oral arts from older women before they die so that the arts and the information they contain do not die with them.

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## Chapter 3

### Critiquing Dominant Patriarchalised African Languages Through Feminist Approaches

*Gabi Mkhize*

#### Autoethnographically based African languages and patriarchalised discourses

54 **L**anguage is power and is central to learning and social interactions. The African language discourses dealt with in this chapter are based on an autoethnographic, evocative research method, which is centred on the researcher's personal experience and point of view. In this research, the researcher is a full member of the group or social group studied (Wall 2008; Gobo and Marciniak 2011), which is the African language isiZulu. Patriarchal language examples applied are thus drawn from the author's personal experience, and some are supported by existing studies (Mathonsi and Mpungose 2015) and used as a form of secondary data. This section also applies practical discourse thinking regarding African-language dissemination of knowledge, especially in educational scenarios. An instructor or speaker is central to practical discourse, applied language discourse and learning, and the language instructions propagated are sustained by their practical experience (Ellis and Shintani 2013). In this case, language knowledge is shaped more by the speaker's experience than by text or recipients' knowledge. There is no shared experience or sharing of knowledge leading to an imposed construction and diffusion of knowledge. Because of its subjective, technically based knowledge, practical discourse becomes a relevant tool to utilise in this autoethnographically based critique of patriarchalised epistemologies in some African languages, exemplified by the isiZulu language. In no way does this chapter critique African languages in their entirety. African languages are a prodigious part of knowledge and a way of preserving the cultures of African people and societies at large. The chapter focuses mainly on questioning some patriarchalised tendencies embedded in African languages. Patriarchal biases remain dominant in African languages and are passed from one generation to the next, thus creating problems for the combat against gender inequities.

Although progress has been made—globally, as well as in Africa and South Africa—in fighting

gender inequities, gender gaps and inequalities still remain. Tenacious gender issues are evident in gender-based violence and crimes (for example, hate crimes), as well as in patriarchal-dominant cultures, religions, leadership and corporations. Ridgeway (2011) and Aterido, Beck and Lacovone (2013) contend that gender inequalities persist globally in contemporary societies and institutions. Moreover, research undertaken in South Africa indicates existing gender gaps and inequalities in education, with examples that include career paths (Moorosi 2010), reading literacy (Zuze and Reddy 2014) and science and mathematics (Dickerson, McIntosh and Valente 2015). Specifically, research highlights patriarchally driven gender inequalities and stereotyping across African languages (Mukama 1995; Mwangi 2010; Wa Mberia 2015). For instance, Ademowo and Balogun (2015) found sexism and public defamation of women's sexuality and bodies in Yoruba proverbs. The authors argued that even though African proverbs impart wisdom, they often also promote men's dominant sexuality and the objectification of African women's bodies, making sexuality the property of and a commodity for African men (Ademowo and Balogun 2015). While investing in and embracing African languages (Zezeza 2006; Ndimande-Hlongwa and Ndebele 2017), which this chapter supports, it is imperative to confront gender gaps in the use of language to combat all forms of patriarchally controlled approaches in education and society at large. Hence, in the African context, the argument is that the depatriarchalisation of education is as important as its decolonisation and Africanisation. It is against this background that this chapter questions and attempts to address some forms of patriarchally biased knowledge perpetuated in African languages.

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In most African societies, proverbs constitute a vital tool for education, that is, the transmission of knowledge and the preservation of culture. They are, therefore, essential contributors to African language and cultural learning and comprehension. Proverbs help to promote creativity and oral art (Nyembezi 1963;<sup>5</sup> Magwaza 2004; Mathonsi 2004; Hussein 2005; Malunga 2013). However, African proverbs are mostly patriarchally biased, reinforcing ideas of male superiority and female inferiority. Proverbs are among the language arts that make it possible for African languages to play a part in the normalisation of the heteronormative and hegemonic patriarchal dominance that continues to undermine feminine bodies and roles (Mkhize and Njawala 2016). In the learning environment, learners of African languages are highly likely to assimilate patriarchalised knowledge that promotes the idea that women are subordinate to men (Mkhize 2015). Examples of conversant male-dominant proverbs that promote patriarchalised knowledge, also cited by Mathonsi and

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5 This study may be considered outdated but is included as a sign of respect for African scholars such as Nyembezi (1963) who, despite colonial pressures, contributed to the promotion and preservation of African epistemologies, philosophies, languages and cultures.

Mpungose (2015), include:

*Okuhlul'amadoda kuyabikwa* (What men cannot handle should be reported, meaning that men are knowledgeable and can resolve all problems.)

*Ikhand'elixegayo lofulel'abafazi* (The weak head will be used by women for thatching, meaning that men should not be weaker than women/women have power over weak men.)

*Indoda ayibuzwa* (A man is not questioned, meaning that a man is always right.)

*Izwi le ndoda aliphikiswa* (A man's word is final, meaning that a man's orders should be obeyed without question.)

Such gendered proverbs, widely used by isiZulu speakers, reinforce gender-based norms that promote men's control, particularly over women. Unfortunately, such patriarchalised proverbs are part of the language used daily in homes and educational institutions. This is an example of how African languages publicly contribute to the construction of gender imbalances and patriarchal structures, which are generally accepted by members of society as part of their languages and cultures. Home is the main foundational education space where language and culture are socialised and adopted. In addition to proverbs, some African language expressions stereotype women as deviant on account of their behaviour, while praising men for the same behaviour. The isiZulu language has well-known patriarchally biased labels for men and women with multiple sexual partners. Examples include:

A man with multiple sexual partners is called *isoka* (a sensual, artistic man who knows how to win a woman's heart).

A woman with multiple sexual partners is referred to as *isifebe* (a loose woman).

Magwaza (2006: 4) views such patriarchalised practices as a divergent cultural script that reduces women's behaviour to their bodies and 'equates them to prostitutes'. Such gendered normative culture embedded in an African language encompasses a violation of women's reproductive rights and autonomous control of their bodies while promoting sexism. In this context, the language, to a certain extent, promotes gender-based power relations that uphold a socially constructed culture of subordination for women and authority for men (Mkhize 2015). African languages and cultures mostly portray men as knowledgeable and powerful and women as 'the other'. Practical discourse



helps unveil patriarchal biases that can be dangerously embedded in educators' ingrained, unquestioned gender norms through language and practical knowledge-based teaching methods. Since language is part of a culture, identifying one's socialised and ingrained gender norms and attitudes may be problematic. It is in this context that one might benefit from utilising feminist approaches, which also promote practical-centred epistemology, but in the form of interaction and conscience-raising approaches, where one teaches another.

### **Feminist approaches: Conceptualisation and theoretical frameworks**

This chapter draws from post-structuralist, consciousness-raising and postcolonial feminist thinking. Post-structuralist feminist theorising, which argues against the objectification of women's knowledge in social, economic and political institutions, including education, helps to unveil gender gaps that foster silence and the omission of women's voices and narratives (Barrett 2005). Feminist post-structuralist thinking is relevant to the critiquing of patriarchalised knowledge produced in African language discourses as it depicts socially constructed identities and power relations that feminists must contest and thwart. Such theoretical thinking can help gender-specific power dynamics in African language educational spaces. Depatriarchalised knowledge dissemination can help develop a form of shared knowledge. Smith (2013) connects colonised knowledge to postcolonial feminist arguments about the colonial impact on the construction of culture, history, race, gender, individuals and knowledge (Mohanty 2003; Mkhize 2015). In African languages, patriarchal dominance can be drawn from a colonial understanding that extended the male-dominated mindset and 'othered' female brainpower. In African languages, arguably, women are positioned as subalterns (Spivak and Riach 2016) and portrayed as passive recipients of knowledge, in contrast to men, who are seen as knowledge producers. Colonial discourses contribute immensely to patriarchalised knowledge, and the effects are still clearly visible in most postcolonial nations' institutional structures and practices—for example, in South African education. Postcolonial consciousness-raising feminist theorising resists all forms of oppression and encourages the sharing of knowledge based on lived experiences (Dalmiya and Alcoff 1993) to promote non-hierarchical knowledge production and dissemination. Feminist consciousness-raising group approaches create opportunities for individuals to share their specific experiences, as also advocated in postcolonial feminism—and these experiences are practically based and can even be emotional in nature. Hence, feminist theoretical thinking can create an opportunity for alternative narratives (Mkhize 2015), negotiated power (Nnaemeka 2004) and a transformed African male

domain (Zondi 2007) to address the gender gaps and inequalities that continue to exist in African languages. Such African feminist rationale finds women's experiences located in negotiated power to be significant in the African context. African feminist thinking subscribes to an interactive and reflective society in which negotiated space can allow the oppressed to influence and possibly transform the oppressor. It is in this context that feminist theoretical thinking and epistemologies can be used as an alternative tool to reveal gender power dynamics to depatriarchalise dominant knowledge.

### **Gender power dynamics are not always visible but are always present in African languages**

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Gender dynamics are not visible but are always related, attached and embedded in most languages, including African ones. Gender and gender roles are social contrasts (Lorber 2018; Mkhize 2015) in social constructionism. Social constructionism eminence refers to interpreting what society constructs and upholds as accurate and meaningful. Language is central to evolving socially constructed meanings influenced by families and cultures. Subsequently, the constructive power of language plays an integral role in the normalisation of gender-based power dynamics in social relations and institutionalised practices. Patriarchal language is habitually normalised and is an agent for female inferiority in society. Patriarchally dominant language and knowledge add to compulsory heterosexuality and the patronising of other gender identities' agency, power and abilities. In most societies, including African societies, languages have become vehicles of socialisation through which cultural values and norms are learned, adopted and passed on. African languages, for instance, tend to internalise patriarchy as dominant, which is normalised in gender dynamics where men are viewed as powerful and women as mediocre. Patriarchal dominance, extended by colonialism, limits women's abilities and agency and places men and women in the oppressor/knower and oppressed/'other' dichotomies, respectively. Such dominant patriarchal language is made compulsory and internalised in acquiring and comprehending African languages and cultures. Women are always placed in a subordinate position to men. This could be because African languages, especially isiZulu, express gender mainly in binary opposition: man and woman (*umfazi nendoda*), ignoring the existence of other gender forms, even though homosexuality has always existed in the Zulu culture and is referred to as *inkonkoni*. However, homosexuality is still not acknowledged in everyday language usage as it is regarded as taboo or an unAfrican gender (Dlamini 2006). Normalised gender binary opposition does not only uphold heteronormativity but

also enacts heterosexuality as compulsory in most African languages and cultures. When a woman is powerful, she is not seen as a powerful woman in her own right but is compared to a man. Some common examples embedded in the isiZulu language include:

When a woman has a strong physical stature, she is labelled a man—*uyindoda* (she is a man)—not a woman.

When a woman knows how to fight or throw a punch, she is labelled a man—*uyindoda* (she is a man)—not a woman.

When a woman can lift heavy objects, she is labelled a man—*uyindoda* (she is a man)—not a woman.

Competition—*ukuqhudelana* (derived from *iqhude*—a rooster/male chicken)—is used even when only women are involved. This suggests that competition is for men and not for women.

*Izinkunzi ezimbili azibusi kwisibaya sinye*—two bulls cannot be in the same kraal, meaning that two men cannot run the same household. This proverb means that only a man can be the head of a household.

This normative binary approach to gender is transferred to the learning of African languages, where the relationship between men and women is often used with reference to patriarchally biased power relations. A woman, therefore, always assumes a subservient position. Most African cultures and languages celebrate and endorse male supremacy and leadership over citizens and men's dominance over women. As the above examples demonstrate, men are often regarded as sovereign, powerful and in control. Women are habitually regarded as dependants. One isiZulu proverb that is reflected in economic, social and political leadership structures is *Okuhlul'amadoda kuyabikwa* (Whatever men cannot handle should be reported) (Mathonsi and Mpungose 2015). This gives the impression that men can handle anything and everything. It indicates a society dominated by men and in which men take leadership positions, as is apparent in many African and world societies. Another proverb states *Ihlonipha la ingayikwendela khona* (She respects where she will not marry, which means that respect is expected only from a woman and not from a man) (Mathonsi and Mpungose 2015).

In this patriarchal context, the *hlonipha* culture often places women in needy and submissive positions. In fact, *hlonipha* also includes children, which is problematic as it equates women to children. In its literal meaning, *hlonipha* refers to respect in the Zulu culture. Zungu (1985) explains

*hlonipha* as a cultural tool that is used to show appropriate respect for authority. Thus, *hlonipha* becomes a social custom that reinforces 'proper' behaviour in the family and community (Mkhize 2012). Further, *hlonipha* culture is viewed as regulating and controlling the rules of conduct regarding language, dress code and other behavioural patterns based on gender, age and social status (Mkhize 2012). *Hlonipha* also confirms the authority of men over women, reinforcing male domination in general. The Zulu culture of *hlonipha* is intended to maintain *ubuntu* (humanity) in the community but, either intentionally or unintentionally, ends up promoting gender inequalities (Mkhize 2012). Such normative gendered binary opposition, manifested in most African cultures and societies, is covertly carried on in teaching and learning African languages as the languages borrow their practical examples from cultural practices and oral arts, including proverbs. This chapter, therefore, proposes feminist pedagogical teaching methods to help address culturally rooted gendered discourses and avoid promoting patriarchalised epistemologies and knowledge production.

### **Addressing gendered African language discourse**

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In educational spaces, language ought to be utilised to facilitate, produce, disseminate and evaluate knowledge. Also, language, as a subject, ought to be learned in a managerial but non-hierarchical gender-specific controlled approach. In the African context, decolonisation and Africanisation of education is central and should be an obligatory objective of teaching and learning. The unheeded 'other' in the transformative discourse of education is depatriarchalising education. Reddy and Butler (2004) criticise existing narratives in the postcolonial African context that accentuate the concept of gender as inapt. African language discourse promotes the same impression. It is necessary to expose and remove gender-based power relations entrenched in education. Based on feminist views, there is no absolute truth or reality, and everything, including language and culture, is constructed by humans. Butler (2004), for instance, is one of the post-structuralist feminist scholars who reject objectivity, reality and all categories as social constructs. For this reason, every paradigm is subjected to construction, deconstruction by shifts and new developments and reconstruction. Knowledge production in all languages, including African languages, should be progressive in every field and not a definitive static objective. African languages and cultures are gendered, mainly favouring men (Gqola 2001; Mama 2001). This results in African languages and cultures privileging men and tending to exclude and silence other genders, including women.

Freire (1996) conceptualises the banking system as a non-hierarchical knowledge production

and dissemination method. In Freire's banking system, learners and educators are all role players in knowledge production. This conceptual framework can be pragmatic in African language discourses. African languages can be used to 'disseminate information' that does not acquaint learners with patriarchally dominant ideas and views but instead opens up avenues for non-gendered critical thinking and sharing of African-based epistemological systems. This is in agreement with feminist pedagogic approaches and with theoretical thinking that is critical of power structures and inequalities (Crabtree, Sapp and Licona 2009). Hence the proposal to dismantle patriarchally dominant knowledge systems such as those entrenched in African languages and cultures. Based on the researcher's grounded experience in feminist studies and African languages, feminist approaches are considered useful for encouraging a disruption of power asymmetries and inequalities and can be of value in teaching and learning African languages. The use of multiple and divergent strategies in learning not only accommodates and accounts for diverse abilities but also allows everyone to be represented in their own specific identities, including gender identities, and to be accepted. Furthermore, it is a fundamental facet of feminist philosophy to consider the importance of diversity as a counter to the simplistic binaries of superiority and inferiority implicit in patriarchal schemas, and feminist approaches are relevant to African language education. The dispersal of power and hierarchies entrenched in African languages by applying feminist approaches can help deconstruct and resist gender-based norms to introduce an Africanised education in which colonised and patriarchalised mindsets and knowledge are renovated. The use of feminist strategies for the dissemination of knowledge may mean that African language practitioners can expose silenced, obscured, slurred and tabooed gender issues.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter argued that patriarchalised knowledge is mainstreamed in most African languages and cultures (Gqola 2001) and is reproduced and maintained in formal education through unacknowledged instructive practices. It further argued that feminist approaches could help identify and critique African language comprehension of marginalised epistemologies to promote non-hierarchical knowledge production and dissemination. Through shared narratives and negotiated power, a collective knowledge can be built around the similar dynamics of varied experiences, dismantling identity power dynamics and those that are specifically patriarchally controlled. In critiquing African languages—by accessing the implicit dominant and mainstream knowledge they produce and sustain—feminist epistemologies can help transcend normalised and engrained

African-language gender-specific experiential knowledge. Arguments in this chapter are based on autoethnographic research methods and secondary data. The aim is not to impose feminist approaches but to refer to them as tools to help contest and resist gender inequalities contributing to depatriarchalising and Africanising education. African philosophy promotes the principles of negotiation, sharing and respect irrespective of gender identity, as African languages ought to.

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## Isahluko 4

### Ukulondolozwa Kwezilimi Zomdabu zase-Afrika Ngemikhosi Yabesifazane Esizweni SamaZulu

*Gugulethu Mazibuko, Phindile Dlamini kanye noNobuhle Ndimande-Hlongwa*

#### Isingeniso

Amasiko enziwa ngezindlela ezihlukene, abamba iqhaza elisemqoka kakhulu ekulondolozeni nasekugcineni ulimi. Lokhu kuba sobala emikhosini yamaZulu egujwa ngabantu besifazane; lapho kuxoxiswa khona, kuhutshwe, kusinwe kubungazwe ukuba ngumuntu wesifazane; konke kwenziwa ngolimi lwesiZulu. Kuyacaca ukuthi abantu besifazane babambe elikhulu iqhaza ekulondolozeni amasiko nezilimi zomdabu ngokugubha le mikhosi egxile emasikweni esiZulu. Le mikhosi okubhekiswe kuyo futhi engumongo walesi sahluko; wumkhosi wesivivane ogujwa ngomama abashadile, abanemizi, nabangashadile, kube wumkhosi womhlanga ogujwa yizintombi ezimsulwa, kanye nomkhosi kaNomkhubulwane, okungumkhosi lapho omama nezintombi besebenza ngokubambisana ukucela imvula kanye nenzalo enkosazaneni yeZulu. Kwakucelwa kuNomkhubulwana ukuthi kube khona inala, nokuthi kwande inzalo ukuze kukhule isizwe (Khuzwayo 2000: 61).

Lesi sahluko sibhekisisa umsuka womkhosi ngamunye, ukubaluleka kwawo kanye nezinjongo zawo. Kuyaziwa vele ukuthi imikhosi eminingi isuke iqhakambisa isiko elithile. Singathi nje, amasiko awenziwa ngoba kusiniswa amahleza, kepha kusuke kunokuthile okubalulekile okuba ngumsuka walo isiko futhi kube nenjongo enqala yesiko lelo. Ngesikhathi-ke kwenziwa lawa masiko, kusetshenziswa ulimi. Ukubhekisisa le mikhosi kanye nendlela elondoloza ngayo izilimi zomdabu, ikakhulukazi isiZulu, kwenziwa kusetshenziswa izinjulalwazi *i-postcolonial*, kanye ne-*postcolonial feminist*.

Lesi sahluko sisebenzise izinjulalwazi ezimbili njengezinsizakuhlaziya zemikhosi yabantu besifazane esizweni samaZulu. Injulalwazi yokuqala, *i-postcolonial feminism*, isemqoka kakhulu uma kuhlaziywa izinto ezithinta abantu besifazane. Ibhekelela kakhulu abantu besifazane, futhi nalesi

sahluko sigxile ekulondolozweni kwezilimi zomdabu ngokubheka imikhosi yabantu besifazane. Injulalwazi yesibili esetshenziwe, yinjulalwazi i-*speech act*. Le njulalwazi ingeshaya emhlohlweni kulesi sahluko ngoba kuhlaziywa amahubo ahutshwa uma kuqhutshwa imikhosi yabantu besifazane esizweni samaZulu. Iyinsizakuhlaziya eyelekelela ukuthola imiyalezo enhlobonhlobo equkethwe amahubo abantu besifazane. Konke lokhu kuzovela kahle ngezansi uma sekubhekwa ngobubanzi izinjulalwazi ezisetshenziwe kulesi sahluko.

Ukuxoxisana nokhuba amahubo kuba yingxenyane enkulu uma kugujwa le mikhosi. Lawa mahubo, phezu kokuba enandisa, asuke eyinkulumo ethile, enenhloso ethile, ebhekiswe kubantu abathile, elindele ukuba labo ebhekiswe kubo bayamukele ngendlela ethile. UKhoza ethula inkulumo yakhe yesihloko sempi yaseSandlwana eNyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natali, ngowe-2019 wathi, “Amahubo afana nomthandazo wesizwe”. Ngakho-ke, lesi sahluko siphinde sibheke nokuthi ahutshwa nje lawa mahubo empeleni yini inhloso yawo; futhi aqukethe mqondo muni namyalezo muni. Lokhu kwenziwa kusetshenziswa injulalwazi i-*speech act* eyasungulwa ngu-Austin ngonyaka we-1962 yathuthukiswa ngu-Searle ngonyaka we-1969 kanye nabanye abaningi. Le njulalwazi iphakamisa ukuthi mkhulu umsebenzi owenziwa ulimi ngaphezu nje kokukhuluma nokudlulisa izindaba. Sizothatha-ke amahubo ambalwa siwacubungule sisebenzisa injulalwazi i-*speech act* ukuthola ukuthi ngabe abawahubayo bathini futhi ngabe abalalele bezwani. Kubalulekile ukuphawula ukuthi lawa mahubo; yize ehutshwa emikhosini emithathu eyahlukene, kuningi okufanayo ngawo.

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Lokho-ke kufakazela lokhu uBarber (1997: 3) akubiza phecelezi ngokuthi yi- ‘*Porous nature of genre boundaries*. Lokhu kuchaza ukuthi kuyinto ejwayelekile emiphakathini yama-Afrika ukuthola kuhlatshelwa amaculo afanayo nakuba kuyimibuthano eyehlukene. Ngenxa yokuthi imibuthano yehlukene, lawa mahubo angedlulisa imiyalezo engafani, yize wona esebenzisa amagama afanayo. Kubalulekile-ke ukuthi ekuqaleni nje kwalo msebenzi sikuphawule ukuthi, ezizweni zama-Afrika awukho umbuthano ongawufaki umculo. UXulu (1992: 16) uthi ukhuba kuchaza ukucula ngezwi elikhulu elifana nokungenisa komfula, ukuduma kwezulu, ukukhala kwebhubesi. Uthi ukhuba kunguphawu lwamandla.

NoZondi (2020: 1) ecaphuna uMsimang (1975: 97), uyakuphawula lokhu lapho ethi,

Ukucula lokhu kusemthanjeni womuntu ongumZulu. Empeleni leli yiqiniso elingephikwe futhi aligcini kumaZulu odwa: bonke abayinzalo yase-Afrika bazalwa naso lesi siphawu esibaluleke kangaka. Azikho KwaZulu izikole zokufundela umculo kodwa sinezingqambi, sinamagosa, sinamaculo, sinabasini. Uma kufiwe kuyahutshwa, uma

kujatshuliwe kuyahlatshelelwa, kubhiyozwe; uma kuyimikhosi kuyahaywa kugidwe, uma kusetshenzwa kunamalima, umculo kawusaleli ngemuva, uma kwenziwa noma yini ongase uyicabange leyo nto iphelekezelwa umculo.

Isibonelo esizovela kulo msebenzi yilesa esikhombisa ukuthi amaculo agxile esikweni ahutshwa emikhosini ethinta abesifazane, futhi ahutshwa ngabesifazane, aqukethe amasiko aphinde asebenzise ulimi olunothile, futhi olunemiyalezo enzulu.

Ngesikhathi kugujwa le mikhosi kusetshenziswa ulimi lwesiZulu olumsulwa. Yize kulesi sikhathi samanje sekuyinto ejwayelekile ukukhuluma kuxutshwe izilimi, lapho uthola izilimi zabomdabu zikhulunywa zixutshwe nje kalula nolimi lwaseNtshonalanga, kuze kube kwephulwa nemigomo yazo yolimi, lokhu akwenzeki kule mikhosi. Lapha ukuxoxisana nokuhuba kwenziwa ngolimi lwesiZulu olumsulwa. Kungakho nje kulesi sahluko kubhekwa ukuthi qhaza lini elibanjwe ukuxoxisana, nokuhuba, ekulondolozeni, nasekuthuthukiseni ulimi, kanye nesiko lamaZulu.

Umbono onobufakazi wesahluko uyakuveza ukubaluleka kwemikhosi yeningi labesifazane ekulondolozeni ulimi lwesiZulu. Izinhloso zalesi sahluko zimi kanje:

- Ukwethula nokuhlaziya okuqukethwe imikhosi yeningi labesifazane.
- Ukuhlaziya ngokocwaningo lwezilimi kumahubo emikhosi yeningi labesifazane.
- Ukuxoxa ngezindlela ezahlukene zokulondoloza ulimi lwesiZulu.
- Ukuveza iqhaza elibanjwe ngabantu besifazane ekulondolozeni ulimi lwesiZulu ngemikhosi yabo.

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## **Indlela Yokwenza Yocwaningo**

### **Ucwaningo ngokwekhwalthethivu**

Lolu wucwaningo lwekhwalthethivu. U-Cresswell (2009: 175) uthi:

*In qualitative research, researchers do not bring individuals into a contrived situation nor do they typically send out instruments for individuals to complete. In this type, information is gathered by actually talking directly to people and seeing them behave and act within their context.*

(Ocwangingweni lwekhwalthethivu abacwaningi abalethi abacwaningwayo esimweni sokuzenzela noma babathumelele lokho okumele bakugcwalise. Kulolu hlobo, ulwazi luqoqwa ngokuthi kuxoxwe nabantu nokubabona benza okuthile endaweni abasuke bekuyona.)

Le ndlela yocwangingo ivumelana nalolu cwangingo lwemikhosi yeningi labesifazane ngoba abacwaningi ukuze bathole ulwazi olunzulu ngemikhosi yeningi labesifazane kwaZulu, kanye neqhaza layo ekulondolozeni ulimi, baqoka ukuba bayethamele iminyaka emibili ilandelana le mikhosi, ukuze babe yingxenye nabo njengabantu besifazane bese bekwazi ukuqoqa kahle ulwazi. Asibanga khona isidingo sezimvume zokwenza ucwangingo, ngoba ababhali babeyingxenye yemikhosi kanti le mikhosi ingevulelekile kuwo wonke umuntu ofuna ukuyethamela. Okubuye kuphawuleke ngendlela yekhwalthethivu, ukuthi iyayivumela imithombo eyehlukahlukene ekuqoqweni kolwazi. Kulolu cwangingo ulwazi lwaqoqwa ngokuba abacwaningi bazibandakanye nabacwaningwayo, ukuze bazibonele ukuthi le mikhosi iqhutshwa kanjani, kanye nokusebenzisa ulwazi olusemibhalweni oluthinta le mikhosi ecwangingwayo.

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### **Ukuzibandakanya nabacwaningwayo ngenhloso yokubuka indlela yokwenza kwabo**

Ukuba yingxenye yemikhosi kwaba enye yezindlela zokuqoqwa kolwazi ezasetshenziswa abacwaningi bebuka ukuqhutshwa kwemikhosi. Lokho kwenza kwaba lula ukuthola lonke ulwazi olwaludingeka ngokuba yingxenye yemikhosi. Kwaba lula kakhulu emkhosini wesivivane, nokaNomkhubulwane, ngoba ngabesifazane bezigaba ezahlukene ababa yingxenye yawo. Umkhosi womhlanga abacwaningi bawethamela nanoma bengabambanga iqhaza kuwo, kepha lonke ulwazi lwatholakala kuwo. UKhumalo (2008: 45) uthi, indlela yokuzibonela mathupha kwenzeka izinto, umcwaningi uthola ithuba lokuzibonela qobo konke okuphathelene nolwazi locwangingo alwenzayo. Kule ndlela umcwaningi ufana nesethameli, kepha esizuza ulwazi ngalokho esikucwangingayo.

### **Ukucutshungulwa kwemibhalo**

Imibhalo eshicilelwe naleyo engashicilelwe, kumbandakanya izincwadi, izahluko zezincwadi, amajenali ocwangingo, amathesisi, imiqulu yolwazi kahulumeni, kanye nezizinda zolwazi

ezahlukene kwasetshenziswa kulolu cwaningo. Ngakolunye uhlangothi ukucutshungulwa kwemibhalo kusetshenziswe ukweseka, kanye nokugcwalisa izikhala olwazini olutholakale ngokuzibandakanya kwabacwaningi emikhosini yabesifazane. Leli lisu lokucubungula amabhuku lihle ngoba umcwaningi uzikhethela ngokukhululekile ulwazi aludingayo, njengoba ulwazi luvele selukhona, akhethe nesikhathi esimvumelayo sokuluhlwaya. Nakuba kunjalo, lingaletha izinselelo kumcwaningi ngoba lincike kakhulu ekuhunyushweni, ngaleyo ndlela lidinga umuntu abe nolwazi kanye nekhono elinzulu lokuhlaziya nokuhumusha. Kulolu cwaningo abacwaningi basebenzisa imibhalo enhlobonhlobo ebhalwe ngemikhosi yabesifazane yakwaZulu. Imikhosi obekusabhalwe ngayo, umkhosi womhlanga kanye nomkhosi kaNomkhubulwane. Akukho obekusabhalwe ngomkhosi wesivivane.

Abantu abangamaZulu abalondolozile nje amasiko, ulimi namagugu abo kuphela, kodwa basebenzisa ulimi lwabo ukuze baphile. Indlela yabo yokuphila incike ekusetshenzisweni kolimi njengoba amaNgisi enza ngokunqoba umhlaba ngolimi lwawo. Into eyenze ukuthi ulimi lwesiZulu kanye namasiko kungaveleli njengesiBhunu emphakathini waso, ukuthi isiZulu asizange sithole ukwesekwa ngesikhathi sobandlululo okufana nokwatholwa isiBhunu; eminxeni emithathu yokuhlelwa kolimi okuyizinga, ikhophasi, ukufundwa kanye nokwamukelwa kolimi, (Rudwick 2008: 3). U-Olifant (2014) exoxisana noSolwazi uJabulani Maphalala, wambuza ukuthi bawalondolozze kanjani amagugu abo abantu abangamaZulu? Ukusebenzisa kwabo ulimi lwesiZulu kwenza amasiko namagugu abo abe yinzuzo uma uqhathanisa namanye ama-Afrika aqoka ukusebenzisa izilimi zangaphandle. Waqhubeka wathi isiZulu sinomthelela ngisho ngaphandle kwesifundazwe saKwaZulu-Natali; kanti futhi sinezikhulumu ezingamaphesenti angama-25 eNingizimu Afrika. IsiZulu ulimi lomdabu olukhulunywa kuzona zonke izifundazwe eziyisishiyagalolunye. Ulimi lwesiZulu seludlondlobale kakhulu ngoba lukhulunywa futhi ngamanye amazwe ase-Afrika, kanye naphesheya kwezilwandle. Ukuthuthukiswa kolimi lwesiZulu sekungumsebenzi we-Nyunyana Yobumbano e-Afrika (i-African Union) njengoba ngoZibandlela 2018 e-Kigali, kwasungulwa ikhomishani yesiZulu, engaphansi kwe-*African Academy of Languages* (ACALAN). Amasiko esiZulu anotho ngomculo, izibongo kanye nomdanso. Kumele ube nguMzulu noma ukwazi ukukhuluma isiZulu ukuze uqonde amahubo. Kuyona yomithathu imikhosi esigxile kuyo kulesi sahluko, amahubo akhona.

## Izinjulalwazi

Zimbili izinjulalwazi ezisetshenziswe kulesi sahluko, eyokuqala i-*postcolonial feminism* kanti

eyesibili injulalwazi ye-*speech act*. Injulalwazi i-*postcolonial feminism* iqokwe ngoba iveza uvo ngemisebenzi yeningi labesifazane kanye nokulwa nokuqonelwa kwabantu besifazane ngabesilisa. Injulalwazi ye-*feminism* ineminxa eminingi. Abanye abacwaningi bakhala ngokuthi kunokwentuleka kokuxhumana emkhakheni we-*feminism*. Injulalwazi i-*speech act* yona iqokwe ngoba isebenza ekuhlaziyeni imiyalezo eqokethwe yinkulumo. Izosetshenziswa ekuhlaziyeni amahubo nokuthola imiyalezo ayiqukethe. Lapha ngezansi senaba ngenjulalwazi ngayinye.

### **Injulalwazi i-*postcolonial feminism***

I-*postcolonial feminism* icacisa imisebenzi yocwaningo ngeze-*feminism* ngaphandle kwaseBrithani kanye naseMelika kanye nezindlela i-*Capitalism* eveza ngayo ubudlelwano kanye namandla, uNdimande-Hlongwa (2016: 3). U-Mishra (2013: 131) uthi i-*postcolonial feminism* isebenzela inkululeko yabesifazane kwezenhlalakahle, amasiko kanye nezomnotho. Ikhombisa ukuthi abantu besilisa babacindezela kanjani abesifazane, okufanayo nokucindezelwa kwamazwe asathuthuka, ecindezelwa yilawo adla izambane likapondo noma athuthukile. Uyaqhubeka u-Mishra (2013: 131) akhale ngokuthi ngesikhathi sokulunjwa, abantu bomdabu bathathelwa amasiko, izinkolelo, umhlaba, namagugu; baphoqwa nokuthi bathathe indlela yokuphila yabelumbi. Abelumbi bakuqinisekisa ukuthi bathuthukisa ulimi kanye namasiko abo, bedicilela phansi okwalabo abalunjwa, lokhu bakwenza njengesikhali esicijile ukucindezela izilimi namasiko abalunjwa, uHamadi (2014) simcaphuna kuNtuli (2018: 20).

INingizimu Afrika' ingelinye lamazwe ezwenikazi i-Afrika' anomlando ongafani nowabanye nokungalunjwa nje kuphela ngabaseNtshonalanga, kodwa futhi lahlangabezana nengcindezelo, ubandlululo, nokwehliswa isithunzi kwabantu bomdabu' ngenxa yomthetho wobandlululo. Ngaleyo ndlela abantu bomdabu balahlekelwa ubuzwe babo. Umphumela wobandlululo washiya izibazi kwezepolitiki, ezomnotho kanye nezenkolo' namasiko kubantu bomdabu.

U-Tyagi (2014: 48) uveza ukuthi imibhalo eminingi yase-Afrika ayibhaliwe nje kuphela ngabesilisa, kodwa futhi iveza abantu besifazane njengabantu abahlala emakhaya' okumele bazale izingane nje. Uyaqhubeka athi izingqinamba eziqondene nabantu besifazane bezinganakwa. Inhlosonqangi yosonjululwazi be-*postcolonial feminism*' ukubhekana nokwakhela kokulunjwa okukabili lapho sibheka ukucindezelwa kwabantu besifazane' ngesikhathi sokulunjwa kanye nesikhathi sokuqonelwa kwabantu besifazane ngabesilisa. E-Afrika kunomkhuba okhona lapho abantu besifazane abashadile belahlekelwa ububona ngokwabo ngoba baphila impilo yentando yabayeni babo, lokhu kufakazelwa nguNdimande-Hlongwa (2016: 4) kanye noNdimande-

Hlongwa noMngoma (2022: 297). Kubaluleke kakhulu kulesi sahluko' ukuthi sisebenzise le njulalwazi ye-*postcolonial feminism*' ngoba sidingida imikhosi eqondene ngqo nabantu besifazane abangamaZulu, ababhekane nqo nokuqonolwa ngabantu besilisa eNingizimu Afrika.

Kulesi sahluko' umbono owubufakazi ukubeka obala ukubaluleka kwemikhosi yeningi besifazane ekulondolozeni isimilo, amasiko nolimi lwesiZulu. Lokhu sikuveza ngoba imisebenzi eminingi eyenziwa abantu besifazane ibingagqanyiswa kodwa kuvele kakhulu eyeningi labesilisa. Ngaphezu kwalokho futhi' sifuna ukuveza ukuthi yize abantu besifazane kuyibona inkolo yobuKrestu eyangena ngabo' ngesikhathi sokulunjwa kodwa bakwazi ukuthi balondoloze amasiko abalulekile esiZulu' nawumongo ekukhulisweni kwamantombazane, kanjalo nokuthi uma umuntu wesifazane eseshadile uwuphatha kanjani umuzi wakhe. Ngokwesiko lesintu kunokubambisana okukhulu phakathi kwabantu besilisa nabesifazane' kodwa ngesikhathi kufika impucuko nenkolo kwashitsha konke lokho ngoba kwadingeka ukuthi kuthathwe usikompilo lwabelumbi njengoba ebekile u-Mishra (2013: 132).

Manje sesizobheka injulalwazi yesibili i-*speech act*.

### **Injulalwazi i-*Speech Act***

Uma sikhuluma, kujwayelekile ukuba sisebenzise namalunga omzimba ukugcizelela noma ukucacisa lokho esikushoyo. Kwesinye isikhathi siyakwazi futhi ukusebenzisa amalunga omzimba kuphela ukusho okuthile. Kepha lokho esikushoyo kungaba nezincazelo ezehlukene kuye ngokuthi lwazi luni analo loyo okudluliselwa kuye lowo mnyakazo. Isibonelo, ukuphakamisa isandla – kungachaza ukuthi lowo ophakamise isandla ufisha ukubonakala, noma uthulisa umsindo, noma uyabingelela, noma uyazivocavoca, noma nje uyazelula. Njengoba-ke iminyakazo yomzimba ingasho izinto eziningi ezehlukene, kanjalo nenkulumo esiyiphimisayo ingasinikeza izincazelo eziningi ezahlukene. Isibonelo, uma kungenamuntu endlini wena uphakathi bese ethi, "Kunganjani sivule amawindi?" Lokhu kungachaza ukuthi, uzwela ukushisa, noma uzwa kunephunga endlini, noma nje uthanda ukuba sendaweni eshaya umoya. Okusho ukuthi ziningi izincazelo ezingatholakala enkulumweni eyodwa' kuye ngokuthi lowo oyizwayo ukusiphi isimo futhi uyizwa kanjani. Yikho-ke lokhu okubizwa ngokuthi yi-*speech act*. I-*speech act* injulalwazi ebhekene ngqo nendlela abantu abalusebenzisa ngayo ulimi (*communicative function of language*).

Ngakho-ke uma sikhuluma ngenjulalwazi i-*speech act*, kumele kube sobala ukuthi lapha sikhuluma ngezingxenyanana zenkulumo ezisetshenziswa ukwethula umqondo. Le njulalwazi yasungulwa ngu-Austin ngonyaka we-1962. Uma ekhuluma ngenkulumo u-Austin (1962: 12)

uthi, “ukusho okuthile kusho ukwenza okuthile”. Ngonyaka we-1969, u-Searle wayithuthukisa le njulalwazi ka-Austin kangangokuba sekwaziwa yena kakhulu sengathi nguye umsunguli wayo. U-Searle (1969: 47) uphakamisa ukuthi ulimi asilusebenzisi nje ukukhuluma nokudlulisa izindaba mayelana nokwenzeka emhlabeni kepha sibuye silusebenzise ukuzuza okuthile okuningi; isibonelo, ukwakha ubuhlobo, ukubuza, ukucela, ukuxolisa, ukuthuma, ukuphoqa, njalo njalo. Yikho-ke lokhu okubizwa nge-*speech act*.

Esikhathini esiningi okhulumayo usho okungaphezu kwalokhu akuphimisa ngamagama (Scheckle 1994: 14). U-Lyons (1977: 725) yena uphawula athi, “ulimi lwenza okungaphezu kokudlulisa inkulumo, lubuye lube nethonya esimeni sengqondo, izinkolelo kanye nokuziphatha.” Kungakho-ke le njulalwazi ikhethiwe ukuhlaziya amahubo ukuze kutholakale ukuthi yikuphi okungaphezulu, okudluliswa ngabantu besifazane uma behuba amahubo abo ngesikhathi sale mikhosi.

Le njulalwazi inamazinga amathathu anganikezwa yinkulumo wona ahleliswe lapha ngezansi:

- ***I-locutionary act*** – Lapha sibheka amagama uqobo asetshenziswe enkulumeni ngokohlelo lolimi. U-Oshima (2010: 9) uma echaza *i-locutionary act* uthi; “Ngukukhiqiza inkulumo ezwakalayo ngokohlelo lolimi. *I-locutionary act* iyisenzo sokusho okuthile (ukuphimisa amagama enkulumo ngokohlelo lwalolo limi).”

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Uma sisebenzisa le nkulumo:

- a. Ngiyakuthembisa ukuthi uzoyithola imali yakho.
- b. Uzoyithola imali yakho.

Singathi inkulumo (a) inamagama ayisihlanu; inezenzo ezimbili, inomenziwa ohambisana nesabizwana songumnini. Inkulumo (b) inamagama amathathu; inesenzo esisodwa kanye nomenziwa ohambisana nongumnini.

Empeleni kuningi ongakusho, mayelana nalezi zinkulumo, okuhambisana neSayensi Yezilimi.

- ***Illocutionary act*** – Lapha sibheka lokho okhulumayo afisa ukukudlulisa. Ngokuka-Oshima (2010: 9) *i-illocutionary Act*, “Yilokho okhulumayo ahlose ukukudlulisa ngamazwi lawo awaphimisayo nangalokho okungaphezulu okuqukethwe ngamazwi lawo.” Singathi nje *i-illocutionary act* inhloso equkethwe amagama aphimisiwe.



Lapha singabheka inhloso yalokho okuphimsiwe; ngabe kungumyalezo onikeza ulwazi, umbuzo, isexwayiso, isicelo, impoqo, isaziso, isethembiso, njalo njalo. Okubalulekile lapha ukuqaphela lokho abantu abakushoyo nokubhekisisa isimo sabo somqondo.

Zihlukene kabili izinhloso zalokho okuphimsiwe. Kukhona:

- ezisobala (explicit)
- ezicashile (implicit)

Uma sisebenzisa inkulumo (a) no (b) ebhalwe ngenhla:

- a. Ngiyakuthembisa ukuthi uzoyithola imali yakho.
- b. Uzoyithola imali yakho.

Kusobala ukuthi:

- Inkulumo (a) isivezela inhloso esobala. – Lapha igama ‘ngiyakuthembisa’ lisho ngokusobala ukuthi lesi yisethembiso.
- Inkulumo (b) isivezela inhloso ecashile. – ‘Uzoyithola imali yakho’. Lapha kufundwa kuyona inkulumo ukuthi iyisethembiso kepha alikho igama elichaza ngokusobala ukuthi nebala kunjalo. Kanti omunye angathi, itshengisa ukunengwa ngoba mhlawumbe kade ubelesela ufuna le mali.

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Lokhu kuvezwa ngokusobala ukuze umuntu aqonde kahle umyalezo, kumele abe nolwazi olugcwele lolimi olusetshenziswayo futhi aqonde ukuthi kwezinye izikhathi ulimi lusetshenziswa ngendlela engaqondile ngqo ukuthumela umyalezo othile. Uma sibheka nje inkulumo (b), kuyacaca ukuthi okhulumayo udinekile futhi ubona lona akhuluma naye kungumuntu obeleselayo nongenasinike. Lokhu akukho emagameni aphinyisiwe kepha uma unolwazi olugcwele mayelana nendlela ulimi olusebenza ngayo, ukuqonda kahle okuthwelwe yinkulumo.

- *Perlocutionary act* – Lapha sibheka lokho okwenziwa yilowo othola umyalezo noma lowo umyalezo oqondiswe kuye. Okusho ukuthi sibheka ukuthi umyalezo lowo umthuma ukuthi enzeni lo owamukelayo. U-Poghosyan (2015: 11) uyichaza i-*perlocutionary act* ngokuthi: “umphumela walokho okukhulunywe ovela kulowo owamukela inkulumo.” Lowo mphumela

uhambisana nesimo inkulumo eyethulwe kuso. I-*perlocutionary act* yilokho okwenziwa olalele ngenxa yenkulumo leyo ebhekiswe kuye noma emuva kokwamukela inkulumo leyo ebhekiswe kuye. Lapha sibheka indlela olalele ayithatha ngayo inkulumo ephimisiwe. Kubalulekile ukuqaphela lapha ukuthi isimo noma indawo lapho inkulumo yethulwa khona, inomthelela emphumelweni walokho okukhulunywe. Kanjalo nolwazi okukhulunywa naye analo mayelana nokhulumayo, kungaba nomthelela endleleni okukhulunywa naye aphenjula noma enza ngayo.

Sizoqhubeka nokusebenzisa inkulumo (a) no (b):

- a. Ngiyakuthembisa ukuthi uzoyithola imali yakho.
- b. Uzoyithola imali yakho.

Inkulumo (a) no (b) njengoba iyisethembiso; lowo okukhulunywa naye angaba nomuzwa wokujabula ngenxa yesethembiso, angaqala enze uhlelo lokuyisebenzisa imali, angabonga kulowo omthembisayo, njalo njalo. Kanti futhi uma sibhekisa enkulumweni (b), lowo okukhulunywa naye angafikelwa ukuthukuthela ngenxa yokuthi kade imali ayilinda, angaduba athi kulungile imali ingabe isabuya, angacela ukwazi ukuthi izobuya nini imali leyo, njalo njalo. Konke lokhu kuya ngokuthi lwazi luni analo ngalowo okhulumayo. Isibonelo; uma okhulumayo kungumuntu oneqiniso, lowo owamukela isethembiso angajabula aze abonge; kanti uma okhulumayo vele engathembekile, owamukela isethembiso angadineka noma adube.

Ake sibheke nasi esinye isibonelo:

Thandi: Kuyashisa.

Zama: Hhayi, angishiye leli jezi-ke, uma usho njalo.

Kule ngxoxo engenhla, uThandi ubeka isitatimende esiyisexwayiso (*i-illocutionary*). UZama uyasiqonda lesi sexwayiso futhi uyamthemba uThandi, ngakho-ke uthatha isinyathelo esifanele – ushiya ijezi (*i-perlocutionary*).

Kubalulekile ukuqonda ukuthi uZama ubengaphendula ngenye indlela, kuye ngokuthi bakuphi laba abakhulumayo futhi izinga lokuthembana noma ukwazana lingakanani. Isibonelo:

We, phela wena awuwezwele amakhaza. / Hhayi bo, kanjani liguqubele nje emnyango? / Uqinisele, thatha nasi isiphuzo esibandayo. / Kwangcono, sesifile amakhaza. / Usho njalo, ake

ngivule umnyango. / Asihlale phandle, kupholile khona. / njalo njalo.

Manje sihlaziya le mikhosi emithathu sisebenzisa zona lezi zinjulalwazi esiphawule ngazo.

## Ukuhlaziya Imikhosi

### Umkhosi womhlanga

Lo mkhosi, okungowabantu besifazane, ungeminye yemikhosi ebalulekile esizweni samaZulu. Futhi-ke, lo mkhosi ungeminye yemikhosi emidala egujwa minyaka yonke. UKhumalo (2008: 73) uthi; “Umkhosi womhlanga waqalwa amaZulu esazinze enkabazwe yezwekazi lase-Afrika.” Ngesikhathi amaZulu enqotshwa amaNgisi, wake washabalala kepha wabuye wavuselelwa yiSilo esebuzile, uGoodwill Zwelithini Zulu, ngonyaka we-1984.

Lo mkhosi weyamaniswa ne-Congo lapho kukholelwa ukuthi yilapho kwadabuka khona ama-Afrika emihlangeni esemachibini amakhulu. Umhlanga uyakhiwa bese uhanjiswa yizintombi eSilweni, umele indabuko le okuthiwa eyasoHlangeni.

Lo mkhosi ungowezintombi ezimsulwa ezingamatshitshi ezingakaze zihlangane nomuntu wesilisa ngokocansi. Ngaphandle kwamatshitshi, nezintombi ezingamaqhikiza ziyaya eMkhosini Womhlanga, kepha lezo ezingakahlangani nomuntu wesilisa ngokocansi. Lo mkhosi uvuselela ukuziphatha kahle emantombazaneni ukuze akhule ebugcinile ubuntombi bawo, ukuze kuthi uma sekufika isigaba sokugana abe ngamakhosikazi azokwakha imizi eqotho, leyo mizi yakhe isizwe esiyoqinisa ubukhosi.

Okuyiyona nhlosongqangi yalo mkhosi ukuqhakambisa ukukhuliswa kahle kwamantombazane ahambisa umhlanga eSilweni ukukhombisa ukuthi anqobile futhi abamba iqhaza elikhulu ekwakhiweni kwesizwe. Umhlanga ungumqhele emantombazaneni kanti nesizwe sisuke sihlonywa uphaphelwe lwegwalagwala ngokukhulisa kahle amantombazane. NgokukaMakhoba (2013: 146); “Emhlangeni kuyafundwa, ngoba omama abadala basuke befundisa izintombi ngezinto ezehlukahlukene, ezakha isizwe esiphilile nesinenhlonipho.” Izintombi kumele zihlolwe kuqala ngaphambi kokubamba iqhaza emhlangeni kepha kubalulekile ukuphawula ukuthi ayikho intombi ephoqwayo ukuhlolwa; izintombi ziyazikhethela. Lokhu kufakazelwa yiculo elaculwa yizintombi eMkhosini woMhlanga eNyokeni mhla ziyi-8 kuMandulo, 2007 nezaziveza kulo ukungahambisani kwazo nomthetho omusha wezingane (*New Children's Act No-38 of 2005*), owawukhishwe uhulumeni othi kuyicala ukuhlolwa kwezingane zamantombazane ezineminyaka engaphansi kweyi-16. Lelo culo lalithi:

Khuza uHulumeni mama  
Uyaganga sohlolwa thina  
Uhulumeni udlalile ngathi  
Wathi asihole imali yeqolo  
Imali yeqolo isigcwele  
Isiyizinkulungwane thatha Mbeki  
(Zondi 2008: 199).

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Lo mkhosi ugujwa minyaka yonke ngenyanga kaMandulo esigodlweni seSilo eNyokeni, kwaNongoma. Kulo mkhosi kuza izintombi esezihloliwe ezifundeni lapho zisuka khona. Empeleni, ngaphambi kokuba kube nomkhosi womhlanga kuba nokuhlolwa kwamantombazane kuzo zonke izifunda esifundazweni. Kuba khona imicimbi emincane ezifundeni ebizwa ngo: 'Siyaya Emhlangeni' lapho kusuke kulungiselelwa khona umkhosi womhlanga. Kule micimbi kusuke kubandakanywa nalabo abangeke baphumelele emkhosini omkhulu wesizwe. Umkhosi womhlanga uqhutshwa izinsuku ezintathu, nakuba onke amalungiselelo awo ethatha inyanga yonke. Kuyaye kukhishwe ibutho ukuba liye eHabeni ngaseMpangeni ukuba liyogawula imihlanga bese -ithwalwa isiya esiGodlweni eNyokeni. Ngaphambilini imihlanga yayigawulwa kwaSokhulu. Indlela okuqhutshwa ngayo umkhosi, izintombi ezisuke ziholwa umntwana weSilo osuke eqokwe ngalowo nyaka ukuhola izintombi, ziya enkosini ethile esezansi nezwe ngalapho kuzogawulwa khona umhlanga bese leyo nkosi ifike izihlabise izinkomo ezintathu kanye nembuzi yokubika umkhosi.

Uma izintombi sezifika emfuleni lapho kuzokhiwa khona umhlanga, umntwana wenkosi oqokwe ukuhola umhlanga, usika umhlanga wokuqala onentshakaza okusuke kuyiwona mhlanga okhethekile. NgoLwesihlanu izintombi zisuke sezibuyela eNyokeni. NgoMgqibelo ekuseni izintombi zivuka kusempondozankomo ziyogeza emfuleni bese zinyukela esigodlweni. Kube sekuhola phambili umntwana wenkosi oqokiwe, kanye nabanye abantwana benkosi bamantombazane, bahole izintombi uma sezikhuphula umhlanga ziwusa esigodlweni. Izintombi ziyayalwa ukuba ngesikhathi seziphethe imihlanga, zikhulume nayo zicele ukuba iziqinise zigcine ubuntombi bazo, ukuze nangonyaka olandelayo zikwazi ukuza emhlangeni. Zithi ziphethe imihlanga zibe zihuba amahubo.

Umhlanga wokuqala wethulwa umntwana weSilo kuso iSilo uqobo. Uma iSilo sesiwamukele umhlanga sibe sesiphelzelwa amabutho sesiya enkundleni, lapho kuzokwelulekwa khona amantombazane, kusinwe kube njeya. Uma iSilo sesifika enkundleni sibongelwa yinyosi yeSilo. Kwethulwa izinkulumo bese kusinwa. ISilo sisuke sincoma bese sigqugquzela nokuziphatha kahle ezintombini. Sikhuthaza ukuzigcina kwezintombi kuze kufike isikhathi sokugana. Sikhuthaza

nokubekezelelana ngokwezinhlanga namasiko. Kubuye kugcizelelwe ukuzithiba kwezocansi, ikakhulukazi kulesi sikhathi lapho kudlange izifo ezingelapheki.

Nangosuku olulandelayo okusuke kuwusuku lweSonto kusuke kusaqhutshekwa namahubo kanye nokusina. Nakuba emaningi amaculo aculwayo kule micimbi, sizokwenza isibonelo ngamathathu ohlotsheni lomkhosi ngamunye.

## **Ukuhlaziya amahubo omkhosi womhlanga**

Lo mkhosi uhambisana nokuhlolwa kwezintombi. Ukuhlolwa kwezintombi isiko lamaZulu elidala. Izintombi ziyahlolwa ukuze zigcine ubuntombi bazo kuze kube yilapho zenda khona. Kepha-ke ushintsho nentuthuko kufika nobuhle nobubi. Kanti futhi okubukeka kukuhle komunye kungaba kubi komunye. Ngesikhathi iNingizimu Afrika iqala ukubuswa ngentando yeningi, kwabe sekubhalwa umthethosisekelo omusha. Lo mthethosisekelo, phakathi kokuningi okutholakala kuwo, kukhona namalungelo abantu besifazane. La malungelo-ke yiwo asebuka amanye amasiko njengengcindezelo. Leli siko lokuhlolwa kwezintombi nalo libhekwa ngamehlo engcindezelo yilabo abathi balwela amalungelo abesifazane. Kanti ngakolunye uhlangothi abalwela amasiko nabo babeka amaphuzu abo ahlabahlosile, asekelu ukuqhutshwa kwaleli siko. Ngenxa yokuthi uhulumeni nguye owethula umthethosisekelo wezwe, amahubo amaningi angahambisani nomthethosisekelo abhekiswa kuhulumeni. Kungakho-ke nje sithola amahubo omkhosi womhlanga ebhekiswe kuhulumeni. Nalapha kulolu cwaningo sinamaculo amabili abhekiswe kuye uhulumeni.

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### **1. Uhulumeni udlala ngathi**

Oholayo:	Uhulumeni uyadlala ngathi
Abavumayo:	Uhulumeni uyadlala ngathi
Oholayo:	Uthi asilale
Abavumayo:	Uthi asilale sothola imali yeqolo
	Uhulumeni uyadlala ngathi

### ***I-Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

**Uhulumeni uyadlala ngathi** – umugqa onamagama amathathu: ibizo eliyinhloko yomusho, isenzo esisenkathini yamanje, isandiso.

**Uthi asilale, sothola imali yeqolo** – umugqa onamagama amahlanu: isingasenzo, isenzo, ibizo elingumenziwa, ongumnini

### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

Izintombi zibeka isikhalo sokuthi uhulumeni akayigqizi qakala injongo yazo yokuzigcina ziyizintombi nto.

Uhulumeni ulibukela phansi isiko, yena ufuna ukuqhuba izinhlelo zakhe zokukhipha imali yeqolo ukuze abale inani labantu abondlayo. Ngokungaligqizi qakala isiko lezintombi, uhulumeni ubhebhethekisa ukungaziphathi kahle kwentsha.

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### ***Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Leli hubo lithi libhekiswe kuhulumeni kepha libe linomyalezo nakwezinye izintombi kanye nabazali bazo imbala. Ake sibheke-ke ukuthi laba abamukela lo myalezo bangabhekana kanjani nawo:

Uhulumeni angasishaya indiva lesi sikhalo, aqhubeke nezinhlelo zakhe. Kanti futhi angasilalela lesi sikhalo enze utho ngaso.

Ezinye izintombi ezilalele, zingathatha isinqumo zibambe iqhaza kulo mkhosi. Abazali nabo ngokunjalo bangathatha isinqumo sokuweseka lo mkhosi ngokugqugquzela abantwana babo, ukuthi babambe iqhaza kulo mkhosi ngokugqugquzelwa bafunda nendlela enhle yokuziphatha, ngoba indlela eya kulo mkhosi ilele ekuzigcineni kahle kwentombi.

## **2. Khuza uhulumeni**

Khuza uhulumeni, mama  
Uyaganga, sohlolwa thina  
Uhulumeni udlalile ngathi  
Wathi asihole imali yeqolo  
Imali yeqolo isigcwele  
Isiyizinkulungwane, thatha Mbeki

### ***Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

**Khuza uhulumeni, mama** – umugqa owumusho ophoqayo onamagama amathathu: isenzo esisindleleni ephoqayo, ibizo, isibizo ngenxa yokuthi lihambisana nesenzo esiphoqayo.

**Uyaganga, sohlolwa thina** – umugqa onemishwana emibili enamagama amathathu: umshwana wokuqala unegama elilodwa, eliyisenzo esisenkathini yamanje eqhubekayo, umshwana wesibili unamagama amabili: isenzo esinezakhi ezifinyeziwe (siyohlolwa), isabizwana.

**Uhulumeni udlalile ngathi** – umugqa onamagama amathathu: ibizo, isenzo esisenkathini edlule, isandiso

**Wathi asihole imali yeqolo** – umugqa onamagama amane: isingasenzo, isenzo, ibizo, ongumnini

**Imali yeqolo isigcwele** – umugqa onamagama amathathu: ibizo, ongumnini, isenzo

**Isiyizinkulungwane, thatha Mbeki** – umugqa onemishwana emibili: umshwana wokuqala unegama elilodwa: isilandiso; umshwana wesibili: ungumusho ophoqayo onamagama amathathu: isenzo esisindleleni ephoqayo, isenzo, ibizo elilahle isiqalongqo ngenxa yokuthi lihambisana nesenzo esiphoqayo.

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### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

Izintombi ziphakamisa ukukhononda futhi ziyexwayisa. Ngokwesiko lamaZulu, kuyichilo ukuthola ingane ikhononda noma ixwayisa umuntu omdala. Kepha amahubo, izinkondlo namaculo ayasetshenziswa ukusho lokho ongeke wakusho uma ukhuluma nje. Kanjalo-ke izintombi zisebenzisa amahubo. Zikhononda ngesenzo sikahulumeni ezingahambisani naso futhi zexwayisa uhulumeni ukuthi lesi senzo asisihle. Zikubeka obala ukuthi zona ngeke zizibandakanye naso 'siyohlolwa thina'. Izintombi azeneme ngendlela uhulumeni alengamele ngayo udaba lwamasiko kanye namalungelo. Zibona uhulumeni enzelela ngokukhipha imali yeqolo. Imali yeqolo itholwa ngamantombazane athola abantwana engashadile. Ngakho-ke, uma uhulumeni enikeza lawa mantombazane imali yokondla abantwana, ngokubona kwezintombi zomhlanga, kusho ukuthi uhulumeni uyakugqugquzela lokhu kuziphatha. Kanti ngokwesiko, ukuthola umntwana ungashadile kuwukungabi nasimilo. Izintombi ziphinde zidlulisa umyalezo wokuthi yize uhulumeni ekhipha le mali, kepha zona zizoqhubeka nokuziphatha kahle, ngeke zibathole abantwana zingashadile.

Ziveza nokuthi zinobuhlobo obuhle nomama bazo, ziyabethemba ukuthi bangazilwela kule nkinga ezibhekene nayo. Lokhu kuqhakambisa ukuzigqaja ngesiko lazo, kanye nokwazi ukubona okuhle nokubi, uthathe isinqumo. Kuphinde kuveze nobuhle bokungalutheki, uluthwa yimali, kanti usulahlekelwa ubugugu bakho. Izintombi ziphinde ziyakuveza ukuthi ziningi ezinye izintombi eseziluthekile, yile mali yeqolo; 'isiyizinkulungwane' okusho ukuthi iningi imali ephumayo ngenxa yokuthi ziningi izintombi ezithola abantwana ezidinga ukubaholela.

### ***I-Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Abantu abebengasinakile lesi senzo sikahulumeni semali yeqolo ukuthi sithi sakha ngapha ngokusiza abantwana abazelwe amantombazane kepha sibe silimaza ngapha ngoba nalawo mantombazane asaziphethe kahle angagcina elingeka ukuthola abantwana, ukuze azuze imali le yamahhala. Ngenxa yokuthi imali impande yesono, isiko lokuthi intombi izigcine njengentombi nto kuze kube yilapho isiyogana lingagcina selishabalele.

Uhulumeni angaphinde ayibhekisise indaba yemali yeqolo, enze imizamo yokuthi ingaphikisani nesiko. Kanjalo nomama uma bezwa bemenyezwa bangabhukula bame nezintombi zabo, bazisekele ukuba ziqhubeke nokuziphatha kahle. Baziqinisekise ukuthi isinqumo abasithathayo sihle akumele ziphazame.

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### **3. Umhlanga ubikwe ngenkomo**

Oqalayo:	Umhlanga ubikwe ngani na?
Abavumayo:	Iyahho, iyahho
Oqalayo:	Lo mhlanga ubikwe ngenkomo
Abavumayo:	Iyahho, iyahho

### ***I-Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

**Umhlanga ubikwe ngani na?** – umusho ongumbuzo onamagama amane: ibizo eliyinhloko yomusho, isenzo esisenkathini edlule, isandiso, isakhi sombuzo

**Lo mhlanga ubikwe ngenkomo** – umusho onamagama amane: isabizwana sokukhomba, ibizo, isenzo esisenkathini edlule, isandiso



### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

Izintombi ziqhakambisa isiko. Zibika ukuthi lo mkhosi ubaluleke kakhulu, wethulwe ngokwesiko uHlanga lomhlabathi, ubikwe emadlozini ngenkomo, okuyisilwane esisetshenziswayo uma kunemigubho emikhulu. Uma AmaZulu enza umsebenzi wedlozi, kuyenzeka asebenzise inkukhu noma imbuzi noma inkomo. Asikho isilwane esisetshenziswayo esingaphezu kwenkomo. Ngakho-ke uma umsebenzi wedlozi umkhulu, kuwa inkomo. Njengoba-ke ihubo lisho ukuthi lo mhlanga ubikwe ngenkomo, liqhakambisa ubukhulu balo mkhosi.

Leli hubo lihlose ukuvusa intshisekelo kumaZulu ukuba azigqaje ngemikhosi yawo, ngoba iphakanyiswa ngisho nayiSilo uqobo lwaso, siyibike ezinyanyeni futhi siyibike ngesilwane esikhulu kunazo zonke, esisetshenziswa uma kwenziwa imisebenzi yezinyanya.

### ***I-Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Abantu abebengawunakile lo mkhosi, bangathola ulwazi ngokubaluleka kwawo esikweni lamaZulu bese bewunikeza isithunzi nenasasa eliwufanele.

Abazali abanezintombi bangagqugquzela ukuba nezintombi zabo zibambe iqhaza kulo mkhosi uma sebezwa ukubaluleka kwawo. Njengoba bese siphawulile ngenhla, ukugqugquzela izintombi ukuba zibambe iqhaza emkhosini onjengalo kuhambisana nokuzifundisa indlela yokuziphatha kanjalo nokufundisa ngesiko, izintombi ezizogcina ziziqhenya ngalo.

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### **Umkhosi wesivivane**

Lo umkhosi mdala kakhulu esizweni samaZulu. Elinye igama lalo mkhosi uMkhosi Wezithungo ngoba omama basuke beyogawula umhlanga, bese bewenza izithungo noma izinyanda abaya ukuyozethula eSilweni. Lo umkhosi owabuye washabalala ngenxa yezimpi nemithetho eyehlukene eyayishayelwa amakhosi amadala esizwe sakwaZulu. Kuthe ngonyaka we-2007 iSilo esasibusa, iSilo esebuzile u-Goodwill Zwelithini Zulu, sawuvuselela umkhosi wesivivane.

Umkhosi wesivivane ungumkhosi wabantu besifazane abangomama, lapho behlangana khona ukuzobonisana ngezinto ezithinta ukuphathwa kwamakhaya kanye nokukhuliswa kwezingane. Okuyibona bantu ababandakanyekayo kulo mkhosi abantu besifazane bonke ngaphandle kwezintombi ezisahamba umkhosi womhlanga. Izintombi esezaphuka kanye nomama abangagcagcile bayaba yingxenye yomkhosi wesivivane. Lo mkhosi ugujwa ngenyanga kaNcwaba, esigodlweni seSilo kwaKhangalamankengane, kwaNongoma.

Ukuqala kwalo mkhosi, kuhlangu abesifazane bakulo lonke elakwaZulu, bafikela esiGodlweni seSilo kwaKhangelamankengane. Bafika bamise amadlangala ngaphesheya komfula uPhongolo bese benyukela esiGodlweni lapho babephuma khona sebeholwa uNdlunkulu uMaDlamini, osasishiya naye, baze bafike emadlangaleni. Bafike bazole bese kuqalwa izinkulumo zokubeluleka ngezimo ezahlukahlukene zempilo. Okunye okubalulekile ukuthi babuye bayogawula umhlangu ngasemfuleni, okuyiwona abazoya kowethula eSilweni ngosuku olukhulu.

Ezinye zezinto eziba semqoka emkhosini wesivivane okuxoxwa ngazo amasu okulwa nendlala nobubha, ukuqwashisana ngesiko lokuhlonipha, kanye nokuziphatha kahle komama emakhaya, ukuvikeleka ezifweni ezinhlobonhlobo, kanye nokubuyisa ithemba kulabo besifazane asebebhukile. Inhlanzeko nezempilo akusali ngaphandle ezingxoxweni zabantu besifazane. Ukudla okudliwayo emkhosini wesivivane kuba yilokho okunempilo nokukhuthaza ukudla ukudla okunomsoco. Ngazo zonke lezi zinsuku abantu besifazane basuke begawula umhlangu omncane ukuze bawenze izithungo noma izinyanda okuyizona ezisuke ziyokwethulwa eSilweni ngosuku olukhulu lomcimbi. Okunye abasuke bekwenza ukufundisana amahubo anhlobonhlobo akhuthazayo nalulekayo kubantu besifazane. Ngesikhathi kuqhubeka izingxoxo, kuba khona oyedwa oqokwa yisivivane ukuba kube nguye oyokwethula uMbiko eSilweni.

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Usuku lwangoLwesihlanu kuba usuku lapho omama besuka emfuleni nezithungo zabo zomhlangu, bese benyuka nazo beya esigodlweni. Banyuka emuva kwesidlo sasemini ukuyokwethula izithungo zabo eSilweni. Uma sebenyuka nezithungo, basuke beholwa uNdlunkulu wakwaKhangelamankengane, kepha yena esakhe isithungo sisuke sithwelwe umfana ngoba ngokwesiko nenhlonipho undlunkulu weNgonyama akazithwaleli isithungo. Ngesikhathi ibutho labesifazane selinyuka nezithungo, lisuke likhaphuzela lihuba amahubo ahlukahlukene.

Uma befika esigodlweni nezithungo, bamukelwa yiSilo, bahube, basine kube kuhle kube njeyaya. Usuku lwangoMgqibelo yilona suku lapho besuke sebethula endlunkulu izithungo zabo. Bavuka ekuseni bageze, bavunule baconse, ngoba kusuke sekuwusuku lapho kunezimenywa ezahlukahlukene kanye nendlunkulu yonkana. Ondlunkulu beSilo basuke sebesezigodini zabo behlela abesifazane ngokwezigaba zabo.

Emuva kokwamukela izithungo, iSilo sibe sesibahlalisa phansi omama, ukuze sethule inkulumo yaso yosuku. ISilo sibongelwa yinyosi bese siqala inkulumo eyalayo, eqwashisayo neyelulekayo. Kube sekuphakanyiswa lowo oqokiwe ukuba ethule umbiko wakho konke obekudingidwa emkhosini wesivivane. Kube sekuhutshwa, kubuswe kube mnandi, abesifazane bethokozela ukuba ndawonye bebonisana bephuma nesixazululo sezinkinga ezahlukene ezikhungethe isizwe.

Ngosuku lwangoSonto, okuwusuku lokugcina lomkhosi wesivivane, ibutho lesivivane libuyela esigcawini ukuyohuba lisine, siphinde futhi iSilo sizokwethula inkulumo yokuvalalisa ebuthweni

lomama. Enye yezindlovukazi zesizwe ibe seyethula amazwi okubonga egameni leSilo nendlunkulu yonke kubongwa ibutho lesivivane. Babe sebelulekwa ngokuthi lokho abakuzuzile bakwedlulisele ezigodini abasuka kuzo.

## **Ukuhlaziya amahubo omkhosi wesivivane**

### **1. Aliwe phansi igeja kuyalinywa**

Oqalayo: Awuyeke ubuvila  
Abavumayo: Aliwe phansi igeja kuyalinywa  
Oqalayo: Asizisebenzele  
Abavumayo: Aliwe phansi igeja kuyalinywa

#### ***I-Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

**Awuyeke ubuvila** – umusho onamagama amabili: isenzo nebizo

**Aliwe phansi igeja kuyalinywa** – umusho onamagama amane: isenzo, isandiso, ibizo, isenzo

#### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

Omama bayakhuthazana ukuthi njengoba beshadile futhi kuyibo ababheke amakhaya abangazitheli ngabandayo, abayimise imizi, bangalindeli ukondliwa ngamadoda bebe bengezona izinkubela.

Omama bayakhumbuzana ukuthi ikati alikwazi ukulala eziko ube unomhlaba; amasimu ayalinywa, kudliwe kuphilwe kahle.

Ukubhekelela umndeni akuwona umsebenzi wamadoda kuphela, kepha kumele kubanjiswane, uma ungumama awukwazi ukwenaba ubona kukhona ongakwenza ukufukula umndeni wakho.

#### ***I-Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Umama uzovuka azithathe asebenzele umndeni wakhe. Kungangabi ukusebenza emasimini kepha ukubhukula usebenzise amakhono onawo njengomama, ukuze umndeni wakho uphile kahle.

Izintombi zingafunda ukuthi uma seziganile kulindelekeni kuzona njengomama.

## 2. Angizokwenana ngizokubona

Oqalayo:	Wangibuka wangenyanya
Abavumayo:	Angizokwenana mina ngizokubona
Oqalayo:	Angiphethe nashekhasi
Abavumayo:	Angizokwenana mina ngizokubona

### ***Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

**Wangibuka wangenyanya** – umusho onamagama amabili: isenzo nesenzo. Isenzo singumusho ngokwaso

**Angizokwenana mina ngizokubona** – umusho unamagama amathathu: isenzo esiphikayo, isabizwana soqobo, isenzo

### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

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Omama bavuselela ubuntu kanye nesiko. Leli hubo lithi azibuye emasisweni. Likhumbuza omama okuyibo abagcini bemizi ukuthi kumele kuhlaliswane kanjani emphakathini. Isizwe samaZulu siyisizwe esiqhakambisa ukuphila ndawonye.

Kusadliwa ngoludala ukuvakashelana kwakuyinto eyaziswa kakhulu emphakathini kwakhiwe. Lokhu kwakuqinisa ubudlelwane, kukhuthaze ukusizana nokwazisana. Impilo yamanje enomthelela waseNtshonalanga yiyo le eseyenza ukuthi abantu babe ngobhekokwakhe, isimo esingahambisani neze nobuZulu.

Isiko lokwenana, nalo ngokunjalo yisiko elaziwayo elalibaluleke kakhulu emandulo. Ukwenanelana kwakuyindlela enhle yokuthuthukisa ukwabelana, ukusizana nokunakekelana.

### ***I-Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Leli hubo lizokhumbuza abadala ngobuhle bamasiko akhuthaza impilo enhle emphakathini okungenzeka bagcine sebekuvuselela lokhu emiphakathini abaphila kuyo, futhi bakwedlulisele nakubantwana babo. Kulesi sikhathi samanje kuphuma izidumbu emizini, umuntu eshiseka

phakathi nenkinga kodwa angakwazi ukuyixoxa namuntu, ngenxa yokuthi ukuvakashelana nokwazisana sekuyindlala.

### 3. Ngithe hlala lapha!

Ngithe hlala la!  
Ngithe hlala la  
Ufunan' ekameleni?  
Ufunan' ekameleni?  
Hha, uyeye!  
Hho, mina ngoke ngibone  
Hha, uyeye!  
Hho, mina ngoke ngibone

#### ***I-Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

**Ngithe hlala la** – umugqa ongumusho osendleleni ephoqayo onamagama amathathu: isingasenzo, isenzo esisendleleni ephoqayo, isabizwana sokukhomba

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**Ufunani ekamelweni?** – umugqa ongumbuzo onamagama amabili: isenzo esihlanganise nesakhi sombuzo, isandiso esisuselwe egameni 'ikamelo' elibolekwe olimini lwesiBhunu 'kamer'

**Hho, mina ngoke ngibone** – umugqa onamagama amane: isibabazo, isabizwana, isingasenzo esifinyeziwe, isenzo

#### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

Omama bafundisa ngempilo yasesithenjini. Impilo yokulalelana, ukulinda, ukubekezelelana nokuhloniphana. Uma uganele esithenjini kumele ulinde ithuba lakho lize lifike lokuba umyeni achithe isikhathi nawe. Ihubo liyathetha futhi liyaqwashisa; liqwashisa abanye besifazane ukuba balalele, bahloniphe kanti uma bengenzi kahle kumele bakhuzwe babuyiselwe endleleni. Uma umuntu ethi 'Hho, ngoke ngibone' usuke esho lapho ebona izinto zingahambi kahle bese esho la

mazwi acishe ahambisane nesaga esithi 'Kazi iyozala nkomoni'. Lokhu kungenzeka ukuba kushiwo kulowo owesifazane ongalaleli, ongenzi kahle.

### ***I-Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Abesifazane abaganele esithenjini abangenzi kahle futhi abangalaleli bangashintsha ukwenza emuva kokuzwa leli hubo elibafundisayo ukuba baziphathe ngendlela efanele. Nalabo abanenkani uma sebezwa lesi sisho, 'Hho, mina ngoke ngibone' bangaguquka ngoba besiqonda ukuthi siqukethe myalezo muni. Ngakho-ke leli hubo lithi liqukethe umyalezo ofundisayo mayelana nesiko lasesithenjini libe lifundisa futhi ngokusebenza kwezisho esiZulwini.

### **Umkhosi kaNomkhubulwane**

Lona ngomunye wemikhosi ebalulekile esizweni samaZulu. Ngokuhamba kwesikhathi, njengeminye imikhosi, nawo wawusuya ngokushabalala kepha iSilo esasibusa esesikhotheme, uGoodwill Zwelithini Zulu, sawuvuselela ngonyaka we-2000. Lo mkhosi ugujwa ngenyanga kaNhlangulana. NgokukaMsimang (1975: 351)

Okhokho babemhlonipha kakhulu uNomkhubulwana, bethi iNkosazana yaseZulwini eyadabuka ohlangeni emuva kukaMvelinqangi. Kunenkolelo yokuthi uNomkhubulwana uyena oletha imvula kanye nenala esizweni. Uma izwe lomisile noma ukudla emasimini kuhlaselwa izilokazane bekuyiwa entabeni kuyolinywa insimu kaNomkhubulwana. Umkhosi kaNomkhubulwana ubuye ubizwe ngokuthi umkhosi kaNomdede.

Abadala babekhohlelwa ekuthini inkosazana uNomkhubulwana, yabe ihlala eziqongweni zezintaba lapho kuneziziba ezinkulu. Lo mkhosi ubandakanya abantu besifazane bodwa. Kusuka omama namantombazane bahambe bengena emizini yeningi becela ukudla nembewu yokwenza umkhosi kaNomkhubulwana. Uma behamba bengena imizi, bafika bangakhulumi lutho kepha abanimuzi basuke sebekwazi abeze ngakho bese benikwa inhlwanyelo, ummbila, izinselwa, amabhece nokunye. Uma befika emakhaya bafike bacwilise amabele, ukuze kwenziwe utshwala bomkhosi kaNomkhubulwana.

Uma sekufika usuku lolo oluhlelelwe umkhosi, izintombi zibhinca amabheshu ezinsizwa bese zikhipha izinkomo ezeluswayo. Omama bona bathatha amageja bese beyolima insimu kaNomkhubulwane. NgokukaNyembezi noNxumalo (1966: 141), le nsimu yabe ilinywa

ngamakhosikazi onke esigodi. Ahlwanyela imbewu okuthi uma ukudlasekukhulile beseingahlakulwa ibuye futhi ingavunwa. Kule nsimu kudla izinyoni kanye nezilwane zasendle. Kuyaye kuphathwe umnikelo uma sekukhushukelwa entabeni okungutshwala besiZulu, ugwayi kanye nokunye. Uma sekuqediwe ukutshala kube sekudliwa ukudla okunyukwe nakho, kuhaywe namahubo. Konke ukudla okusuke kusele kuthelwa phansi njengophawu lokupha nokunikela enkosazaneni. Akuvumelekile ukuba kube khona ophuma nokudla okusuke kusensimini kaNomkhubulwane, ngoba kunenkolelo yokuthi lowo uzilandela amashwa nezinhlopheko.

Lo mkhosi wenganyelwa yiNkosi yesizwe kepha amakhosi ezizwe ezincane ayawuqhuba lo mkhosi ezifundeni zawo, ngoba kwesinye isikhathi izulu alomisi kulo lonke elakwaZulu ngesikhathi esifanayo.

## Ukhlaziya amahubo omkhosi kaNomkhubulwana

### 1. Nangu umagejana

Nang' umagejana nango  
Sibiz' amabele awomame!  
Wo haye! Buyani madoda,  
Niz' ekhaya! Wo haye haye!

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### ***I-Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

**Nangu umagejana, nangu** – umusho onamagama amathathu: isandiso, ibizo, isandiso

**Sibiz' amabele awomame!** – umusho onamagama amathathu: isenzo, ibizo, ongumnini

### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

Omama nezintombi bayabika ukuthi umsebenzi abebewuphumele usufeziwe, imvula iyeza ngakho-ke amageja nembewu akulunge. Bamema amadoda ukuba abuyele emakhaya kuzolinywa. Endulo uma kungesona isikhathi sokulima, amadoda ayejwayele ukuvuka azihambe ayohlala namanye amadoda, kuphuzwe kuxoxwe. Omama nezintombi, ngaleli hubo, bakhumbuza abantu ngosikompilo lwamaZulu ukuthi amasimu ayalinywa, kuvunwe kudliwe. Awulambi uma unensimu.

### ***I-Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Abantu bazohlalela ethembeni lokuthi isomiso sesidlulile, izitshalo nemfuyo kuzosimama. Bazozilungiselela, abangenambewu bazame izindlela zokuyithola. Abanamathangi nezitsha zokubekelela amanzi emvula bazozilungisa.

### **2. Uyozisholo wena**

Uma ubuntombi ungasenabo

Uyozisholo wena

Uma ihlo ungasenalo

Uyozisholo wena

### ***I-Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

**Uma ubuntombi ungasenabo** – umugqa oqukethe amagama amathathu: isihlanganiso, ibizo, isenzo

**Uyozisholo wena** – umugqa oqukethe amagama amabili: isenzo esinempambosi yokwenzela, isabizwana

**Uma ihlo ungasenalo** – umugqa oqukethe amagama amathathu: isihlanganiso, ibizo, isenzo

### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

Isiko lokuhlola izintombi alihlelelwanga ukuphoxa izintombi kepha ukukhuthaza izintombi ukuba zizigqaje ngobuntombi bazo. Uma intombi ihlolwa, bese kutholakala ukuthi ayisagcwele, izithola isingena ehlazweni. Leli culo liqwashisa izintombi ukuthi yizo ezizaziyo ukuziphatha kwazo, ngakho-ke uma intombi isizazi ukuthi seyibulahlile ubuntombi bayo, ayingayi ekuhlolweni. Lifundisa izintombi ukuba zizithathele izinqumo ngokwazo futhi ziqonde ukuthi noma yisiphi isenzo osenzayo sinomphumela ozobhekana nawo ngqo noma ngabe unjani. Leli hubo liveza nokuthi izintombi zinakho ukuzikhethela ukuthi ziyahlolwa noma cha.



### ***I-Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Leli hubo likhuluma nezintombi ngqo. Kumele zizithathele izinqumo futhi ziziphathe ngendlela efanele, zazi ukuthi akukho okufihlekile okungeyikuvela.

### **3. We Mkabayi kaNdaba**

We, Mkabayi kaNdaba  
Siyakhuleka siyacela kuwe!  
Sicel' inhlanhla kuwe  
Uyithonga kithi  
Siyakwazi ukucela kuwe  
Nemvula nelanga siyakwazi ukucela kuwe  
Siyakhuleka siyacela kuwe  
We Mkabayi kaNdaba

### ***Locutionary act: (isakhiwo senkulumo)***

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**We, Mkabayi kaNdaba** – umugqa onamagama amathathu: isenzukuthi, ibizo, ongumnini

**Siyakhuleka siyacela kuwe** – umugqa onamagama amathathu: isenzo, isenzo, isandiso

**Sicel'inhlanhla kuwe** – umugqa onamagama amathathu: isenzo, ibizo, isandiso

**Uyithonga kithi** – umugqa onamagama amabili: isibanjalo, isandiso

**Siyakwazi ukucela kuwe** – umugqa onamagama amathathu: isenzo, ibizo, isandiso

**Nemvula nelanga siyakwazi ukucela kuwe** – umugqa onamagama amahlanu: isandiso, isandiso, isenzo, ibizo, isandiso

### ***I-Illocutionary act: (inhloso yehubo)***

Ukuqhakambisa umlando wethu kwaZulu, nokukhumbuza amaZulu ngeqhawekazi uMkabayi kaNdaba. UNomkhubulwana uyinkosazane yasezulwini, kanti futhi amaZulu akholelwa ekuthini asebewushiya lo mhlaba, bayakwazi ukusinxusela kangcono. Ngakho-ke izintombi zinxusa uMkabayi njengoba naye ayelokhu eyintombi waze wafika ebudaleni bakhe ukuba asinxusele kuNomkhubulwana inkosazane yasezulwini. Leli hubo lifundisa nokuthi yini okumele siyicele kuNomkhubulwana.

### ***I-Perlocutionary act: (okungenziwa olalele)***

Baqonda kangcono ukuxhumana phakathi kwabasadla anhlamvana nalabo asebekwelamathongo. Lolu lwazi nabo bangaludlulisela kwabanye ukuze umlando nesiko lamaZulu laziwe.

### **Ukulondolozwa kolimi emikhosini yeningi labesifazane**

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Kuyinto ebaluleke kakhulu ukulondolozwa kolimi lwesiZulu njengolimi lomdabu lwase-Afrika. Lokhu sikusho ngoba izilimi eziningi emhlabeni wonke jikelele, zisengcupheni yokushabalala. UNgulube (2012: 11) uthi ukuxhumana nobudlelwano emphakathini kweyame olimini. Ulimi yilona oluchaza isintu. Uma ulimi luvumela abantu ukuba bahlangane ndawonye, babambisane, ukushabalala kwalo kungaletha enkulu ingozi emphakathini. Lokhu kungaba nomthelela wokushabalala kwamasiko aleso sizwe. Imikhosi yakwaZulu ingenye yamagugu esiziqhenya ngawo ngoba asilondolozela ulimi olwakhiwa llembe, iSilo saKwaZulu. Ngesikhathi sokugubha imikhosi, ulimi lulondeka ngokuthi kube khona amahubo aculwayo angumthandazo wesizwe.

Amahubo ahlobene kakhulu nemikhosi, ngokuka-Rycroft (1971: 217; 1980: 316), Berglund (1976: 72). Ngesikhathi izintombi zihuba emkhosini womhlanga, zisuke zicela amandla okulondolozeka ebuntombini bazo. Omama nabo uma behuba emkhosini wesivivane basuke bethandazela imizi yabo, nemendo yabo, nabantwana babo, yingakho nje bethwala izithungo ngoba basuke bekhulekela umndeni wonke. Namhlanje abantu besifazane abaningi abasayihambi le mikhosi ngoba sebeya emasontweni lapho bethandaza khona. Imikhosi efana nesivivane, imikhosi yesizwe samaZulu sonkana lapho omama benxusa khona becela amandla khona. Ukuba ubukhosi bakwaZulu abuzange buqonelwe amaNgisi ngesikhathi sokulunjwa, ngabe ubukhosi besilo sakwaZulu bukhulu bufaniswa nobamaShayina namhlanje.

Kukhona izinto ezifanayo emikhosini emibili okungumkhosi womhlanga kanye nowesivivane. Emkhosini womhlanga, izintombi ziphatha umhlanga owodwa intombi ngayinye, kodwa emkhosini wesivivane, omama bathwala inyanda noma izithungo, bayokwethula eSilweni, okuyinkosi yohlanga. Umhlanga kubiywa ngawo esigodlweni. Yomibili le mikhosi yenzelwa esigodlweni sesilo. Lokhu kuyisifanekiso sokwakhiwa kwesizwe. Umkhosi wesivivane wenzelwa esigodlweni saKwakhangelamankengana, kwaNdlunkulu uMaDlamini, osekhothame ozalwa ebukhosini baseSwatini, ongundlunkulu wesithathu weSilo. Umkhosi womhlanga wenzelwa eNyokeni. Umkhosi kaNomkhubulwana wona-ke wenzelwa entabeni ngoba kukholelwa ukuthi uhlala eziqongweni zezintaba, lapho kuneziziba khona. Uma ehla wehla nenkungu. Siyaye sibone uthingo lwenkosazane, ngoba luqhamuka entabeni lukhombe emanzini. Lokhu kuyisibonakaliso sobuhle bukaNomkhubulwana. Uvikela isizwe sonke nabantu nesifazane ukuze kungabi khona indlala, isichotho nakho konke okubi. Abantu ngesikhathi belunjwa bethatha inkolo yobuKristu, bashiya ukwenza izinto ezingamasiko abo, manje sebeshaywa ukuthi azisenziwa izinto ezazenziwa kuqala yingakho sesibona nesomiso kuphele amanzi izulu lingani nje, lokhu kwenza isilo saKwaZulu sathatha isinqumo sokuvuselela lo mkhosi. Umkhosi kaNomkhubulwana wenzelwa entabeni, uyinhlanganisela yezintombi nto zibambisene nomama, kuhlwanyelwa insimu kaNomkhubulwana ndawonye. Kuhlonishwa inkosazane yezulu. Isikhathi esiningi wenzelwa ezindaweni ezinezintaba njengase-Bulwer nje.

## **Isiphetho**

Lesi sahluko sethule saphinde sahlaziya imikhosi emithathu; umkhosi womhlanga, umkhosi wesivivane kanye nomkhosi kaNomkhubulwana; okuyimikhosi eholwa futhi egujwa ngabantu besifazane. Sichaze kabanzi ngemvelaphi kanye nomumo womkhosi ngamunye, siphinde siqhathanisa le mikhosi, sibheka okufanayo nokwahlukile ukusukela ekulungiseleleni, kuze kuye ekuphuthuleni umkhosi ngamunye. Siqhubeke sabheka indlela le mikhosi elondoloza ngayo ulimi kanye nesiko lamaZulu. Njengoba le mikhosi iholwa futhi igujwa ngabesifazane, lapha kulesi sahluko kuvela ngokusobala ukuthi likhulu iqhaza elibanjwa abantu besifazane emikhakheni eyahlukene yokuthuthukisa nokulondoloza okungamagugu esizwe, lapha singabala ulimi kanye nesiko. Umongo wale mikhosi yizingxoxo ezijulile kanye namahubo okuhlelekile, okwethulwa futhi kwenziwe ngendlela efundisayo, esamdalo nejabulisayo, okwethulwa esizindeni esinokuxoxisana ngokwesiko kanye nenhlalanhle. Phezu kwalokho lesi sahluko sibuye sahlaziya amahubo sibheka inhloso kanye nemiyalezo ayiqukethe. Amahubo nawo ayibeka obala imisebenzi neqhaza elibanjwa ngabantu besifazane emikhakheni eyahlukene.

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## Isahluko 5

### Iqhaza Elibanjwe Ngababhali Besifazane Bamanje Ukudiliza Imingcele Yobulili

*Bonakele Mhlongo kanye noNompumelelo Zondi*

#### Isingeniso

Ukungalingani phakathi kwabesilisa nabesifazane ngenye yezinto ezigqamile ngosikompilo lwabantu abamnyama. Lokhu kungalingani kuhambisana nemingcele ebekiwe ngendlela yokuziphatha elindelekile phakathi kwabantu besilisa nabesifazane ezinhlakeni ezehlukene zempilo njengakwezemfundo, ezenkolo nakwezombusazwe. Izimpande zale mingcele zisukela ezinkolelweni eziyindabuko yale miphakathi kanye nalokho ama-Afrika akwazisa njengamagugu (Kim noMotsei 2002). Ngenxa yobucayi nokubaluleka kwalesi simo esivamise ukuba nemiphumela yokungabibikho kobulungiswa nokuhlonishwa kwamalungelo abantu besifazane, miningi imisebenzi esikhiqiziwe njengemizamo yokulwisana ngqo nalesi sikhumba emiphakathini eminingi yabantu abamnyama (Tlali 1975; Bâ 1989; Nkealah 2009). Isibonelo, ezwenikazi laseMelika, izishosho zamalungelo abesifazane nababhekele amalungelo abantu besimame zibhale kabanzi ngalesi sihloko zisusela kulokho abesifazane bakuleliya zwekazi abahlangabezane nakho kule minyaka engamashumi ayisihlanu edlule. Nababhali besifazane bemisebenzi yobuciko basemazweni akhelene nesifunda esingezansi kwengxenye yeSahara ezwenikazi lase-Afrika, babonakala besemkhankasweni wokugudluzisa eminye yemingcele esithathwa njengengxenye yempilo ngama-Afrika amaningi. U-Ogunyemi (2009: 12) uyasinxenxa ukuba sikhumbule ukuthi isilinganiso esikahle sokufunda imisebenzi yobuciko yabesifazane wukubheka ubuciko bokubhaleka komsebenzi ofundwayo kanye nendlela umbhalo lowo oveza ngayo isimo ezenhlalakahle nezokuxhumana komphakathi umbhalo ogxile kuwo. Uqhubeka athi kufanele kucutshungulwe futhi indlela umbhalo 'osikhumbuza ngayo ngomlando owedlule'. Uphetha ngokuthi makuqashelwe ukuthi imibhalo yobuciko yabesifazane isilunguzisa ezweni 'elisha' leminyaka yekhulu lama-21 ngenguqukisamqondo engenzeka phakathi kwezemibhalo nesimo ezenhlalohle yomphakathi.

Kulesi sahluko kuzobuyekezwa kafushane izindlela namasu asetshenziswa ngababhali besifazane ukulwisana nemigoqo abayibekelwe ngenxa yobulili babo. Kukhethwe ababhali basemazweni ase-Afrika engezansi kogwadule i-Sahara, nababhale ngolimi lwesiNgisi kanye nolimi lwesiZulu. Isizathu sokugxila kulezi zilimi yingoba ayiminingi imibhalo yobuciko edingida izindikimba ezithinta amalungelo nokuxhashazwa kwamalungelo abantu besifazane ebhalwe ngezilimi zomdabu ehlaziya le ndikimba ngokusezingeni eliphakeme. Nakuba ikhonyana eyimbijana kodwa ingxoxo ibhalwe yabalula yangadepha kwazise isikhathi esiningi umbhali usuke eyibhale ngenjongo yokuba ifundwe ezikoleni. Ukuze isithombe salokhu okubhalwa ngakho sikhanye bha futhi singachemi, ingxenye yokuqala izohlaziya imibhalo yabesifazane base-Afrika ababhale ngemuva kancane kweminyaka yengcindezelo. UBoehmer (2004: 175) uchaza imibhalo yobuciko ebhalwe ngemuva kweminyaka yobukoloni ngokuthi iyimibhalo egxile ekuhlaziyeni izimo ezithinta ezombusazwe nobuninizwe. Uqhubeka athi le mibhalo ivame ukuphonsa imibuzo efana nokuthi ngobani abancishwe izwi kanjalo futhi nemibuzo ngobuninimhlaba. Nakulesi sahluko, lezi zindikimba ziyathintwa. Ingxenye elandelayo idingida kafushane injulalwazi ezisetshenziswe kulo msebenzi, ilandelwe yingxenye ehlaziya amasu avezwa ngababhali besifazane beminyaka esuka kowe-1988 kuze kufike kule minyaka yekhulu lama-21. Kukhethwe ukugxila eminyakeni engemuva kowe-1995 ngoba unyaka we-1995 waziwa njengengqophamlando yonyaka okwaqinisekiswa ngawo amalungelo abantu besifazane kwinkomfa yomhlaba jikelele eyaziwa ngokuthi “yiNkomfa yesiNe Yomhlaba Engabesifazane”. Kuzobe sekulandela ingxoxo emfishane ngokuveza izindikimba ezisemqoka ezigqanyiswa njengezinsalele ababhekene nazo ababhali besifazane bemisebenzi yalolu hlobo lwemibhalo. Kusetshenziswe Injulalwazi yeFeminizimu neyokuhlaziya Inkulumo Edluliswayo (*Discourse analysis*) ukuhlaziya izindikimba ezitholakele. Kubuywe kwasekwa ngokuhlaziya imibono yochwepheshe abahlaziya ukuxhumana kwezamasiko nobulili abafana no-Fanon (1968). Isahluko sizophetha ngokubuyekeza kafushane okwethulwe kuso.

## **Uhlaka lwezinjulalwazi**

### **Injulalwazi yeFeminizimu**

Ngokwenzazelo yesichazamazwi i-*American Heritage* (2021: 848), injulalwazi ebuye yaziwe ngokuthi yinsizakuhlaziya, wuhlelo lwezitatimende ezisamaqiniso esezike zahlolwa ukusebenza kwazo yiqembu labantu abathile bavumelana ngobuqiniso bazo ekuchazeni ngesimo esithile, ngobunjalo bento noma ngokusebenza kwento ethile. Injulalwazi iyamaniswa kakhulu nombhalo wocwaningo njengalokhu isebenza njengelensi yokuphendula imibuzo yomcwaningi ngokwenzeka kwesimo

esicwaningwayo. ONtuli (2006: 47), noNdimande-Hlongwa benoDlamini (2015: 189) baphawula ukuthi elinye iqhaza elibanjwa yinjulalwazi lapho kwenziwa ucwaningo, ukwelekelela ukuhlaziya nokucubungula imicabango nemibono etholakele ocwaningweni. Kulo msebenzi kusetshenziswe uhlaka lwenjulalwazi yeFeminizimu kanye neyoKuhlaziya Inkulumo Edluliswayo (*Discourse Analysis*).

UReddy, uZondi bekanye noMkhize (2020: 1), bayichaza ifeminizimu ngokuthi yinkolelo ephakamisa ukuba amalungelo abantu besifazane ahlonishwe ngendlela efanayo nawabantu besilisa emikhakheni eyehlukene yempilo njengakwezenhlalo, ezomnotho, nakwezombusazwe. Ukungalingani ngokobulili kuveza obala ukuthi abantu besilisa nabesifazane kabaphathwa ngendlela efanayo, okugcina kunemiphumela yokuba ubulili kube yibo obulawula indlela yokuphila yomuntu. Luningi ulwazi nokuqonda okusha okuvezwe ngabahlaziyi bezindaba ezithinta ubulili nezindaba zebesifazane kule minyaka embalwa edlule kulokhu kwaqala umkhankaso weFeminizimu (Nanda 2014; Spade kanye noValentine 2014.) Lolu lwazi selusetshenziswe kakhulu ukukhanyisa kabanzi ngalokhu kungalingani phakathi kwabesifazane nabesilisa, kanti luphinde lwaveza ukuthi ukungalingani ngokobulili kuyehluka ngokosikompilo kanye nangokwezimohlalo zabantu. Baningi ababhali bezobuciko abangene bagamanxa emkhankasweni wokuqwashisa nokuhlonishwa kwamalungelo abesifazane njengoba kuvezwa nakulo msebenzi odingidwa lapha. Yingakho kusetshenziswe injulalwazi yefeminizimu ukuhlaziya izindikimba.

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### **Injulalwazi yokuHlaziya okweDluliswayo**

Enye injulalwazi lo msebenzi oncike kuyo yinjulalwazi yokuHlaziya okweDluliswayo. Njengoba lo msebenzi uxile ekuhlaziyeni iqhaza elibanjwe ngababhali besifazane emibhalweni yobuciko ukudiliza imingcele yobulili, kusemqoka ukuhlaziya indlela laba babhali abasivezela ngayo ukungalingani nokuhudulelwa phansi kwamalungelo abantu besifazane emibhalweni yaboyobuciko besebenzisa amasu okuhlaziya ukusetshenziswa kolimi kule mibhalo. Ngokuka-Owomoyela (1996: 38), ulimi luyindlela ehlelekile yokuxhumana ngokukhuluma noma ngokubhala, futhi luphinde lusebenze ukwehlukana usikompilo kolunye. Lokhu kuyahambisana nokubalulwa ngo-Jacques Derrida beno-Ricoeur njengalokhu becashunwe ngu-Dimitriadis beno-Kamberelis (2006: 26) abaveza ukuthi ulimi luyinqola esetshenziswa ukwedlulisa imiqondo ethile kubantu. Ngakolunye uhlangothi, u-Gee (2005: 6), usikhumbuza ukuthi ulimi lusebenza ukwakha amaqembu ehlukeni omphakathi nendlela umphakathi owemukela ngayo lawo maqembu kwazise ukuthi aba nendlela azigqaja ngayo ubuwona nemvelaphi yawo. Ababhali bemisebenzi yobuciko bayingxenyane yale



miphakathi. NoGrace (1965: 5), ukuchaza kube sobala ukuthi ababhali bemisebenzi yobuciko baveza amaqiniso ngempilo ngakho imibhalo yabo iyisibuko sempilo lapho sizibuka khona sihlole inkambo yethu njengomphakathi.

## **Ukwethula nokuhlaziywa kolwazi:**

### **Imibhalo yobuciko yababhali besifazane abavelele e-Afrika**

Ziningi izingqalabutho zababhali besifazane bemisebenzi yobuciko base-Afrika eziyibekile induku ebandla. Lapha singabala kafushane ababhali abafana no-Mariama Bâ (1929–1981), u-Miriam Tlali (1933–2017), u-Ifeoma Okoye (1937–) kanye no-Tsitsi Dangarembga (1959–). Indikimba enqala edingidwa imisebenzi yalaba babhali yileyo ethinta izihlava ezifana nengcindezelo, ukucwaswa kanye nokuhlukumezeka abantu besifazane base-Afrika abahlangabezana nakho emiphakathini abaphila kuyona. Bephawula ngababhali bamanje besifazane bemisebenzi yobuciko base-Afrika, o-Allan nabanye (2005) njengalokhu becashunwe nguNgu'mbi (2015: 3), bayakuqinisa ukuthi laba babhali abaphambuki emgomweni wabo wokuveza umthelela wezimo zezenhlobo, ezepolitiki, nezimo zomnotho ezimpilweni zabo. Imisebenzi yabo ikuveza obala ukuxhumana okukhona phakathi kwemisebenzi yobuciko nomphakathi kubalwa nohlaka lomndeni othathwa njengesakhiwo esiyisisekelo semiphakathi.

Ngokukachwepheshe wezokuhlaziywa kwemibhalo yobuciko yababhali besifazane base-Afrika, u-Ogundipe-Leslie (1982) ocashunwe ngu-Davies beno-Graves (1986: 21), akumangalisi ukuba imisebenzi yobuciko yababhali balobu bulili igxile ezihlokwani ezithinta izihlava ezibalwe ngenhla, kwazise abesifazane base-Afrika kufana nokuthi 'babelethe izintaba eziyisithupha emihlane' yabo. Lezi zintaba uzichaza ngokuthi yizo zonke izingqinamba abahlangabezana nazo nsuku zonke zemihla yabo; umsuka wazo udalwa wukuba yizakhamizi zezwekazi abazithola bakhe kulo; okuyizwekazi lase-Afrika. Ngaphezu kwalokhu, leli zwekazi linomlando omdala othinta izinhlobonhlobo zengcindezelo izinhlobo zemiphakathi yezwekazi edlule kuzo. Eqhubeka nale ncazelo u-Ogundipe-Leslie uthi laba besifazane bama-Afrika bagcina bekwazi ukuphila nayo le mithwalo kwazise sebeyamukele bayenza yayingxenywe yempilo yabo.

Ocwaningweni lweziqu zobudokotela olwenziwa nguZondi (2008) nokungumsebenzi osezingeni eliphezulu njengoba usushicilelwe njengencwadi othi: Bahlabelelani-*Why do they sing? Gender and Power in Contemporary Women's Songs* (2020), uZondi usika elijikayo ngemizwa yabantu besifazane bakwaZwelibomvu ngempilo yomuntu wesifazane emhlabeni obuswa nophethwe

ngabesilisa. Kulo msebenzi oshiwo ngenhla, onesihloko esingaguquliwe nakuba sewushicilelwa njengencwadi, okaNondaba naye usika elijikayo ngalesi sihloko esesidingidwe futhi kwabhalwa kabanzi ngaso ikakhulukazi emiphakathini yabantu abamnyama. Lo msebenzi ozinze kubantu besifazane bakwaZwelibomvu ngasePhayindane, esifundeni saKwaZulu-Natali, unika bona kanye abantu besifazane ithuba lokuchaza ngemizwa yabo ngempilo abayiphilayo ngaphansi kwalesi simo. Ngokwenza lolu cwaningo, uZondi wayebanikeza izwi ukuze bangalokhu bekhulunyelwa ngezimpilo zabo kube kuyibo abashayo kuleli bhodwe. Njengomphakathi osakholelwa esithenjini, abantu besifazane bakwaZwelibomvu basivulela imbotshana yokuqonda kangcono ngempilo yomuntu wesifazane ophila ngaphansi kwalezi zimo. Kuyathokozisa nokho ukuthi abantu besifazane bakwaZwelibomvu sebazitholela izindlela zokubhekana nezimo ngomculo wabo ohlabahlosile noletha injabulo emangalisayo kowulalele ebe engazi lokho okungale kwawo. Kubona, ukuhlabelela kufeza izinto eziningi; njengokuthi nje kungenye yezindlela ezibenza bagcine beyijabulele impilo njengoba kubahlanganisa nabanye abantu besifazane bese babelana ngokuningi nje. Baphinde basizane ukwenza imisebenzi yabo yasemakhaya bezihlabelelela bahleke, bagconane, bampansane kube njeya. Ngaleyo ndlela bagcina bekhohliwe yizinhlopheko zabo bathokozele ukuba ndawonye njengabantu besifazane. Ngisho khona nje ukuthola ithuba lokuhleba ngabayeni babo kubanika injabulo engenakuchazwa.

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Ababhali besifazane bamanje bemisebenzi yobuciko, nabo babhekene nezingqinamba ezithi azifane nalezi kodwa bona babonakala bengamavulandlela ngezixazululo ezintsha, bengagcini nje ngokubuka nokucubungula ubunzima bempilo yeningi labesifazane. Kunalokho babonakala bedabula amazibuko amasha kwezemibhalo yobuciko. Kuvela sengathi izindikimba abazidingidayo emibhalweni yabo ziqonde ukwedlula ekuvezeni ubunzima nemithwalo yokuba ngumuntu wesifazane omnyama e-Afrika, kodwa futhi balwisana nemingcele yobulili ezimpande zayo zitholakala emiphakathini abakhulele nabahlala kuyona. Echaza kabanzi ngalolu hlobo lwababhali besimanje uGqola (2001: 12), lapho ecaphuna u-Davies uthi laba babhali ngabesifazane abenqabayayo ukuba ngabahlali nje abangenzi lutho ukuletha inguquko. Kanjalo futhi bangabesifazane abalwisana nemigoqo eminingi abayibekelwe kusukela kwebekwe ngabaphethe bebala kuze kufinyelele kuleyo eyimiphumela yenqubo yobungqoshishilizi babesilisa kwabesifazane ephakamisa amandla namalungelo abesilisa ngokunyathela nokubukela phansi amalungelo abesifazane.

Nakuba uDangarembga (1988) ongowokuzalwa e-Zimbabwe, ethule umsebenzi wakhe ohlaziywa kulesi sahluko ngeminyaka yokugcina yeminyaka eyikhulu eledlule, simqoke njengombhali wakule minyaka ngoba udingida izinselele ebezilokhu ziqhubeka ukuba yinkinga kwabesifazane base-Afrika ngeminyaka yowe-1980 kuya kowe-1999 noma kambe i-Zimbabwe

yabe isineminyaka eyishumi yathola inkululeko. Umbhalo wakhe wobucikomazwi odume kakhulu nawubhale ngowe-1988 waziwa ngokuthi, “*Nervous Conditions*” nongahunyushwa ngokuthi, “Isimo Esimazonzo”; okuyisisho esiyisingathekiso sesimo abalingiswa besifazane kule noveli abaphila ngaphansi kwaso. Isimo esimazonzo singaba yisingathekiso esichaza isimo sempilo abesifazane abamnyama abazithola bephila ngaphansi kwaso imihla yonke yokuphila kwabo. Ungowokuqala kubabhali besifazane abamnyama base-Zimbabwe ukubhala inoveli ngolimi lwesiNgisi. Ngonyaka we-1918 isiteshi esikhulu sokusakaza saseNgilandi i-*British Broadcasting Corporation* sahlonipha le noveli ka-Dangarembga ngokuyenza enye yemibhalo eyi-100 ebambe iqhaza elivelele ekushintsheni umhlaba. UDangarembga ubhale ngezikhathi ezilukhuni lapho ababhali besifazane babebhekene nengwadla yokucwaswa ngabashicileli, kanti namathuba okuqhuba imfundo emazingeni aphakeme ayemfiliba (Uwakweh 1995: 79). Usebenzise ikhono elalingajwayekile ngokwenza lo msebenzi ube yindaba exoxwa ngowesifazane omnyama futhi osemncane, eyingxoxo ngomlando wempilo yakhe nezinselele adlule kuzona. Yigxathu elibalulekile-ke leli kwezemibhalo yobuciko ebhalwe ngabesifazane kwazise umbhali unika owesifazane izwi, okwakungajwayekile emibhalweni eminingi yobuciko ebhalwe eminyakeni eyikhulu edlule.

Okwenza lo msebenzi wobuciko ube nohlonze nokuhlwabusa wukuthi u-Dangarembga uthinta izindikimba ezimbili ezijulile. Eyokuqala; eyempilo yengcindezelo ephilwa ngabesifazane abaningi abamnyama ngenxa yosikompilo lobungqoshishilizi kwabesilisa kubantu besifazane okubanika amandla phezu kwabesifazane abaphila nabo. Indikimba yesibili yileyo ethinta kakhulu umlando wama-Afrika kuleli zweekazi; ubukoloni; okungukuthuntubezeka kwengqondo yom-Afrika ithuntubezwa ngabokufika basemazweni aseMpumalanga nomphumela wakho empilweni yemihla ngemihla (Zondi 2013: 172). Ngokuka-Oelofson (2015: 137) ubukoloni buyisimo somqondo sokuzenyeza, ukulahlekelwa ukuzethemba nokuzonda konke okumelwe yizwe lakho ngenxa yokugxishwa izimfundiso-ze ngabantu bokufika abathathe izwe lakho bakufundisa ukuba uzibukele phansi. Njengababhali abaningi besifazane kulo msebenzi wakhe uveza ngokusobala ukucindezelwa kwabesifazane ngabesilisa. Amazwi ashiwo ngomunye wabalingiswa abaqavile kuleli noveli u-Maiguru ongunkosikazi kaBabamukuru, uyixoxa kahle le ndikimba lapho ethi:

*This business of womanhood is a heavy burden...How could it not be? Aren't we the ones who bear children? When is it like that you can't just decide today I want to do this, tomorrow I want to do that, and the next day I want to be educated! When there are sacrifices to be made, you are the one that has to make them. And these things are not easy; you have to start learning from a very early age. The earlier the better so that it is easy later on. Easy! As*

*if it is ever easy. And these days it is worse! With the poverty of blackness on one side and the weight of womanhood on the other. Aiwa! What will help you my child is to learn to carry all your burdens with strength (Dangarembga 1988: 16).*

(Le ndima yokuba ngowesifazane ingumthwalo onzima...Ingebe yiwo kanjani? Akusithina yini esibeletha abantwana? Ngenxa yalokho awukwazi ukuthatha isinqumo uthi namhlanje ngifuna ukwenza lokhu kusasa ngenze lokhu, ngosuku olulandelayo ngifunde! Kuba nguwenza ozidelayo njalo lapho kufanele kuthathwe izinqumo zokulahlekelwa okuthile... Yinto le osheshe uyifunde ebuncaneni...futhi kungcono ngaleyo ndlela ngoba kwenza kube lula ngokuhamba kwesikhathi ukuzidela. Noma ngingesho ukuthi kunesikhathi lapho kuke kube lula khona! Khona nje kulezi zinsuku sekwedlulele! Ubuphofu bokuba mnyama ngapha, isisindo sokuba ngowesifazane ngapha! Hhayi bo! Into nje, eyokusiza mntanami wukuba uzifundise ukuthwala izinkinga zakho zonke ngamandla.)

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Okuphawulekayo wukuthi lawa mazwi aphinyiswa ngu-Maiguru nongumlingiswa osezingeni elingcono kakhulu ngezindlela eziningi kunabo bonke abalingiswa besifazane abakuleli noveli. Inkulumbo kaMaiguru iveza obala inhlopheko nokucindezeleka kwabesifazane base-Afrika ngokwamalungelo abo empilweni uma uyiqhathanisa neyabesilisa. Futhi iveza ukuthi abakwazi ukuveza uvo lwabo ngezidingo zabo. Ungunkosikazi kaBabamukuru, njengomyeni wakhe, naye ufunde eNgilandi wathola iziqu ezilinganayo nezomyeni wakhe. Nakuba efaka imali eningi ngomholo wakhe akanazwi ngokwabiwa kwezimali ngoba kulo mndeni zenganyelwe nguBabamukuru. Inkulumbo yakhe uyivula ngokuba aqale aveze ukuthi ukuba ngumuntu wesifazane kungumthwalo onzima. Uqhubeka abuze umbuzo oziphendulayo ngoba ube esenikeza izizathu ezidala ukuba impilo yabo ibe nzima. Uchaza athi ngabantu besifazane abathola abantwana. Abakwazi ukuzithathela izinqumo ngalokho abakuhlosile ngempilo yabo, izinqumo ezifana nokuthi yiziphi izinto abafisa ukuzenza futhi bangazenza nini. Abakwazi ukuthatha izinqumo ezithinta imfundo yabo ngoba kulindeleke ukuba kube yibona abehlela ngezansi lapho kufanele kuthathwe izinqumo ezinzima.

Lokhu-ke ukubiza ngokuthi wukwenziwa kwabantu besifazane imihlatshelo lapho kufanele kuthathwe izinqumo ezinzima. Uthi-ke impilo iba ngconywa uma ungowesifazane osheshe wakufunda usemncane lokhu ngempilo. Embhalweni wakhe oxoxa ngayo le ncwadi ka-Dangarembga, ethi *Nervous Conditions*, uZondi (2013: 164) ukubeka ngokungahlonizi ukuthi

lesi simo sengcindezelo kubantu besifazane asigcini nje kuphela kubantu basemakhaya noma abangafundile kepha ngisho ngabe ungowesifazane okhanyiselekile nohlala emadolobheni (njengoba kwenzeka ku-Maiguru) uzithola amandla akho etheniwe ngenxa nje yobulili bakho.

Izikole nezemfundo ephakeme ngenye yemiphumela yobukoloni e-Afrika. Ngeminyaka yowe-1960, laliphansi inani labantu abafunda isikole. Izibalo zikhombisa ukwenyuka kwenani labafundi ababhalisele iziqu zemfundo ephakeme emanyuvesi ngeminyaka yowe-1980 zafinyelela ezigidini ezingama-61 zisuka ezigidini eziyi-12 nje kuphela ngeminyaka eyandulela lena kule ngxenye ye-Afrika eyaziwa ngokuthi yi-*Sub-Sahara*. Lezi zibalo azilifaki izwe laseNingizimu Afrika. Nakuba kunjalo, abesifazane bangamaphesenti angama-21 kuphela kulesi samba abathola leli thuba. Yinani eliphansi kakhulu leli uma liqhathaniswa nabafundi besilisa (Ombati no-Ombati 2012: 116). Ezinye zezizathu ezibalwa njengembangela yokuba abesifazane abaningi bangalitholi ithuba lokuzuzisa imfundo wubuphofu, ukungalingani ngokomnotho kanye nesimomqondo kuhlangele nezinkolelo ezihambisana nosikompilo lwezizwe zase-Afrika ngokufundiswa komuntu wesifazane. Inoveli ka-Dangarembga ikuveza obala lokhu kungalingani kwamathuba okufunda ezweni lase-Zimbabwe kule minyaka. Abalingiswa basetshenziswe ukweneka imithelela yokungalingani kwamazinga empilo ngenxa yokuvaleleka kwabanye ngaphandle.

Umlingiswa oliqhawe ngumlingiswa wesifazane onguTambudzai (uTambu). Bobabili beno-Nyasha bayalingana baneminyaka eyishumi nantathu lapho kuqala indaba, kanti futhi u-Nyasha ngudadewabo ngoba obaba babo yizelamani. Akagcini ngokuba ngumlingiswa oliqhawe kodwa futhi umbhali umnikeze indima yokuba ngumlandi kulo mbhalo. NgokukaCazenave (2005: 62), ngokubhangqa ukuba ngumlandi nokuba ngumlingiswa oliqhawe, umbhali ufeza izinjongo ezimbili ezibalulekile. Eyokuqala wukubheka emuva esikhathini esedlule, kanti eyesibili wukuzindla ngalokho okuthathwa njengamagugu omdabu aziswa kakhulu ngumphakathi umbhalo ongawo. Ukusetshenziswa kwaleli lisu lokubheka emuva emlandweni kwelekelela ukuveza umthelela womlando empilweni yesikhathi samanje. UTambu ukhulela endaweni yasemakhaya nomfowabo uNhamo. Njengengane yentombazane, uyancishwa ithuba lokuya esikoleni semfundo ephakeme njengalokhu leli thuba linikezwa umfowabo othathwa njengomholi womndeni wakusasa. Lesi senzo sigqamisa indlela yokucabanga encike ezimfundisweni ezibusayo kulo mphakathi lapho abantu besifazane benganikezwa isikhundla esifanayo nabesilisa. Kuningi nje ukucwaseka uTambu adlula kukhona ngoba eyingane yentombazane. Lesi simo siguquka lapho uNhamo ethathwa ukufa kungalindele muntu lokhu kuholela enkulumeni yakhe lapho ezwakalisa khona imizwa ngokudlula kwamnewabo. Uthi akumdabukisi neze ukufa kwamnewabo ngoba kumvulele ithuba lokuba athole into abeyilangazelela ngaphezu kwezinto zonke; imfundo (Dangarembga 1988: 1).

UBabamukuru ungumlingiswa ofunde eNgilandi wabe esebuya ezophatha isikole semfundo ephakeme samantombazane eZimbabwe. Izimfundiso zakhe nendlela aphatha ngayo umndeni wakhe kuyinhlanganisela yemvelaphi yakhe kanye nenhlelele yobukoloni ayifunde phesheya. Umndeni wakhe uyawucindezela ikakhulukazi unkosikazi nendodakazi yakhe, kanti phela nabo bahlalile naye eNgilandi 'bayawazi' amalungelo abo. Lokhu kuvela kugqame ngendlela indodakazi yakhe u-Nyasha ekwazi ukumphendula ngayo futhi abeke imizwa yakhe obala lapho emphoqa ukuba alandele indlela ethile yokuphila yena ayibona ifanelekile kumntwana wentombazane omnyama e-Afrika. Okwenza uNyasha angahambisani nale mithetho wukuthi umfowabo yena wayekhululekile engenayo le migoqo eminingi okwakulindlele ayilandele. Wayephumelele ukukwenza lokhu isikhathi eside kwazise nguye oyinhloko emndenini futhi enamandla ngakwezizimali. Izwi lakhe liyagcina, uyindlovu kayiphikiswa nakuba unkosikazi wakhe naye engenisa imali eningi emndenini, kodwa uzibona kunguye owondla wonke umndeni. Ngisho namadoda alapha ekhaya ayemsaba engakwazi ukumelana nezwi lakhe. Kodwa uLucia ongudadewabo omncane owayebukhali engqondweni noma wayengafunde kuyaphi ngenxa yokuvaleleka kwamathuba okufunda wakwazi ukumelana naye. Uyisibonelo salabo abavaleleka ngaphandle ngenxa yobuphansi bamanani abantwana ababesezikoleni ngeminyaka ye-1960 okungaphambi kokuba izwe labo lizuze inkululeko.

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Ababhali besifazane babonakale bebhukula eminyakeni elandela ingqophamlando yengqungquthela yabesifazane yomhlaba jikelele ngonyaka we-1995 e-Beijing ezweni laseShayina. Esinye sezibophezelo esimqoka esathathwa yizethameli kulo mhlangothi yilesi:

Wukuzinikela ukulwisana nezingqinamba kanye nezithiyo ezibhebhethekisa ukungalingani nobuphovu kubantu besifazane emhlabeni wonke jikelele. Lokhu kuyokwenziwa ngokuqinisekisa ukuthi amalungelo abantu besifazane nezingane zamantombazane kuyingxenye yokuhlonishwa kwamalungelo esintu. Lapha kubalwa ukuqinisekiswa kwamalungelo alinganayo nawabantu besilisa uma kuza emathubeni emisebenzi, izinsiza, ukwakhiwa komndeni nokubambisana ekugcineni inhlahlakahle yomndeni ukuze umbuso wentando yeningi usebenze ngempumelelo (United Nations 1996).

Baningi ababhali besifazane abathathe igxathu lokuba baqale babhale badingide izindikimba ezithinta imizamo yabesifazane yokudiliza imingcele yobulili phakathi kwabo nabantu besilisa njengalokhu amathuba alinganayo ngokwemisebenzi nezinsiza eya ngokuya evuleka nakubantu

besifazane.

UChimamanda Ngozi Adichie ongowokuzalwa ezweni lase-Nigeria kodwa osezinze eMelika, u-Angela Makholwa ongowaseNingizimu Afrika kanye no-Ifemu Okoye ngabanye bababhali bobuciko abasemkhankasweni wokulwisana nemingcele ebekelwe abantu besifazane ngokobulili babo. Kulesi sahluko ngihlaziya kafushane imisebenzi yabo ebhalwe kule minyaka eyikhulu ngenhloso yokuveza indima asebeyihambile ekuletheni izinguquko kwezemibhalo yobuciko ebhalwe ngababhali besifazane. U-Adichi usezakhele igama njengombhali ovelele emhlabeni wonke, futhi wahlonishwa ngeziqo zobudokotela emkhakheni wakhe ngamanyuvesi amaningana kubalwa ne-*John Hopkins*, kanye ne-*Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies*, esenyuvesi yase-*Harvard* eMelika. Uzuzwe nemiklomelo eminingana ekubhalweni kwezincwadi kubalwa nowe-*Commonwealth Writer's Prize* awuzuzwe ngowezi -2005 (Andrade 2011). Imibhalo yakhe idingida izindikimba ezifana nodlame lwasekhaya, iqhaza lezenkolo kanye nelezemfundo ekucindezelweni kwabesifazane.

Encwadini yakhe ethi, *Purple Hibiscus* (Adichie 2003), umlingiswa wesifazane osemncane oliqhawe uKambili, uvezwe njengowesifazane okwazi ukugqabula amaketanga uyise u-Eugene azama ukubabopha ngawo benomfowabo uJaja egameni lenkolo yobuKhatholika. Ubaba walaba bantwana abasesigabeni sokukhula waba yisisulu sokungakwazi ukuzithola ubuyena ngqo ngenkathi esesigabeni esifanayo nesabo manje ngenxa yesandla esinengcinezelo akhula ngaphansi kwaso ehlala nabaphristi ababemkhulisa. U-Adichi uqhathanisa izindlela zokukhulisa abantwana ezinemiphumela engefani ngokuveza u-Ifueoma ongubabekazi walaba bantwana njengomlingiswa okwazi ukuhlanganisa ngempumelelo ingxenye yezimfundiso zaseMpumalanga kanye nengxenye yezimfundiso zase-Afrika. Usebenzisa lezi zindlela ukufundisa abantwana bakhe amasu okucabanga nokuqhamuka nezixazululo ngezimo abangazithola bebhokene nazo. Ungowesimame ophumelelayo, ozimele onobuhlakani obumenza acabange ngendlela eyahlukile. Kanti uyise woKambili yena impilo uyibuka ngohlangothi olulodwa lobuKhatholika kuphela. Uma abantwana benze amaphutha basatshiswa ngokuthi 'bonile futhi bazosha esihogweni'. Unonya, udlame nezizeziso ezinzima nankunkosikazi wakhe uqobo.

Ababhali abaningi bayayigwema indikimba ethinta ukuthandana kobulili obufanayo. Kodwa u-Adichi ukhombisa isibindi esikhulu ngokubhala ngale ndikimba eqoqweni lemidlalo yakhe emfushane etholakala emsebenzini wakhe wobuciko othi, "*The Thing Around Your Neck*". Ephawula ngalesi senzo sika-Adichie, u-Eromosele (2013: 108), uveza ukuthi lokhu kuyimizamo ka-Adichie yokuphikisa amazwi ajwayelwe ukushiwo ngesihloko sokuthandana kobulili obufanayo lapho kuthiwa masinganikezwa indlebe ngama-Afrika ngoba empeleni lolu hlobo lobudlelwano

'akulona usikompilo lwase-Afrika'. U-Eromosele uyawuncoma umsebenzi ka-Adichie awuchaza ngokuthi wedlulisa umyalezo wokuthi ukuthandana phakathi kwabantu bobulili obufanayo kufanele bamukelwe njengengxenyane yempilo ejwayelekile, kungabibikho ukucwaswa kwabo. Kusewumqansa nokho emiphakathini eminingi yasezwenikazi lase-Afrika njengalokhu imithetho yamazwe amaningi ingahambisani nalolu hlobo lokuphila. Emdlaweni omfushane othi, "*On Monday Last Week*", u-Adichie uveza omunye wabalingiswa abaziwa ngezinkonkoni ephawula ngokuthi kwenye indawo yokujabula ayekade eyivakashele ngempelasonto, wayehlangabezane nomunye wabaholi abaqavile bomphakathi babingelelana baxhawulana. Lokhu okuchaza ukuthi nakuba imithetho ebekiwe ikuphikisa lokhu, kodwa ngasese bona labo abangabaholi bayayiphila le mpilo.

Owokugcina esizokhuluma ngaye kulaba babhali bamanje ngumbhali ongowokudabuka kwelaseNinigizimu-Afrika, u-Angela Makholwa ozakhele igama njengombhali wokuqala wesifazane omnyama obhale umsebenzi wobuciko othinta ezobugebengu. Inoveli yakhe yokugcina ayibhale ngowe-2016 ethi, '*The Blessed Girl*'. Iqhawekazi kule noveli yintokazi esencane ephila ngokusebenzisa umzimba nobuhle bayo ukuyenga nokulutha amadoda anemali ukuba amenzele izinto ukuze aphile impilo enhle nenobukhazikhazi. NgokukaMakholwa, enye yezinjongo zakhe ngokubhala le noveli wukuveza ingcindezi ebangwa yizinkundla zokuxhumana zomphakathi kubantu abasha ukuba bavele bengabaphumelelayo. Nokho-ke kulesi sahluko, kugxilwe enovelini yakhe eyodwa vo. Echaza enkulumeni ekhethekile ayenayo nomunye wabashayeli bohlelo lwesidlo sasekuseni esiteshini esidumile sikamabonakude, uMakholwa uthi nakuba ekhule enothando lokufunda uhlobo lwamanoveli ophenyo nathinta ubugebengu, kodwa okumgququzele kakhulu ukubhala umbhalo wakhe wobuciko odumile osihloko sithi, '*The Black Widow Society*' (Makholwa 2013), ukuzwa nokubona udlame olunyantiso abesifazane abaningi abamnyama abadlula kulona ngezandla zabayeni noma zalabo abangabalingane babo kwezothando. UMhlongo (2017: 17), ecaphuna u-Butler (2010: 13) uveza ukuthi ulwazi lokuhumusha nokuqonda amagama asetshenziwe embhalweni kungamelekelela ofundayo ukuqonda izinhloso zombhali ngalowo msebenzi wakhe wobuciko. No-Fairclough (1995: 26), uyakugcizelela lokhu lapho echaza ukuqokwa kwamagama athile kwelekelela ukwakha itekisi elihlonziwe. Amagama akha isihloko sencwadi kaMakholwa ewodwa nje axoxa indaba. Ngokombiko wenhlangano yezempilo yomhlaba i-*World Health Organisation* (i-WHO), bangamaphesenti aphakathi kwangama-20 kuya kwangama-75 abantu ngonyaka ababika ukuhlukunyezwa ngabalingane babo (WHO 2016).

Umsebenzi kaMakholwa ukhuluma nge-*stokvel* esaqalwa ngowesifazane owayehlukunyezwe kanzima ngumyeni wakhe okwadala ukuthi abe nenzondo ejulile yokufuna ukuziphindiselela



ngokuhlukumezeka akuzwiswa ngumyeni wakhe. Yile nzondo emqhuba ukuba aqale *i-stokvel* sabesifazane abafana naye abafuna ukuziphindiselela kubantu besilisa ababahlukumezile ngokuba baqashe inkabi ezobabulala bese behlukaniselana imali ekhokhwa ngumshwalense walowo osefile. Echaza ngokwakhiwa kwabalingiswa kulo mbhalo wobuciko, u-Murray (2016: 18), uveza ukuthi inoveli kaMakholwa ibeka obala ukungalingani ngokobulili okutholakala ebudlelwaneni bezothando nemiphumela yakho emibi. Inhloso yomlingiswa oliqhawe u-Tatullar, yokusungula *i-stokvel* se- "*Black Widows*" ukukhulula abesifazane abavaleleke konoxhaka bobudlelwano obubahlukumeza emoyeni nasenyameni. Iphinde iveze ubudlova nodlame olubhekiswe kwabesifazane olubonakala luezimpande ezijulile ezisukela kubungqoshishilizi babesilisa kwabesifazane. Lezi zimpande zinomkhuba wokwakhela ebudlelwaneni obuba phakathi kwabesilisa nabesifazane nokwenza kuthatheke njengengxenye yempilo ejwayelekile phakathi kwabesifazane nabesilisa. Njengo-Adichie (2003), uMakholwa (2013), ugqamisa ukuthi ulwazi nokwazi ukuzimela ngokwakho unganciki kumuntu wesilisa ngenye yezindlela abantu besifazane abangazikhipha ngayo emaketangeni odlame olubhekiswe kubona. Yingakho *i-stokvel* sabo sakha isikole esaziwa nge-*Young Women's Academy* ngenjongo yokunikeza abesifazane abamnyama abasebancane ithuba lokuzuzisa imfundo eyayizoba yisango elibayisa enkululekweni yangempela.

Indikimba edingidwa nguMakholwa lule noveli yindikimba ebalulekile emphakathini wezwe laseNingizimu Afrika elibhekene nengwadla yokubulawa kwabantu besifazane ngabesilisa. Ngokombiko omaqondana nobugebengu obubhekiswe kwabesifazane okhishwe *i-Statistics South Africa* (2019: 22), amathuba okubulawa kowesifazane eNingizimu Afrika aphindaphindeke kahlanu kulawo omhlaba wonke jikelele. Ongcweti ababhala ngalesi sihloko bathi isibalo esiphezulu kangaka sokuhlukunyezwa kwabesifazane eNingizimu Afrika singaqhathaniswa kuphela nezwe lapho kuliwa khona. Yisibalo esiphezulu kakhulu lesi emhlabeni wonke jikelele. Kunesidingo esiphuthumayo sokuba kutholakale isixazululo esisheshayo ukudambisa leli gciwane elibi elihlasele neliqonde ukubhubhisa imiphakathi yaleli zwe. Lokhu kunikeza ithemba futhi kuyawavula amehlo engqondo abantu abaningi nokuthi owesifazane omnyama nosebenzane abe nesibindi sokubhala ngalesi sihloko. Imizamo yokwenza le ndaba yokuhlukunyezwa kwabesifazane ibe yisithombe sebhayisikhobho ezodlala kuleli nasemazweni aphesheya seyiya ngasemaphethelweni (Moroetsana 2019: 12), izosiza kakhulu ukuqwashisa nokuveza obala umsebenzi omkhulu okusafanele wenziwe kule ndima yokulwisana nodlame olubhekiswe kwabesifazane.

Okuphawulekayo ngabalingiswa abavezwa yilaba babhali bobuciko kule misebenzi edingidwe lapha, yimizamo yabo yokwakhela nokuveza abalingiswa besifazane abanesibindi, abakwazi ukulwela inkululeko nokuhlonishwa kwamalungelo abo ngamandla abo onke njengabantu

besifazane. Bavezwa bebambe iqhaza emikhakheni eyehlukene yempilo. Kuyancomeka lokhu ngoba kubonakala sengathi laba babhali basabela kwikhwelo elishaywe ngababhali besifazane abafana noKhuzwayo kanye noLaurrette Ngcobo eminyakeni eminingi edlule lapho ecashunwa khona ngu-Peterson beno-Rutherford (1986: 151), bethi,

*there is a need for a changed portrayal and representation of black women in literature... women who are role models, liberating and self-defining instead of the shallow stereotyped representation in the past.*

(Kunesidingo sokuba kuguqulwe indlela abesifazane abamnyama abavezwa ngayo emibhalweni yobuciko... kuvezwe abesifazane okungabukelwa kubona, abesifazane abazaziyo, nabakwazi ukumela abayikho esikhundleni sokuvezwa kwabesifazane okulandela izinkolelo ezingaguquki ngabo, okungukuvezwa kwabesifazane ababuthaka obekuyinto evamile ngezikhathi ezedlule.)

### **Imibhalo yobuciko yababhali besifazane ababhala ngezilimi zomdabu**

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Ngemuva kokuphela kombuso wobandlululo kusukela ngowe-1994, izilimi zonke zaseNingizimu Afrika zenziwe zaba semthethweni, okube sekuzinikeza amandla alinganayo nalezi ebezithathwa njengezibalulekile kunezinye ezweni (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, Republic of South Africa 1996: 4). Lo mthethosisekelo uphinde wabhekela kakhulu amalungelo abesifazane empilo, ukuhlonipheka, kanye nokuhlonishwa kwempilo yabo yangasese. Isigatshana sesishiyashagalolunye neseshumi nanye somthethosisekelo silwisana nokucwaswa kwabesifazane ngenxa yobulili babo, isimo sabo somshado, ukuzikhethela kwabo ubulili, udlame lwasekhaya kanye nokubulawa kwabo. Izinguquko ezilandele ukuphatha kukahulumeni omusha zibe nemithelela emihle kwezemibhalo yobuciko ebhalwe ngezilimi zomdabu. Lokho kuholele ekutheni izinga lokubhalwa kwezincwadi ngezilimi zomdabu nalo linyuke. Bechaza ngalokhu oMathonsi benoMazibuko (2009: 306), babika ukuthi izinguquko ezidalwe wuhulumeni wentando yeningi zivulele amathuba amasha kubabhali ababhala ngezilimi zomdabu. Lokho kubenze bazizwa bekhululekile ukubhala ngezindikimba ezithinta izingxenye ezahlukene zempilo yomuntu omnyama kuleli lizwe. Kwehluke kakhulu lokhu kokwakwenzeka ngesikhathi sobandlululo lapho ababhali abamnyama babezithola kunezihloko ababevalwe imilomo ukukhuluma kumbe ukubhala ngazo ngenxa yemithetho yengcindezelo. Kanjalo nezinguquko ezize nomthethosisekelo omusha

wezwe, zidale ilukuluku lokuba kubhalwe ngezihloko ezintsha ezifana namalungelo abesifazane, awabantwana nezinye izimo zempilo.

Ngaphezu kwalokhu, uhulumeni ngaphansi koMnyango wezeMidlalo, uBuciko amaSiko, kanye Nezokungcebeleka usebenzisana nezinkampani zabashicileli bezincwadi abadumile abaphuma umkhankaso wokudayisa izincwadi zezilimi zomdabu. Ngonyaka we-2006, kusungulwe umbukiso omkhulukazi wezincwadi owaziwa ngokuthi yi-*South African Book Fair* (osubanjwa minyaka yonke) obukisa ngezincwadi ezibhalwe ngazo zonke izilimi zaseNingizimu Afrika ezisemthethweni. Kuphinde kwasungulwa imincintiswano eminingi yababhali abasafufusa eyayihambisana nemiklomelo emihle kakhulu. Noma singeyibale yonke lapha, miningi eminye imizamo eyenziwe nguhulumeni ukudala isasasa lokufunda nokubhala imisebenzi yobuciko ezindaweni zabantu abamnyama. Lesi senzo sibe nomthelela omuhle njengalokhu kuvele ababhali abaningi abasha. Kuphinde kwavulela nabantu besifazane amathuba okuba nabo bazibandakanye emkhakheni wokubhala. Kungukuthatha igxathu eliya phambili ukubona abesifazane bengena shi emkhakheni wokubhala ngezilimi zabo zomdabu ngoba kuyiqiniso elimsulwa ukuthi maningana amathuba okuba imibhalo yabo ifinyelele kubafundi abaningana kunaleyo ebhalwe ngesiNgisi. Imisebenzi yababhali besifazane abambalwa ababhale ngolimi lwesiZulu ehlaziywa kule ngxenye yesahluko yakha isinqanyana nje semibhalo yobuciko ebhalwe ngababhali besifazane kule minyakana embalwa eyedlule. Sizocubungula kafushane izindikimba ababhala ngazo nokuthi bazisebenzisa kanjani ukugudluzisa imingcele yobulili njengalokhu itholakala emiphakathini yabamnyama.

UNombeko Langa, ngumbhali wezindaba ezimfishane zesiZulu osemusha. Izindatshana zakhe zitholakala eqoqweni, "Uthando Nethemba" elihlanganiswe lahlelwa ngumbhali osemnkantsha ubomvu kwezemibhalo yobuciko uMnumzane u-M.J. Mngadi. Isihloko sendatshana yakhe ecutshungulwa kulo mbhalo sithi, "Masihlalisane". Le ndaba igxile kwabesifazane ababili; uSizakele noThandi abazithola beshayana ngamakhandla ngenxa yesenzo sokungathembeki kwesoka labo. Isenzo sikaBafana sokushadelwa ngasese wuSizakele oyintombi nto, efunde yagogoda kwezamabhezini ibe futhi izalwa emndenini ozimele kahle. Lesi senzo asinabo ubulungiswa kumasihlalisane wakhe weminyaka uThandi, osemzalele izingane ezintathu futhi engasebenzi njengoba kungekho msebenzi yena awufundela. Yena nabantwana bakhe bondliwa nguyise wezingane, uBafana. Kuningi okuvezwa nguLanga kule ndatshana yakhe okuthinta izinselele abantu besifazane ababhekana nazo ngezimo ezifana nomshado, ukuthola nokukhuliswa kwabantwana, kanye namathuba emisebenzi.

Umsebenzi kaLanga (2012: 42) uthinta indikimba esematheni kulezi zinsuku nokuyindikimba yesithembu. Isithembu-ke, besiyinto ethathwa kakhulu njengohlobo lomendo oveza

ukungalingani phakathi kwabantu besilisa nabesifazane kanye nokungalingani kwabesifazane bebodwa kuyona le ndoda abayiganile. Ngokocwaningo lukaZondi (2008: 23) lesi simo saholela ekutheni abantu besifazane bakwaZwelibomvu abangaphansi kwalolu hlobo lomshado basungule izindlela zokubhekana nezimo abaphila ngaphansi kwazo emendweni yabo ngokuhlabelela (Zondi 2008: 12). Uhlelo lukamabonakude oluqale ukubonakala ngonyaka we-2018 kwesinye seziteshi zikamabonakude oluthi “Uthando Nesithembu” lwenze udaba lwesithembu lwaba ngundab’uzekwayo. Okwenze lolu hlelo lwathatha amehlo abantu abanengi wukuthi belusakaza bukhoma impilo kaSomabhezini owaziwayo nose mncane obonakala ephila impilo enobukhazikhazi namakhosikazi akhe amane ayiziphalaphala. Kodwa okaLanga indatshana yakhe uyibhale lungakaqali ukusakazwa lolu hlelo.

UThandi uzama ukuziphindiselela ngobuhlungu abuziswe nguyise wezingane zakhe ngokuba anqume ukushada noThabani ongumngane omkhulu womnyeni wakhe. Nguye uThabani omlume indlebe ngokuhloswe ngumnyeni wakhe. Bonke bashada ngosuku olulodwa okususa isiphithiphithi esikhulu. USizakele udinwa agane unwabu ukuthi uBafana umfihlele ukuthi unengoduso yeminyaka ahlala nayo nasenezingane ezintathu nayo. NoBafana uyehluleka ukwamukela ukuthi unina wezingane zakhe uthathwa ngumngane wakhe amethembile nabemtshela zonke izimfihlo zakhe. USizakele akahambisani nhlobo nesixazululo sikaBafana sokubashada bobabili, uThandi abe ngunkosikazi omdala. Ngokuka-Bundlender (2005: 33), ukuba ngumakoti omdala emshadweni wesintu yisikhundla esibangwa ngabathintekayo. Nakuba uThandi eqale ngokulwa kubonakala sengathi wamukela isimo sakhe njengaleso esingenakuguquleka lapho ethi:

Impela ngingenze njani. Lo nguyise wabantabami. Ngiyamthanda futhi sesinezingane ezintathu ndawonye. Ziyamdinga uyise nami futhi ngokunjalo, sizoquba nje sibone ukuthi senzenjani (Langa 2012: 48).

Ngokuka-Nkealah (2009: 32), izimo nezimpendulo ezifana nalezi zijwayelekile emiphakathini eminingi yabamnyama lapho izinqumo ezidingida ukungena emshadweni zincike kakhulu emibonweni nasezinkolelweni zabisilisa ngomshado. U-Nkealah uyaqhubeka achaze ukuthi lolu hlangothi lokubuka oluvuna abesilisa luqhutshelwa phambili ubungqoshishilizi babesilisa kwabesifazane, ukubukeleka phansi, ukucwaseka, nokuhlala ungothobela isimo nangokuzehlisa wamukele izimo njengezingeke ziguqulwe empilweni. Ngakolunye uhlangothi, uSizakele, ubhoka akhahlele angafuni nokuzwa ngesimo esihlongozwa ‘ngumnyeni wabo’. Nakuba kunjalo laba besifazane, bacela umfundisi ukuba abanike ithuba lokuxoxisana ngalolu daba. Umehluko ovezwa

ngamasu laba besifazane ababili abawasebenzisayo ukubhekana nesimo abakusona ugcwalisa okushiwo nguKhuzwayo (1985: 123) lapho ethi khona ukungalingani kwamathuba emfundo anikezwa abesifazane eNingizimu Afrika, uma kuqhathaniswa nawabesilisa kuqhubekisela phambili ukungalingani ngokwamandla phakathi kwabesilisa nabesifazane.

ULanga uveza isimo esingajwayelekile neze ngokunika amandla abesifazane ukuba kube yibo abaqhamuka nesixazululo odabeni oluthinta umshado wesintu. Ukwenza ngalolu hlobo kukaLanga kwenza abukeke njengomunye wababhali besifazane abagqugquzela ukuba kube nengxoxo nokubonisana phakathi kwabesilisa nabesifazane ukuze kutholakale isisombululo nendlela eya phambili ngalezi zimo. Isenzo sakhe sihambisana nezimiso zeNjulalwazi ye-*Womanism* okuyinjulalwazi eyamaniswa nezindlela abesifazane base-Afrika abaxazulula ngazo futhi balwele ngazo amalungelo abo njengabantu besifazane. NoNnaemeka, njengalokhu ecashunwe ngu-Steenkamp (2019: 39), ugcizelela ukubaluleka kokubheka unzikandaweni ngokwebalazwe nangokwesikompilo lapho kukhulunywa ngobushoshozela bokulwela amalungelo abesifazane. Uyaqhubeka uNnaemeka anikeze incazelo yobushoshozela bamalungelo abesifazane akubiza ngomcabangonzulu obizwa ngokuthi yi*Feminizimu* yokubonisana (*Nego-Feminism*). Incazelo ayinikeza lo mcabangonzulu ibalula ukuthi abesifazane base-Afrika kumele baqhamuke namasu ehluke kulawo ayesetshenziswa ozakwabo basemazweni aseNtshonalanga lapho belwisana nobungqoshishilizi babesilisa. Uyavumelana nombono ka-Ogunyemi (2009: 21), wokuthi ubushoshozela bobufazane e-Afrika abunayo impi, kunalokho bucinga isixazululo esiletha ubumbano kuzo zonke izinhlaka ezithintekayo.

Isinqumo salaba besifazane ababili sokungena emshadweni wesithembu ngokubambisana besebenzisana ngokwamandla abanawo, siyisibonelo salolu hlobo lwesixazululo. Njengoba uSizakele efunde wagoda uzinikela ekusizeni umnakwabo ambiza ngokuthi ngu 'dadewabo' ngokumnika ithuba lokuba naye aziqhube ezifundweni zakhe ngenkathi yena esathola abantwana. Uzibophezela ekuthwaleni umthwalo wokukhulisa abantwana bakhe kanye nabakaThandi ngesikhathi uThandi esazikhulula emaketangeni obugqila bokungabi nemfundo. Uchaza athi uyakudinga ukuba afunde ukuze akwazi ukuzimela futhi akwazi nokuveza imibono yakhe lapho kuthathwa isinqumo ezithinta ikusasa labantwana bakhe ngaphandle kokushiyela umyeni yonke into. Nakuba laba besifazane bevuma ukuthi bafinyelele kulesi sinqumo ngoba benqotshwe wuthando abanalo ngomyeni wabo, lolu thando alumvali amehlo uSizakele ukuba angaboni ukuthi kunesimo sokungalingani, nokungabibikho kobulungiswa kule mpilo yabo entsha ndawonye, yingakho ethatha isinqumo sokulungisa izinto.

Kuyavela kule ndatshana ukuthi ezinye zezinto ezimdongile uBafana, imvelaphi kaSizakele.

Uvela emndenini ozimele kahle nonamabhizinisi ngakho-ke ukuba yingxenywe kwakhe kuleli khaya kuzosimamisa amabhizinisi kukhuphule nezinga lakhe lempilo. Ngokwakha umlingiswa onguThandi, uLanga (2012: 43), uvela njengomkhulumeli wabesifazane abangenazwi nabashiywe ngaphandle. Le ndatshana iveza ngokusobala ukuthi nakuba kuyaye kubonakale sengathi yizakhiwo nobunjalo besimo emphakathini okudala ukucindezeleka, izenzo zabelilisa nazo zineqhaza ezilibambayo ekucindezelweni kwabesifazane abaningi abamnyama. Isinqumo esithathwa ngabalingiswa sokuba basebenzisane siyimizamo yokukhulula uThandi emaketangeni obungqoshishilizi babesilisa kwabesifazane. Njengowesifazane ofunde wagogoda, uSizakele, usikhanyisela ukuthi imfundo ingesinye sezikhali esingasetshenziswa ukumelana nobhubhane lokungazi kanye nosikompilo lokuncika kwabesifazane kubantu besilisa. Ngaphezu kwalokhu isenzo sikaSizakele siveza ubuntu, obuchazwa nguNkealah (2009: 29), lapho ecaphuna khona uNnaemeka (2003: 360) ngokuthi *i-nego-feminism* okungubushoshovu bamalungelo abesifazane okuhambisana nokuxoxisana. Uchaza lobu bushoshovu ngokuthi buhlanganisa ubushoshovu bamalungelo abesifazane kanye nosikompilo lwabantu abamnyama. 'Amakhosikazi kaBafana' akubeka kucace ukuthi umshado uzoqhubeka kuphela uma uBafana emukela imibandela yokusebenzisana ebekwa yibona.

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Umbhali wesibili nongowokugcina ukuhlaziywa kubabhali besifazane bamanje ababhale ngolimi lwesiZulu nguLindiwe Lorentia Manana. UManana (2018: 25) ubhale umlando omfishane ngempilo yakhe otholakala eqoqweni lezindaba ezimfushane esihloko sithi 'Ngamehlo Osiba' (Manana 2018). Leli yiqoqo lezindaba ezimfushane ezibhalwe ngababhali abehlukene abangabafundi baseNyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natali abaphila nokukhubazeka. UManana (2018: 26) oqashwe ngokugcwele emsebenzini kodwa ebe eqhuba izifundo zakhe zangasese zeHonours, uthi akazalwanga engaboni, yisehlo nje ahlangabezane naso eseneminyaka engama-34 yobudala, nesamehlela eminyakeni ethi ayibe yishumi edlule. Kwakuyisikhathi lapho ayematasa elungiselela ukushada nensizwa yasebukhosini. Kwenzeka lokhu nje basemaphethelweni amalungiselelo omshado wabo. Lokhu kwaphoqa ukuthi umshado uqhutshelwe esibhedlela ngoba wayengasaboni nhlobo. Odokotela bamtshela ukuthi uvuvukalelwe yimithambo yekhanda okwaba yimbangela yokuba angaboni, bamchazela ukuthi empeleni wayesinde ngokulambisa njengalokhu kwakusale kancane ukuba imithambo iqhume imkhiphe umoya.

Kule ndatshana yakhe uManana (2018: 25) uthinta indikimba engagjwayelekile kwezemibhalo yobuciko njengoba ekhuluma ngokuphila nokukhubazeka ube ungowesifazane ophila ngayedwana. Abantu abaphila nokukhubazeka eNingizimu Afrika ngokwezibalo zonyaka we-2019 bangamaphesenti angaphansana kancane kwayishumi lesibalo sezakhamizi zakuleli (*Statistics*

*South Africa* 2019: 12). Ngokwalezi zibalo inani labesifazane abaphila nokukhubazeka lingaphezulu ngamaphesenti amabili nohhafu kwelabesilisa. Yinani eliphezulu kakhulu leli, kanti futhi imibiko yocwaningo iqagula ukuthi ezweni elisathuthuka njengeNingizimu Afrika, elibhekene nezinsesele zamathuba emisebenzi nawezezimali angalingani, kuba umqansa kubantu abanengi abaphila nokukhubazeka ukuzuza noma ukuqedela imfundo yabo (Moodley, Graham noSelipsky 2012). UManana (2018: 28) ukhombisa amandla nesibindi somuntu wesifazane okubhukula abhekane nezinsesele eziphambi kwakhe noma ngabe zingakanani. Emva kancane kwalesi siwombe, ushiywa ngumyeni wakhe ngenxa 'yokungabi nawo amandla okumelana nezinsesele zokuba nonkosikazi ongaboni emehlweni, futhi okulindeleke ukuba afeze ngendlela imidanti yokuba ngunkosikazi womholi wesizwe' ngokusho kukaManana. Kungashiwo ukuthi yizo izintaba ezibelethwe ngabantu besifazane lezi njengokusho kuka-Ogundipe-Leslie kuDavies noGraves (1986: 21). Akungabazeki ukuthi ukuba bekungumyeni kaManana owehlelwa yisigameko sokulahlekelwa ukusebenza kwamehlo akhe, bekuzolindeleka ukuba ashiye phansi ngisho umsebenzi azomnakekela njengokusebenza kwemithetho ehlukenisa imisebenzi ngokobulili emiphakathini emnyama. Kunalokho uManana (2018: 16) uveza isidingo sokuba abesifazane, noma ngabe engasekho umuntu wesilisa okusizayo eduzane, babe nempokophelo namandla okumelana nobunzima. Uyabhukula afunde esikoleni sabantu abangaboni nhlobo. Iqhaza lemfundo ekusimamiseni umuntu wesifazane liyagqama futhi kule ndatshana ngoba uManana (2018: 16), lapho esefunde ukubhala nokufunda nge-*Braille* ugxila ekufundeni ukusebenzisa ikhompyutha nokubamba izingcingo okuhlobene nobuxhakaxhaka bezinto abezisebenzisa emsebenzini wakhe odlule engakalahlekelwa inzwa yokubona.

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## **Isiphetho**

Abahlaziyi bosikompilo abadumile kule minyaka eyikhulu edlule u-Fanon (1967: 172), kanye no-Cabral (1993:55), baphawula ukuthi incazelo yosikompilo egxile esimeni sezenhlalakahle kanye nasemlandweni wezomnotho, kodwa ishiya ngaphandle ingxenye yokuziphatha kanye nokulandelwa kwemikhuba ethile ayiphelele. U-Fanon (1967: 53) uyachaza ukuthi kulindelekile ukuba kube nendida emibhalweni yobuciko lapho ababhali bevama khona ukuveza uhlobo oluthile losikompilo, kodwa lokhu kuba yinkinga ngoba le ngxenye yencazelo yosikompilo ethinta 'ukuzilawula' ingami ndawonye kodwa inesimo sokuguquguka njalo'. Uqhubeka achaze ukuthi lokhu kuguquguka kudalwa yimithelela yezimo eziningi eziyinxenye yempilo. U-Fanon (1968: 40), uveza ukuthi umzabalazo omkhulu yilowo ongumphumela wobukoloni obudale

ukungalingani phakathi kwabamnyama nabamhlophe. Uchaza athi ukuba ngokhululekile kuwukulwela izinguquko empilweni futhi ngenye yemizabalazo okumele ilandelwe. Ababhali besifazane okukhulunywe ngabo kulesi sahluko babonakala besemkhankasweni wokwenza njalo. Laba babhali baziveza ngokucacile izingqinamba ababhekene nazo.

Isahluko sidingida kabanzi ngababhali besifazane abangama-Afrika ababhala ngezimo abesifazane abamnyama abaphila ngaphansi kwazo, izingqinamba nezinsalelo ababhekene nazo ngenxa yokungalingani ngamandla ngokobulili. Izingqinamba ezivezwa yilaba babhali zibandakanya ukuncishwa kwamathuba okuzithuthukisa nawemisebenzi, ukungalingani kwezezimali nezomnotho nokunye ukucwaseka okunhlobonhlobo. Bayakuveza emisebenzini yabo yobuciko ukuthi umsuka wezingqinamba eziningi ukuba khona kwenqubo nezinkolelo ezithinta ukusingathwa kwamalungelo abesifazane emindenini nasezinhlakeni ezithile zemiphakathi. Le nqubo inikezela wonke amandla kwabesilisa ukuthi kube yibo bodwa abaqhwakela ezihlalweni zokuphatha emiphakathini, emindenini, emisebenzini, kwezenkolo nakwezombusazwe. Ziningi izindikimba ezithintwa yilaba babhali. Isibonelo u-Dangarembga (1988: 18), oveza ngokusobala ukuthi njengabesilisa abamnyama ababhekene nomshikashika wokulwisana nemixhantela kanye nemithelela yempilo yobukoloni, kubukeka abesifazane bebhekene nengwadla yokulwa zozimbili lezi zimpi uma kubandakanywa neyokucindezeleka ngenxa yobulili babo. Ngakolunye uhlangothi, ababhali abasebasha njengo-Adichi, babonakala beziqhelelanisa nezinkambiso ezingakhi nezibeka abantu besifazane njengababuthakathaka abadinga ukuqeqeshwa nokulawulwa kusetshenziswa izinhlaka ezifana nenkolo. Kanti uMakholwa (2016: 3), yena ubalula ukuba abesifazane babhukule balwe nezithiyo ababhekene nazo njengengcinezelo iningi labo elibhekene nayo ngenxa yemithelela yezinkundla zomphakathi. Ubhalile futhi nangendikimba ethinta kakhulu abantu besifazane abaningi, okuwukuhlukunyezwa kwabo ngabesilisa abanobudlelwano bezothando nabo.

Ukulwela ubulungiswa kwezamalungelo abesifazane ikakhulukazi ngaphansi kwesimo somshado, ukwesekana kanye nokukhuthazana, ngezinye zezindikimba eziseqhulwini kwezidingidwa ngababhali besifazane ababhala ngolimi lwabo lomdabu. Umbhalo kaLanga (2012: 42), uyisibonelo salokhu. Kanjalo noManana (2018: 16) uyakugcizelela ukuthi abesifazane balwisane nezithiyo ezinhlobonhlobo abahlangabezana nazo ezifana nokukhubazeka. Nakuba kukhuthaza ukubona ababhali besifazane bamanje bezibophezela ukubhala bakhulumisane ngqo nezinkinga ezibhekene nabesifazane abangama-Afrika, kuyakhanya nokho ukuthi kusekuningi okufanele kwenziwe ngababhali besifazane bale minyaka kule ndima njengoba izimo nezinsalelo zempilo ziya ngokushintshashintsha.



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## Chapter 6

### Fighting Women's Cultural Subjugation Using Metaphors, Euphemism and Sarcasm in Izingane zoMa Musical Renditions

*Sipho A. Ntombela and Evangeline B. Zungu*

#### Introduction

African popular music, in the form of *maskandi*, is steadily gaining popularity in academic spaces and has been at the centre of African music scholarship. *Maskandi* research has focused on the structural features of its guitar styles (Rycroft 1980; Davies 1992, 1994; Olsen 2009, 2014; Titus 2013), the context and social commentary of its lyrics (Olsen 2009, 2001, 2014) and the artistic techniques used by *maskandis* (Ntombela 2011, 2016). This music genre is also rich in figures of speech, which are part of the African cultural wealth. For example, the *maskandi* group called Izingane zoMa uses metaphors, euphemisms and sarcasm for humour, to voice pent-up emotions and to point out stereotypes that are embraced by the traditional Zulu society. In this context, three figures of speech represent the issues rural people—couples, in particular—face in their daily lives. A discourse analysis approach and an appraisal framework are used to analyse the data collected. The authors aim to extrapolate paradigms of indigenous epistemologies from the use of metaphors, euphemisms and sarcasm while focusing on the way Izingane zoMa use figurative language to highlight stereotypes in traditional society. For analysis, Izingane zoMa songs were chosen to represent how *maskandi* groups use metaphors, euphemisms and sarcasm to reveal some neutral words used by traditional men and women as substitutes for strong sexual words. Pooley (2008: 1) asserts that *maskandi* composers 'articulate shared experiences of poverty, inequality, migrancy and dispossession in South Africa and often use martial, caustic imagery to evince their social critique'.

The aim of this chapter is to highlight how Izingane zoMa uses metaphors and sarcasm to address topics that are regarded as taboo in Zulu culture. An attempt will be made to answer the following

questions: What social behaviour patterns are evident in this musical genre? How does the use of metaphors and sarcasm in the lyrics illuminate the family dynamics in polygynous relationships? To what extent does Izingane zoMa reflect the suffering and oppression of women in rural areas?

## Background and contextualisation

South Africa has seen many shifts in social and political dynamics since the advent of democracy in 1994. This stimulated the evolution of *maskandi* music to address previously taboo issues. As Bhabha (1994: 1) notes, 'we find ourselves in a moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion'. *Maskandi* music can be perceived as a conduit for the political, social and psychological feelings of traditional Zulu societies. The songs composed by *maskandi* composers reflect what is happening in their society. They become representatives of and spokespersons for their communities. Olsen (2000: 10) states: 'Maskanda speaks of what it means to be Zulu; it gives shape and form to Zulu identity, not only as a reflection of the reality of lived experience but also as the powerful expression of hopes and aspirations which during the moment of performance become a reality.'

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The group Izingane zoMa infiltrated a genre that was previously reserved for men. Its leading members are women who grew up in traditional societies in deep rural Zululand, where women are socialised to understand gender roles and their place in society. Men go to work in the cities and wives remain behind to take care of the family and plough the fields. The group uses this platform to vent their pent-up feelings about the injustices of patriarchy and the oppression of women by social rules. Some of their songs reflect how women are suffering because their unemployed husbands are at home but refuse to help with household chores simply because they are men. Olsen (2000: 1) asserts that:

Contemporary maskanda is a dynamic body of Zulu popular music which takes shape in a number of performance styles. It is the transformation of a musical style which was developed at the turn of the 20th century by migrant workers in response to the changing dynamics of Zulu society ... In the broadest sense it is most commonly understood as Zulu guitar music.

In any traditional society, music becomes a strategy for communication about topics that cannot be

openly discussed. The impact of rigid cultures and patriarchy is always at the centre of traditional music. Francis (2008: 4) states:

Music is a very powerful medium [...] It is powerful at the level of the social group because it facilitates communication which goes beyond words, enables meanings to be shared and promotes the development and maintenance of individual, group, cultural and national identities. It is powerful at the individual level because it can induce multiple physiological, movement, mood, emotional, cognitive and behavioural responses.

Music is a powerful force that cuts across cultures and can be used by people to share their feelings. According to Njooa (2005: 7),

music plays a major role in defining national solidarity; it informs our sense of 'place' whether that refers to the physical setting of social activity as situated geographically or a philosophical/stylistic space [...] Music is socially meaningful, not entirely but largely because it provides means by which people recognise identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them.

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Societies need to have an outlet for their feelings concerning particular issues and topics. It provides solidarity to people who support a common cause. This chapter is important as the focus is on a *maskandi* group whose lead singers are women. In traditional societies, women are rarely given a platform to express their opinions, even on matters that concern them. They are often given instructions on how they should behave and are socialised into submission from a young age as they are taught that a woman's task is to rear children and take care of her husband and family. They are also expected to accept promiscuity in men, which is disguised in their culture as polygamy. The same tolerance is not extended to women, and any woman who engages in an extra-marital affair is ostracised and labelled a village slut. Against this background, Izingane zoMa composes songs that are in conflict with the instructions given to rural women. Their lyrics highlight the suffering of rural women in polygynous marriages when men take many wives even though they cannot provide for them; how men favour some wives above others; the abuse of alcohol by both men and women; and male promiscuity.

In Black African culture, sex and sexual relationships are private matters; therefore, Black African men and women, young and old, find it difficult to discuss sexual matters in public. As a result,

they have to find neutral words for such discussions, but a lack of suitable substitutes forces them to be creative and coin new words. It is thus unsurprising that married couples use such neutral words when they speak in front of their children, parents, in-laws and members of the public. This pressure comes from the fact that most rural people are traditionalists who believe that talking about sex in public is a sign of disrespect, unlike libertarians who believe that sex is just another activity that can be freely discussed (Olen and Barry 1992). Most Black traditionalists ensure that community members conform to the norms and standards set by their forefathers and passed from one generation to the next. Even nomadic people are scolded and embarrassed if they do not refer to romantic love and sex acceptably.

Couples feel uncomfortable discussing sexual matters in public. They discuss these matters either in the privacy of their bedrooms or over the phone. Community members include musicians and some couples who are fully aware of what is happening in their communities. For example, Zulu *maskandis* sing about what they see happening in their communities and teach and warn their audiences about certain things. The *maskandi* group Izingane zoMa shows a particular interest in how couples discuss sex and sexual relationships. In this chapter, the authors look at how this group uses isiZulu metaphors, euphemisms and sarcasm in their songs to disclose how some Zulu couples discuss sexual matters and draw inferences about how this indigenous musical genre can be used as a tool to teach the general public about the neutral words traditional communities use to avoid using unacceptable words when referring to sexual matters. Among the few female Zulu scholars who have contributed to the promotion of gender equality and efforts to claim power are Magwaza (1993, 1999), Zondi (2008) and Zungu (2014). These authors saw a gap in research on how female *maskandi* groups use their voices to speak on behalf of the voiceless to avoid further oppression and subjugation and have positioned themselves as pioneers taking a stand against patriarchy and its abuse and subjugation of women.

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## Theoretical framework

In this chapter, the theoretical insights of Jousse (1997) are employed to analyse the chosen songs. This theory describes the features that preserve oral cultures and traditions. The article focuses on formalism, which, according to Jousse, explains the way in which humans express themselves in oral cultures. In applying this theory, the authors intend to demonstrate how Izingane zoMa uses metaphors and sarcasm to express their feelings about the subjugation of women in rural areas where polygynous relationships are common.



The songs analysed in this chapter reflect the use of metaphors, euphemisms and sarcasm and were taken from different Izingane zoMa albums.

## Metaphors, euphemisms and sarcasm used in different songs

Mbaegbu (2015: 177) states: 'Music is the very fabric of African society and is deeply entrenched in culture, it is one of the cultural characteristics that make the African who he is, as a distinct cultural being in the world, for it binds Africans together and gives them common characteristics.'

Commenting on oral strategies, Baker (cited in Prouty 2006: 328) says the following: 'Oral tradition usually suggests something a little more language-oriented. Certainly, the oral tradition says you learn by imitation and all that too, but in particular inference, people pass the information from person to person.'

The collected data show that songs in which the woman or the man complains about issues in their relationship are very common. In such songs, women use different approaches when complaining about their husbands. First, they direct their anger at the co-wives—for example, in the song '*Sengathi Ungazala Intwala*', a woman accuses her co-wife by saying, *Njengoba indoda ngingasayazi isihlala kwakho!* (I do not know our husband because you keep him in your house). The accuser uses an exclamatory sentence to voice her anger, which is misplaced as it should be directed at the husband, who spends too much time with the co-wife. Although the first woman knows that her husband can decide which wife he will visit and when, it is easier to confront the co-wife. However, she should be commended as, though frustrated, she conforms to the rules by avoiding strong words. She uses the euphemism *ngingasayazi* to say that she no longer engages sexually with their husband because the other woman selfishly keeps him in her house for too long. Remarkably, she does all this with ease, which shows that she has enough substitute words in her vocabulary to express her anger. Another example is found in the song '*Umlomo*', in which the woman says, *Yathi mayihamba yahambela ngakwami indoda* (When [our] husband left for [work] he was at my house), and *Yothi mayibuya yobuyela* (When he comes back, he will come straight to my house). In this context, the woman is deliberately being spiteful to hurt her co-wife. She not only boasts about her ability to keep the man in her house but also tells her co-wife how she does it successfully. She says, *Umlomo wami uyashisa* (My mouth is hot), meaning 'My vagina is hotter than yours', which is an unbearable insult. In the song '*Iphela*', a woman complains indirectly to her co-wife. She starts by referring to a cockroach, *Uma liza ngasekudleni kwami iphela ngilenze njani?* (What must I do when the cockroach comes to my food?) The other women respond by

saying *Lishaye ngempama* (Slap it). Next, she asks, *Uma ngabe lingavumi?* (When it refuses?) and the other women reply, *Lipitshize ngonyawo* (Step on it). In the end, it becomes clear that the word *lphela* is used to refer to the co-wife. In another similar song, '*Impukane*', a woman asks, *Uma iza ngasehlweni lami impukane ngiyiyeke na?* (Should I leave a fly when it flies straight to my eye?) and the other women answer, *Ishaye* (Hit it). She then asks, *Ngiyishaye kanjani?* (How should I hit it?) and the reply is, *Ipicize obondeni* (Squash it against the wall). At first, it seems as if she is referring to a fly, but then it becomes clear that she is using the word *impukane* to refer to her co-wife. The last example is from the song '*Ungqesta*', in which a woman sarcastically tells her co-wife, *Angithi phela wena uwungqesta impukane yasebhoshi* (You are a streetwise toilet fly). *Ikwale kanjani indoda?* (How did the husband dump you?) The scenarios above reflect the derogatory remarks between co-wives in real life.

Secondly, they discuss their complaints with their friends and other women in the community. For instance, in the song '*Wagqoza Kabi*', a woman jokingly remarks to another woman, *Nina anazi ukuthi ngayigcina nini indoda inqunu!* (You do not know the last time I saw a naked man!) The exclamation mark indicates that the woman jokes about her experience to conceal her pain. It is said that by sharing one's problems, they become easier to bear. Similarly, when one jokes about an embarrassing situation, it indirectly indicates to others that the situation has been accepted. This woman should be commended for brushing aside her pain and conforming to tradition. The pain she feels does not stop her from using a euphemism: *ngayigcina nini indoda*, whereby she is saying, 'It has been a very long time since I last had sex.' Another example is the song '*Indlu*', in which a woman shares her painful experience with other women. She says, *Sengiye ngithi uma ngihlala ngimise amadolo, ngithi mhlawumbe indoda izokhumbula endlini yayo*, which translates to 'When I am with my husband, I spread my legs hoping that maybe he will miss his house'. In this context, the woman expresses her longing for her husband who seems to have lost interest in her. She tries to seduce her husband by recklessly and deliberately spreading her legs while she sits, but he does not respond. In this context, the word *indlu* (hut or house) refers to her vagina. She may have already tried other strategies to gain his attention without success. Now, she resorts to this approach, which is said to be very tempting to men. In the same song, the woman addresses her husband and says, *Kuyaye kuthi ngoba [umuntu] uyadakwa indoda ingabe izeza endlini* (So if you are a drunkard, the man does not come into the house), meaning 'So if you are a drunkard, the man does not have sex with you'. Although it is not for us to pass judgement on whether the way the man deals with the situation is correct, it is clear that the woman is always drunk. The man could either be unhappy with her conduct or be suffering from erectile dysfunction. Remarkably, the woman

indirectly admits that she is an alcoholic. She says, *Ngena endlini uhlukane nokudakwa* (Get into the house and forget about drunkenness). Including a locative *endlini* (in the vagina) clearly shows what the woman means.

Thirdly, women sometimes direct their complaints directly to their husbands. A good example is the song '*Sengikukhumbule*', in which a woman says to her husband, *Kudala wahamba layikhaya, buya phela uzongibona!* (It has been a long time since you left.) While complaining, the woman also begs her husband to visit her. However, the loneliness this woman experiences is not strong enough to allow her to violate the norm of using euphemisms instead of strong words. What she really means is *buya phela uzongibona* (please come back home so we can engage in sex). When her husband responds to her request, he says, *Thula ngizokuphathela izinto ezimnandi*, which literally means 'Do not cry (complain), I will bring you appetising things', but which in fact means: 'I will bring you my body'. Another example is found in the song '*Baba kaXolane*', in which the woman complains to her husband that he has taken too long to return home. She refers to other women in her neighbourhood who are happier in their marriages because they enjoy regular sex with unemployed husbands and are always with them. She asks, *Kuyoba nini kodwa siqhoshelwa abafazi bomahlalela?* (For how long will unemployed men's wives be bragging [about their marital happiness]?) However, this is a rhetorical question and the man knows she does not expect an answer. The only thing he expects is to come home and give her the attention she desires. While some women complain about estrangement from their husbands, others complain about husbands who have become passive in the bedroom. For example, in the song '*I-TV yasekamelweni*', a woman sarcastically teases her husband by saying, *Waguga madala usushelela ukubuka nje* (You impotent old man, you now date women just to look at them). Undoubtedly, the man understands that he is being deliberately compared to an old man even though he is still young and energetic. The woman further says: *Ayikho into ebuhlungu njengokuthi umuntu azokwenza i-TV yasekamelweni* (There is nothing as painful as when your partner watches you like a TV in the bedroom), meaning that nothing is more painful than when your partner neglects you by neither kissing nor having sex with you. In this context, the woman uses sarcasm to help stimulate her husband to perform one of his important duties, which he has been neglecting. The man is left with no choice and must comply with his wife's wishes to prevent her from further irritating him with sarcasm. The song '*Isidina sikaMahlalela*' presents the opposite—women who boast about always being in the company of their husbands. One woman says, *Sengikhathele ukugqozwa njalo ubusuku bonke ngilambile* (I am tired of always having sex while hungry). The woman is complaining that although she enjoys regular sex, her husband is unemployed and it is unlikely he will ever look for a job.

Another unemployment scenario is revealed in the song '*Ulalephi?*', in which a woman asks her husband where he slept. He replies, *Musa ukubheda, angishongo ukuthi uzoba yiphoyisa lami layikhaya* (Don't talk nonsense, I didn't bring you here [to my home] to police me), which illustrates how stereotypical some men in traditional societies can be. This man talks and does as he pleases without caring about the pain his wife experiences due to his behaviour. Sometimes, when couples quarrel, men resort to using physical power to punish their partners. For example, the song '*Umfaz' Ushaywa Ngani?*' tells of a disagreement between a husband and his wife, who asks, *Awazi yini ukuthi umfazi ushaywa ngani?* (Don't you know a suitable object to chastise a woman with?) meaning, 'Don't you know that a woman is punished with a penis rather than a knobkerrie?' Here, the woman avoids two things: the use of the strong word penis and any other neutral word or expression she might use in this situation. Instead, she uses a submerged metaphor to imply that the right way to discipline a woman is with a penis.

Men who suffer from chronic diseases such as hypertension and diabetes often experience erectile dysfunction. This creates problems in the bedroom. The affected men consult traditional healers and sometimes doctors working at men's clinics. While doctors rely on Western medicine, traditional healers use herbs such as *Ndwendweni* or *Mabelejongosi* (*Eulophia arenaria*) and *Mbadlanga* or *Bangalala* (*Corchorus asplenifolius*) to treat this condition (Ntombela 2019). Although many men may claim to be skilled at concealing the fact that they have such a problem, their partners quickly notice it. When a man is experiencing problems of this nature, a concerned partner does something to resolve the problem. For example, in the song '*Adam no-Eva*', a woman invites her husband to fulfil his role by showing him a picture of a nude woman and a man. Her husband responds by reminding his wife that she knows *Isibhamu sikaJesus asisasebenzi* (Jesus' gun is dysfunctional), meaning that he suffers from erectile dysfunction. In this case, both parties are aware of the problem, which is why the woman unsuccessfully tries to ignite her husband's passion by using erotic pictures to encourage him to perform his duties. She might have tried other means before and be attempting a new strategy to solve the problem. Another possibility is that she might have successfully used this method previously when the situation was less serious. There may be other remedies that have been tested but failed. In this song, the euphemism of Jesus' gun refers to the penis.

Now, we will discuss men's complaints about their wives. First, we look at the case of a man who complains to his wife, who is about to take a trip, about her co-wife. In the song '*Izingubo ziyabanda*', the man asks, *Ngeke impela ngize ngiqambe amanga. Ngizosale ngothani?* (Seriously, I will not lie to you. What will keep me warm?) by which he means to ask with whom he should have

sex during her absence. The woman sarcastically replies, *Engani ukhona umnakwethu uzosala naye* (But you have my co-wife who will stay with you), reminding him that her co-wife is there to be her substitute. The man responds abruptly, *Engani ngakutshela ngathi izingubo zakwakhe ziyabanda* (But I told you that her blankets are cold), which means that the co-wife does not stimulate him as she does. Two things are revealed here: This man is untrustworthy as he talks ill of his second wife when he tells his other wife about the former's inability to stimulate him. The idea is that some men cannot bear to be separated from their partners.

Second, men direct their complaints to their wives. For instance, in the song '*Sehlukene ngezingubo*', a man complains that he and his wife share a bed but have separate blankets. Although it is unclear whether the man complained about this to his wife, he is not happy and says, *Umkami angisamazi, sekuze kwaphela izinyanga zambili*, meaning that it has been a long time since he and his wife last had sex. One may wonder why the man uses euphemism when the couple is not in public. It is possible that he habitually conforms to cultural norms, whether publicly or privately. The man is suspicious of his wife's activities and concludes that she is promiscuous, even though he has no proof. Therefore, he asks, *Bhodwe lami kazi sewuphekela bani?* (My pot, who are you cooking for?), asking his wife with whom she is having sex. In this context, the pot refers to his wife's vagina. He further asks, *Bheseni wami kazi sewuphakela bani?* (Who would you feed my basin to?). No reason is given for why this is happening or how long it has been happening. The second example is seen in the song '*Ungangithinti singavumelananga*', in which a woman says *Ngicela ukuthi ungangithinti namhlanje ngikhathele kabi* (Please do not touch me today, I am too tired), but means 'Please let us not have sex today, I am too tired'. Although the reason she gives is credible, her husband has several questions, such as: Why is she stopping me today even though it is not the first time she has been to work? Did she work too hard? Did she start elsewhere? Is she promiscuous? If so, who is the man and how long have they been involved?

## Discussion

This chapter extrapolates and engages with paradigms of indigenous epistemologies from the use of metaphors, euphemisms and sarcasm while focusing on how Izingane zoMa uses figurative language to highlight stereotypes in traditional Zulu society. The purpose is to draw inferences about how this indigenous musical genre can be used as a tool to teach the general public about neutral words used by isiZulu speakers in traditional societies to conceal sexual words considered to be crude. Two major findings were arrived at: In this context, isiZulu speakers traditionally use

metaphors and sarcasm more often than euphemisms. For example, in the song '*Umfaz' Ushaywa Ngani*', a woman uses a submerged metaphor to imply that the right object with which to discipline a woman is a penis. Although she could have used a neutral word instead of a strong one, she decided simply to imply what she meant. In the song '*Iphela*', the woman pretends to be speaking about a cockroach, but it later becomes clear that she is making a sarcastic reference to her co-wife, whom she thinks should be killed. Another example is found in the song '*Impukane*', in which a woman sarcastically refers to her co-wife as a housefly, which she thinks should be squashed against the wall.

It was further revealed that traditional Zulu society avoids using words that refer to sexual relationships and sex organs by neutralising them. For instance, a penis becomes *isibhamu sikaJesus* (Jesus' gun) because both contain and release material that is released at high speed, meaning that when a man ejaculates, sperm is released from the penis at a very high speed, just as bullets are emitted when a gun is fired. This comparison is relevant to this situation and therefore, the use of the metaphor is effective. However, its weakness is that it is unclear why the penis should be named 'Jesus' gun'.

### *Indlu*

*Kuyaye kuthi ngob' uyadakwa indod' ingab' isez' endlini* So, if you drink, the man doesn't come into the house

*Ngen' endlini uhlukane nokudakwa* Come into the house and don't talk about drinking

*Sengiye ngithi uma ngihlala ngimis' amadolo* When I see him, I spread my legs

*Ngith mhlawumb' indoda izokhumbula endlini yayo* Thinking that maybe he will miss his house

The group plays on the word *indlu* (room), which refers to the vagina. In this song, the complaint is about the lack of intimacy and sex in the marriage because the husband is unhappy with his wife's alcoholism. *Ukukhumbul' endlini yayo* implies that the husband might show more interest if he sees her in a compromising sitting position.

### *iTV yasekamelweni*

*Waguga madala usushelel' ukubuka nje*

You are an impotent old man, you date women just to look at them

*Ayikh' int' ebuhlungu njengokuth' umuntu azokwenz' iTV yasekamelweni*

Nothing is more painful than a person treating you like a TV in a bedroom

Here, attention is drawn to the fact that although men like to marry younger women, older men fail to perform in the bedroom. However, they persist with marriages of this kind. It must be noted that in traditional societies, divorce is only embraced as a last resort when serious marital problems occur. Some wives, therefore, resort to drinking to numb the frustration caused by sexual deprivation. Drinking alcohol is a privilege reserved for men, and women who drink are considered to be promiscuous and unfit as wives.

### *Baba kaXolane*

*Kuyoba nini kodwa?*

How long will it be?

*Siqhoshelw' abafazi noMahlalela*

Unemployed men's wives are bragging

*Amadod' ab' ayalima nenyama bayayithola*

That their men are ploughing the field and they get the meat

Many husbands move from the rural areas to look for better jobs and better opportunities in cities like Durban and Johannesburg, leaving their wives at home to fend for themselves. Due to the high unemployment rate in South Africa, well-paying jobs are not easy to find close to home. Wives who are left behind to look after the household, rear the children and plough the fields feel that they have been given a raw deal. In the above lyrics, the complaint is triggered by the fact that the husband is not working. The word '*inyama*' (meat) refers to the penis. The wife is worried about her husband being away, that she is sexually deprived, and that she is receiving no money from him.

### *Izingubo ziyabanda*

*Ngeke impela ngize ngiqamb' amanga*

Seriously, I will not lie to you

*Ngizosale ngothani?*

What will keep me warm?

*Engani ukhon' umnakwethu uzosala naye?*

But you have my co-wife, won't you stay with her?

*Engani ngakutshela ngathi izingubo zakwakhe ziyabanda*

But I told you that her blankets are cold

*Ngob'uth' awaz' uzobuya nini*

Because I do not know when you are coming back

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This song shows that polygynists sometimes have favourites (*intandokazi*) and spend more time with their preferred wives. The less-favoured wives rarely get to spend time with their husbands, who are always ready with an excuse to avoid going to their houses. The metaphor *izingubo zakwakhe ziyabanda* indicates that the husband gets no sexual satisfaction in the other wife's bed.

### *Umlomo*

*Yath' mayihamba yahambela ngakwam' indoda*

When my husband left, he was at my house

*Yoth' mayibuya yobuyela ngakwami*

When he comes back, he will come back to my house

*Umlomo wam uyashisa*

My mouth is hot

Sharing a husband creates unhealthy competition between co-wives. The word *umlomo* (mouth) is used to refer to the vagina. She believes the husband stays with her because she is good in bed. She feels like bragging to her co-wives that their husband is spending all his time with her.



## *Ungqesta*

*Angithi phela wena uwungqesta impukane yasebhoshi* You are a streetwise toilet fly

*Ihlala noma lumanz' udaka ayibhajwa* It stays there even if there is mud, it doesn't get stuck

*Ikwale kanjani indoda* How did the husband dump you?

The competition for the husband's attention causes co-wives to be sarcastic about each other's pain and suffering. Calling the other wife *impukane yasebhoshi* (a toilet fly) means that she is a know-it-all and shows that the co-wives are happy that she is also ill-treated.

What the *maskandi* singers convey to the public through their songs is authentic, which shows that they are the true, watchful eyes of traditional Zulu society. They effectively use metaphors, euphemisms and sarcasm, which shows that they understand why strong words are avoided in the Zulu context. Relevant figures of speech are used to convey information to the listeners through their songs, which is an advantage when performing for people from a particular culture—in this case, Zulu culture. Using neutral words eases the tension when children, parents, in-laws and random members of the public listen to the music. Moreover, the group adds some words to the public's vocabulary, which guarantees that the accepted vocabulary for referring to sexual relationships and sex organs reaches many people, young and old. This preserves the richness of Zulu culture for future generations as the *maskandi* music genre is played mostly by Nguni radio stations, which have many listeners. For example, uKhozi FM has more than 7 million listeners, Umhlobo Wenene FM has more than 5 million, Ikwakwezi FM has 1.7 million and Ligwalagwala FM has 1.5 million. This music is also available on YouTube and on CDs and DVDs for interested listeners from other cultures.

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## Findings

The *maskandi* group discussed in this chapter uses metaphors and sarcasm to create awareness of gender issues and power dynamics in rural areas. Sex is a taboo topic not easily discussed, especially by women who have been socialised into accepting the dictates of patriarchy without question. The repeated use of the word *ibhodwe* (port) and *ubheseni* (bowl) suggests that it is only men who

benefit from sexual encounters because these utensils are used as containers for food but never get to 'eat the food'. This analogy is supported by the lyrics in which a wife complains that her conjugal rights are infringed upon when the husband spends more time with another wife and neglects the first wife's sexual needs.

The words *umlomo* (mouth) and *indlu* (house) are used interchangeably by the female vocalists to refer to the vagina and indicate that sexual encounters are more about building homes, the lack of which is contrary to the isiZulu saying *indlu engahlali muntu idliwa wumuhlwa* (an uninhabited house gets eaten by termites), which, in this context, may be understood as a warning to husbands about the dangers of spousal neglect as it may lead to infidelity.

These female vocalists play an important role in making women's voices heard. Their complaints about sexual deprivation, neglect and rejection by their husbands are brought to the fore. The ill-treatment of one wife due to a preference for another is always a problem in polygynous families.

## Conclusion

This chapter revealed that traditional Zulu society uses metaphors and sarcasm more often than euphemisms. It further revealed that traditional Zulu society neutralises strong words for male and female sex organs as follows: (i) a penis is called *isibhamu sikaJesus* (Jesus' gun); (ii) a vagina is called *ibhodwe* (pot), *ubheseni* (basin), *indlu* (house) and *umlomo* (mouth). This study followed a different route than that of Ntombela (2016), who found that *maskandi* music can be used for literacy instruction for early readers at schools. It also showed that *maskandi* music can be used as a tool to teach the general public, young and old, about accepted words when referring to sexual relationships and sex organs, which are sensitive matters in traditionalist Zulu society. There is, however, a need for further studies on how this indigenous music genre enhances the richness of Zulu culture.

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Part II:  
Theorising from the Aesthetic  
Critique, Decolonising Possibilities  
and Creating New Worlds

## Chapter 7

### *Thokoza Ngwenyama!*—Unsettling Gendered African Language(s) Using *Umsamo*

*Siseko H. Kumalo and Nompumelelo Zondi*

#### Introduction

Starting from a critique of Western conceptions of gendered identities, we unearth the role of European colonialism as instantiating mis/recognition(s) of non-binary gender paradigms through language. This suggests that our conception of language appreciates how power and social organisation revolve around this institution.<sup>6</sup> Our analysis, while cognisant of the Anglicisation of African languages through orthography,<sup>7</sup> is not confined to orthography.<sup>8</sup> By this, we mean that we

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6 Framing language as a social institution comes from an observation of how language acts as a carrier of meaning—not only through intellection and discourse but also in institutions. Furthermore, '[insofar] as the capacity for acting and speaking—and speaking is but another mode of acting—makes us political beings, and since acting always has meant to set in motion what was not there before' (Arendt 2018: 383), language becomes this social institution to which we are referring. As it is the tool that promulgates action, language defines social institutions and cultural practices in meaning-making processes, both in indigenous languages as well as in the *linguae francae* of global communication, i.e., English and French.

7 Consider Noni Jabavu's contention when she writes, '[may] I have a word surreptitiously with Xhosa-speaking readers—*"bite their ear"*, as we say? The present Orthography of the language came into general use after I had learnt its predecessor and I have never become reconciled to it. I dislike the appearance of symbols like "th" for aspirated 't'; marks for tone pitch; double vowels in plural noun-prefixes, verb tenses, demonstratives, ideophones and so on. This is the reason why, where I have written out a Xhosa sentence, my spelling is erratic. I am among those who, *"eating with the old-fashioned spoon"*, believe that for languages so "dominantly vocalic in character" [...] nothing short of a new script should be devised. The roman is not suitable and will always make for troublesome – and ugly – reading or writing' (authors note in *The Ochre People: Scenes from a South African Life* 1963).

8 For the purposes of this analysis and in line with our conception of language as a (social) institution, we move away from an orthographic analysis and pay attention to the implicit power of language in fashioning ontological categories that are either erased or substantiated. The rationale behind this move will become clearer to our reader shortly.

recognise how the changes in orthography instantiate the shifts that have been instituted in our languages, subsequently leading to contemporary understandings of society. From this framework, it follows that language cannot be divorced from our understandings of the world as it describes the world. To substantiate this claim, we draw the readers' attention to Jabavu's (1963) contention:

And may I ask English-speaking readers also to forgive me in their turn? For I have here and there unconsciously inflected a word according to Xhosa rules in trying to convey a non-English thought. When my publisher's reader pointed out that it was an invented construction, I decided to risk letting it remain because it seemed to me that the 'new' word came closer to the meaning I hoped to render than the one which would have been grammatically correct.

In this excerpt, the reader is privy to the observation we make about language in footnote 6 above. What Jabavu (1963) demonstrates through her 'inventions' is the notion of 'speaking [albeit in the written form, as] but another mode of acting—[making] us political beings, [which in itself highlights how we] set in motion what was not there before' through language. This act of setting in motion what was not there before is perhaps what compelled Mudimbe (1988) to claim, in his seminal treatise on *The Invention of Africa*, that Africa was invented.

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The invention(s) analysed by Mudimbe (1988) compelled us to undertake a project that critiques the transfigurations that have altered our gender economies and moral codes based on an imported understanding of sexuality. It was in driving a conservative sexual moral economy that was rooted in Victorian (read British) values that 'the early missionaries who were also founders of Africa's early schools, were somewhat shocked at what they considered a rather loose sexual morality among the Africans' (Mazrui 1978: 26). Pointedly, and in demonstrating this alteration of moral codes, Mazrui (1978: 26) details this political process as follows: '[The] headmistress of Gayaza High School in Uganda, for example, right at the outset regarded her vocation as going beyond the confines of the boarding-school compound to the lives of the people beyond.'

In the first section, our analysis thus seeks to demonstrate how, through language transformations, language has instituted new categories of thought that are derived from colonial misreading(s) of our ontologies as African peoples. In other words, we acknowledge how morality in our contexts has been framed as associated with sexual economies of desire, with the apartheid state, using a Christian conception of morality, going so far as to outlaw and criminalise same-sex desire and relations through the Immorality Amendment Act of 1969. Our analysis, therefore, does not rest

on a moralising/moralistic rationale, as said analysis is aware and cognisant of the shortcomings in framing a debate on gendered identities in this way. The argument suggests that a moralistic approach reproduces ingrained conceptions of sexuality that were imposed on African subjectivities as a result of colonial encounters. The reader should not misunderstand this undertaking. The argument does not suggest that African modes of being did not have their own problematics, which would be a romanticisation of reality, while substantive evidence exists to suggest that such a claim would indeed be tantamount to the romanticisation of realities on the African continent. Rather, the aim is to demonstrate readings and understandings of the sexual economies of desire that substantiate evidence of the fluidity that constitutes Black/Indigenous ontologies.

To move away from a moralistic framework, this analysis uses Amadiume's (1987) seminal book titled *Male Daughters, Female Husbands* to highlight colonial misconfigurations of African gender systems through the imposition of strictures that delimit the capacity for flexibility in gender construction.<sup>9</sup> In line with Amadiume's (1987: 89) argument, we contend that European colonialism, which is predicated on the false assumption of Western universality, undermined the '[flexibility of] gender construction in language', ultimately arresting the capacity to mediate or break down the dual-sex barrier. It is useful to note that this duality was imposed on Africans.

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To substantiate this claim, the argument details the erasures and misrecognitions of precolonial African conceptions of gender with the little evidence at our disposal.<sup>10</sup> There are two distinctions to be made: First, insofar as the chapter details the dual-sex binary, our critique is not new but rather highlights existing debates that are crucial for the theoretical developments advanced by our work. Second, in pointing out the contribution made by this philosophical treatise in articulating these erasures, a niche is created for our theoretical contribution. Amadiume's (1987) detailed analysis of the 'ideology of gender' provides an entry point into the critique of Western universalisms

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9 To detail this point, we direct our reader to the scholarship of Kumalo (2019), who critiques Chemhuru's (2018) notion of an African compatibilist view on rights. Kumalo's (2019) argument critiques the moral economies that are fascist and homophobic, which have been internalised by African ethics that are derived from colonial categories of thought.

10 The lack of scholarly evidence in this instance is what provides the opportunity for a novel contribution in the form of this chapter. What is meant by this is that with the lack of work that has been published on this particular subject—a lack that itself demonstrates the lack of Western epistemic positions—ours fills this gap by way of drawing from epistemic locales that have always been treated as lesser than, owing to their associations with Blackness/Indigeneity.



from a decolonial<sup>11</sup> perspective. This critique considers contextual realities that unsettle the dual-sex barrier/binary. Analysing Nguni cosmology, which is heavily predicated on *izithakazelo*, the chapter interrogates the interface between phenomenological and metaphysical reality in keeping with the philosophical contribution made by this chapter. This interrogation supports the claim that *Umsamo* destabilises the fixities of gendered dualism represented through the binary (fe)/male sex paradigm.

To claim that *Umsamo* destabilises the fixities of gendered dualism, this chapter must prove two interconnected propositions. First, that language instantiates power as a social institution, and second, through *izithakazelo* isiZulu, as one of the Nguni languages, mediates between phenomenological and metaphysical reality. The first move, which shows how language inscribes power, will direct us to consider how identity is obfuscated or legitimated through language. It is on the basis of this rationale that the argument frames language as an institution. This consideration will reveal the abnegation of queer identity as an outcome of colonial imposition. Put simply, this chapter implicitly highlights the existence of queer identities prior to colonisation and their continued existence even as contemporary identities have imbibed colonial moral economies; this is done through an analysis rooted in language. An intricate analysis of the concept *thokoza ngwenyama* substantiates the claim of abnegation derived from colonial moral economies and suggests the second move relating to our claim. By revealing how this concept functions as a mediation of phenomenological recognition that is connected to the metaphysical/spiritual realm(s), the chapter highlights how language inscribes power, either acting to destabilise homophobic thinking or negate and erase particular identities.

These two elements—language as institution of power and the use of language (isiZulu) to mediate between phenomenological and metaphysical reality—substantiate our primary claim that *Umsamo* destabilises fixities of gendered dualism and highlights the rich cultural conceptions of Nguni ontology. This epistemic wealth facilitates the project of transforming socially entrenched notions of strictly gendered sexualities by appealing to the metaphysical/spiritual realities manifesting through the phenomenological reality of *ubuNgoma* (divination) (Ongana and Ojong 2015).

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11 We subsequently premise our argument on a decolonial critique, even as we do this in implicit ways that align our work with decoloniality. This is to say that the premise of our argument is decoloniality; however, this will function implicitly as we are more concerned with a linguistic analysis that aids the advancement of a rearticulation of African sexuality and sexual identities that are not derived from a colonially imposed social framework but rather from the cultural milieu of African subjectivities.

*Thokoza ngwenyama* then denotes a salutation informed by the speaker's cultural-historical context and connotes the recognition of the other in a cultural-historical narrative that shapes contemporary identity. Further, we argue that contemporary identities in these cosmologies comprise the ancestral lineage of the speaker, which manifests through the speaker's existence. The analysis of this salutation shows that African cosmologies are shaped and informed by an oral tradition in which understandings of social governance, ethics and morality are intrinsically embedded. Our analysis, while making use of ethics and morality as indicated above, does not rest on this tenet as the argument focuses on theoretical developments premised on language analysis. The second section of the chapter performs this function—theoretical development through linguistic analysis—in our claim of non-binary citizenship as located *Emsamo*.

The argument presented in this chapter maintains that the privileging of homophobic uses of African languages masks the continued rationality impositions endured by African subjectivities due to colonialism. This injustice elucidates conceptualisations of African citizenship, which is arrested with regard to queer subjectivities and heteronormative identities that subscribe to and continue to use derogatory terminology. The continued use of this derogatory language highlights the injustice endured by heteronormative subjectivities who are oblivious to the reality that these terms are rooted in colonial imposition(s), which frames queerness in Blackness as a rogue and social deviance, and therefore requiring violence as a method of correcting it. To foreground our analysis, we start with libations to demonstrate the notion of language as institution.

*Ngithokozisa iThongo, ngithokozisa umndiki nomndawe, ngibiza oMbulaze abamnyama, oMashobane, oMakhunga, izikhali zaMantungwa ezawela iZambezi'gcwele. Ngithokozisa ondlondlo, ney'nyoni ezihamba emkhathini weZulu; oNdabezitha ngoba beludaba ezitheni zabo. OMkhatshwa oZikode, abakhatshwe ngezinde nangezimfushanyana, ibutho lezikhali zaMantungwa osihlangu salo singuMzilikazi, isilo sakwaNdebele sawoZimangele. Izizwe ezamangazwa indumezulu yexuluma eyagcotshwa ngegazi lesitha sikaNdaba. OMabaso ababasa entabeni ilanga lishona, oMbulaze abamnyama, abakhothamisa izizwe, ithombe likaLobengula elaxebula umunga libheke kwesi kaBhaca ngaphesheya ko'Mzimkhulu, liyogawula induk'enhle-*

*Emagcekeni oScina, koNongawuza, koGaba, koNqolo, omahlamba'hla'etsheni ngenxa yokuswela ithawula, abakhi beqonya bengasay'kuleluka. EManqolweni, agcab'ibovu bexwayiswa ukungadluli nabadluli ngendlela ngoba bebahle kakhulu. OnoDzanibe kaDzakatshana, uNdathane eyahlula*

*umbathalala, oGaba ongapheli. Okwathi ngokuchithwa kwenyongo, kuhlangukiswa imizi yoMbulaze noNdathane, kwayiyiza izalukazi, kwethulwa indlalifa kaNyathela, balitha usana ngeSisekelo somuzi kaNdaba, lutshanaza koDzanibe, kaDzakatshana. Lithi melizithutha lubiza konina lumemeze amakhehla nezalukazi zakhona oSihleza, omaJilajila, omanDlangisa, izinyanya, ezakhanyisa kumnyama. Lumemeze ekhaya kubo komaNzimande, komaZondi, luthi Thokoza Ngwenyama!*

## Hybridities of erasure and negation

‘We have always been consigned to responding from the place where we ought not to have been standing’—Ato Quayson (2002: 587).

This analysis starts by detailing the notion of language as institution. Footnote 12 frames this conception of language as the process by which we make meaning not only through intellection but also as meaning-making is related to social institutions<sup>12</sup> that determine the daily realities of our lives. Amadiume (1987: 89) demonstrates this point when she writes: ‘[It] can, therefore, be claimed that the Igbo language, in comparison with English for example, has not built up a rigid association between certain adjectives or attributes and gender subjects’. She showcases the role of language as institution, specifically as it constrains and prohibits gender fluidity within the colonial constructs that have come to determine life on the African continent. This, however, requires some clarification concerning the link between gender, language and politics since these three components play out on the continent.<sup>13</sup> Detailing language as an institution emphasises how it regulates and informs the economies of rationality that govern gendered identities and their construction, which all exist in a political domain. Fanon ([1952]/2008: 1) makes a useful contribution to explaining this claim when he says that ‘[we] attach a fundamental importance to the phenomenon of language and consequently consider the study of language essential for providing us with one element in understanding the Black man’s dimension of being-for-others, it being understood that to speak is to exist absolutely for the other’. Our explanation suggests that the reader cannot fully understand

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12 By social institutions is meant the family, social bonds and relations as they are determined by a communal ethic that infuses social life along with social spaces and cultural meeting ceremonies that define the ontic-ontological existence of Africans. These ceremonies are those such as *umkhosi woMhlanga*, *umkhosi wokweShwama*, *uMhlonwane*, etc.

13 Parts of this argument, specifically the link between language as institution and gender, are spelt out in the first section of the chapter, wherein the argument details non-binary citizenship as *Umsamo*. This conceptual move highlights the link between these components for our reader so as to foreground the overarching objectives of this argument.

this analysis without an acknowledgement of the function of the political<sup>14</sup> in the speech act itself. The framing of language in this way is inspired by Fanon ([1952]/2008: 1–2), who writes: ‘[To] speak means being able to use a certain syntax and possessing the morphology of such and such a language, but it means above all assuming a culture and bearing the weight of a civilisation.’

We therefore realise that before colonial imposition on the continent, gender strictures were not as they are now since the current sociopolitical economy that defines existence on the continent is a derivative of colonial categories of thought. This comes as the African subjects have assumed a culture that is alien to them and the weight of a civilisation that was imposed. To elucidate, Fanon ([1952]/2008: 2) contends that ‘[all] colonised people—in other words, people in whom an inferiority complex has taken root, whose local cultural originality has been committed to the grave—position themselves in relation to the civilising language: that is, the metropolitan culture.’ This claim is substantiated by Mamdani (2005), who maintains that the African continent remains ensnared in colonial categories of state organisation, which were established under direct colonial rule. Amadiume (1987: 90) substantiates this point when she writes: ‘[In] indigenous Nnobi society and culture, there was one head or master of a family at a time, and “male daughters” and “female husbands” were called by the same term, which translated into English would be “master.”’ This surfaces the transfigurations that took place on the continent owing to colonial imposition. Surfacing these changes highlights two things: First, the political as a result of colonial imposition. Second, the language used in the cultural framework of the Nnobi instituted a particular social economy, subsequently substantiating what is meant by ‘language as institution’.

The concept of language as institution denotes the power of language in willing certain realities into existence while denying other modes of being. This claim rests on Fanon’s ([1952]/2008: 2) assertion that ‘all colonised people [...] position themselves in relation to the civilising language’. The power of the speech act as willing certain realities into existence while denying others is detailed by Das (2007) in her book *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. The ability to will reality into existence through the speech act is itself demonstrative of the political component that is constitutive of language as institution. Das (2007: 46) writes:

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14 The political here means power as it relates to the governance of social subjects that constitute a given community. In speaking about power relations, we recognise that power can be viewed both in its positive form, in the sense of curating meaningfully fulfilling existences, as well as in the negative sense, which denotes coercive uses of force that occlude, erase and even negate existence. Our use of the political thus works to understand and think through both the negative and the positive components in the political. Our definition of the political will be clarified further using the work of Douzinas (2013).

The young men find Sakina, the daughter, hiding in the forest, half crazed with fear. They reassure her by evoking the name of her father and how he asked them to find her [...] we next see a clinic. A near-dead body is being brought in on a stretcher. The father, Sarajjudin, recognises the corpse. It is his daughter. Numbly he follows the stretcher to the doctor's office. [...] there is a movement in the dead body. The hands move towards the tape of the salwar (trouser) and fumble to loosen (literally open) it. Old Sarajjudin shouts in joy, 'My daughter is alive—my daughter is alive'.

In the exclamation 'My daughter is alive!', we see the power of language in willing reality into existence. This observation is based on how gendered economies work in Indian society, for in the rape and 'sexual defilement' of a woman, she is seen to have brought shame to her father's house—a shame that only her literal death can erase. Thus, in Sarajjudin's claim that his daughter is alive, we see him willing life back into his daughter's body and allowing/permitting her to live, as it were. Das (2007: 46–47) goes further to demonstrate how language wills reality, which portends our conception of language as institution:

As I understood this story in 1986, I saw Sakina condemned to a living death. The normality of language has been destroyed as Sakina can hear words conveying only the 'other' command.<sup>15</sup> Such a fractured relation to language has been documented for many survivors of prolonged violence, for whom it is the ordinariness of language that divides them from the rest of the world.

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The power of language becomes the basis from which life and death are given, literally dispensed, if we support the argument developed here in Das' (2007) work. Enunciation—through the speech act—performs a political act in that the speech act becomes the tool by which one's existence is instantiated and permitted. The speech act, as a mode of coming into existence, surfaces an observation of the political detailed by Douzinas (2013: 16) when he observes that '[the] "political", on the other hand, refers to the way in which the social bond is instituted and concerns deep rifts in society. The political is the expression of the irreducibility of social conflict'.

This chapter, therefore, pays brief attention to the political as the expression of the irreducibility of social conflict. Douzinas' claim substantiates our conception and framing of the political as

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<sup>15</sup> The other command in this instance is a command to life, a willing of life back into her body as her father proclaims that his daughter is alive.

detailed in footnote 8. In explicating this proposition, we foreground it in the following argument by Douzinas (2013: 16):

Politics proper erupts only when an excluded part demands to be included and must change the rules of inclusion to achieve that. When they succeed, a new political subject is constituted, in excess to the hierarchized and visible group of groups and a division is put in the pre-existing common sense.

Douzinas (2013) details our framing of the speech act as an expression of the political, as the speech act is the premise for the call of/to inclusion. This will become clearer to the reader when we detail the erasures of queer subjectivities that call for inclusion in the South African context. To further demonstrate the notion of the speech act as a political move, a demonstration that aims to substantiate the claim that frames our analysis—this being language as institution—we return to Amadiume's (1987) view of the imposition of Christian belief in the Nnobi community and how she showcases this point specifically in relation to the female goddess and her displacement by colonial imposition:

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Christian disrespect was directed not only against the totemic symbols; they are also said to have been fond of killing and eating animals sacrificed to the goddess. Again, the DO's response to the complaints was nonchalant. He would tell the people to leave it to the goddess to show her power. In this way the Christians hoped to expose and confirm their claim of the impotence of the 'idols' (Amadiume 1987: 122).

In this instance, the speech act (of those attempting to safeguard their ideals, beliefs and practices) is disregarded in favour of a responsive speech act that wills the destruction of one mode of life, a speech act that reinforces colonial categories of thinking. The political, as surfaced by the speech act, is political insofar as the speech act is a dialogical exchange between the speaker and the audience. The framing of the speech act as dialogical is rooted in the claim 'that to speak is to exist for the other' (Fanon [1952]/2008: 1). Here, the political is inherently tied to the speech act that denotes an utterance heralding an intention, purpose or effect. The effects of the speech act as political are summed up as follows by Fanon ([1952]/2008: 12):

When someone desperately strives and strains to prove to me that Black men are as intelligent as white men, I say that intelligence has never saved anyone; and that is true, for if philosophy and intelligence are invoked to proclaim the equality of men, they have also been employed to justify the extermination of men.

The speech act, therefore, as a dialogic exchange, leads us to consider modes of being as a form of substantiating the claim of erasure and negation.

### **The speech act as modes of being**

The speech act is indicative of two things: the political as tied to language and language as institution. We frame the speech act as instantiating phenomenological reality, which itself resists the colonial notion that “[there] is nothing comparable to the Black man. He has no culture, no civilization and no “long historical past” (Fanon [1952]/2008: 17). Our analysis reveals that the speech act not only showcases the legacies of long historical pasts but, as in the case of the use of izithakazelo, further underscores the role of power and culture in aiding us along the path of imagining ourselves out of the colonial strictures that limit modes of being. Any reality comes into being only through its enunciation—its being called into being. The speech act as izithakazelo calls into being the historical realities of the Black/Indigenous person and provides us with what Coetzee (1988: 9) frames as an ‘Adamic language’. However, the power of language and its politics may very well be limiting for two reasons: In the first instance, when Blacks/Indigenous subjects possess their own language, they are regarded as backward, retarded and uneducated. In the second instance, when Black/Indigenous subjects possess and control the coloniser’s language, they are seen as suspicious. Fanon ([1952]/2008: 19) frames this suspicion by saying that ‘[there] is nothing more sensational than a Black man speaking correctly, for he is appropriating the white world’. The appropriation of the white world is underlined by the fact that ‘[as] we said at the beginning, there are mutual supports between language and community. To speak a language is to appropriate its world and culture’ (Fanon [1952]/2008: 21). The use of language in appropriating culture substantiates the distinction made by Sartre between the object and its meaning.

Jean-Paul Sartre ([1957]/2003: 5) contends that ‘[the] essence is not in the object; it is in the

meaning of the object, the principle of the series of appearances which disclose it'.<sup>16</sup> In this framework, insofar as it reveals what is meant by the notion of the speech act as tied to language and language as institution, we are drawn to 'the meaning of the object', meaning that which can only come into being through language. Language describes meaning while mediating between phenomenological reality insofar as it—language—describes this reality. In framing the role of language, we follow Sartre's ([1957]/2003: 5–6) cue when he writes:

If the being of phenomena is not resolved in a phenomenon of being and if, nevertheless we cannot say anything about being without considering this phenomenon of being, then the exact relation which unites the phenomenon of being to the being of the phenomenon must be established first of all. By not considering being as the condition of revelation, but rather being as an appearance which can be determined in concepts, we have understood first of all that knowledge cannot by itself give an account of being: that is, the being of the phenomenon cannot be reduced to the phenomenon of being.

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The speech act, therefore, instantiates phenomenological reality in its ability to describe it, a description that manifests an ontology. In other words, 'the phenomenon of being is "ontological" in the sense that we speak of the ontological proof of St. Anselm and Descartes' (Sartre [1957]/2003: 6). One can go further by stating that perceptual reality becomes phenomenological insofar as it is called into being, is enunciated. Here, our thinking is once again substantiated by Sartre ([1957]/2003: 11), who writes: '[The] "how" (essentia) of this being, so far as it is possible to speak of it generally, must be conceived in terms of its existence (existentia)'. This taxonomy facilitates our claim that the speech act mediates phenomenological reality and encodes said reality in our ability to speak of it. The speech act, as representative of phenomenological reality, is useful when considering the language used *Emsamo*. *Umsamo*, as a phenomenological space, doubly enriches the speech act that mediates between phenomena and the metaphysics of both being and the being. The connection between the phenomenological and metaphysical is lubricated through the use of *impepho* and language—in the speech act of libation—*Emsamo*. The intricacies of this reality

<sup>16</sup> Sartre ([1957]/2003: 5) continues with this line of argument by stating that 'but being is neither one of the object's qualities, distinguishable among others, nor a meaning of the object. The object does not refer to being as to a signification; it would be impossible, for example, to define being as a *presence* since *absence* too discloses being, since not to be *there* means to be. The object does not *possess* being, and its existence is not a participation in being, nor any other kind of relation. It is. That is the only way to define its manner of being; the object does not hide being, but neither does it reveal being.'



implicitly reveal the place of queer identities in our context.

Being here denotes a double embodiment for our argument as we borrow it from the Sartrean context. The first relates to the ancestral world, which can be accessed through *impepho* and *izithakazelo*, and the second relates to the physical presence of the individual conducting the libation and intercession. Expressed differently, *impepho* and libation combine to invoke spiritual/metaphysical beings that are not governed by the gender strictures of Victorian sexual codes and moral values.<sup>17</sup> This signifies the capacity to adapt, change and modify phenomena through the speech act that calls into existence modalities of being that coloniality attempted to erase. This erasure is substantiated by our contextualising analysis in footnote 11.

Articulating one's identity through speech acts as libation defines being as that which can be adapted and modified, therefore suggesting being continuously changing and adaptable. In this framework, the speech act substantiates the claim that 'the being of the phenomenon'—the experience of inhabiting the world of those invoked through libation—'cannot be reduced to the phenomenon of being'. Mohanty's (1993: 42) claim that cultural experience can be a starting point for meaningful contributions to knowledge is taken seriously by Sartre. The ambiguities *Emsamo*<sup>18</sup> allow for the imagination of new possibilities outside the parameters of the contemporary gender binary norms that govern our existence. From this perspective, we maintain the need to take seriously Zulu epistemic positions regarding knowledge production. We stake our claim on the premise that Zulu epistemic frameworks allow us to broaden our conceptions of gendered identities beyond the confines of the prescriptive and limiting Euro-Western sexual economies.

Modification suggests the function of being in conceptualising identity formation, adjusting

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17 It might be useful for the reader if this chapter were to go into some detail, even if cursory in form, of what is meant by this claim. The gender economy that we speak of is one that exists outside of the sexual moral codes of Western ontologies. These codes that are site-specific to our context continue to manifest in the present day as the embodiment and negotiated existence of the contemporary individual as they relate to their lineage and ancestors—specifically, individuals who are undergoing *intwaso* or those who are *izangoma*. An individual undergoing this process, or one who has undergone *ukuthwasa* and is a practising *sangoma* might have a male spirit guiding their practice, even as they are female. The same can be said vice versa, wherein a female spirit embodies a man. The flexibility and acceptance of these sexual moral codes can best be articulated by the idiomatic phrase '*akudlozi lingayi ekhaya*', which will be best understood by our Zulu readers. For this reason, the reader can begin to appreciate why we claim that these site-specific realities differ from the Victorian sexual moral codes.

18 A distinction ought to be made between the use of the concept as a noun (*Umsamo*)—which, when used in this format, is written as such, even in the analysis—versus its uses as a locative (*Emsamo*), which is denotative of the space of Umsamo itself.

and adapting existence in the social setting—a claim that supports the notion that ‘the being of the phenomenon cannot be reduced to the phenomenon of being’ (Sartre, [1957]/2003: 6). Fully understanding this modification necessitates an appreciation of the reality that the phenomenon of existence exists between a willing and/or forced reality—owing to the role of language as institution. To demonstrate this, Todd (2016: 6) argues for the place of indigenous ways of knowing when dealing with the global commons, while we suggest that language as institution plays a critical role in this framework. Framing knowledge as part of the global commons from which societies draw solutions to issues of injustice and oppression, and make propositions for inclusive societies, underscores the need to reconceptualise language as a tool that can either act as a useful resource to encourage and foster social change or as a mechanism inhibiting the inclusion of alternative epistemic positions. This limitation undercuts the possibilities of new futures and continues to support bigoted and bifurcating language usage.

Suppose being is to be understood through mode(s), which denote(s) the capacity to alter and modify the phenomenon of being. In that case, injustice arises when a modification to being is directed by an imposition that obfuscates being as conceptualised and articulated by the self. In simple terms, in the conception of language as institution, it is useful to take heed of how language might modify existence in ways that are outside the self-directed existence of the being. In this case, the being is forced to comply with an imposed existence owing to the curative uses of language since language acts to permit particular existences while negating and erasing others. Therefore, our position suggests that this institution, language, is already being used to challenge the binary gendered strictures that we currently witness through its use *Emsamo*. This will be discussed in the next section. From an onto-epistemic perspective, language as institution and how it influences modes of being (the phenomenon of being), either through erasure or substantiation, becomes a fundamental tenet in clarifying how the being is constituted. Modification of being through an imposition, owing to derogatory language—*inkonkoni*, *isitabani* and so forth—gives credence to the claim of epistemic injustice within the social milieu in which the queer person exists. If the being is denied its identity through modification by imposition, this is a fundamental negation of personhood. A negation of this proportion highlights an act that is inherently objectionable and morally abhorrent while it serves the purpose of illuminating the charge of an epistemic injustice that has been committed.

Conceptualising being as sufficiently modified by language to recognise a person constructing themselves through a particular mode and manifesting as a particular being leads to an appreciation of the dialectical nature between language and being. The assertion by Grosfoguel (2013: 76) that

knowledge is created in social relations implies the recognition of equality among individuals in a given society. In her discussion of race-based epistemologies, Almeida (2015: 86) underscores a fundamental point in the argument advanced here, which contends that the hierarchies of knowledge frame Oriental epistemes and ontologies as merely existing to substantiate Western epistemic traditions.<sup>19</sup> The consignment of African ontologies and epistemic frameworks to a position that highlights the superiority of Western knowledge traditions explicitly unearths the colonial yoke under which, even now, queer African citizens find themselves existing—with language acting as an institution that continues to perpetuate this rationale. The South African context, in its modalities of denigration and erasure that are informed and underpinned by silencing certain modes of being through the use of particular language, continues the act of colonial tropes that deliberately erase and negate certain existences.

The contemporary uses of language in South Africa can only be understood through a historical project that reveals the erasures and negations derived from coloniality, the Christianisation of indigenous peoples, and the obliteration of our epistemic frameworks. Grosfoguel (2007: 214) contends that the universalisms that allow Western modernity to classify these epistemes as inferior and 'other' is rooted in the subzero, god-eye-knower position. In a later argument, Grosfoguel (2011: 6) suggests that this philosophy has morphed into 'I conquer, therefore, I am'. While there is much to be gleaned from this Western philosophical tradition, which regards African epistemic frameworks as provincial and thus unable to make meaningful contributions to the knowledge production processes of the world, it is worth noting the provinciality with which this very philosophy speaks, as effectively outlined by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018). The vanguard of the intellectual community that clings to the claim of provinciality in African epistemic frameworks derives its legitimacy in silencing these positions from an implicit moral substantiation rooted in colonial conquest.

The Christianisation of indigenous peoples has further played a crucial role in arresting Blackness in a state that Mudimbe (1988: 7) has termed the gradual backward conception of the African. It is clear how Christian civilisation played a role in establishing a hegemony of Western knowledge and entrenching Western cultural values such that our own taxonomies and frameworks of existence were expunged even from our own vocabularies and continue to exist only in confined pockets of cultural identities. This imposition has subsequently defined African cosmologies as mythical in the tangential reading of our ontologies, while in extreme circles of Western epistemic

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19 In framing African sexual moral codes as *other* and by implication assuming a superior mode of existence, is witnessed as the views of European voyeurs, as early as the 17th century in our context. J.M. Coetzee (1988: 16) details this aptly in *White Writing* when he contends that 'the Hottentots sleep by day (idle Hottentot character) in a hut (Hottentot dwelling), lying all over one another (Hottentot sexual mores) like hogs (place of Hottentots on the scale of creation)'.

traditions, our customs, practices and cultures have been defined as devilish, demonic and evil.<sup>20</sup> The role of Christianity in Africa and African epistemic frameworks has continued to entrench the colonial conquest narrative, subsequently highlighting and substantiating our claim of language as institution. In this sense, we claim that due to coloniality and subjugation, African subjects have been denied their birth right to name the African landscape (Nkosi 1989: 158), thus further alienating Indigeneity/Blackness from its ontology. It is fundamental to mention, however, that oppression does not automatically mean that the speaker is thinking from a subaltern perspective (Grosfoguel 2011: 5). Negations that inspire the native to speak like and adopt the characteristics and cultures of the oppressor (hooks 2009: 90) reveal the extent to which Black ontology has been suppressed through the historical realities of colonialism and coloniality.

Returning to the earlier claim that knowledge is created in social relations, it is clear that the historical injustices and inequalities that fashion the contemporary dispensation led to the assertion by Gqola (2001) that South Africa has adopted a tokenistic approach to the inclusion of Blackness in the transformative project of the country.

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This pseudo-Africanisation of places, commodities etc. is emblematic of a tokenistic relationship between new-South-Africanese and the concept, idea and politics of Africa generally. It is reflective of the opportunistic links made conveniently with Africa, which do not seem, paradoxically however, to encourage a reflexiveness or reveal the ironies [of epistemic inequality] even as many headlines scream 'African Renaissance' (Gqola 2001: 102).

The negations and erasures experienced in South Africa are emblematic of what Jones<sup>21</sup> calls a violent white silence in the country, which dictates the rules of engagement regarding issues of righting the epistemic injustices perpetuated by whiteness. In language, the implications of this silence have far-reaching effects in that the linguistic tapestry that could permit possibilities of imagining new realities is denied existence owing to the silence of white intellectuals and whiteness in the broader sense of it. This is to say that there continue to be negations, erasures and denunciations that relegate certain existences to the zone of non-being. This perpetuates the continued relegation of liberatory language to the confines of culture—a reality we seek to challenge here.

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<sup>20</sup> See the Witchcraft Suppression Act 3 of 1957.

<sup>21</sup> Personal correspondence.

## Non-binary citizenship as *Umsamo*

*Izinyane lemvubu kalidliwanga yingwenya kwacweba iziziba*

In this discussion, it is useful to consider citizenship and how we understand its application and contestations. To begin with, we draw our readers' attention to Gqoba's *Ingxoxo Enkulu Ngemfundo*, wherein this question was considered from the perspective of Blackness/Indigeneity as far back as 1888. Gqoba, who sets up a debate between 32 participants—both as speakers and observers—makes a poignant observation (through Fanathethe, one of the characters in this debate) of the place of indigeneity in response to the question of citizenship in the context of colonial South Africa, what has been termed by contemporary legal scholars and philosophers 'Conqueror South Africa' (see Dladla 2018; Modiri 2018). Having traced the implications of coloniality on Blackness/Indigeneity, Fanathethe maintains:

*Xa ndilapho ke mawethu,  
Alusapho oluNtsundu,  
Intliziyo ibuhlungu.  
Aba bantu mhla bafika  
Kwakuyole 'de kwancama,  
De sancama amawonga,  
Akowethu, obunono;  
Sawushiy'oweth'umbuso.  
Sawuchitha, inanamhla  
Sasibinza kwelo khaya  
Ngezi zandla ncakasana*

(Gqoba [1888]/2002: 68–69).

This excerpt is intriguing. As we have identified previously in our scholarship (Kumalo 2020), the speaker's name is already indicative of the contribution he will make to the conversation/debate. One could make a claim that either contests or affirms the statement made by Fanathethe; however, that is not the point of our argument presently. We do recognise and acknowledge, however—as does Gqoba ([1888]/2002: 47), who speaks through Bhedidlaba when he introduces the debate—the place from which Fanathethe speaks as he bemoans the reality that defines the place of Blackness/

Indigeneity in the land of his forefathers. Gqoba ([1888]/2002: 47) maintains that '*[mna] okwam, nindibona nje sendincamile, ingaba nini kambe madodana, nani mthinjana wakowethu eningaba nisakholwa; koko ningeqabaqondi aba bantu kuba nisengabantwana*'. This contention highlights the contestations that Fanathethe brings to the debate of belonging, citizenship and the erasure of Black mores, values and culture epitomised in his assertion '*de sancama amawonga, akowethu obunono; sawushiy'oweth'umbuso*'. Bhedidlaba continues, specifically on the question of governance, rule and citizenship, when he avers that '*[le] mpatho basiphethe ngayo, neli khethe likhoyo kuzo zonke izinto; sahlala thina sibuyiselwa emva kuzo*' (Gqoba [1888]/2002: 47). In these assertions lies the claim made by the poet in the introduction to the poem in which he distinguishes between those who embraced wholeheartedly the place, role and function of colonial education and those who contested it as they saw how it eroded the very being of Blackness/Indigeneity in the way that Blackness '[assumes] a culture and [bears] the weight of a foreign civilisation' (Fanon [1952]/2008: 2). This erosion of the ontological foundations of Blackness/Indigeneity can inaugurate a debate rooted in Sartrean analyses of *Being and Nothingness*—as indeed has been the case in our previous (Kumalo 2018) treatise on abjection. The implications of bearing the weight of a culture that is foreign are also discussed by Gqoba when he further maintains, through Fanathethe:

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*Ngamangqina ayathetha  
Ngathi thina abaMnyama  
Sabulala amawethu  
Elo nxeba libuhlungu;  
Sawachitha loo makhaya,  
Sathi gongqo amakhaka  
Sawabinza, sawachitha  
Ngezi zethu thin'izandla  
Ibuhlungu loo nyaniso  
Kwezi mini zalo mbuso  
Usidike sakruquka,  
Usidudu, naso semfe.  
Siyafuna siquleka  
Sibuzana, xa sixoxa  
Ngobu bume beli gwangqa,  
Thina bantu sekudala*

*Sawashiya amakhaya,  
Sawagwaza, sawantama,  
De sanxiba nemixhaka  
Ngezo mini zokuyola  
Kwakungathi kuthi thina  
Sithelele kweli gwangwa  
Singabile kuko konke,  
Kanti mawo ngamampunge,  
Namhla sonke ngokwenene  
Sesijoje amasele*

(Gqoba [1888]/2002: 69–70).

The reader will recall that this argument began by claiming that we should treat and see language as an institution to appreciate its role and function in substantiating or dismissing certain realities. Maintaining the claim of language as institution in the realm of citizenship and belonging reveals, through the lamentations of Fanathethe, the institutional arrangements of Black ontology as they differ from Western colonial impositions. Put simply, Fanathethe—even as he does so in cursory form—reveals that there existed and continue to exist divergences in the formation, conception and understanding of the citizen in the two traditions. The one is premised on a hierarchy devoid of a humanness through historical social phenomena such as slavery, racism and apartheid, while the other presents us with a framework that elides rigidities that are policed and enforced with and through violence. This claim is substantiated by Mahmood Mamdani (2001: 31) when he states: '[Thus] the conservative variant of the postcolonial state accepted as "authentic" the colonial construction of the native: as an ethnic being ruled by a patriarchal authority with an authoritarian and unchanging custom that needed to be enforced officially as "customary" law.' These rigidities that were imposed on Black/Indigenous conceptions and definitions of citizenship and belonging continue to influence the ways in which Blackness/Indigeneity perceives itself, even in the (post)-colonial context.

When Black/Indigenous people understand themselves through a certain mode or enter being through a self-fashioned mode that aids them in making sense of their reality, this mode expresses the meaning-making processes through which they interact with the world. In this regard, it is useful to highlight further how language is the tool with which said expression of self-understanding and articulation can be realised. Framing epistemic justice as a virtue of social institutions, Anderson

(2012: 165) acknowledges each knower's sense-making processes to engender epistemic justice. Denying beings their mode of being is indicative of a fundamental change and altering of said beings, epitomised by epistemic injustice. This fundamental obfuscation leads Grosfoguel (2013: 77) to enquire about the possible conditions left to those who have been silenced. The erasure of the epistemic framework and the ontological negation that are the result of colonial impositions necessitate alternate conceptions of citizenship and belonging that are rooted in language; such alternatives give rise to the conditions of possibility accessible to Blackness—when using a decolonial lens.

### ***Umsamo* as a response—reclaiming Black/Indigenous ontology**

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Presented with the reality of being constantly silenced through the ontological negations that deny the existence of queer subjectivities owing to how Blackness/Indigeneity itself has imbibed colonial categories of thought, this reality requires the consideration of the response left to Blackness/Indigeneity. We suggest that the space of *Umsamo* offers these alternatives. Simply expressed, *Umsamo* is the respected sacred space in the Zulu hut where ancestors are invoked before any traditional ceremonies such as *umemulo* (a young woman's coming-of-age ceremony) and *umgcagco* (Zulu traditional wedding) take place (cf. Zondi 2020). The destabilisation of the fixities of the gender dualities within the contemporary social context requires the mediation of phenomenological and metaphysical reality, as argued above. This takes place by using libation and *impepho Emsamo* through the invocation of and appeals to the ancestral realm, which is not governed by the gender strictures that continue to dictate the contemporary world (cf. Zondi and Ntshangase 2013). The reader is privy to new worlds (potentially) being conceived, articulated and realised.

Adhering to the more radical decolonial theoretical assumptions developed in the scholarship of Indigeneity in Canada, Tuck and Yang (2014: 7) would suggest a re-invasion, with our argument leading off from theirs in our suggestion regarding the re-settlement of the topography of language that defines our experiences and existence. *Umsamo* acts as the tool with which we begin to re-invade thinking in its gender-non-conformist modalities of existence and the possibilities it presents to us in the contemporary world. This means that *Emsamo*, people can become, through the phenomenon of being, androgynous beings as they negotiate their existence of embodying and being embodied by a spiritual being that is antithetical to their sexed identity. *Umsamo*, therefore, not only presents us with the rare opportunity to correct binary conceptions of gendered



identity but is the very instantiation of inclusive citizenship and the subversion of Euro-Western conceptions of gender and performative identities. To this end, *Umsamo*, through its language—in the case of libation—reaffirms the notion of re-invasion by breaking down the strictures that define phenomenological reality as it is inherited from categories imposed on the indigene. In *On Violence*, Fanon ([1963]2004: 14) argues that truth for the native ‘is what hastens the dislocation of the colonial regime, what fosters the emergence of the nation. Truth is what protects the “natives” and undoes the foreigner. In the colonial context, there is no truthful behaviour. And good is quite simply what hurts them most.’ Concurring with the claim that good is what hurts them most, Tuck and Yang (2014) contend that it is this white fear—if we were to call it such—that acts as the barrier to substantive decolonisation as all efforts at decolonisation are co-opted into interests that serve white settler colonial descendant futures. They maintain:

There is a long and bumbled history of non-indigenous peoples making moves to alleviate the impacts of colonisation. The too-easy adoption of decolonising discourse (making decolonisation a metaphor) is just one part of that history and it taps into pre-existing tropes that get in the way of more meaningful potential alliances. We think of the enactment of these tropes as a series of moves to innocence (Tuck and Yang 2014: 2-3).

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Anderson (2010), who writes about the white closet, reveals these moves to white innocence that secure white settler futures through modes of white fragility, otherwise known as white tears. White tears and white fragility flair up violently when attempts are made to shift the ‘geography of reason’ (Gordon 2014) beyond the colonial self-referential position. The white silence mentioned earlier shatters, facilitating the capacity of whiteness to speak, but not as a means of fostering justice and an ethical commitment to righting the wrongs of white violence meted out upon those who have suffered under the heel of white oppression and subjugation. In speaking, whiteness serves as a mode of securing and ensuring white colonial futures in the colony and dictating the modes of engagement with the discussion at hand. In this very instance, the claim of the speech act as political is vividly demonstrated to the reader. What is highlighted is the negation that takes place owing to the insecurities of whiteness in our context. Such negations are aptly dealt with when Coetzee (1988: 11) enquires: ‘Do white hands pick the fruit, reap the grain, milk the cows, shear the sheep in these bucolic retreats? Who truly creates wealth?’ Before asking this question, Coetzee

(1988) highlights how whiteness negates Blackness/Indigeneity by imposing strictures that define and delimit those who belong and those who are alien. He maintains:

So, quite aside from the question of whether it is practical for a European to enter African culture in sufficient depth, quite aside from European doubts about whether the black man anyhow “appreciates” the landscape into which he was born any better than an animal does, the question has to be rephrased: Is there a language in which people of European identity, or if not of European identity then of a highly problematical South African colonial identity, can speak to Africa and be spoken to by Africa? (Coetzee 1988: 7–8)

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The more radical approach would be to follow suit with the suggestions made in the work of Fanon ([1963]/2004: 8), who writes that the natives ‘know they are not animals. And at the very moment when they discover their humanity, they begin to sharpen their weapons to secure its victory’. Here, Fanon reminds us of the idiomatic phrase quoted above, which suggests that the inherent nature of *ubuntu*—not to be mistaken with the white liberal conception of the philosophy but rather humanness expressed in the linguistic-cultural underpinnings of social interaction—speaks to reminding one’s oppressor of the humanity of the oppressed. Intrinsically linked to this reminder is violence that is governed by ethical limitations. Ethical limitations in the sense of violence that merely seeks to remind the oppressor of the consciousness of the oppressed, and not the annihilation of the oppressor, is a constitutive part of humanness, understood here from our loci of enunciation, which is an isiZulu idiomatic cultural framework.

## Conclusion

Citizenship, as presented to us by the language use of *Emsamo*, becomes a category that is useful in addressing and correcting the problematic linguistic norms that abound in South African society. The uses of language, with the power to permit particular realities to exist while silencing and erasing the experiences of queer subjectivities, can be the starting point in addressing the problems that define how South Africans relate to these subjectivities. Owing to the internalisation of colonial categories of thought and the notion that queer identities are un-African—a proposition put forward by Chemhuru (2012) and contested by Kumalo (2019)—a popular discourse has developed that is rooted in bigoted and bifurcating language that is oppressive and, in the legalistic sense,

unconstitutional. *Umsamo*, in this case, contests this popular discourse by inviting us into the close intimacy of a sexual moral economy that is not predicated on borrowed conceptions of being. *Umsamo* allows us to explore and draw from our own repositories of knowledge, being and sexual moral codes. This move is decolonial in its capacity to subvert and contest the coloniality of being that has been theorised by scholars such as Tlostanova (2010). By this, we mean that the language used *Emsamo* allows us to imagine new possibilities owing to the androgynous nature in which the space is curated and exists. *Umsamo*, as we understand it, unsettles fixities in gendered identities by appealing to new and different ways of existing and relating to one another that are not arrested by the impositions of coloniality.

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## Chapter 8

### Interrogating South African Reality and Probing the Interconnections of Language, Hegemonic Masculinities and Patriarchy

*Tsoaledi D. Thobejane*

#### Introduction

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Africa abounds with heroes and heroines who ruled their countries with precision and were at the forefront of the liberation struggle against colonialism and imperialism. Queen Aminatu of the 13th century—the daughter of Bakwa Turunku—ruled a country called Zazzau in Hausaland. According to history, Queen Nefertiti and Cleopatra ruled ancient Egypt, while Queen Ranavalona ruled Madagascar from 1788 to 1861, and Queen Nandi, the influential mother of Shaka, was able to guide him to rule the Zulu kingdom. In the northern part of South Africa, we had Queen Modjadji, who ruled without regard to patriarchy or gender discrimination (Matshego 2019).

In the origin of the family, as catalogued by Engels (1893), it is documented that the family formed the cornerstone of a class society and, with it, some forms of women's oppression as they (that is, women), for the first time, became the private property of their husbands. This is where the adage 'a woman's place is in the home' began to take root. With this, we saw how girl children were nurtured to become obedient and boy children were trained as future leaders (Mohanty 2003; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Hill-Collins 2000). However, in pre-class societies, or primordial communities, women and men enjoyed equal freedom. Later on, there was a state called gynococracy, where women were in charge of their governments and the running of their communities as a whole. Gynococracy is defined as a form of government or political system which is governed by women (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary* 2019). This symbolised female power. So, where did we learn about gender-based violence (GBV) or domestic violence?

When he critiques identity and gender, Thiongo's gender dimensions allude to the fact that gender-based violence should be seen against the backdrop of slavery, colonialism and

globalisation. This continuum of colonialism and oppression in Africa has led to the post-colonial personality being trapped in a contradictory Western civilisation.

Violence in the home setting is rife in most countries. Unfortunately, women are its usual victims, while most men are the perpetrators (Thobejane 2015).

Despite their immense contribution during the liberation struggle, South African women still face all forms of oppression. Every township and village boast of many women who sacrificed their lives on the altar of freedom. Yet they still find themselves marginalised by the same men they helped to emancipate. Women's organisations, including the judiciary, continue to fight against those customary, cultural and religious practices that subordinate them. They are calling for the protection of women against racial and sexual harassment and for accessible shelters and counselling services for survivors of rape, battery, sexual assault and demeaning gender roles that have been perpetuated by some of the antiquated cultural aspects in our communities. The Commission for Gender Equality has played a meaningful role in making gender transformation part of the South African march towards democratic laws that protect women. Therefore, this chapter argues that gender-based violence is perpetuated in language form. Gender subjugation continues to show itself in spoken language and the acceptable norms and values that condemn women to the kitchen and to being mere child bearers.

## **Objectives of the chapter**

The objectives of the chapter are as follows:

1. To elucidate how language can be used as a tool to perpetuate gender discrimination.
2. To show some concepts that are embedded in language (especially Northern Sotho or Sepedi, spoken in Limpopo Province, South Africa) that may advertently or inadvertently perpetuate gender-based violence or gender discrimination.

## **Research questions of the chapter**

The following are the research questions:

1. How can language be used as a tool to perpetuate gender-based violence or gender discrimination?
2. What are some concepts embedded in language that may advertently or inadvertently advocate for gender-based violence or gender discrimination?

### **Significance of the study**

This chapter looks at some of the arguments advanced by feminist paradigms in deconstructing the patriarchal hegemony perpetuating itself in language and culture. The focal point is that language can perpetuate hegemonic masculinities by way of using language that conforms to gender exploitation and discrimination. The chapter aims to expose some of the dehumanising aspects of language and to foster a dialogue that is based on egalitarianism. The study is significant as it strives to expose some sexist tendencies that are grounded in language.

### **Literature review**

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The South African Government, at the highest policy-making levels, vowed to address human rights violations against women. However, the state's response remains sporadic and often discriminatory. The lack of a systematic approach to addressing the scourge of domestic violence means that lasting democratic change cannot be achieved. South African women's organisations estimate that as many as one in every three women was raped and that one in six women was in an abusive domestic relationship from 2005 to 2013 (Abrahams et al. 2010; Nduna and Nene 2014; Vetten 2007). These figures have increased to an alarming degree since the advent of COVID-19, with Mexico leading the fray.

Crime statistics released annually by the South African Police Service (SAPS) do not provide much information about GBV. They provide some information about sexual offences, but questions have been raised about their reliability and whether they are overestimating or underestimating the scourge. Furthermore, it has been reported that many victims of GBV are unlikely to go to police stations to report their cases due to the patriarchal attitudes of some police officials (Vetten 2007). There is, therefore, a reporting bias in the statistics released by the SAPS.

In Sudan, we are told that law enforcement bodies are biased towards mainly policing the public behaviour of women in the name of protecting morality. They are targets of religious propaganda that preaches obedience and chastity. If they are seen in the street and judged to be inadequately



covered or without an escort or to be walking in a 'provocative' manner, they can be sentenced to a jail term. The wearing of the hijab, which is a combination of a headscarf and a long-sleeved blouse, is widely accepted in Sudan. However, it becomes problematic when it is imposed on women. Women in Sudan cannot travel unaccompanied by men. This restricts women's movement. Also, Sharia law is used to send to prison women who brew alcohol to support their families. Women are often raped in prison (House 2008). At the heart of these malpractices is the language that is rooted in patriarchal codes where women are referred to as secondary to men. Another practice that valorises female subjugation—a daily practice in most Muslim countries and, of course, here in South Africa—is genital mutilation, which is also celebrated in language. In Sepedi, a language spoken in the northern part of South Africa, we are told that '*Sa mosadi ke go ya komeng*' ('a perfect woman is one who is circumcised').

Female genital mutilation, already practised comprehensively in northern Sudan, has also spread to the non-Muslim community in the south and west and among urban migrants responding to social pressure to conform. It is mistakenly regarded as an Islamic practice and a safeguard against immorality and AIDS, although it has been suggested by medical experts that the opposite is true. Medical complications regularly result from this practice, which involves cutting the clitoris and the outer vaginal labia and, in the severe form most widely carried out, includes infibulation (which means the sewing up of the vaginal orifice, leaving only a small outlet for menstrual flow) (Vetten 2019).

One out of every three women in Nigeria suffers from domestic violence, and in some areas, physical violence against one's spouse is not even considered a crime. As many as 56% of women in parts of Nigeria are also subjected to female circumcision (Equality Now n.d.). This chapter does not argue for or against female circumcision (or genital mutilation as it is called by Western feminists). Rather, it shines a spotlight on issues that women need to resolve by themselves instead of being dictated to by their immediate cultural milieu.

Gender stereotypes produce behaviour patterns that conform to expectations, such as female submissiveness to males. Kay et al. (2015) state that a stereotype is a belief that individuals in a group (for example, gender, occupation, race, ethnicity or particular background) generally have one or more traits or behaviours. People make use of stereotypes to explain their own or others' behaviours, to justify actions or decide how to act and to define group boundaries. In society, gender stereotypes are used as standards for evaluating people's mental capabilities, social roles, positions and qualities possessed. When gender stereotypes are used this way, they lead to discrimination and prejudice. These stereotypes can be found in how we classify people and the language we use to authenticate this classification.

Elouard et al. (2013) posits that due to the cultural and institutional devaluation of characteristics and activities associated with women, men have had very little incentive to move into very often badly rewarded traditional female activities. These activities include homemaking, among other primarily female-dominated roles. There are, however, powerful economic incentives for women to move into historically male-dominated occupations despite issues of inequity in the remuneration levels of women as compared to their male colleagues in similar jobs (Elouard et al. 2013). A study on the gendered nature of poverty in northern Ghana found that the effects of general poverty are experienced more by women than by their male counterparts. This includes the calculated deprivation and marginalisation of women (that is, inadequate education of females), lack of access by women to productive resources, limited decision-making power, and ultimately, powerlessness. Men have long dominated positions of power in economic and political spheres, the legal system, religious and educational institutions, as well as most community organisations (Elouard et al. 2013).

## **Feminism and gender**

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According to feminist activist Patti Lather (1991), every woman has something important to say about the disjuncture in her own life and the means necessary for change. Feminism addresses this disjuncture and issues of domination, class oppression and gender inequality, whose end results are domestic violence, abuse and patriarchy. Feminists (especially radical feminists) also posit that capitalism is highly patriarchal. Men own the richest of industries (and capital) everywhere in the world. This system of patriarchal capitalism translates into domestic violence in many countries (as alluded to earlier in Engels' work). Many of the abused women have been found not to have developed a standpoint vis-à-vis their oppression as most think it is part of the culture and religion that they are treated that way and can therefore not resist it, especially given that the languages we speak still valorise this dehumanisation.

Some feminists have argued that domestic violence has its roots in the traditional definitions of gender relations and gender roles that determine the legitimacy of wife-beating (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). When wife beating escalates, it is because of factors such as militarism, consumer capitalism, portrayals of violence and sexism and our everyday language that depicts women as inferior to men (Crenshaw 1994).

## Language and GBV

Speech (or language) reveals the links between power and patriarchy. Speech may not simply be a means by which we communicate; it can also show the desire to dominate. It is no more than just a verbalisation of conflicts and systems of domination. It is the very object of man's conflict. Almost all languages have some patriarchal undertones, some of which stem from what we may call hegemonic masculinities.

According to Thobejane (2014; 2015), language is the engine of reason. Language forms part of the production of knowledge. Reason, which comes in the form of language, can present itself as universal. Therefore, the continued silencing and degrading of women can be found in spoken language. Foucault (1972), hooks (2000) and Hill-Collins (2000) argued that power is widely dispersed and operates in the form of language—diffusely, through the ways we talk, write and conceptualise. In language, one sentence may have two meanings (Thobejane 2014). An obvious meaning, understood without difficulty by everyone, may conceal a second esoteric meaning that requires a more subtle deciphering to finally reveal it. Language may be the terrain where differently privileged discourses struggle via confrontation and/or displacement.

Ramaite (2016) once argued that:

Most languages are sexist, and this implies that languages 'represent' or 'name' the world from a masculine viewpoint, and 'in accordance with stereotyped beliefs about the sexes. The male representation, as well as the monopoly of naming has detrimental effects on relationships between women and men, particularly when men feel threatened by what they regard as 'women being too presumptuous for their gender' or when they believe that 'women do not know their place in a man's world (Ramaite 2016: 13).

Women have been at the receiving end of gender-based violence for too long. They should start setting up clearer goals of attaining social justice and equality and transforming their economic, political and social structures. This will help them to fight for social change in their communities. If feminism is to liberate a woman, it must address all forms of domination. Women fill the ranks of every category of oppressed people.

In addressing the issue further, Makgopa (2018) adds that with respect to the status of women, from a traditional and cultural point of view—especially in the context of practice, tradition and

beliefs in Africa—women are addressed in different ways within the society. In most cases, they are treated as minors. Makgopa further illustrates that in Northern Sotho, there is a proverb that goes, *'Mosadi ke ngwana'* (A woman is a child). In this light, children are always expected to carry out directives and instructions from their parents. At certain stages in women's lives, their parents decide on their behalf what they eat or wear (Makgopa 2018). Further, there is another saying that goes, *'Mosadi ga a na lentšu kgorong'* (A woman cannot speak in a traditional court, or a woman is not allowed to express herself in a traditional court). Women are not allowed to participate in traditional courts even if the case handled rests squarely on their shoulders. Women are not allowed to participate in many gatherings, such as the courts. Another proverb elucidated by Makgopa (2018) to show how women are not fully recognised and treated like men says, *'Mosadi o hupa meetse'* (A woman keeps water in her closed mouth). This proverb indicates that a woman is supposed to keep quiet, even during tribulations.

### **Theoretical framework**

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This chapter uses radical feminism as a lens through which to deconstruct oppressive language that valorises gender discrimination and, ultimately, domestic violence, which emanates from sexual relations of power (Hill-Collins 2000). At the core of oppressive gender-based language lies the system of patriarchy, which excludes women from political and economic power and destroys the potential that women have as a group. Furthermore, radical feminism argues that the experiences of women are interlinked with ideological and economic assumptions about women at the international level (see Lather 1991). The emergence of property and the capitalist mode of production are once more seen as levers towards women's oppression and subjugation that exemplify themselves in our daily usage of language (what Lather calls 'Languacentricity'). Language can be used as a hegemonic critique, where elites are imposing their ideology to leverage themselves as 'leaders' to unquestioning 'followers'. It is, therefore, imperative to learn how to unlock the consciousness of the oppressed (in this case, the marginalised women) so that they can be conscientised about their position. Hence, there is a need for a definition of educational theory whose main aim is to raise the consciousness of women vis-a-vis their oppression and denigration. This can only be realised when oppressive language is changed to be a tool for conscientisation and liberation.

With the development of capitalism, women have been pushed to the margins and relegated to reproductive labour at home. This separation of labour, argued Hill-Collins (2000), Mohanty (2003)

and Lather (1991), is seen as important to the development of capitalism and patriarchy. Capital accumulation cannot be achieved unless patriarchal gender relations are maintained. Control over women is entrenched in economic, ideological, cultural and political structures. These structures authenticate themselves in spoken language that entrenches gender discrimination. Anything that challenges this setup is strongly resisted by men. Hill-Collins (2000) also maintains that capitalism has channelled women into commodity production. This largely impacts what men and women think about themselves. This devaluation has led to men thinking that women cannot challenge them. Feminist organisations are striving to deconstruct this male-hegemonic world outlook which presently determines the consciousness and meaningfulness of societies. Feminism is more concerned with critical social science and the politics of empowerment. Feminist thought defines empowerment as a general analysis of the causal factors of powerlessness and collective actions to change the material conditions in which women find themselves. For this to happen, we should start with the way our languages are constructed to perpetuate gender discrimination and the way male hegemony is celebrated in the form of language.

## **Research design and methodology**

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Critical discourse analysis was used as a method of gathering the data for this chapter. This approach included the usage of literature regarding how hegemonic masculinities perpetuate themselves in language. The study relied on content analysis, which is a method of analysing various texts from literature. Through content analysis, the researcher extracts material (as sample) out of a huge amount of texts (for example, newspapers and books) regarding the topic under study. The view of content analysis is that different perspectives provide different forms of knowledge about a phenomenon under study so that, together, they produce a broader understanding. Content analysis always remains a matter of interpretation. As there is no hard data provided, the reliability and validity of one's research/findings depend on the force and logic of one's arguments (Renkema 2004).

Even the best-constructed arguments are subject to their own deconstructive reading and counter-interpretations. The same holds true for this study. The validity of critical analysis is, therefore, dependent on the quality of the rhetoric (Renkema 2004). By enabling us to make these assumptions explicit, Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) postulate that content analysis may allow us to view the 'problem' from a higher stance, to gain a comprehensive view of the 'problem' and ourselves in relation to that 'problem', and ultimately, to solve concrete problems—not by providing

unequivocal answers but by asking ontological and epistemological questions (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002). This research is, therefore, a product of the understanding that research should be openly ideological and based on a liberatory advocacy for an oppressed group (Green and Thorogood 2018).

## Observations and findings

What follows are the themes that emerged during the textual (content) analysis of books studied regarding the topic:

### Sexist language

When confronting the issue of language, it appears that gender roles and the power attached to men permeate the texts studied (as shown in the literature review). The role of women is largely reduced to that of a sexual object. Languages interpret the world from a masculine viewpoint. In arguing this point further, Hill-Collins (2000) opines that male andragogy is deeply entrenched in our languages.

In our communities, there are proverbs which are used by men and are said at weddings and when they are alone celebrating their hegemonic masculinities. Proverbs such as those used in Sepedi, for instance, are inadvertently reinforcing the subjugation of women. Utterances such as *'Lebitla la mosadi ke bogadi'* (meaning that even if a woman is being ill-treated in marriage, she must not seek divorce because by so doing, she will be transgressing on the sanctity of marriage) are re-enforcing gender subjugation. Furthermore, if a man shows that he has feminine characteristics, he is chastised by other men and called a weakling and not worthy of being a man. Men are not supposed to show emotion. They are not supposed to cry.

### Language and patriarchy

In everyday usage of language, women are frequently portrayed as objects of violence, sex and/or aggression. This view is supported by Ramaite (2016: 13) when she says that gender and language structure has demonstrated numerous ways in which women are ignored, trivialised and depreciated by the words used to describe them. Thobejane (2015) further indicates that culture (be it Western, Asian or African) also regards men as having been endowed with the authority to

rule over women. This perpetuates itself in coded patriarchal language. Language is the backbone of power relations in every society. It is through language that women continue to be vilified and dehumanised. Speaking has never been neutral. The spoken word, or the formal language, is loaded with gender insensitivities. Feminists, in their endeavour to deconstruct the patriarchal power structures in language, are presently searching for feminine styles of writing. For instance, Lacan (cited by Jarviluoma, Moisala and Vilkkko 2003: 111) says that women will always be at a disadvantage in language because the organising principle of language is the opposition between the masculine phallic presence (or hegemonic masculinities) that lacks any feminine analysis.

The literature engaged thus far indicates that the patriarchal power structures in language should be deconstructed by offering a sort of counter-language that will amplify the voices of the women who remain marginalised. Women still need to rally together to fight against systems of language that are demeaning to them.

## **Implications**

Women around the world have played a distinctive role in opposition to totalitarian and authoritarian regimes. Their struggles continue unabated to date. They still play a meaningful role in helping the families of those who have been harassed, executed, arrested or dismissed from their jobs because of gender discrimination and patriarchy. Gender-based violence remains a pandemic which is unparalleled around the world and especially in South Africa. This violence is sometimes hidden in codes that are embedded in our everyday use of language. A collaborative approach is needed where linguists and policymakers can start to work out a curriculum that seeks to root out all sexist notions that are transmitted through language.

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## **Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted the arguments advanced by feminist paradigms in deconstructing patriarchal hegemony perpetuating itself in language and culture. The chapter showed that language can be used as a tool for subjugation. Hegemonic masculinities are also alluded to as oppressive bodies that are connected to the everyday lives of men while also affecting women. Marriage is also critiqued as an institution where hegemonic masculinities may find fertile ground for the perpetuation of the domination of men over women. The chapter posits that some of our behaviours can be attributed to cultural constraints that may stem from patriarchal relations.

Languages continue to have a gendered position in our culture. Male hegemony can, therefore, find its place in language. Language that perpetuates patriarchal norms that, in turn, contribute to gender-based violence has to be deconstructed in order to offer language codes and nuances that resonate well with the plight of women.

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## Chapter 9

### Intersectionality and (Re)marriage: A Perspective of the Xitsonga Sociocultural Identity

*Mafemani J. Baloyi*

#### Introduction

**E**hrlich, in Davies and Elder (2004: 304), agrees with West and Zimmerman (1987) that ‘language is one important means by which gender—an ongoing social process—is enacted or constituted; gender is something individuals do; in part through linguistic choices, as opposed to something individuals are or have’. In this chapter, I explore the practical use of language, culture and gender as both a social phenomenon and a community-based practice. The chapter draws from an extensive review of existing published research on the intersection of various dimensions of language and gender, such as sex, race, religion, culture and class. Eckert and McConnel-Ginet (1992), as well as Bergvall (1999), acknowledge that most studies on gender are based on Western perspectives and are centred on the experiences of white middle-class women. These scholars are also concerned about the tendency to generalise the findings of those studies to women of all races and classes. Spivak (1988) expresses the same concern and warns that excessive generalisations that assume that women behave the same way the world over without consideration of any specific historical, cultural, socioeconomic and geopolitical realities faced by them pose serious research challenges. On the same note, Stokoe and Smithson (2001: 15–16) observe that analysts spend much time interpreting categories and norms that perpetuate traditional gender dualisms rather than interrogating them to determine how speakers ‘do femininity’ or ‘do masculinity’. Above all, the same generalisations may distract future researchers from responding to many burning questions on the use and reflection of language in the construction of complex gender differences and gender relations. It is, however, interesting to note that researchers such as Naidoo and Kongola (2004), Phendla (2004), Littrell and Nkomo (2005), Kargwell (2008), Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) and Dlamini (2016) identified this gap and have since conducted intensive studies on leadership as influenced by gender and race differences within a South African perspective.

This chapter is situated in the field of sociolinguistics, which is ‘the study of language structure and social context’, with special reference to Xitsonga (Dong 2014: 92). Ehrlich, in Davies and Elder (2004: 304), emphasises that according to sociolinguistics, ‘the way I use language reflects or marks my identity as a particular kind of social subject’. Cameron (1995: 15–16) supports the sociolinguistics idea that ‘how you act depends on who you are’. The relationship between language and gender has not yet developed significantly in Xitsonga language studies. This study is grounded on the assumption that language is ‘the carrier of culture, which at the same time restricts the language’ (Ning et al. 2010: 129). It is premised on the understanding that language is ‘the main method of human thinking and self-expression’ and ‘has power to reflect all kinds of social relationships during communication’ (Dong 2014: 94–95). The chapter aspires to contribute to our understanding of the diversity of possibilities of gender expression through language within the Vatsonga culture. Its epistemology is based on the idea that language is ‘an important communicative tool in human society and it evolves with the development of the society’ (Gu and Day 2013: 251). In summary, the way people use language can be related to the social network to which they belong, and the popular claim is that in academic studies on this topic, there is a complex relationship between language and gender (Cameron 1992).

Xitsonga is a language spoken by the Vatsonga and was designated by the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) as one of the 11 official languages of South Africa. Xitsonga draws its uniqueness from the fact that it is used by groups of people in South Africa, Eswatini, Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. In South Africa, speakers of Xitsonga are concentrated mostly in the Limpopo Province but are also found in Mpumalanga and Gauteng. Historically, Xitsonga is assumed to be derived from the word ‘Vutsonga’, a place occupied by Vatsonga in Mozambique before the arrival of Soshangana. ‘Shangaan’ is sometimes also used, mainly by that portion of the speakers who are direct descendants of Soshangana. However, it should be noted that this is not the official name for these inhabitants of South Africa. Linguistically, Xitsonga and Shangaan are similar, but culturally and anthropologically, there is a slight difference between the Vatsonga and Machangana (Baumbach 1987). In the former Bantustan Gazankulu, a double-barrel name was used to indicate related languages spoken in South Africa, Mozambique, Eswatini and Zimbabwe. In this case, Tsonga/Shangaan referred to the language, whereas Vatsonga/Machangana referred to those who spoke it. This naming approach was formally used until the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994. However, its application in post-democratic South Africa was viewed as divisive and also demeaning to some members of society and resulted in a public outcry by some listeners of Munghana Lonene FM (MLFM), the community’s national radio station. The radio station ended

up retaining the name Xitsonga (as dictated by its SABC broadcasting license), which, according to the Constitution, includes both groups. The language name Xitsonga was truncated to Tsonga to assume a colonised orthography without the significant prefix. Some researchers conclude that the colonisation of the name was intended to make its pronunciation easier for non-native speakers (Halala and Mthebule 2014; Maluleke 2017).

This chapter, which is contextualised within a social constructionist framework, aims to explore stylistic and conversational expressions as elements of Xitsonga sociocultural identity in an intercultural society within the context of language and gender and provides empirical substance to theoretical notions. The following objectives played a critical role in arriving at the abovementioned aim:

- To analyse the impact of the transderivational morphology on the semantic structure of the partner words in Xitsonga
- To explore Xitsonga linguistic gender expressions based on agentive and adverbial instrumental prefixes
- To account for the impact of cognitive meaning extension in constructing deep-rooted linguistic prejudice and discrimination based on gender.

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The above objectives were arrived at by responding to the following questions:

- To what extent does transderivational morphology impact the semantic structure of the Xitsonga partner words?
- What is the idea created by Xitsonga linguistic gender expressions based on agentive and adverbial instrumental prefixes?
- How is cognitively based extension of meaning interpreted in the construct of deep-rooted linguistic prejudice and discrimination based on gender?

The chapter explores the linguistic expressions within the Vatsonga family context as influenced by their various sociocultural aspects. Nkomo and Ngambi (2009: 60) posit that 'culture has a significant influence on gender stereotyping, socialisation, family and work relationships and the status of women in different countries'. Marriage among the Vatsonga has traditionally been treated as a contract of commitment with rules and regulations that represent the husband's stereotypes, societal prejudice and culture. In the current South African political and socioeconomic climate,

the traditionalist view of marriage as providing social status, economic security, and protection no longer applies. It is viewed as being no longer attached to the traditional confines of the Vatsonga 'genuine marriage institution', and concepts indicating affinity by another marriage, such as stepfather, stepmother and stepchild, lack definition in the Vatsonga society. Despite this lack, the Vatsonga culture does not allow the death of a husband to result in the disintegration of a family and the destruction of the marriage institution. Hence this study on intersectionality and the (re) marriage of widowed women.

## **Theoretical framework and methodology**

This chapter avoids debating the appropriateness of feminism and feminist theories. An extensive review of published research on language and gender studies generally indicates that, with regard to these theories, there has never been a unified body of thought. The chapter focuses on exploring gender differentiation in practical language use within the Vatsonga society. Research has also found that messages expressed through words are aligned with the ideological standpoint of the producers of the text or speech. Xitsonga, like all other languages, plays a critical role in inhabiting, enacting and responding to gender and language as influenced by various forms of social identities. In this chapter, the community of practice (CoP) theory has been applied as 'a way of seeing, a perspective from which to contemplate something to understand it' (Chesterman and Wagner 2002: 2). The theory is meant to explore ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs, values and power relations and helps us to understand human behaviour and linguistic behaviour in particular (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992). Above all, CoP theory has the potential to develop a model for understanding, analysing and describing the functions and evolution of literary systems and their specific application in the learning of language and gender.

While Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) advanced CoP theory, a dominant reading of Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998; 2000) projects these authors as its true proponents. The word community, which is attached to the CoP theory, refers to 'groups of people that interact regularly, which may be associated with the dimension of community, inherently and irreducibly a social endeavour' (Duguid 2005: 109). According to Cox (2005: 11), community may have the connotation of a 'rather large, helpful and friendly, bounded group', and it can also be argued that it 'carries with it quite a heavy baggage of idealist connotation' (Lindkvist 2005: 1193). Although there is no common agreement among researchers and scholars about what exactly a community is, it is generally understood that it must be informed by boundaries and proximity, as well as the quality

of relationships (Wenger 1998, 2000; Tosey and Mathison 2003; Cox 2005; Roberts 2006). Within the context of CoP theory, the Vatsonga family is considered as a community where language and gender can be closely and decisively studied.

CoP theory enabled us to explore and explain the circumstances in which widowed Vatsonga women find themselves. It addressed both social and cultural factors with regard to changes in behaviour and learning about Vatsonga beliefs, traditions and values and was also applied to explore how language use influences the relationship between widowed women and their in-laws and their behaviour during and after mourning. Unlike many theories, such as that of Piaget, which is based on behaviourism as a sole focus of studying gender and which seems to rest largely with the individual when applied in the study of language and gender (Piaget and Inhelder 1969), CoP theory adopts a social process that is situated in some cultural, historical and geopolitical contexts and emphasises the learning and mutability in gendered linguistic displays across groups (Bergvall 1999). Researchers generally favour the application of this theory when studying issues related to the assessment of variation and deviance or variability in gendered practices and identities. Bergvall (1999: 279) asserts that CoP is 'well suited to address the complexity of the cross-currents of modern Western and other societies where gender roles are in flux and under challenge; where members might construct differing practices in response to differing social opportunities and settings, such as work within non-traditional fields'.

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CoP theory seems to be in harmony with the philosophy of *Ubuntu* owing to its ability to weave a golden thread between the notions of traditional and modern, as well as its capacity to encompass and transcend the limits of time (Thompson 2017). The philosophy of *Ubuntu* is explained as 'a social, economic and political phenomenon which is deeply rooted in a people's traditions and cultural system and which manifests in many forms of people's behaviour and actions whether individually or collectively' (Baloyi and Mabaso 2018). CoP theory also ensures that the research study is in sync with a community's policy agenda, and its key premise is that it can arise in any domain of human endeavour to learn through participation in multiple social practices over time (Lave and Wenger 1991; Brown and Duguid 1991; Wenger, McDermott and Snyder 2002; Cox 2005; Farnsworth and Higham 2012; Farnsworth, Kleanthous and Wenger-Trayner 2016). CoP theory can also facilitate aggregation of knowledge that may be widely dispersed among different stakeholders.

For the purpose of this chapter, preference was given to CoP theory based on its ability to contemplate many shades, such as the Vatsonga cultural identities attached to sex, gender, feminism and feminist theories. Bergvall (1999: 273) states that CoP theory naturalises intragroup variation as a social construction of gender and advises that the theory 'must be augmented by critical study

of both ideology and innateness'. CoP theory is a lens that is not used only to focus on a set of gendered characteristics but also on gender and social justice. The feminist gender theorists argue that women and men are social categories defined in relation to each other rather than based on a pre-social biological essence. They posit that a patriarchal society takes certain features of male and female biology and turns them into sets of gendered characteristics that serve to empower men and disempower women and are then presented as natural attributes of men and women. Delphy and Leonard (1992) assert that men and women exist as socially significant categories because of the exploitative relationship that binds them together and sets them apart. Many research studies have applied African feminism and post-colonial theories to identify the differences between the language use of men and women from different angles by using different methodologies (Gu and Day 2013). The question asked in this chapter is: 'What adjustments should we make regarding these differences to help people employed in the education sector to think differently and consider inclusive language development?'

The qualitative research method has been adopted as 'an enquiry process of understanding a social human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in [a] natural setting' (Creswell 1994: 2). This research method has the potential to 'produce descriptive data—people's own written or spoken words and observable behaviour' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2004: 227). A qualitative research design can be defined as having the capacity to assist researchers in analysing the symbol systems used in texts, focusing mainly on the meaning, language and cultural experiences expressed in written texts (Du Plooy 2002: 32–33). This study was qualitative in nature as a content analysis technique was adopted for collecting and analysing data in the form of words. Connolly (1998) posits that the goal of qualitative research is to obtain insights into particular processes and practices that prevail in a specific location. An observational exercise was carried out to analyse common ways of writing and selected Xitsonga expressions used in conversations.

To better understand the intersection of sex and gender in the (re)marriage of widowed women and (re)constituted Vatsonga families, the study included conversations by all-female, all-male and mixed-sex groups. The tools for data collection included semi-structured interviews, and the target population included young widows (25–45 years of age) as victims and older females (55–65 years of age) as facilitators of (re)marriage. Participants were assured of anonymity throughout the study and its publication.

Intersectionality, a term coined by Crenshaw (1991), was used as the tool for analysis. It framed and allowed for the mediation of the interactivity of language, culture and gender as social structures

in determining the life experiences of widowed Vatsonga women and discrimination in the context of their (re)marriage. However, intersectionality can be used as a feminist theory, a methodology or a tool for analysing multiple social identity structures such as language, race, culture and gender in fostering life experiences (Symington 2004; McCall 2005; Davis 2008; Nash 2008).

## Background

Like other societies and cultures, the Vatsonga are entities that are continually changing. However, remnants of the past in the form of South Africa's history of racial and social discrimination can still be traced as factors that influence the need to renew and reshape societies. Traditional beliefs, patriarchal stereotypes, societal prejudice, cultural attitudes, customary legal arrangements and laws relating to marriage, divorce and inheritance can sometimes be discerned in language use that discriminates against women and favours men.

The Vatsonga (re)marriage institution expects women to adhere to restrictive family rules communicated through standard idiomatic and other linguistic expressions. Without itemised directives from their husbands, these sociocultural elements tend to leave women with limited decision-making power and control over their resources. Patriarchal social ideology still dominates Vatsonga (re)marriage procedures and places wives in a subordinate position in relation to their husbands. This arrangement prevents women from enjoying their basic human rights, especially after the death of their spouses. This is made worse by the way in which the Vatsonga manage the process of the (re)marriage of women whose husbands have died. The *vakhegula* (old females) still play a critical role in facilitating (re)marriage and the (re)constitution of the families of widowed women after the death of their spouses. Some Xitsonga idiomatic expressions are invoked to encourage surviving male in-laws to benefit from the inheritance of their deceased elder siblings by acting as caretaker husbands. The process is usually facilitated by the *vakhegula* (old females), who can be perceived as perpetrators of female-on-female injustice. Some resistance to this societal pressure has become evident since the establishment of a democratic South Africa in 1994, and it is generally believed that it was triggered by the fact that the majority of Vatsonga women now have careers and independence and often earn more than their male counterparts.



## Statement of the problem

Xitsonga idiomatic expressions such as *Nhwanyana i huku yo khomela vaendzi* (meaning *Nhwanyana loko a tekiwa u ta siya muti xivundzeni a famba*), which can be translated as 'A daughter is a hen to be caught for visitors' (meaning that when a daughter marries, she leaves her village and goes away) put girl-children in a vulnerable position. Girls may consequently struggle to find ways to deal with their cultural identity in intercultural communication when they later attend institutions of higher learning. In most cases, they find themselves trapped by some of these Xitsonga idiomatic expressions and other popular sayings that have somehow become their frame of reference and influence their habits and points of view (Mezirov 2009). Some Xitsonga linguistic expressions that have become repeated utterances, as if calling for learning by doing, have led to misunderstandings and inconsistencies (Argote, Beckman and Epple 1990; Darr, Argote and Epple 1995; Reagans, Argote and Brooks 2005; Amin and Roberts 2008). Like all other societies, female Vatsonga students must emerge as professionals empowered with skills that enable them to interact with others in multi-ethnic and multicultural societies. This conception of their world compromises some inherent identity markers that instil in them a sense of belonging to their ethnic group.

The terms gender and sex attribute influence in the construct of language, but the stereotypical judgements and misunderstandings attached to these concepts call for further investigation. The distinction between gender and sex is often blurred in the Vatsonga community, and either can be used for one concept, namely to indicate whether a person is male or female. It is also worth noting that sex is a phenomenon, fixed and based in nature, whereas gender is fluid, based on culture and determined socially (Ellis 2008). Bergvall (1999: 275) regards gender as 'the social construction of femininity and masculinity'. Gender, which refers to male or female, 'indicates something about socialised behaviour patterns'. Gender roles are set by convention and other social, economic, political and cultural forces and can be expressed explicitly through language (Hesse-Biber and Carger 2000: 91).

Legal prescripts such as the *2019/20 Annual Report, Commission for Gender Equality – A society free from gender oppression and inequality* demonstrate South Africa's political attempts to redress the past system of gender bias. This framework establishes guidelines for South Africans to take the action required to remedy the historical legacy of gender bias and discrimination. However, behind the vortex of discursive public participation lies a creeping non-inclusive language that feeds into this democratic achievement and perturbing attempts to fight different forms of gender-based violence.

## Limitations

This study was conducted by a native Xitsonga speaker whose ideas are largely a manifestation of the collective thinking of a people's culture and are, therefore, naturally biased. This natural bias has always served as a voice and natural inclination to refuse to be biased. The study, which is qualitative in design, provides for the interpretation of the results and contributes to the existing body of knowledge. The findings are subject to further interpretation by other researchers and scholars.

## Language and sociocultural identity

178 Language is one of the most prominent identity markers in society (Garuba 2001: 7), and the knowledge, beliefs and practices of a particular society are reflected in its language (Baker 2003: 11). Like other languages, Xitsonga represents an ethnic or cultural identity. However, identity is not explicitly defined but rather conceptualised and displayed through action. This could be one of the reasons for identity being characterised by complex, allusive and ambiguous qualities that make it a difficult concept to define. Identity refers to 'a sense of belonging, and involves becoming. It embraces a shared sense of companionship, beliefs, interests and basic principles of living, and it can hardly exist outside of its representation in cultural discourses' (Baker 2003: 245). Zeleza (2006) posits that, as a social construct, identity can promote unity, patriotism and peaceful existence, foster national pride, reconciliation and nation-building or fuel violence, conflict and confrontational existence. Martin (1996: 188) defines identity as follows: 'The semantic ambivalence of the word "identity" emerges clearly: it connotes sameness and permanence, difference and change. "Identity", as well as the discourses and the narratives which refer to it, cannot be understood as reflecting an ontological, immutable reality or essence.'

Zeleza (2006:1) further argues that 'African identities, like African languages, are inventions, mutually constitute existential and epistemic constructions. Invention implies a history, a social process; it denaturalizes cultural artefacts and practices, stripping them of primordial authenticity and essentialism'. This scholar seems to have overlooked the fact that Africans existed long before the modern era, as confirmed by Deacon (1997), who refers to Africa as the cradle of humanity. The European obsession with social classifications is demonstrated by apartheid South Africa's decision to divide Africans along ethnic lines. Writers and speakers should refrain from perpetuating this tendency as it constitutes non-inclusive language. However, evidence exists of linguistic elements

of discrimination against women embedded in some idiomatic expressions in most African languages spoken in South Africa, including Xitsonga, which constitute a biased linguistic context. This is evidenced by Martin's (1996: 193) observation about the danger of falling into the trap of exploiting identity and the warning that 'the world we live in risks to be a place where violence and conflicts are fuelled by identity narratives based on aggressive and exclusive conceptions of culture and identity'.

From a scholarly observation and the above descriptions, one might deduce that identity is not irrevocably fixed but rather relational and that it is not only attached to its semantic properties but also to its ability to mutate. Hofstede (1997: 1) associates culture with the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others and describes culture as 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'. Culture manifests itself through four categories, namely symbols, values, rituals and heroes, which implies that culture can be both perceived and described. Symbols refer to verbal and non-verbal language, which are the focus of this study. Values are feelings, rituals are socially essential collective activities within a culture, and heroes exist primarily in the culture's myths, real or imaginary (Hofstede 1997). Cultural identity can, therefore, refer to the characteristics, orientation, feelings and beliefs that distinguish one group from another. Cultural identity often embraces traditions and heritage that have been passed down to new generations through the years. In summary, cultural identity refers to identification with and perceived acceptance into a group that has a shared system of symbols and meanings, as well as norms for conduct. Cultural identity contributes to a sense of belonging and 'is wholly cultural in character and does not exist outside of its representation in cultural discourse' (Baker 2003: 45).

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## **The role of intersectionality in studies dealing with language and gender**

Intersectionality can play an important role in studies that deal with language and gender. Shields (2008: 301) describes intersectionality as the mutually constitutive relations among social identities. It is 'a central tenet of feminist thinking and has transformed how gender is conceptualized in research' and thus has the potential to bring about positive social change. McCall (2005) refers to the immense contribution made by intersectionality to feminist theory and our present understanding of gender by revealing that individuals' social identities profoundly influence their beliefs about and experience of gender. Shields (2008: 302) agrees and states that 'we are not

“passive recipients” of an identity position, but “practice” each aspect of identity as informed by other identities we claim’ and that gender is one of the categories of identity—awareness of self, self-image, self-reflection and self-esteem. However, it is widely agreed that intersections create both oppression and opportunity (Zinn and Dill 1996; Zinn 2000) since ‘an intersectional position may be disadvantaged relative to one group, but advantaged relative to another’ (Shields 2008: 302). Most importantly, gender must also be understood in the context of power relations embedded in social identities (Collins 1990).

### **Transderivational morphology on the semantic structure**

Semantics, as a study of meaning, is not restricted to words only but reaches below and above the level of words. This chapter explores the meanings contributed by adding prefixes, suffixes and roots below the word level. It also deals with the meanings of clauses, sentences or larger units of discourse above the word level. The chapter is, however, confined to the idea that a word or phrase can reflect attitudes towards gender. In other words, the focus is on referential meaning, which means that there is a definite reference relationship between a word and the gender signified by that word.

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Crystal (1997: 249) defines morphology as ‘a branch of grammar, which studies the structure of words, primarily through the use of the morpheme construct’. While morphology is located within the field of linguistics and deals with morphemes and the patterns and structures of words, the linguistic concept adopted is transderivational morphology, derived from neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), which was developed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in the 1970s as an approach to enhance the effectiveness of communication and facilitate learning and personal development. Bandler also applied transderivational morphology as an extension of the Meta Model, as it implies the examination of the movement of a root word, and together with Robert Dilts and Todd Epstein, created several procedures for exploring and applying it. They applied the concept of transderivational morphology as the process of searching back through one’s stored memories and mental representations to find the personal reference experiences from which a current understanding or mental map has been derived (Bandler and Grinder 1975; Grinder and Bandler 1976; Dilts 1998; Churches and Terry 2007; Henwood and Lister 2007).

Although there are other word formation processes worth noting, such as clipping, blending, borrowing, inflexion and coinage, the formation process that has been of much interest to this study is affixation. Adejumo and Osunbade (2014: 18) explain that affixation means ‘to be capable

of performing any function, therefore a bound morpheme is usually affixed/joined to the free morpheme, and this process is known as affixation (that is, the joining of bound morphemes) to the free one(s). When bound morphemes are added to a stem word, a new word with a new and different meaning is created. In Xitsonga, affixation plays a critical role in forming different new words. Most noteworthy, Xitsonga is agglutinative in nature and thus accommodates the extensive use of prefixes and suffixes in the formation of words.

The two types of affixes, namely prefixes and suffixes, are attached by processes called prefixation and suffixation. Prefixation is the joining of a prefix to the free morpheme. A prefix is a bound morpheme affixed at the beginning of a word. The word prefixation is itself morphologically realised from a prefix, which is a bound morpheme affixed to the beginning of a word and action (the act of). It, therefore, refers to the act of placing a bound morpheme at the beginning of a word (Beard 1995, 1998; Hlungwani 2012; Adejumo and Osunbade 2014). A suffix is an affix added after a root or stem. Suffixes are added to the end of a word to create a new word with a different meaning. Bases (roots) and affixes are regarded as two separate classes of morphemes (Crystal 1980; Fromkin and Rodman 1993; Akmajian, Demers, Farmer and Harnish 2010). Lyons (1979: 181) regards a morpheme as ‘the unit of “lowest” rank out of which words, the units of next “highest” rank are composed.’

A morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in a language and may or may not stand alone. There are two types of morphemes, namely free morphemes and bound morphemes. A free morpheme is independent and self-expressive or can stand alone with a specific meaning—for example, *manana* (mother). A bound morpheme does not stand alone and does not have a meaning but is usually attached to another morpheme. The plural morpheme *va-* can, for example, be attached to nouns as a prefix when combined with a free morpheme, *manana* (mother), to form *vamanana* (mothers).

The suffix *-nyana* can also be combined with both *manana* (mother) and *vamanana* (mothers) to form the diminutives *manananyana* (small mother) and *vamanananyana* (small mothers). In Xitsonga, adverbial instrumental suffixes such as *n’wina* (you) are used to convert a noun to an interjection. It is a shortened version of the phrase *manana wa n’wina/manana wa wena* (your mother [element of respect]/your mother [element of disrespect]). This serves to confirm that morphemes in Xitsonga can assume different forms and meanings depending on the context in which they appear.

In Xitsonga, morphological derivation is a process by which a new word is built from a base, usually through the addition of an affix. Xitsonga contains many suffixes that play an important role in forming different kinds of new words. Some examples of nominal suffixes and verbal suffixes can be seen below.

- *manana* (mother) > *manan'wina!* (Interjection of oath, usually expressed by women.)
- *manana* (mother) > *manano!/manawe!* (Interjection expressing shocked surprise at something repulsive or wicked, usually expressed by both men and women—it simply means 'I am dead!') Alternatively, Vatsonga women usually express a cry of distress such as this one as *Yowee!* ('Alas!').
- *dyana* (eat) > *dyanaka!* ('Eat, please!' A polite way of encouraging someone to act as desired. It is usually expressed by women.)
- *dyana* (eat) > *dyanavu!* ('Please also have your share of the food.' It is usually expressed by women.)

The addition of nominal and verbal suffixes, as demonstrated in the two sets of examples, *manana* and *dyana* (mother and eat), resulted in new words with new meanings. The above statements, usually expressed by women, are uttered in low-rise intonation and are projected as caring. The new words formed from the verb *-dyana* (eat) have contributed to creating a new sense of harmonious interpersonal relationship.

### **Xitsonga linguistic gender expressions based on agentive and adverbial instrumental prefixes**

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This chapter also interrogates the effect of adding derivational morphemes on the grammatical category or part of speech of the root word to which it is added. In Xitsonga, more than one derivational morpheme can be added to a root word to create several different meanings. Note that the root alone does not have a definite meaning and so cannot be used in speech until it has been fitted into an appropriate morphological framework consisting of words belonging to various parts of speech. Xitsonga has some forms that are applied as expressive of an agent or agency, denoting the performer of an action of agentive nouns and suffixes. The adverbial instrumental prefix *ka-* and the exclamation mark (!) as the suffix are usually applied by women in an attempt to politely direct their pathways of mental association to the addressee. Linguistically, the adverbial instrumental prefix *ka-* is a shortened version of the phrase *Eka wena [jaha, nhwana, khalavi, khegu]* ('Dear you' [boy, girl, lovely boy, lovely girl]). The adverbial instrumental prefix *ka-* cannot be considered as a prefix in Xitsonga but rather operates like a pre-prefix or an augment since *mu-* is the prefix of *mu-fan-a* ('boy'). Women usually apply this form of communication to politely direct their pathways of mental association with the addressee, for example:

- *mufana* (boy) > ***kamufana!*** (hey, boy!)
- *jaha* (young boy) > ***kajaha!*** (hey, boy!)
- *nhwana* (young girl) > ***kanhwana!*** (hey, girl!)
- *wena* (you) > ***kawena!*** (hey, you!)
- *khalavi* (lovely young boy) > ***kakhalavi!*** (hey, lovely boy!)
- *khegu* (lovely young girl) > ***kakhegu!*** (hey, lovely girl!)

Vatsonga men usually demonstrate their power over the addressees by adding various affixes (prefixes and suffixes) to give twists to commonly used base words. The adverbial instrumental prefix **he-** is a shortened version of the interjection *Hey!*, which is used to express disapproval, reproof or admonishment.

- *mufana/jaha* (boy or young man) > ***hemufana/hejaha!*** (hey, you boy/young man!)
- *nandzuwee* (you fellow) > ***henandzuwee!*** (hey, you fellow!)
- *nhwana* (young girl) > ***henhwana!*** (hey, you young girl!)
- *kamundzhina* (my fellow being) > ***hekamundzhina!*** (hey, you fellow being!)
- *khegu* (lovely young girl) > ***hekhegu!*** (hey, you lovely girl!)

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The linguistic expressions provided above simply mean to be summarily summoned. Men consider themselves as having higher status and use high-rise intonation as a way of asserting their dominance. The adverbial instrumental prefixes *ka-* and *he-*, as applied by women and men, respectively, reveal different vernacular styles. Men tend to adopt a more vernacular style that demonstrates dominance and shows that they are unique, while women's style suggests sympathy.

Vatsonga women use the greeting *xewee!* ('hello') as a salutation to their husbands or older persons. This form of greeting adds more individual inclination and respect. Should the husband fail to acknowledge this form of greeting, the word *bava/papa!* (father) is used as a follow-up. However, when a wife calls out for the husband's attention and uses the expression *hee!* (hello!), it is seen as disrespectful if directed towards someone who is older than the attention-seeker. The contrast in meaning between the expressions *xewee!* ('hello') and *hee!* ('hello') demonstrates the power that men wield over women. According to Bloomfield (1983), an interjection is a word or expression that occurs as an utterance on its own and expresses a spontaneous feeling or reaction. Interjections can be further divided into subcategories, namely primary and secondary interjections (Lyons 1981).

Vatsonga women use the following idiophones to express their polite but sincere objection and/or as an interjective of surprise, as shown in the following examples:

- *Ebo!* (a vehement objection)
- *Ehee!* (a vehement objection)
- *Xihambano!* (a vehement objection/interjection or oath)
- *Manan'wina!* (a vehement objection/interjection or oath)
- *Ndhozamanan'wina!* (interjection or oath)
- *Xuu/yhii!* (expression of shock and disbelief)
- *Swona!* (expression of shock and disbelief)
- *Ixii!* (expression of mockery)
- *Hala!* (expression of mockery)

The observation is that the affixation applied to the above examples influences the meaning and the impact of the words on the addressees. The affix also creates some sense of politeness and sympathy.

### **Enhancing Xitsonga's sociocultural identity through idiomatic expressions**

In the context of this chapter, diversity refers to individual and group differences that include but are not limited to differences in, for example, gender, race, ethnic group, religion, age, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, personality, political affiliation, life experiences, learning styles, working styles, class, ethnicity, culture, country of origin or viewpoints. There has been sufficient advocacy with regard to the vision and goals towards achieving gender equality, as guided by the Bill of Rights contained in The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996), which incorporates the acceptance of the equal and inalienable rights of all citizens, irrespective of gender, race, ethnic group, religion, age, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, etc. (Bill of Rights Sections 9.1 to 9.4). In the context of inclusive language, diversity should be measured qualitatively in terms of equality. Within the confines of diversity, Smith (2005) provides a comprehensive description of language as:

a symbolic, culturally transmitted system of communication, which is learnt through the inference of meaning. It is important to acknowledge not only that language is a



culturally transmitted system of communication, but also that this transmission is based on the inference of meaning. I describe the importance of meaning inference, not only in language acquisition, but also in developing a unified explanation for language change and evolution.

It can, therefore, be deduced that the meaning of words is confined to what they convey. Longman (1998: 67) regards idiomatic expressions as ‘a sequence of words which have a different meaning as a group or from the meaning it would have if you understand each word separately’. Idioms, therefore, cannot be expressed in isolated words and should not be broken up into their elements since they behave as fixed expressions. This view is supported by Shojaei and Laheghi (2012: 1220), who define idioms as ‘an inalienable part of each language found in large numbers in most of the languages’. The fact that the meaning of these collocations cannot be understood from the superficial meanings of the single words constituting them implies that there is a possibility for non-inclusive language. In this chapter, the concept of idiomatic expressions has been applied as embracing proverbs, similes, idioms, metaphors, puns, sarcasm and any other forms of figurative language, herein summarily referred to as idiomatic expressions.

Junod and Jaques’s (1957) *Vutlhari bya Vatsonga (Machangana)–The Wisdom of the Tsonga-Shangana People*, and Ntsanwisi’s (1968) *Tsonga Idioms* serve as the primary sources that conserve and document the Vatsonga cultural heritage. Ntsanwisi’s (1968) publication also constitutes a comprehensive scientific study of the semantic and linguistic aspects of the Xitsonga language. The table below provides ten selected examples of idiomatic expressions that serve as a frame of reference influencing the Vatsonga society’s language use and culture of thinking.

**Table 1: Xitsonga idiomatic expressions that exhibit gender-based discrimination**

Xitsonga (source text)	English (target text/translated text)
<p>Mavala ya mangwa i mavala man'we.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Vavasati va fana eka hinkwaswo leswi va swi endlaka.</i></p>	<p>The zebra's stripes are all alike.  <b>Meaning:</b> Women are all alike in their behaviour.</p>
<p>Mavala ya mfutsu i mavala man'we.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Vavasati hinkwavo i van'we. Hambu un'wana a lehile, un'wana a komile, i vavasati hinkwavo.</i></p>	<p>All tortoises have the same colour.  <b>Meaning:</b> All women are alike. Even though one is tall and another is short, they are all women.</p>
<p>Homu ya ntlhohe a yi na ntswamba.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Wansati loko a xongile, loko ji nge singe [loko a nga ri xiphunta] i noyi.</i></p>	<p>A white cow has no milk.  <b>Meaning:</b> A beautiful woman will probably be either a fool or a witch.</p>
<p>Mbhuri a xi hetu.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Wansati wo saseka a nga hetisekanga.</i></p>	<p>A beautiful person is not complete.  <b>Meaning:</b> A beautiful woman is not perfect.</p>
<p>Nhwanyana i huku yo khomela vaendzi.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Nhwanyana loko a tekiwa u ta siya muti xivundzeni a famba.</i></p>	<p>A daughter is a hen to be caught for visitors.  <b>Meaning:</b> When a daughter marries, she leaves her village and goes away.</p>
<p>Xinyanyana xi voniwa hi timpapa.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Wansati wa mahanyelo yo biha u tiviwa hi ndlela leyi a tibombisaka hi yona.</i></p>	<p>A little bird is recognised by its feathers.  <b>Meaning:</b> A woman of bad conduct is known by how she dresses.</p>
<p>Kuwa le'ro tshwuka a ri kali swivungu.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Nhwana lo'wo saseka, loko a nga lowi, wa loloha, kumbe wa yiva, kumbe wa kariha, kumbe u ni mona.</i></p>	<p>A red fig does not lack worms inside.  <b>Meaning:</b> If a beautiful girl is not a witch, is often lazy, or is addicted to robbing, ill-tempered or wicked.</p>
<p>Ku dlaya hi tinyarhi.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Ku fa hikwalaho ka vuvabyi bya vavasati.</i></p>	<p>To be killed by buffaloes.  <b>Meaning:</b> To die from diseases spread by women.</p>

<p>Ku mama vuloyi.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Ku dyondza vuloyi kusuka eka manana wa wena.</i></p>	<p>To suckle witchcraft.  <b>Meaning:</b> To learn witchcraft from one's mother.</p>
<p>Ku va na mbilu ya xisati.  <b>Meaning:</b> <i>Ku va munhu wa vutoya swinene.</i></p>	<p>To have a womanly heart.  <b>Meaning:</b> To display effeminate behaviour.</p>

These idiomatic expressions constitute the basic principles of the Vatsonga cultural identity and are used as the frame of reference when decisions are made during both marriage negotiations and proceedings, as well as during family dispute management. They also have a strong influence on people's habits, thinking and points of view. Many of these idiomatic expressions provoke emotional responses and fuel confrontational relationships. They perpetuate gender-based violence, domestic violence, emotional abuse and other forms of abuse suffered by many rural Vatsonga females.

The examples cited above are meant to describe women in a manner that devalues them while privileging men. They have an exclusionary impact on women and make them feel ostracised and less motivated to face the realities of life. This language usage has some potential for creating identity at the interstices of multiple axes, such as gender and sexual orientation. They perpetuate the stereotyping of, myths about and prejudice against women. A sizeable number of published Xitsonga texts have adopted this tone, and it is unfortunate that some are still being prescribed for use by learners and students to gnaw at the moral fibre of our democratic society.

### **A cognitively based account of the extensions of meaning in the construct of Xitsonga in deep-rooted gender-based prejudice and discrimination**

Derivation in Xitsonga creates a new word by changing the category and/or meaning of the base word to which it applies. This section presents an analysis of deverbatives derived from verbs and the resulting semantic structures of the newly formed words as a demonstration of congruence in meaning attached to gender. Hlungwani (2012) explores the classes in which nominalisation occurs through affixation of the class prefix 7(a) and the nominal suffix onto the verb stem and determines the semantic features noted with these deverbatives in various noun classes.

Nominalisation means turning some other part of speech, such as a verb, an adjective or an adverb, into a noun or using it as the head of a noun phrase, with or without morphological transformation

(Comrie 1976; Comrie and Thompson 2007). Hlungwani (2012) focuses on individual-level nominal and stage-level nominal. This section focuses on converting verbs into nouns that refer to people to demonstrate how gender bias is socially constructed in Vatsonga society.

**Table 2: Nominal nouns created from Xitsonga verbs**

Verbs	Newly formed nouns (nominal nouns)
- <i>feva</i> (to devote, to hire out for sexual intercourse)	<i>Xifevi</i> (prostitute)
- <i>gawula</i> (lead one to informal marriage)	<i>Mugawula</i> (one led into informal marriage)
- <i>phukula</i> (froth over through fermenting)	<i>Xiphukuphuku</i> (fool)

Marhanele and Bila (2016) define the above newly formed nouns as follows:

- *Xifevi* > *wansati wa mahanyelo ya rigangugangu* (a woman characterised by ill morals)
- *Mugawula* > *wansati loyi a hlomisiwaka a nga lovoriwangi naswona a nga tiveki kahle laha a humaka kona, a tlhela hakanyingi a tswale vana vo ringana ni loyi a n'wi gawuleke* (a woman who marries a man whose family background is unknown, without her parents receiving lobola, and the very woman has given birth to children who are of the same age as this man and who have different fathers)
- *Xiphukuphuku* > *wanuna wo gawuriwa hi wansati kumbe wanuna wo lan'wa ndyangu a ya hlomisiwa hi wansati loyi a nga na humbi ya vana lava n'wi hundzaka* (a man who married a woman or abandoned his family to marry a woman with many children who are older than he is)

The newly formed nouns are defined so that their meanings indicate deep-rooted prejudice and discrimination against women. The nominals (newly formed nouns) have been constructed as individual-level nominals that are derogative and suggest that women are and remain excessively immoral. This tendency can create mental associations with coherent patterns of bad thoughts used by Vatsonga society to understand women and judge their behaviour accordingly.

## **Research findings**

This observational study was based on the familiar ways we write and speak Xitsonga, which, like all languages, makes a valuable contribution to the development of a people's culture and identity and is thus viewed as a reliable tool for sustaining a tribe's cultural materials. Vatsonga men use sexist language that most Vatsonga women seem to approve of, as well as popular expressions worthy of acceptance. Whereas Vatsonga women's language reflects their consciousness, nurturance, emotional expressivity, connectedness to their children and husbands and sensitivity towards others, their male counterparts' language reflects their toughness, a sense of independence and control and authority over their children and wives. The practical language use provided in this chapter demonstrates that the Vatsonga women use linguistic features of tentativeness and powerlessness, which shows that some of the Xitsonga linguistic features are non-inclusive and discriminatory.

The interview revealed that the process of mourning their deceased husbands was experienced by Vatsonga women as emotionally draining. Their loss also takes a toll mentally, spiritually and physically, leaving them with nervous energy. They succumb to discriminatory demands because they fear losing their homes if they refuse to agree to newly arranged relationships.

Culture is not a generic trait, but its elements, symbols, values, rituals and heroes are shared through interaction with others in a society. It is influenced by ethnic traditions that consider men superior to women, thus giving them a strong voice in decision-making processes. This is a clear demonstration that language can—consciously or unconsciously—damage relationships if it offends, intimidates, belittles, excludes, reinforces harmful stereotypes and contributes to the unequal status of individuals or groups. Inclusive language makes people feel valued and included. In the Vatsonga society, gender is, therefore, constructed and accepted through social relationships based on their cultural context.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrates that Xitsonga is not only applied as a culturally transmitted medium for the formation of meaning and knowledge but also reflects the society's social structures and attitudes based on inference of meaning. It demonstrates how Vatsonga women and men use language differently and how sexism manifests itself linguistically. Vatsonga men use their identity to consolidate their power over women and their will to exist as dominant beings. The practical

examples of Xitsonga linguistic gender expressions based on agentive and adverbial instrumental prefixes demonstrate that the linguistic aspects discriminate against women, are biased and perpetuate prejudice and stereotyping. The conclusion is that some Xitsonga idiomatic expressions are discriminatory and saturated with gendered ideologies and power relations, which confirms that the influences are embedded in the hard-to-crack patriarchal system.

This multidisciplinary chapter provided a model analysis that draws a logical connection between Xitsonga linguistic expressions and their meanings with a view to understanding intersectionality and (re)marriage of widowed women within the Xitsonga sociocultural identity. It also encourages people to be more attuned to the use of language that does not offend, demean or exclude people for any reason.

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# Chapter 10

## Unholy Unions: Analysing the Constitutionality of Levirate Marriages in Zulu Custom

*Sicelo Z. Ntshangase*

### Introduction

Nelisiwe Zulu's books *Isiko Nelungelo* (2011a) and *Umshado* (2011b) are written in a post-1994 South African context and demonstrate the conflict between patriarchal societies and the modern world. While patriarchal families still believe in cultural traditions that are oppressive to women, the modern world seems to embrace the feminist ideology and advocate for gender equality (Ntshangase 2018a). The Constitution, guaranteeing and safeguarding women's rights, supports South African women who believe in the modern world (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development 1996).

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The two abovementioned books engaged with in this chapter illustrate that the dawn of democracy in South Africa did not make life easier for some women who marry into patriarchal families (Zulu 2011a, 2011b). Those women find themselves subjected to marginalisation and degradation by oppressive cultural customs regarding marriage (Ntshangase 2018b). Since literature is critical in shaping and changing how society thinks about gender issues, those two books were deemed suitable for a discussion of how the cultural tradition of levirate marriage suppresses the constitutional rights of women in post-1994 democratic South Africa. They show the power of the isiZulu language in entrenching gender stereotypes to propagate gender imbalances between men and women in patriarchal Zulu families and society at large.

Levirate marriage is not a strictly Afrocentric cultural tradition but a global phenomenon (Agarwal 1994; Nyanzi, Emodu-Walakira and Serwaniko 2009; Doosuur and Arome 2013; Ogolla 2014; Baloyi 2015; Westreich 2019). Although this cultural tradition, which was already practised by the ancient Israelites, is no longer as dominant as it used to be, it is still being practised by societies around the world—for example, the Punjab and Haryana of India, some communities in Pakistan and Bangladesh, the Igbo of Nigeria, the Nandi, Luo and Kamba of Kenya, Zambia, Uganda and

Sudan, the Supyire of Mali, the Akan of Ghana, the Yoruba of Nigeria, the Sotho, Venda, Tsonga and Nguni in South Africa (Baloyi 2015).

Levirate marriage occurs when a widow is forced by her in-laws to marry her deceased husband's brother (Ogolla 2014). The term levirate marriage is derived from the Latin term *levir*, meaning a husband's brother (Ogolla 2014). Justification for levirate marriage is often based on religion and culture (Baloyi 2015). In an African setting, especially in South Africa, patriarchal families have always used cultural customs to compel women to enter into loveless levirate marriages (Baloyi 2015). These families ignore the fact that according to the Constitution, all people are equal before the law, regardless of race, gender or creed, and women have the right to refuse any form of oppression or subjugation (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development 1996).

Nevertheless, even in democratic South Africa, some women are still being forced into levirate marriages by their patriarchal families. This chapter aims to provide answers to the following questions:

1. How are widows demeaned and trapped in marriages that could be classified as unholy unions?
2. Why and how do these unholy unions obstruct the feminist agenda of emancipating women from all forms of domination by men?

### **Levirate marriages as a direct attack on the feminist agenda of equality**

Nelisiwe Zulu's books *Isiko Nelungelo* and *Umshado* both interrogate gender issues, especially the oppression of women by the families of their deceased husbands through levirate marriage. If analysed through a feminist lens, these books could fuel a robust debate embracing all ideologies of feminism and interrogating how gender imbalances are entrenched in the use of isiZulu.

The feminist criticism approach followed in the analysis of these two books is interdisciplinary as it allows for a multi-thematic analysis involving diverse disciplines, such as anthropology, education, history, language, law, philosophy, psychology and religion. These disciplines play a role in critically analysing the themes of the two books and in substantiating the argument with credible examples depicting the severity of gender inequalities in patriarchal Zulu families. The thematic analysis approach adopted in this chapter speaks directly to the language usage in isiZulu literature viewed through the lens of literary feminist criticism.

The books are analysed by unpacking how the social scripts and institutions, such as cultural institutions and levirate marriage, are used to police gender identities, power and privilege (Butler 1988, 1997, 1999). Since Nelisiwe Zulu's books are both prescribed as Grade 12 set works in IsiZulu First Additional Language, they must be analysed as educational tools for ushering in social change and justice. Young Zulu women and men should read about the violation of women's constitutional rights, engage in debates about these issues, and reposition themselves in society as the custodians of change. The model of educational intervention should embrace the feminist ideals advocated for by Butler (1988) in her assertion that feminism should be about empowering women and should encapsulate the emancipation of all of society from the theatrical acts that exalt men over women.

Nelisiwe Zulu's books expose a string of classical performances or theatrical acts, such as levirate marriage, embroidered in the form of cultural traditions. Butler (1999), who warns that if this string of classical acts goes unchallenged, societies will most likely naturalise or normalise them, believes that the normalisation of these theatrical acts poses a great danger to the feminist agenda of changing the perceptions of society. Once these acts are normalised, it becomes difficult to root them out from society's psyche. Gender inequality could create psychological and cognitive dissonance if it is not deconstructed and subverted (Butler 1999).

Nelisiwe Zulu's books are analysed thematically by juxtaposing literary feminist criticism with narrative criticism. For an authentic interpretation of the text, the argument must be substantiated with a direct narration from the stories (Gunn and Fewell 1993). Although it is impossible to unpack the entire plot and characterisation in an academic chapter, this chapter aims to make the reader aware of what is dealt with in the books. The narrative criticism approach makes critical engagement with the books' themes possible. The books discuss cultural traditions, such as levirate marriage, *ilobolo* (bride price), ancestry, religion and patriarchal families' disapproval of deep feelings such as love. The analysis of these themes is contextualised in the post-1994 democratic South Africa, which boasts a Constitution that guarantees and safeguards the rights of all citizens.

It is important to note that the themes of the books are not only analysed as fictional works of art with fictional characters but also from the viewpoint that language choices in literature play a critical role in shaping the thoughts of society. The reason for this is that language and literature 'are representative of the struggle for power between different social groups in society' (Anttila, Leskinen, Posti-Ahokas and Janhonen-Abuquah 2015: 62). Therefore, what Nelisiwe Zulu narrates in her books and the characters she developed are true reflections of the feelings, thoughts, philosophies and cosmologies of Zulu communities. The pain, struggles, triumphs, failures and suffering of women portrayed in these books are projections of the lived experiences of women in the broader society.

## Zulu women are victims of cultural beliefs and traditions

In the play *Isiko Nelungelo*, the author shows that the cultural tradition of levirate marriage is oppressive to women as it robs them of their right to move on with their lives after the death of a husband.

*MaMbatha:* *Uyabona njengoba wakhishwa kini kwabikwa emadlozini nje, akuselula ukuthi ubuye ubuyele kini. Uyothi uyaqhamuka bathi abamfuni umuntu obuye emendweni. Wena awusenayo indawo kini.* [You see, as your parents gave you to us and we introduced you to the ancestors, it is impossible to go back home. They will chase you away if you do so and will say that they do not welcome back people who have deserted their marriages. You no longer have a place at your original home.] (Zulu 2011a: 16)

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The above quotation shows how the Zulu culture is deeply rooted in religion—in this case, ancestry religion. The ancestors are believed to be a powerful force controlling the fortunes of the living, and by defying them, one risks their wrath or punishment (Ntshangase 2018b). Therefore, we find MaZungu reminding Thenjiwe that the ancestors would not approve of her decision to return home after her husband's death. MaZungu is aware of the fear and respect most African people have for the ancestors and manipulates religious-cultural beliefs and cosmology to trap Thenjiwe into a marriage with her dead husband's brother. In isiZulu, a woman who leaves her marriage (whether the husband is alive or dead) is called *umabuyekwendeni* (the one who deserted her marriage). This derogatory term is used to demean women and force them into loveless marriages. If they refuse, they risk being cast out or frowned upon by their patriarchal families and society (Zulu 2011a).

In the play, Thenjiwe represents the voiceless women who become victims of societal-cultural beliefs and traditions. Nyengelele (2004: 56) explains the significance of culture as follows: 'Culture is a two-edged sword. In some instances, it is a badge or even the creed of community identity. However, in others, it is used to distinguish between different people in the community, which sometimes results in oppression and injustice.'

Examples are given of how the Zulu people use culture as the creed of community identity and a way to oppress women. Nelisiwe Zulu is known for demonstrating the plight of women in her literary works. In the novel *Umshado*, she narrates the story of a young woman, Tholakele, who strongly resisted her in-laws who wanted her to marry Bhatomu, her late husband's brother.



*Lalela-ke Bheki* [Bhekani]. *Ngilapha nje ngibalekile. Ekushoneni kukababa wakithi, umfowabo wabe esethi uzongingena. Ngangingamfuni nhlobo. Ngathi nyawo zami ngibelethe.* [Listen here, Bheki [Bhekani]. I live here because I ran away from home. After the death of my husband, his brother wanted to take me as his wife. I did not love him at all. Then I decided to run away.] (Zulu 2011b: 8)

Two terms are used in isiZulu to refer to levirate marriage: *ukungena* and *ukungenwa*. *Ukungena* is the 'masculine' active-voice term used to describe the actions of a brother or half-brother of the deceased who marries his late brother's widow, while *ukungenwa* is the 'feminine' passive-voice term used to describe the widow's acceptance of a levirate marriage. My linguistic analysis and understanding of the two terms is that *ukungena* gives men the upper hand to do as they please with the grieving widow. It gives men the power to own the widow, her children and everything that belonged to the deceased husband. The term *ukungenwa* depicts women as passive players in this interplay of power between women and men. It removes women's power to refuse their families' demands when they are forced into a levirate marriage. Women who defy their families are often regarded as rebels.

In *Umshado*, Tholakele refuses to agree to a levirate marriage and runs away. Although running away worked for Tholakele, other women, such as Thenjiwe in *Isiko Nelungelo*, were less fortunate. When Thenjiwe tried to run away from her in-laws, her own parents forced her to return to her late husband's family as their culture did not permit a married woman to return to her own family, regardless of whether her husband was alive or dead.

The cultural oppression of women is as complex as culture itself as it is influenced by religion, history, the economy, politics, geography and anthropology (Cosgrove and Jackson 2013). Historically, a married Zulu woman was never allowed to leave her husband's family and return home. Although this is still generally the case in rural areas, such rules do not necessarily apply in urban areas where the economic status of women has changed. Women in urban areas, where many job opportunities exist, are more likely to be able to break away from their husbands' families and sustain themselves (Cosgrove and Jackson 2013). We saw this in the case of the character Tholakele in *Umshado*, who fled to an urban area and found employment. Thenjiwe, in *Isiko Nelungelo*, remained in the rural area and became a victim of an unjust cultural tradition when she was forced to marry the brother of her deceased husband.

In the two books, Nelisiwe Zulu tells the stories of two women living in rural areas, with one managing to relocate to the city. This shows that although all South African women have rights

enshrined in the Constitution, some women in rural areas are still victims of unjust cultural practices, such as levirate marriages. It would therefore be wrong to assume that since South Africa now has a constitutional democracy, all women are enjoying their rights. Such thinking 'tends to mask inequalities within and to reproduce sectional power and interests as the elite within the group control the membership resources and voice' (Albertyn 2009: 173).

In both the books under discussion, men seem to be benefiting from the unjust cultural traditions infringing on the constitutional rights of women, since in isiZulu, men are called *izinhloko zamakhaya* (the heads of families) and women are seen as subordinates who should accept whatever is imposed on them (Thabede 2017). When men are called *izinhloko zamakhaya*, they automatically think that it is their inalienable right to control the lives of women. Levirate marriage is a classic example of gender inequalities and men's control over women. Zulu's books show that despite the rights given to women by the Constitution, some women are still oppressed through the practice of cultural traditions.

Nelisiwe Zulu's books anchor the argument that culture cannot be ignored in a discourse about gender inequality, as culture plays a critical role in defining male and female identities (Koskinen 2008). In most societies, the degree of oppression of women by men is often measured by culture (Njogu and Orchardson-Mazrui 2013). The binary division between men and women in the books delays the feminist agenda because 'in most societies, the allocated work designated to both women and men in the household and the wider community is validated and explained by culture' (Koskinen 2008: 159). Since men are the ones who generally benefit from this inequality, women's voices are often unheard in a patriarchal family, further hindering their holistic development within the family and society at large (Albertyn 2009). Zulu's books, especially the play *Isiko Nelungelo*, demonstrate how culture becomes inseparable from the identity of society since 'man creates culture but culture, in turn, makes man' (De Bruin 2002: 40). In the play, women are the instigators of the unjust cultural tradition of levirate marriage when they force Thenjiwe into a loveless marriage with her late husband's brother. Nevertheless, in a patriarchal family, women are voiceless because culture is often used as an excuse to oppress them (Thabede 2017).

In any society, as in their culture, people's perceptions, philosophies and cosmologies evolve. 'Culture is dynamic, not static, but patriarchal men are convinced that culture does not alter when times change' (Ntshangase 2018b: 88). In *Isiko Nelungelo*, Thenjiwe shows how times have changed and how that which was acceptable in the past might no longer be acceptable in a democratic South Africa.

*Thenjiwe: Bathi likhona isiko elinjalo elalisebenza kuqala nokho-ke selaphelelwa yisikhathi.*  
[They say a culture of levirate marriage was dominant in the past, but it is dying now.] (Zulu 2011a: 3)

In the books under discussion, we find men pursuing their late brothers' wives mainly because they want to 'cling to the old ways of what it means to be a man, to protect their masculinity' (Hadebe 2010: 5). In most societies, men who want to justify their prejudice and dominance over women might even go beyond the parameters of culture and find justification in religion (Morrell 2001). In both books, ancestry religion is cited on several occasions to explain why the Zulu women, Tholakele and Thenjiwe, the main characters in the books, should agree to a levirate marriage. Women are deliberately made inferior to men by the notions of culture, religion and marriage. This is a problem as it hampers the struggle for the emancipation of women in all spheres of life, including the home and workplace (Connell 2001; Nyengelele 2004).

### **Commodification and communalisation of the institution of marriage**

Accounts of the cultural tradition of levirate marriage are also found in the Old Testament; it was practised by the ancient Jews to preserve the genealogy of the family of a brother who died without an heir (Seidler 2018). The cultural tradition was observed solely for that reason. Although the motives for pursuing the cultural tradition of levirate marriage have changed, such marriages were a common phenomenon in Asia and Africa long before the Bible became available on those continents.

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Traditionally, levirate marriage provided a vehicle through which the husband's family could financially support the widow and her children. Today the practice is sometimes seen as a way for the husband's family to access any wealth the deceased may have acquired during his life and to provide sexual access to his wife (Bond 2011: 9-10).

Therefore, men use levirate marriage as a viable weapon to control women. In a patriarchal family, women are regarded as weak and incapable of managing their own affairs, let alone managing the wealth and finances of the family, which is why they are perceived to need a man to look after them (Baloyi 2015).

*Ilobolo*, which is loosely translated as bride price, is another cultural practice commodifying

marriages and forcing women into levirate marriages. If the widow decides to end the marital bond with her deceased husband's family, her father will have to pay back the *ilobolo* (Ntozi 1997). In the play *Isiko Nelungelo*, Zulu highlights the pain to which Zulu women are subjected because of the commodification of marriages.

*Mondise:* *Ngisho ukuthi phela lokho kuyosho ukuhlehlisa lonke uhlelo olwenziwa. Eqinisweni leli siko lavezwa yilokho. Ukubuya kukamakoti emendweni kusho ukuphindisela emuva amalobolo nakho konke okuthintene nawo.* [Coming back home will mean that we have to reverse all that was done. The cultural tradition of levirate marriage was invented to counter that. If a widowed bride leaves her marriage, it will mean that we must pay back the *ilobolo* [bride price] and everything else that was paid by the in-laws.]

*Nondumiso:* *Okungcono singaya ngisho kubameli. Sinalo ilungelo lokungabuyiseli lutho emuva baba.* [We should at least consult with the attorney. We have a right not to pay back anything, Father.] (Zulu 2011a: 46)

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Modise is Thenjiwe's father. In a normal family setting, Modise would sympathise with his daughter. However, because marriages are now commodified and *ilobolo* is extremely expensive, Modise is more concerned about the possibility of financial ruin than the well-being of his daughter. Nondumiso, Thenjiwe's sister, tries to support her sister by suggesting they take the legal route to avoid paying back the *ilobolo*. However, Nondumiso's suggestion is ignored by Mondise and his wife MaMkhize. The author might have deliberately included this to show how reasonable suggestions by women are often ignored by society.

In a traditional family setting, wealth accumulation in a household is often attributed to the husband, even if the wife also generates income (Ezejiolor 2011). Language choices play a major role in entrenching these gender imbalances because in isiZulu, as mentioned earlier, a man is called *inhloko yekhaya* (the head of the family). Language use, therefore, can be directly linked to the attitudes of most men in patriarchal families towards widows, who are regarded by men as weak and in need of protection.

The determination of Thenjiwe's in-laws, who use the cultural tradition to force her into a levirate marriage, is intriguing. Since Thenjiwe was unemployed and her late husband was the sole breadwinner, one could assume that her in-laws were not acting in her best interest and wanted

a share of her inheritance. In such a case, it could be assumed that all the ideological orientations of feminism (radical, liberal, socialist and Black) would unanimously defend Thenjiwe's right to her late husband's assets, regardless of whether she had contributed to the accumulation of wealth or not. Thenjiwe's marriage becomes commodified because the family resents the idea that the wealth generated by their son might be transferred to another man who is not a blood relative.

Levirate marriages continue to be enforced in traditional patriarchal families, as women are perceived as communal commodities. In the novel *Umshado*, Zulu uses a female character, Bhekani's mother, to show how deeply the ethnophilosophical worldview of marriage is entrenched in the psyches of both men and women.

*Ungakhohlwa ukuthi umfazi owabadala akusiye owakho. Wena uyamletha kuphela. Uma bengamfuni ngeke ahlale nokuhlala lapha ekhaya.* [Do not forget that the wife you take is not necessarily yours; she belongs to the ancestors. Your role is to introduce her to them. If they do not approve of the union, she will not stay in this family.] (Zulu 2011b: 15)

There is a difference between the Afrocentric and Eurocentric views of marriage. When a woman marries a man in a normal family setting, she should concentrate on her nuclear family. In a traditional African family, however, because of cultural beliefs and traditions, marriage involves both the wedded couple's and the ancestors' families (Ntshangase 2018b). This seems to be the general practice among Commonwealth Africans as the cultural beliefs, philosophies, and cosmologies of many Africans consider 'women to be under the guardianship of their fathers before marriage and of their husbands after marriage' (Bond 2011: 9). Most of these communities communalise marriages because of the Afrocentric worldview that 'marriage is the sacred rite of passage that involves the whole community' (Ngidi 2012: 45). There is a belief that the ancestors do not cease to be part of the community and that even though they are not physically present, their spirits continue to control the fortunes of the living (Ntshangase 2018b; Zulu 2011b).

In most African communities, including the Zulu community, once a bond of marriage has been formed between two families through the payment and acceptance of *ilobolo* and blessed by the ancestors, it becomes impossible to break such a bond. Therefore, when the husband dies, 'a widow may live under the guardianship of her husband's customary law heir, such as her husband's brother or a male cousin' (Bond 2011: 10). Most women are forced into levirate marriages against their will, which is why, in this chapter, such marriages are called unholy unions.

## Unholy unions that trap Zulu women in loveless marriages

Women find themselves trapped in loveless levirate marriages because of the payment of *ilobolo*, by which an unbreakable bond is sealed between two families. Ngidi (2012: 49) concurs with this:

In African communities, as well as in Zulu communities, death does not constitute an end to a marriage. The paying of *ilobolo* and the slaughtering of the goat to accept the wife into the family is an eternal binding bond between the surviving spouse and the in-laws' family. When a husband dies, his brother has to take over all his wives and bear the husband's responsibilities, taking care of his late brother's wives and children.

In both *Isiko Nelungelo* and *Umshado*, the brothers of the deceased husbands are trying their utmost to trap their brothers' widows in loveless marriages. In *Umshado*, Bhatomu fails to force Tholakele into marriage, whereas in the play *Isiko Nelungelo*, Dumisani enlists the help of both families and succeeds in forcing Thenjiwe into an unholy union.

In *Isiko Nelungelo*, the value of love in a marriage is demeaned. Thenjiwe tries to emphasise the importance of love when two people enter marriage, but her woman's voice of reason is usually ignored.

*Thenjiwe:*      *Nazi kanjani ukuthi uzongithanda?* [How do you know that he will love me?]

*MaMbatha:*    *Akukhulunywa indaba kamathandana nokungathandani lapha. Ngikhuluma ngesiko elaziwa kini nalapha ekhaya.* [I do not care whether he loves you or not. All I care about is the culture, which is known at your home and in this house.]

*Thenjiwe:*      *Anginalo nje uthando lomunye umuntu mina.* [I do not have the feelings of love for another man, though.] (Zulu 2011a: 16–17)

These examples show that the entrapment of women in loveless marriages challenges the significance of culture in modern society and nullifies the institution of marriage. The above quotation reveals a conflict between love and culture as it suggests that love does not matter in a levirate marriage

and that preserving the cultural tradition is more important than feelings of love. This is a cause for concern, since in a normal society, marriage should be built on a solid foundation of love, as confirmed by the isiZulu expression *uthando lungumanqoba* (love conquers all). The author uses the character of Thenjiwe to demonstrate that ideas about cultural traditions and institutions such as marriage could be oppressive and detrimental to the feminist agenda of emancipating women from gender inequalities and bias.

In *Isiko Nelungelo*, Thenjiwe and her sister Nondumiso are portrayed as the custodians of change in a world unwilling to listen to women's voices. They are tireless in their attempts to change the status quo by arguing that love is essential in marriage, but their efforts are in vain.

*Nondumiso:* *Uma ungamfuni lowo mfana kungakusiza ngani ukukungena kwakhe? ... Mina nakulo leli siko ngibona sengathi uthando kuhle lube yisisekelo.* [If you do not love this man, how will the cultural tradition of levirate marriage help you? I think love should be the foundation of the levirate marriage.]

*Thenjiwe:* *Uyedwa umuntu engangimthanda emhlabeni, uSikhumbuzo.* [There is only one man I ever loved; it is Sikhumbuzo.] (Zulu 2011a: 37–45)

Thenjiwe and Nondumiso are seen as angry feminists trying their best to end a tradition that has been handed down through generations. This kind of thinking illustrates the classical or theatrical acts about which Butler (1988, 1997, 1999) is concerned since once they have been engraved on society, they will be difficult to erase. Therefore, no one in Thenjiwe's family and family-in-law is prepared to listen to Thenjiwe and Nondumiso, who are the only two feminist characters in the play who believe that women should not be condemned to loveless levirate marriages for the sake of preserving a cultural tradition. Cultural traditions should never be used to victimise people (Zungu and Siwela 2017). Zulu communities should, therefore, note that enforcing the cultural tradition of levirate marriage as a way to hold women hostage is in opposition to the ideals of social change and justice.

Thenjiwe was condemned to enter into a loveless levirate marriage, and the law could not protect her. This should be unacceptable in a democratic South Africa where the defenceless should have access to legal recourse. In the play, a young man named Siphso, who Thenjiwe thought could wipe away her tears after her husband's death, is failed by the judicial system when he is unfairly imprisoned.

*Sipho:* *Kwathiwa ngiyophuma uma seniganene.* [They said I will get out [of prison] once you and he [Dumisani] are married.]

*Thenjiwe:* *Ngihlushwa ukungabi namali, bengizofuna ummeli liqalwe phansi leli cala.* [It is a pity I do not have money; I would have hired an attorney who would see to it that this case is re-opened/goes back to court.]

*Sipho:* *Sisodwa isixazululo saleli cala, yikho ukuba ugane uDumisani. Ukuba ngan-gazi ngabe angisizanga mngani.* [There is only one solution to this case, that you marry Dumisani. If I had known, I would not have helped you when Dumisani grabbed you and wanted to speak to you by force.] (Zulu 2011a: 64–65)

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When people are failed by institutions such as courts, which are supposed to be the custodians of justice, law and order, they are often left with no choice but to take the law into their own hands (Ntshangase 2018a). Sipho found himself on the wrong side of the law after trying to protect Thenjiwe from Dumisani, who wanted to speak to her against her will and was manhandling her. Sipho intervened by stabbing Dumisani and was arrested. The court denied Sipho bail, and he was told that he would only be released once Thenjiwe had agreed to marry Dumisani, her deceased husband's brother. Sipho did not get a fair trial and was sent to prison, where he died. The result was that Thenjiwe felt obliged to poison Dumisani to free herself from the bondage of a loveless levirate marriage.

*Thenjiwe:* *Angilithele itiye ngigalele lo muthi. Uma eke waqhabula kathathu kuyobe sekwanele.* [Let me pour the tea and add this poison. Three sips will be enough to kill him.] (Zulu 2011a: 72)

Fortunately for Dumisani, Thenjiwe's plan was thwarted by Thabi, his younger sister, who warned him not to drink the tea. This incident was used as leverage by Thenjiwe's in-laws to compel her to agree to a loveless unholy union.

*MaMbatha:* *Ukugana kwakho uDumisani kuyogqiba zonke izenzo osewake wazenza. Akekho osayophinde azikhulume.* [Agreeing to marry Dumisani will erase all the terrible things you have done. No one will ever talk about them again.] (Zulu 2011a: 75–76)



Thenjiwe had no option but to agree or risk going to jail. In the end, all the attempts made by her and her sister Nondumiso to liberate women and their families from the domination of women by men were in vain. It is bizarre to think that women are still forced into loveless levirate marriages in a democratic South Africa and that the state appears to be unable to protect its citizens. Zondi (2020: 8) succinctly summarises the context in which we live by stating that:

It may sound clichéd to state that we live in times of profound change, given the malaise of our socio-political context. Ours is a context in which the template of change is deeply embedded in the meaning of a budding democracy. We are regularly directed to questions of rights, expectations, service delivery, the meaning and ethics of leadership, what it is to be a nation and, at the heart of it, the meaning of embodiment in the context of gender and sexuality.

Thenjiwe, the main character in *Isiko Nelungelo*, eventually betrays the feminist agenda by not risking defending her case in a court of law. However, this is not surprising considering what happened to Siphso, who was denied justice by the institution that should have defended him. Thenjiwe had another option, which was to run away like Tholakele in *Umshado*, but she never explored that possibility. Instead of fighting for the ideals of feminism, Thenjiwe chose to surrender, thus giving in to the domination of women by men. This may have been a deliberate attempt by the author to show that the struggle for the emancipation of women continues. Both her books, *Isiko Nelungelo* and *Umshado*, have inspired robust, vigorous debates around gender issues in lecture halls and classrooms.

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## Conclusion

The isiZulu expression *Umendo kawuthunyelwa gundane* (No woman would send a rat to spy on the in-laws before she commits to the marriage) highlights the plight of women who feel entrapped by marriage and wish they had known what to expect. Levirate marriage is a classic example of how women's rights are violated by their families and society at large.

Levirate marriages are referred to in this chapter as unholy unions as they show patriarchal families' refusal to respect the constitutional rights of women. These constitutional rights include women's right to protection from all forms of abuse, including being forced to accept unjust cultural traditions (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development 1996).

In her books *Isiko Nelungelo* and *Umshado*, Nelisiwe Zulu challenges male domination over women through levirate marriage. The main characters in the two books, Tholakele and Thenjiwe, are labelled rebels by their patriarchal families. However, their words and actions are manifestations of a struggle to emancipate women from the bondage of male domination. Two women from remote rural areas are the female protagonists in the two stories and are united in sisterhood in their struggle to implement the ideals of a feminist agenda. Tholakele wins the battle by leaving the rural area and her patriarchal in-laws to start a new life in the city. She risks becoming a social outcast or *umabuyekwendeni*, the derogatory isiZulu term used to refer to a woman who has deserted her marriage. Thenjiwe tries to free herself from the clutches of patriarchy by trying to poison the man who plans to force her into a loveless levirate marriage. In the end, she loses the fight and is condemned to this unholy union—a shocking ending for feminists.

The shocking ending of *Isiko Nelungelo* confirms what Butler (1988, 1997, 1999) wrote, which is that normalising gender inequalities makes it hard for them to be rooted out. The fact that Thenjiwe was not only fighting this war against men but also against the women who were pushing her into a levirate marriage confirms Butler's assertion that feminism is not meant to liberate only women but also society at large (Butler 1988, 1997, 1999).

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The bitter ending of *Isiko Nelungelo* does not mean that the struggle to emancipate women and society at large is lost, as the book is used as an educational tool in most public schools and universities in South Africa. It teaches young people to become agents of change in their communities by confronting oppressive cultural traditions that deny women their constitutional rights. The other book, *Umshado*, serves the same purpose. For Tholakele, the protagonist, running away from her in-laws to settle in the city may have been a solution, but it was not an ideal solution as it still deprived her of the right to live peacefully wherever she chose to live. It should never be necessary to escape from your home to avoid being forced to uphold patriarchal customs and ensure that you will be protected against male chauvinists. Therefore, both Nelisiwe Zulu's books challenge young boys and girls to stand together against male chauvinism and cultural fanaticism, which are phenomena that enslave women.

This chapter explained the interplay of various disciplines such as anthropology, education, history, language, law, philosophy, psychology and religion to justify gender inequalities. Attempts to rid society of gender bias and the unfair treatment of women require collaboration by different parties, and the language used in literature is critical to the success of this endeavour. Literature has the power to promote social change and justice because it 'forms part of teaching and education in general ... [and] the way gender is portrayed in these materials influences how pupils perceive gender' (Anttila et al. 2015: 62–63).

The writer of this chapter is of the opinion that educational books, such as *Isiko Nelungelo* and *Umslado*, openly challenge the status quo and can contribute to fostering social change and justice. The more young people read such books and engage with the language used, the more they will deliberate on how societies in present-day Africa, for example in Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Uganda and South Africa, obstruct the gains of the feminist agenda of equality by continuing to practise the oppressive cultural tradition of levirate marriages.

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# Chapter 11

## Feminism and Literacy: Tortured and Traumatized Femininity in Njabulo Ndebele's *Death of a Son*

*Bongani Mbatha*

### Introduction

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The plight of women in a male-dominated world is well known. There are numerous accounts of women's militancy in challenging the oppression and marginalisation imposed on them by patriarchy. At the institutional level, such militancy has resulted in structures and practices that have indeed improved the fate of women, and it can thus be argued that both women and men have assisted women in their struggle for liberation. Although this chapter deals with women's militancy, it focuses on a text written by a man. Njabulo Ndebele, a fiction writer and critic, characterised singer Brenda Fassie as an icon of 'verbal ungovernability' (Ndebele 2007: 208).<sup>22</sup> Taking a cue from Ndebele's description, this chapter is devoted to exploring this issue of 'verbal ungovernability' in the short story *Death of a Son* (1996), especially in the context of women's experiences during the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings. I argue that *Death of a Son* intensifies the work of the TRC—in its content and especially through its particular narrative framing device. Although reference will be made to different texts, this study will be limited to Njabulo's *Death of a Son* as a text that helps theorise about the future of post-apartheid literature, an intervention in a post-TRC culture. An attempt will be made to move that culture in a more ethical direction.

As Ndebele (2007: 208) observes in *Thinking of Brenda*, 'Brenda's dramatic entry into the entertainment industry through her hit song *'Weekend Special'* was accompanied by the media's discovery of her 'outrageous brazenness'. Claiming the 'trademark' of 'a shocker [who liked] to

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<sup>22</sup> Brenda Fassie's popularity was such that she became known simply as Brenda. Girl, daughter, sister, mother, Brenda later assumed the appellation Ma Brr to suit her advancing age. On Brenda Fassie, see Andrew Whaley's *Brenda Remembered* and Lauren Beukes' *The Magnificent Ma Brr – Brenda Fassie*.

create controversy', Brenda dredged the private into the public. Her statement to journalist Charl Blynnaut in the 1992 interview 'In Bed with Brenda' is typical: 'Some men cry /Because I sing /I sing when I make love/I sing for them' (Ndebele 2007: 213).<sup>23</sup> By shifting attention from the salacious details that her statement seems to promise initially, Brenda foregrounds her desire to be heard. This desire is also apparent in her songs, especially '*Memeza*', in which she calls out to her audience to listen even as she is singing at the top of her voice. It is as if the most obvious public statement masks the singer's private experience of pain (Nichols 2005). Brenda commented on the '*Memeza*' song: 'I've been shouting and no one wanted to hear me. When I sing this song, I want to cry' (Whaley 2004: 67). Torn between the public and the private, the discourse of the iconic Brenda raises the need to explore further the private experiences of Black African women, which became public during testimonies given by victims of apartheid during the TRC hearings.<sup>24</sup> Recounting the history of Nelson Mandela's imprisonment in '*Black President*' and her brother's imprisonment for activism in '*Good Black Woman*', Brenda emerged as one of the early public witnesses to apartheid atrocities, anticipating the riveting testimonies of the TRC. This desire to be heard, which is cast in the tension between the private and the public, will be used in this chapter as a frame for critical reading of Ndebele's *Death of a Son*.

This chapter sheds light on the interregnum in South African cultural and language roles in making nationhood and their consolidation in representations of women. The chapter considers how, during the transitional era, the category 'woman' was created in South African literature in the form of a language reflected in short story narratives. The chapter looks at how culture and language contribute to performances of female subjectivities while both constructing a nation and troubling the nation under construction. The performance of female subjectivities can be traced back to both fictional and non-fictional works by some of the foremost writers during South Africa's transition to democracy: Mamphela Ramphele's *A Life* (1995), J.M. Coetzee's *Disgrace* (1999), Zoë Wicomb's *David's Story* (2000), Antjie Krog's *There was this Goat* (2009) and Sindiwe Magona's

23 Charl Blynnaut's interview with Brenda is presented in the documentary *Brenda Fassie: Not a Bad Girl* (1993).

24 The TRC was established by an Act of Parliament, the National Unity and Reconciliation Act 34 of 1995. The Commission was organised into three main committees: The Human Rights Violations Committee, which organised the hearings given by victims of apartheid; the Amnesty Committee, which was charged with hearing appeals for amnesty by those who engaged in human rights violations for political reasons; and the Reparations Committee, which made recommendations for reparations to victims of past violence. For transcripts of reports and testimonies given before the various branches of the TRC, visit the official website of the TRC (<https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/index.html>). The TRC's activities have generated numerous studies, among the most significant of which are James and Van de Vijver (2001), Posel and Simpson (2002), Boraine, Levy, and Scheffer (1997) and Asmal, Asmal, and Roberts (1997).

*Living, Loving, and Lying Awake at Night* (2009). However, in this chapter, female performance is studied by a close reading of Ndebele's short story *Death of a Son* (1996), which signals cultural and language significance reflected in the hearings and thus offers opportunities to explore the role of culture and language in the gendered journey of the Black African woman from the private to the public sphere. *Death of a Son*, through language and culture, assembles a particularly traumatised constellation of Black African women and then imagines for them a reclamation of contested spaces in South Africa, both physical and metaphorical. This signifies a recovery of language, which Teresa Godwin Phelps (2004: 44) calls a 'reconstruction of the shattered voice'. Although *Death of a Son* is not written in an indigenous African language, it does speak directly to the importance of African cultures and languages in the lived experiences of Black African women, particularly in the South African context. The role of language is crucial in this chapter as Ndebele also focuses on the stories that emerged during the TRC process as a 'confirmation of the movement of our society from repression to expression', a sign of 'the emergence of a new national consciousness', and finally, 'some of the first steps in the rewriting of South African history on the basis of validated mass experience' (Ndebele 1998: 20). This chapter also employs Julia Kristeva's (1980) reading of motherhood and her theory of the subject-in-process to read agency in the narrator of *Death of a Son*, which is critical to understanding the coming to selfhood and speculating on the role they may play in the post-apartheid future. In this chapter, Kristeva is read in relation to Jean-François Lyotard's (1983) exploration of the difficulties of constructing narratives of trauma in *The Differend*—in particular, the argument of the body as a repository of the evidence of violence, which enables the witnesses to tell their tales. This chapter also draws attention to the woman as mother—an emergent figure with agency in the public sphere—and concludes by examining the difficulties with regard to narration that some of the women who gave testimony in the TRC hearings faced through a brief reading of Antjie Krog's (2000) *Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow and Forgiveness in the New South Africa*, which marks a significant moment during which the female voice emerged as the foundation of possible post-apartheid subjects.

### **Njabulo Ndebele and the TRC scholarship**

Ndebele's reading of the TRC hearings highlights some of the points raised in *Country of My Skull*. For Ndebele, the hearings provided the grounds for 'the triumph of narrative', which is necessary for the emergence of post-apartheid subjects (Ndebele 1998: 19–21). The portrayal of the Black



African woman as someone waiting for her man is apparent in *Death of a Son*, where the narrator waits for her husband to begin the process of burying their dead son. Significantly, not only does the plaintive testimony of the narrator of *Death of a Son* presage the TRC hearings, but this is also the first of Ndebele's stories before *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* (2003) to feature a woman as the first-person narrator.

Although female characters occupy minimal roles in Ndebele's fiction, apart from *Death of a Son* and *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*, they are neither subservient nor mere foils to male characters. In fact, women provide important critical voices against male strategies in the liberation struggle. Ndebele debunks highly dramatic modes of representation as engaging apartheid on its own terms and calls for the 'rediscovery of the ordinary [because] the struggle involves people not abstractions, [and] the growth of consciousness is a necessary ingredient in [the] subjective capacity of the revolutionary class to take the mass revolutionary actions that are strong enough to smash the old government' (Ndebele 1994: 58). That concern with 'the growth of consciousness' is critical to understanding the possibilities of the emergence of the post-apartheid subject. Seemingly marginalised and confined to the domestic sphere, female characters such as Sarah in *Sarah, Rings and I*, the prophetess in *The Prophetess* and Nosipho in *Fools* emerge as critical voices against masculine constructions of revolutionary possibilities. Nosipho's critique of her husband's self-rehabilitation project following his rape of a student, and her refusal to carry his burden, are representative. Nosipho is fully articulate and has her own ideas and philosophies. She does not wait for Zamani to recover his selfhood; she is already engaged in projects in the development of consciousness through reading and the practice of medicine beyond the administration of drugs.

Nosipho and similar female characters in *Fools and Other Stories* (Ndebele 1983) articulate the possibilities of a feminist critique of social relations, and these possibilities set the stage for the excavation of women's agency in *Death of a Son*. In spite of her lucidity, Nosipho's story in *Fools* is secondary to that of Zamani, the narrator who seeks to gain control over the narrative of his own life. Therefore, first-person narration in *Death of a Son* creates a space for fully articulating the discursive abilities of the Black African woman as subject. Inherent in this suddenly available space of possibilities is the need for the female subject to find language that will enable the expression of her agency. I will argue that the main struggle of Ndebele's narrator in *Death of a Son* is her struggle with language. As will become clear below, this struggle heralds the problems that victims who gave testimonies at the TRC hearings faced in trying to articulate their experiences.

## **The intertwined role of African language culture: synopsis of the short story**

218 In *Death of a Son*, set in the wake of the Soweto uprising, African language and culture are central to the narration at a time when police unceasingly patrolled the townships. The story holds the prospect of a narrative of liberation that engages the traditional images of what Ndebele describes as the spectacular. When a stray bullet fired by the police patrolling the township goes through the window of a house and kills a baby, the crude attempts by the police to manage public relations deprive the bereaved parents of the chance to focus on their grief. The police return to their crime scene and threaten to arrest the narrator's mother (who was babysitting her grandson when he was shot) unless she agrees not to tell what happened. They then remove the child's body to get rid of the physical evidence of their crime. The body of the dead child becomes a pawn in a high-stakes game of public relations, with the police demanding a fee to release the body to the family. Buntu, the narrator's husband and the child's father, initially rejects the demand, declaring: 'Over my dead body! Over my dead body!' He claims 'a fundamental principle', setting the stage for a classic confrontation between the massive apartheid security machine and the victimised but determined Black South African. Indeed, as the narrator observes, Buntu sought to engage the security forces in precisely these terms: 'For the greater part of two weeks, all of Buntu's efforts, together with friends, relatives, lawyers and newspapers, were to secure the release of the child's body without the humiliation of having to pay for it' (Ndebele 1996: 145). Buntu (whose IsiZulu name translates to man/humanity in the generic sense) is the ordinary Black African man engaged in a confrontation with the massive apartheid state machinery. However, the generic is subverted by African tradition, under which Buntu assumes the mantle of leader of the family and constructs his wishes as the wishes of the family. Just as Zamani in *Fools* refuses to engage the Boer on his terms by fighting back, the narrator in *Death of a Son* shifts attention away from the fight over the child's body. Telling her story retrospectively, the narrator confesses: 'The problem was that I had known all along that we would have to buy the body anyway' (Ndebele 1996: 145). As a journalist for a Johannesburg newspaper, the narrator would have realised that she was living the stories she encountered in her work.

## **The overarching theoretical framework**

The narrator underlines the significance of bodies in the story at the very beginning: 'At last, we got the body' (Ndebele 1996: 144). Ineluctably linked, the bodies of the deceased child and the

mother frame the narrative. The first dominant image at the beginning of the narrative is the dead body of the child; the final image is that of the narrator as a woman ready to conceive again. Instead of conflating motherhood with womanhood, Ndebele's story seeks to claim the African woman as more than a mother, as an agent in an inclusive narration of liberation. Julia Kristeva's (1980) reflections on motherhood are both an attempt to rescue the image of the mother from the apolitical and asexualised pedestal of the Virgin Mary as the ideal mother and an attempt to challenge Freudian and Lacanian theories of subjectivity to provide a basis for critical engagement with Lyotard's (1983) argument that the witness of trauma 'testifies to an absence'—a point that will be further explored in this chapter. The body of the mother is always marked, carrying evidence of the loss (Kristeva 1980: 138).

The narrator's struggle in imagining the mutilated body of her son underlines the problems of narration for the witness of trauma. According to Dori Laub (1992: 57), 'massive trauma precludes its registration; the observing and recording mechanisms of the human mind are temporarily knocked out, malfunction'. Laub (1992: 57) further argues that 'the victim's narrative, the very process of bearing witness to massive trauma, [begins] with someone testifying to an absence, to an event that has not yet come into existence, in spite of the overwhelming and compelling nature of the reality of its occurrence'. The idea of 'testifying to an absence' may be further clarified by a reading of Jean-François Lyotard's *The Differend* (1983), in which he argues that 'it is the nature of the victim not to be able to prove that one has been done wrong. A plaintiff is someone who has incurred damage and who disposes of the means to prove it' (Lyotard 1983: 8). Lyotard is concerned with the problem of writing history after traumatic events such as the holocaust. In the case of the holocaust, the challenge issues from the fact that the victims disappeared and, when survivors testify to the traumatic events, 'their testimony bears only upon a minute part of this situation' (Lyotard 1983: 8). Being dead, the actual victim of the trauma cannot testify as to how they died, leaving the testimony of those who witness open to interrogation. Nothing short of the body of the victim, marked with signs of the trauma, can prove the trauma. The ineluctable relationship between mother and child is thus of critical importance in thinking about bodies that carry marks of trauma and provide evidence for the narrative. Although the narrator bears witness to the absence of her son's body, she inherits the language with which to tell the story of the tragedy from the moment she walks through the door of her house and begins to understand the meaning of the harrowing cries of her mother and other women. Her mother's cry inscribes the language that enables her to organise the traumatic event into narrative.

Significantly, the narrator gives her response to Buntu's rhetorical question: 'Do you realise

that our son is dead?' This rhetorical question paves the way for the trenchant critique that will follow shortly. Having been busy in a show of strength against the system, Buntu realises that their son is dead long after the narrator has been dealing with their tragic loss. As the narrator admits earlier, Buntu's declaration of a "fundamental principle" was something too intangible for me [...] something that I wanted should assume my child's body' (Ndebele 1996: 145). The discord between Buntu's direct speech and her reported response marks the gulf between two people who initially do not share the same sense of loss. Still, her husband's question launches the narrator into exploring how they came to be where they find themselves. Although her profession involves the use of language, the narrator ironically struggles to recover language that will enable her transition to agency. Her shift from the singular 'I realised' to the collective 'we realised' at the same time marks the couple's reunion and their collective transition to agency. Ndebele thus constructs a framework for a narrative of liberation that is inclusive of women.

### **Entanglements between African masculinity and language**

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The narrator's response to the loss of her son must be understood in relation to her husband's response. In his relationship with the narrator, Buntu's response comes out of a belief that masculinity demands militancy. From the moment when the couple sees three Black girls eating fish and chips, the erotics of sexual desire as an expression of masculinity begin to assert themselves in Buntu's interactions with the narrator. His tightening grip on the narrator's hand as he expresses a desire for fish and chips suggests erotic desire for the narrator, and the narrator remarks on 'the strength of it'. After the white boys assault the Black girls, Buntu tightens his grip further (as if holding on to the narrator as a possession) as he warns: 'Just let them do that to you!' He means to assure his future bride of his preparedness to protect her; however, this is also the moment the narrator notices that 'there seemed no connection between that face and the words of reassurance just uttered' (147). Buntu's emasculation is complete when the narrator realises that his grip on her arm has slackened: 'I noticed his grip had grown somewhat limp. Somewhat reluctant. Having lost its self-assurance, it seemed to be holding on because it had to, not because of a confident sense of possession' (147). No doubt, the narrator herself revels naively in the image of the virile man and so is disappointed at being confronted by his impotence. The passage raises important questions about the definition of manhood and its role in the struggle against oppression.

The incident is merely a rehearsal for the real test of apartheid. As the narrator observes, they pass through this incident 'like sheep that had seen many of their own in the flock picked out for

slaughter. We would note the event and wait for our turn' (147). Their turn comes that very day when a Boer walking with his family shoves the narrator out of his way 'as if clearing a path for his family' (147). Buntu does not protect her as he had promised; like a sheep whose turn for slaughter has come, he can only offer a helpless epithet: 'The dog!' The narrator's desire to be protected by Buntu suggests her own concession to notions of women as being inferior— notions that were entrenched by apartheid. Thus, while she charges Buntu with failure to act as he speaks, she herself subscribes to the apartheid construction of women as inferior and helpless.

These incidents illustrate that neither Buntu nor the narrator has developed concrete ideas about how to contribute meaningfully to the struggle for liberation. The narrator and Buntu 'walked hand-in-hand through town [that Saturday morning], [they] were aware of very little that was not [themselves]' (146). The two incidents of that Saturday drew the two lovers out of their self-indulgent and exclusive world. They discovered that 'the world around us was too hostile for vows of love' (147). 'Love died', says the narrator, and the two of them began their 'silence'. As they continued their now disrupted walk, Buntu and the narrator 'talked and laughed, but stopped short of words that would demand proof of action' (147). Once the secure world of self-indulgence between lovers has been exposed to the harsh realities of life under apartheid, the narrator's assessment of Buntu is swift and harsh. Drawing on the image of the scattered fish and chips from the first incident, she concludes: 'I saw that day, how the language of love could so easily be trampled underfoot, or scattered like fish and chips on the pavement, and left stranded and abandoned like boats in a river that suddenly went dry' (147).

Buntu's 'impotence' is implicated in the death of the language of love. To the narrator, Buntu's epithetic response to the Boer's space-clearing gesture signals her man's complete emasculation. She experiences an intense desire to sacrifice herself for him: 'At that very moment, I felt my own hurt vanish like a wisp of smoke ... it was replaced by a tormenting desire to sacrifice myself for Buntu' (148). Thus, when they return to the township that afternoon, she 'gives' herself to Buntu 'for the first time'. Interrogating herself retrospectively, the narrator wonders whether she 'gave' or 'offered' herself to him. The narrator constructs herself as both subject and object. As she performs the actions, she claims her body—the female body—and yet gives it towards 'healing something' in Buntu. In the face of the death of the language of love, the body becomes the only possible gift.

From these crises emerges the realisation that Buntu and the narrator are concerned with different things. Buntu is concerned mainly with asserting his manhood. Therefore, when the narrator gives or offers him her body, his sexual virility and thus his manhood, is reaffirmed despite his sexual impotence. The consummation of their relationship leads to their eventual marriage.

Her sacrifice, however, does not also lead to a recovery of the language of love. Their sexual act does not restore communication between her and Buntu. Instead, the act becomes a mask: 'We were never to talk about that event. Never, we buried it deep inside of me that afternoon' (148). Her body becomes the repository for what they cannot face openly; it masks Buntu's powerlessness and political impotence by assuring his sexual virility. The child is the symbolic materialisation of the secret that Buntu and the narrator buried in her body that day.

### The performance of public spectacle

The bullet that shatters the window of their house and kills their child introduces the brutal reality of the pain of the Black African experience into the couple's carefully constructed illusion. Buntu's refusal to 'buy' his dead son's body is as much an expression of what he calls 'fundamental principle' as it is a demonstration of manhood. The 'fundamental principle' is his refusal to participate in the police scheme of deception. However, by enlisting the assistance of lawyers and other influential people, Buntu attempts to bring moral persuasion and critical reasoning to a regime whose security forces flaunt the system of justice from which he seeks equanimity. Ignoring his wife's pleas to accompany him as he tries to retrieve the body of the baby, Buntu commits himself to what he calls 'his task'. The task is less about dealing with personal loss than once again proving his masculinity in a show of power against 'the aggressive Boer'.<sup>25</sup> His task is a man's task, a performance for public spectacle.

Central to 'his task', Buntu promises his wife that he will 'do everything in [his] power to right this wrong ... even if it means suing the police!' (150). Given that the language of love has never been revived between them, the narrator is not convinced by this new promise. She feels a widening divide between them: 'As he spoke, I felt the warmth of intimacy between us cooling. When he finished, it was cold' (150). Keenly aware of the intransigence of the system, the narrator 'disengaged from his embrace, [wondering] why Buntu had spoken'. 'The problem was I had known all along that we would have to buy the body anyway' (151). Although this was the first personal loss for the

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25 Here, the expression 'the aggressive Boer' is drawn from Ndebele's portrayal of the Afrikaner as representative and beneficiary of the system of apartheid, a figure that he describes as having taken 'three centuries to develop the characteristics of the massive wrestler'. This iconographic figure, of course, conflates the state and the individual such that the state is the individual and the individual is the state, and both are (or at least articulate) the system. For a fuller discussion of this iconic figure, see Ndebele, *Rediscovery of the Ordinary* (143). It is worth noting here that Ndebele masterfully articulates these very confluences in *Death of a Son* in the representation of the Boer and his family, whose aggressive ousting of the narrator echoes salient features of the government's cavalier declaration of Black settlements as 'Black spots' to be demolished. For further discussion of forced removals under apartheid, see Murray and O'Regan (1990). Needless to say, the same figure appears as the Boer who whips Zamani in *Fools* (274–276).

narrator and Buntu, it was certainly not the first ‘accidental’ shooting of a Black African person by the police—something that the narrator, as a reporter, already knows. Thus, when Buntu promises to ‘do everything’, they easily revert to silence again.

However, the narrator is now aware of the limits of the silence: ‘I knew something else at that moment: that I had to find a way of disengaging myself from the embrace’ (150). Unlike the Saturday she gave her body so that the affront to Buntu’s manhood could be appeased, the narrator now ‘disengages from his embrace slowly, yet purposefully’ (150). It is not possible for the narrator to sacrifice her body again, for the body of the child as materialisation of the secret they buried inside her that day is the very extension of her own body.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, she uses silence as a weapon against Buntu. Whenever he returns home and reports on another frustrating day of pursuing old and new leads about how to recover their son’s body, the narrator ‘gave speech to [her] eyes. And he answered without my having parted my lips’ (152). Buntu squirms under the ‘female gaze’ of his wife. Through her silence, the narrator ‘sensed, for the first time in my life, the terrible power in me that could make [Buntu] do anything’ (152). ‘Anything’ is perhaps hyperbolic. For instance, it does not include Buntu allowing her to participate in ‘his task’. Still, the narrator now interrogates Buntu’s project of affirmation of masculinity as a struggle for liberation, much like that of Nosipho in *Fools*. Nosipho’s refusal to carry Zamani’s burden contrasts with the narrator’s sacrifice of her body to Buntu. Nosipho’s condemnation of the woman who washed the feet of Jesus and Jesus himself as the ‘worst cases’ of self-righteousness is instructive; the narrator of *Death of a Son* indulges in such self-righteousness in sacrificing herself for Buntu.

The narrator develops a critical understanding of her own position, and this is important to her development as a subject with agency. Despite Buntu’s refusal to allow her to participate in ‘his task’, she ultimately ‘[feels] in him the disguised hesitancy of someone who wanted assurance without asking for it’ (152). She wonders whether ‘he could prove himself without me’ and realises: ‘I have always drawn him into me whenever I sensed his vulnerability’ (152). The narrator now understands her culpability in ‘mothering’ him to assure him of his manhood. Now that she understands her own contribution to his self-indulgent pursuit of masculine validation, she can explain the goal of her critique of his project:

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26 For a discussion of the relationship between mother and child in the development of the subject, see Julia Kristeva (1985). It is important to draw attention to Freud and Lacan’s formulations about the emergence of the subject as predicated on fear of the father, which forces the child to leave the safe haven of the mother, implicated in the emergence of the subject. For her, motherhood is not just biology or nature but also culture or construction. See also Kristeva’s *Motherhood According to Giovanni Bellini and Tales of Love*. For this discussion, see Butler (1993).

I wanted him to be free to fear. Wasn't there greater strength that way? Had he ever lived with his own feelings? And the stress of life in this land: didn't it call out for men to be heroes? And could they live up to it even though the details of the war to be fought may be blurred? They should. (152)

This passage contains strong echoes of Ndebele's argument in essays such as 'Rediscovery of the Ordinary', so the line dividing the thoughts of the character and those of the author is very thin. Suffice it to say that the narrator, being a reporter, is capable of articulating an argument in such lucid language, and there is much evidence to that effect throughout the text of this story. The main point of the passage is contained in the first three sentences, which include her wish that Buntu should feel free to fear, and the question about whether he had ever acknowledged and embraced his own feelings. The rest of the passage is ironic. In referring to the struggle as calling on men to be heroes, the narrator does not suggest that there is no place for women in the struggle but rather aims to expose the phallogocentrism of a narrative of liberation that places the Black man in the centre as a courageous victim engaged in a heroic fight against the massive apartheid machine. Consider Buntu's insistence on proving his heroism by carrying out 'his task' alone. In his desire to be exalted as a hero, Buntu reduces the struggle to a staging of masculinity. The struggle's details are unclear to him as the narrator remarks that Buntu's thoughts 'lacked the experience of strife that comes from acceptance of fear and then, only then, the need to fight it' (153).

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The narrator claims for herself a discourse that embraces fear: 'Me? In a way, I have always been free to fear. The prerogative of being a girl' (153). As discursive code, 'the prerogative of being a girl' underlines the construction of the feminine as the binary opposite of the masculine. If the heroic, as inscribed in Buntu's 'task', is the demonstration of manhood, womanhood is, by implication, the unheroic. This is evident in the narrator's expectation that Buntu would avenge her on that particular Saturday, and when that failed, she sacrificed herself for him. What the narrator calls 'the prerogative of being a girl', therefore, dangerously evokes the social construction of the feminine as weak. However, at this stage in her development as subject, the narrator deploys this seemingly uncharitable view of women to create a space for her subaltern voice and, by bringing the private into the public sphere, takes a necessary step towards the construction of a new public.



## Framing the female voice towards the emergence of the post-apartheid subject

The sound of women crying in her home opens the narrator to the possibilities of crying as an expressive code that can move her towards a new public self or to a self with agency. When she comes home on the day the child is killed, she finds the house filled with people, mostly women, and more crowding into the yard. As soon as she makes her way into the house, she is confronted by her mother's cry: 'Her voice rose above the noise. It turned into a scream when she saw me' (148). Although the narrator sensed that something terrible must have happened, she did not yet know what it was. When she asked what had happened, her mother initially 'pushed me away with a hysterical violence' and cried out in despair: 'What misery have I brought you, my child!' The women picked up the mother's cry, and 'many women in the room began to cry', producing a sound so harrowing that the narrator could barely describe it in words: 'The sound of it! The anguish!' (148). This cry marks the possibility of strengthening the female voice towards the emergence of the post-apartheid subject. The narrator is disoriented by the sound of her mother's cry, which rises above the harrowing sounds coming from the rest of the women in the room. She 'understands' and is 'yet eager for knowledge' and 'desperate to hold onto something'. She understands only that something traumatic has happened. Although aware of her mother's pain, she '[desires] to embrace her mother not to comfort her [the mother]' but 'for all the anguish that tied everyone in the house into a knot'. The narrator desires to belong, 'to become part of that knot ... to know what had brought it about' (149). Thus, when she finally hugs her mother, she begins to understand the potential of the anguished cry in the house as something that 'had to be turned into a simmering indignation' (149).

Since the bodies of the mother and son are intertwined, the narrator's raw and guttural response to her son's violent death is marked by fears about what might happen to the dead body. As she and Buntu wait to recover the body of their child, she is assaulted by 'the horror of her own imagination'. She imagines the police mutilating the body of the child by performing an autopsy 'to determine the cause of death', even though the child was clearly killed by a police bullet. This fear underlines her motherly instinct and is a marker of her consciousness of public opinion. The narrator is afraid of what other women in the township will think of her if she does not act in accordance with public expectations: "What kind of mother would not want to look at the body of her child?" people will ask ... the elderly among them may say: "Young people are strange" (145-146). As Ndebele points out, the apartheid regime's focus on race ignored class distinctions. Thus, although the narrator and her husband have money and initially cast themselves as different, she still feels bound by the morals

of the community in which she lives. Her reference to 'the elderly among them' acknowledges them as custodians of African traditions and values. This is significant because the rhetoric of the young militants in the struggle against apartheid in the 1980s tended to cast older people as conservative and as having abandoned the struggle. Through her self-interrogation, the narrator begins a return to the fold from her sojourn in the wilderness of material self-aggrandisement. She comes to appreciate that the elderly women are not mere custodians of past African traditions but are, in fact, actively engaged in the struggle. It is important to note that the women's crying initially brings about this shift in her thinking and establishes the knot to which she seeks to belong.

The narrator's struggle while imagining the mutilated body of her son underlines the problems of narration for the witness of trauma. According to Dori Laub, 'massive trauma precludes its registration; the observing and recording mechanisms of the human mind are temporarily knocked out, malfunction'. Laub (1992: 57) further argues that 'the victim's narrative, the very process of bearing witness to massive trauma, [begins] with someone testifying to an absence, to an event that has not yet come into existence, in spite of the overwhelming and compelling nature of the reality of its occurrence'. The idea of 'testifying to an absence' may be further understood through a reading of Jean-François Lyotard's *The Differend* (1983: 8), in which he argues that 'it is the nature of the victim not to be able to prove that one has been done wrong. A plaintiff is someone who has incurred damage and who disposes of the means to prove it'. Lyotard is concerned with the problem of writing history after traumatic events such as the holocaust. In the case of the holocaust, the challenge is that the victims disappeared, and when survivors testify to the traumatic events, 'their testimony bears only upon a minute part of this situation'. Being dead, the trauma victims cannot testify about how they died, leaving the testimony of those who witness open to interrogation. Only the body of the victim, marked with signs of the trauma, can prove the trauma. The ineluctable relationship between mother and child is thus of critical importance when thinking about bodies that carry marks of trauma and provide evidence for the narrative. Although the narrator witnesses to the absence of her son's body, she inherits the language to tell the story of the tragedy from the moment she walks through the door of her house and begins to consider possible reasons for the harrowing cries of her mother and the other women. Her mother's cry inscribes the language that enables her to organise the traumatic event into narrative.

If, for the narrator, her mother's cry initiates the language in which to articulate her trauma, it is necessary to critically read her claim regarding 'the prerogative of being a girl'. Clearly, the narrator constructs herself as different from Buntu, who is presented as insisting on a certain ineffectual masculinity. Thus, the narrator struggles to tell her own story, distinct from Buntu's. By identifying

herself as a 'girl', the narrator may seem to infantilise herself and accept apartheid constructions of Black African women as inferior. However, her use of the word girl re-appropriates a term of denigration towards claiming space for Black African women. Buntu's question, 'Do you realise our son is dead?', at the beginning of the story signals the beginning of their mourning. In other words, by the time narrator tells this story, she already knows that even Buntu cries, or at least mourns. In this sense, 'the prerogative of being a girl' might be called a gesture to clear a space for the articulation of women's voices rather than an essentialisation of the inert qualities of women.

It is useful to recall here that within the first few weeks of the TRC hearings, it became apparent that most of the witnesses of apartheid violence were women. Yet the stories they told were not about themselves. It took the intervention of advocates for women's stories to convince the TRC to organise special hearings at which women were invited to tell their own stories of victimisation under apartheid.<sup>27</sup> Women's testimonies revealed the tension between the private and the public as witnesses found it difficult to express the personal in the public arena (Laub 1992: 27–50). According to Mark Sanders (2007: 61), women's testimonies have 'the potential to bring the customary to crisis. Implicitly laying claim to legal and political universality, Black women render apparent the disjuncture and conflation of custom and law.' Sanders underlines the disjuncture under colonialism in Africa between the law as circumscription of civility (applicable to the world of the colonials) and the customary (as marker of the native and traditional, and outside the purview of the law), which still had to be conflated with invented customary law. As Sanders (2007: 70) observes, "'customary law" as codified by colonial and apartheid rulers caricatured relations between men and women, as it did other aspects of African life'. The construction of women as 'insignificant' under apartheid was maintained through extreme forms of discrimination against women in public life in the name of tradition or custom. The narrator's claim of 'the prerogative of being a girl' thus expresses the desire to be heard.

The narrator's struggle with language is similar to the experiences of the witnesses described by Antjie Krog (2000: 45) in her memoir *Country of My Skull: Guilt, Sorrow and Forgiveness in the New South Africa*. Within days of the commencement of the hearings, Krog and other reporters were overwhelmed by the threnody of the victims' narratives: 'It is not so much the deaths, and the names of the dead, but the web of infinite sorrow woven around them [...] A wide barren,

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27 See Beth Goldblatt and Sheila Meintjes' report on 'Gender and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission: A Submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission' (<https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/submit/gender.htm>). For further exploration of the problems of women's witnessing during the TRC victims' hearings, see Ross (2003), Olckers (1996), Sanders (2007), Van Schalkwyk (1999), Oboe (2007) and Driver (2005).

disconsolate landscape where the horizon keeps on dropping away'. During 'a Question and Answer on a current affairs programme' two weeks into the hearings, Krog 'stammers and freezes' and finds that she is 'without language' (Krog 2000: 51). Her symptoms are typical of what happened to journalists listening to the testimonies of victims—it is 'a textbook case'. A TRC counsellor explained to journalists: 'You will experience the same symptoms as the victims. You will find yourself powerless—without help, without words' (Krog 2000: 51).

Krog later put these experiences into perspective based on 'a conversation' with Professor Kondlo, a 'Xhosa intellectual from Grahamstown',<sup>28</sup> whose suggestion was 'to take the tale of Nomonde Calata and make a comic out of it'. Kondlo may be Krog's alter ego, constructed to provide a voice that interrogates her experiences, for one of the central problems of her account of the hearings is that she had to act as a proxy for the voices of the victims.<sup>29</sup> Kondlo's proposed title, *The Contestation of Spaces*, would track the migration of the traditional African female storyteller from the domestic to the public sphere. Especially important for consideration is Kondlo's description of the female storyteller as telling stories that transgress boundaries, questioning, revising and undermining the stories of the male storyteller as a historian. Through 'Migration, Urbanization, Forced Removals', the female storyteller appears in the person of Nomonde Calata, 'sitting in the male space of the British colonial city hall of East London and relating a story as part of the official history of his country' (Krog 2000: 52). This is the type of transformation of the Black African woman that Ndebele also explores in *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*. Ndebele began this project in *Death of a Son*. A close reading of Kondlo's arguments is, therefore, important to the project of exploring the construction of the Black African woman as subject in post-apartheid South Africa.

Kondlo's reference to the female storyteller at the city hall draws attention to the symbolic aspects of the TRC hearings. The city hall, the locus of white male privilege and power for a long time, now

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28 As critics of Krog's *Country of My Skull* have established, Professor Kondlo is a fictional character. This is why 'a conversation' is here placed in quotation marks. Krog's invention of this fictional character allows her both to interrogate herself and to place her experience in the broader perspective of national narrative. For further discussion, see Cole (2007), Viljoen (1996), Phelps (2004) and Harris (2006).

29 Nomonde Calata is the widow of Fort Calata, one of the Cradock Four. The Cradock Four, four anti-apartheid activists in the Eastern Cape town of Cradock, were ambushed and killed by the police while travelling from Port Elizabeth in June 1985. For more on the Cradock Four, see Nicholson (2004). The testimonies of their widows during the TRC hearings helped to establish the harrowing tone of the testimonies. The full texts of Nomonde Calata's testimony and the testimonies of other Cradock widows are available on the official website of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission at the following url: <https://www.justice.gov.za/trc/hrvtrans/hrvel1/calata.htm>. Footage of the testimony is also included in the documentary on the Truth and Reconciliation hearings, *Long Night's Journey into Day* (2000).

serves as a space for the expression of an inclusive national narrative. This is the most salient marker of the movement of the Black African woman from the domestic to the public sphere, one of the elements of social transformation in post-apartheid South Africa. The emergence of the female subject marks that moment of transition through language. As Kondlo says concerning the cries of Nomonde Calata: 'For me, this crying is the beginning of the Truth Commission—the signature tune, the definitive moment, the ultimate sound of what the process is about' (Krog 2000: 57). What Kondlo calls the signature tune is, in his mind, associated with the image of Nomonde Calata: 'She was wearing this vivid orange-red dress, and she threw herself backwards and that sound ... that sound' (Krog 2000: 57). In other words, sound and image combine to produce the narrative of trauma. In a mirroring fiction and reality, Archbishop Tutu started singing the song 'Senzeni na, senzeni na ... What have we done?' during a break from the proceeding, echoing the narrator's mother in Ndebele's *Death of a Son*. The archbishop provided the context for that question when he added: 'Our only sin is our skin colour'. Both the question and the lament *Senzeni na?* underline the very inadequacy of language. The question expresses bafflement at human callousness and cruelty in treating fellow humans who happen to be different. Significantly, this expression of dismay at human cruelty was one of the rallying cries of the liberation struggle. Inscribed in the seeming failure of language in that expression of dismay is the very beginning of possibilities of expressiveness.<sup>30</sup> As Kondlo observes:

Academics say pain destroys language, which brings about an immediate reversion to a prelinguistic (*sic*) state—and to witness that cry was to witness the destruction of language ... was to realize that to remember the past of this country is to be thrown back to a time before language. And to get that memory, to fix it in words, to capture it with the precise image, is to be present at the birth of language itself. But more practically, this particular memory at last captured in words can no longer haunt you, push you around, bewilder you because you have taken control of it—you can move it wherever you want to. So maybe this is what the Commission is all about—finding words for the cry of Nomonde Calata (Krog 1998: 63–64).<sup>31</sup>

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30 This reading is challenged by other readings of the TRC hearings, which draw attention to the overdetermination of the project of national reconciliation that was so central to the process and sometimes demanded that victims narrate their personal experiences within the prescribed framework. On the tension between individual testimonies and the TRC's demand for a national narrative, see, inter alia, Verdoolaege (n.d., 2003) and Harris (2006).

31 Here, Kondlo paraphrases Elaine Scarry's (1987: 5) argument written in response to Virginia Wolf's (2002) argument in the essay 'On Being Ill': 'Physical pain does not simply resist language but actively destroys it, bringing about a state anterior to language, to the sounds and cries a human being makes before language is learned.'

The irony of this argument is obvious, for the cry is prelinguistic, a non-language. The difficulty is that the witness ends rather than begins with the crying. Commenting on the hearings of the Human Rights Violations Committee, Saul Tobias observes that 'some of the testimony presented at the TRC was fragmented and disjointed, and at moments of particular distress or trauma, bordered on the incoherent'. Established under the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act of 1995, the TRC sought 'to [investigate] and [establish] as complete a picture as possible of the nature, causes and extent of gross violations of human rights committed during the period from 1 March 1960 to the cut-off date contemplated in the Constitution, within or outside the Republic' (Office of the President 1995: Preamble). In lay terms, the mandate of the TRC was to establish the truth about the apartheid past as part of an inclusive national narrative. Thus, Tobias (1999) argues that the goal of national narrative suffered when witnesses broke down in the course of giving testimony, witnesses broke down because 'the factual recounting of events gave way to lamentation and prayer, a flood of metaphorical and lyrical language'. The TRC could not use that 'flood of metaphorical and lyrical language' to construct a national truth. It is important to note that Tobias is less concerned with the project of the construction of a national truth than he is with acknowledging the stories of the victims of apartheid. Thus, he observes that 'behind [the] shattered sentences lay depths of personal suffering which were glimpsed but would never fully find their way to language' (Tobias 1999: 7).

The 'metaphorical and lyrical language' as a form of expression is not symbolic but poetic language. Even though Lyotard (1983: 15) argues that 'survivors rarely speak', he notes that an entire literature of testimonies suggests otherwise. Lyotard opens the door, if only by a crack, for consideration of nuanced forms of expression when he observes that 'not to speak is part of the ability to speak, since ability is a possibility and a possibility implies something and its opposite' (Lyotard 1983: 15). Although Lyotard's project illustrates the failure of the victim to speak, his argument allows for the exploration of that ability to speak that is inscribed in silence. Ndebele's reading of the potential of the TRC characterises the metaphorical as critical to what he terms 'the restoration of narrative' (Ndebele 1998: 27). Citing Archbishop Desmond Tutu's reference to the first round of testimonies before the Human Rights Violations Committee in East London as 'stories' ('The country has taken the right course in the process of healing to hear these stories'), Ndebele raises the rhetorical question: 'Is it not that we think of stories as imaginary events which we may call tales, fables or legends: stories as narratives of one kind or another?' (Ndebele 1998: 19) Stories *can be* imaginary, but are not *only* imaginary; yet the idea of a 'story' always suggests the imaginary and thus implicates the real in the imaginary. This implication is very much present

in the TRC victims' hearings. As Ndebele observes, 'the horror of day-to-day life under apartheid often outdid the efforts of the imagination to reduce it to metaphor'; hence, the testimonies of victims may sound like fables. Moreover, dependent on memory, the stories related to the TRC could only achieve form through tropes or figuration. While some criticise the TRC for managing the testimonies towards the construction of narrative truth as a basis for reconciliation, Ndebele draws attention to the management of the testimonies through the very demands of narrative, in part because they are dependent on memory. Ndebele acknowledges the achievements of the TRC process as 'a lifting of the veil of secrecy and state-induced blindness' (Ndebele 1998: 20). Where the official mandate of the TRC posits the 'lifting of the veil of secrecy' as an end, however, Ndebele sees the real challenge in the wake of the stories as being in 'the search for meaning': 'While some key elements of the intrigue are emerging, I believe we have yet to find meaning.' Such a project, namely the search for meanings in the stories of the TRC, he argues, 'may trigger off more narratives' (Ndebele 1998: 20). Unlike the singular narrative truth envisaged by the TRC, Ndebele conceives of multiple narratives built from the search for meanings. This reading of the possibilities of the TRC provides a useful frame for reading the ending of *Death of a Son*.

Although the narrator of Ndebele's text begins with a desire to distance herself from the brutal reality of Black African life under apartheid, she ends her narrative by embracing motherhood as inscriptive of the possibility of agency. An urbanite, she is what Kondlo characterises as a purveyor of testimony in the public sphere of the city hall. Whereas Brenda Fassie sought to make her voice heard in the public sphere by airing her 'dirty laundry', the narrator represents the women who gave testimony in the hallowed atmosphere of the city hall. Yet the arrival at the city hall is not exactly an arrival at home. It is thus worth noting that the narrator ends her narrative in part with considerations of home. The dramatic irony of the narrator's statement about her home as the site of aspiration to material well-being becomes clear when teargas from a police patrol forces her and her mother out of the house a few days before the funeral. Although she has seen police patrols of this kind in townships, and although her own son was killed during such a raid, it is this direct experience that finally opens her eyes to the harsh reality of their lived experience: 'So, this is how our child was killed?' (153). It then strikes her that the child was, in fact, killed in their own home. She asks herself rhetorically: 'And this was our home? It couldn't be. It had to be a little bird's nest waiting to be plundered by a predator bird' (153). That rhetorical question is the analytical comment that explodes the vacuous notion of home to which she and her husband had subscribed amidst the brutal reality of Black African experience. The narrator needs this moment of critical understanding to move towards ultimately embracing the possibility of her development as subject. Significantly,

when Buntu comes home that night and sees what has happened, he breaks down in tears. In fact, here, Buntu's breaking down in tears overshadows the return of Sarah Baartman to her home and the possibility of the project of reconciliation to the South African nation.

The central metaphor through which the narrator reinvents herself is that of the fish and chips scattered like boats stranded on a dry riverbed on a particular Saturday. As has already been noted, she extends this metaphor to characterise the death of the language of love between her and Buntu. When they finally begin grieving for their child, she asks herself: 'How much did we have to cry to refloat stranded boats? I was sure they would float again' (153). Finally, after the funeral, she begins to menstruate. She feels that what she and her husband had buried inside her on that Saturday (the first time they consummated their relationship) had floated away 'on the surge'. What she and Buntu had buried was the secret of Buntu's impotence, which is symbolic even as it is threateningly physical. The floating away of what they had buried in the narrator's body suggests that she carried Buntu's burden. Like Nosipho, who refuses to carry Zamani's burden in *Fools*, the narrator of *Death of a Son* realises that she is not obligated to carry Buntu's burden, so she lets him find his own way through the crisis of their son's death. In other words, by the time that which they had buried floats on the river of her menstrual blood, the narrator is no longer the surrogate for Buntu's burden. Rather, by dislodging what they had buried, the narrator posits herself as subject at the same time that she embraces the possibility of becoming a mother again. The burden is that of conception as a remaking of the self. Having lost one son, the narrator embraces motherhood without the kind of illusion that ruled her sense of self after that Saturday. This is the point at which metaphor becomes the building block of self as subject. As the narrator says, the river of menstrual blood will refloat the stranded boats.

Ndebele's tribute to Brenda Fassie shows the need to place the life and work of this popular icon as a critical text in South African cultural studies. Like her cry of *Memeza*, her controversial claims about her sexual prowess highlight the problems of the movement of Black African women from the domestic to the public sphere. If the TRC stands out as a moment when previously unheard voices were finally ushered into the public sphere, then songs such as 'Good Black Woman' illustrate that testimonies about the apartheid past among Black African women predate any institutionalised witnessing to the past.



## Conclusion

In conclusion, the chapter has posited Fassie's claims and person as signposts towards a critical reading of Ndebele's *Death of a Son*. As the chapter has shown, the migration of Black African women from the domestic to the public sphere is fraught with problems. The narrator of the story manages to overcome these difficulties by embracing motherhood not as burden but as part of her very self. Kristeva's attempts to rescue motherhood from the apolitical pedestal of the Virgin Mary in *Stabat Mater* illustrate the need to engage the casting of the mother as avatar of strength as a critical project towards a more articulate feminism. Kristeva's struggles with the *Stabat Mater* as a symbol of womanhood offer a basis for an equally incisive interrogation of traditional African societies' elevation of mother to the carrier of everyone's burden. This chapter places the reading of *Death of a Son* in the context of the discussion of the TRC hearings, suggesting that the story fundamentally anticipates the problem of how to read women's TRC testimonies. Finally, this reading of *Death of a Son* is also a pre-reading of *The Cry of Winnie Mandela*. The story suggests the need for further contextualisation of Ndebele's engagements with Brenda Fassie and Winnie Mandela. Ndebele's intertwined interrogations of the two iconic figures of Black African womanhood in South Africa suggest possibilities for a broader discussion of South African experiences from postcolonial perspectives.

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## About the contributors

**Siseko H. Kumalo** is a lecturer at the University of Fort Hare's Department of Philosophy, currently completing his PhD (at the University of Pretoria) in which he interrogates belonging and national identity in South Africa. He is the recipient of the Harvard South African Fellowship 2022/2023. Kumalo received his formative training at Rhodes University, where he read in Political and International Studies, Anthropology and Philosophy. His research and teaching interests centre around themes of education decolonisation in the South African academy. He served as the founding Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Decolonising Disciplines* and has presented his research at world-leading institutions, having spoken at Duke University's (USA) Center for International and Global Studies and lectured at Karolinska Institutet (Sweden) in their master's in global health programme, teaching on the subject of decolonising global health. Kumalo's most recent edited collections include *Decolonisation as Democratisation: Global Insights into the South African Experience* (HSRC Press, 2021), *Decolonising Curricula and Pedagogy in Higher Education: Bringing Decolonial Theory into Contact with Teaching Practice* (with Shannon Morreira, Kathy Luckett and Manjeet Ramgotra, Routledge, 2021) and *University on the Border: Crisis of Authority and Precarity* (with Lis Lange and Vasu Reddy, SUN PReSS, 2021). He serves on the Editorial Collective of *Stilet*, the *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* Association and the Literary Association of South Africa's Executive Committee.

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**Gabi Mkhize** is a senior lecturer in the School of Social Sciences at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). She is also an Academic Leader for the Development Cluster, where she is an HoD of Economic History, History, Gender Studies and Information Studies. She holds a PhD in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies from the Ohio State University, USA. She has several peer-reviewed journal and book chapter publications on gender and sexuality. Her publications and research interests include gender and development, gendered violence, identity politics, gender and disability, gender and tourism, intersectionality and critical Black feminist thought.

**Vasu Reddy** is Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Internationalisation at the University of the Free State and former Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria. He is also a research associate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Pretoria. His research interests are gender, sexualities, poverty/inequalities, HIV/AIDS and critical food studies. He is an NRF B1-rated scholar. Beyond articles in these areas, his more recent book-length publications are

*Queer in Africa: LGBTQI Identities, Citizenship and Activism* (with Zethu Matebeni and Surya Monro, Routledge, 2018); *Queer Kinship: South African Perspectives on the Sexual Politics of Family-Making and Belonging* (with Tracy Morison and Ingrid Lynch, UNISA Press and Routledge, 2018); *State of the Nation: Poverty and Inequalities—Diagnosis, Prognosis, Responses* (with Crain Soudien and Ingrid Woolard, HSRC Press, 2019); *The Fabric of Dissent: Public Intellectuals in South Africa* (lead editor with Narnia Bohler-Muller, Greg Houston, Maxi Schoeman and Heather Thuynsma, HSRC Press, 2020); *State of the Nation: Ethics, Politics, Inequalities: New Directions* (with Narnia Bohler-Muller and Crain Soudien, HSRC Press, 2021), *University on the Border: Crisis of Authority and Precarity* (with Lis Lange and Siseko Kumalo, SUN PReSS, 2021) and *Texture of Dissent: Defiant Public Intellectuals in South Africa* (with Narnia Bohler-Muller, Greg Houston, Maxi Schoeman and Heather Thuynsma, HSRC Press, 2022).

**Nompumelelo (Mpume) Zondi** is a professor and Head of the Department of African Languages at the University of Pretoria. She holds a PhD from UKZN. An NRF-rated scholar, Zondi is also a recipient of the Fulbright South African Researcher Scholar Program (2022–2023) hosted by The Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. She is also a qualified teacher from Eshowe College of Education where she passed a Secondary Teachers' Diploma with Distinction. Zondi's research focus area is traditional and modern literature. She is particularly passionate about advocating for women's and children's rights and alleviating gender-based inequalities, using literary tools to address social ills. She has written and delivered papers on these subjects in both locally and internationally acclaimed and accredited journals. Her recent monograph, *Bahlabelelelani—Why Do They Sing? Gender and Power in Contemporary Women's Songs* (2020), deconstructs her doctoral thesis (2008), which uniquely contributed to unlocking women's agency in rural KwaZulu-Natal. Published by UKZN Press and financially supported by the NIHSS, the book contributes to gender discourse while nuancing the meaning of Zulu womanhood in a patriarchal society.

**Evangeline B. Zungu** is an associate professor at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. An NRF-rated scholar, her research interests are in sociolinguistics, onomastics, Indigenous knowledge systems and literature. She has published in local and international journals in these thematic areas within the discipline(s) of linguistics and sociolinguistics. Her recent monograph, published by UKZN Press and titled *Zulu Names, Polygyny and Gender Politics in Traditional Societies* (2021), brings to the fore a number of challenges facing rural women and how they turn to anthroponyms to vent their pent-up emotions.

**Mafemani J. Baloyi** is a senior lecturer in language practice in Social Sciences and Education, at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Venda. He holds a PhD in African Languages, with his doctoral thesis entitled ‘A comparative analysis of stylistic devices in Shakespeare’s plays, Julius Caesar and Macbeth and their Xitsonga translations’. He teaches translation, editing and lexicography. His research interest in translation and applied language studies focuses mainly on terminology development, semantics and language and communication. His research interest overlaps with folklore and onomastics. He has published articles in accredited journals, as well as grammar books and literary works currently prescribed for secondary schools.

**Phindile MaMsomi Dlamini** is a director at UKZN Press. Previously, she worked as a lecturer at Unisa, DUT and UKZN. A linguist working mainly within African languages, she has contributed to various fields within the language space, including translation, editing, publishing, material development and creative writing. She is a published author of more than 50 isiZulu children’s books, some of which are prescribed in schools around South Africa; some have also been translated into English and isiXhosa. Her latest publication is her scholarly book, *Avoiding Potholes in Translation—A Practical Perspective on Translation between English and isiZulu* (UKZN Press, 2021).

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**Adebola (Debola) Fawole** is a teacher, researcher, educational consultant, administrator and writer. She holds a bachelor’s degree in English from the University of Ilorin, a master’s degree in language and communications arts from the University of Ibadan, a postgraduate certificate in education from the University of Pretoria and a PhD in translation studies and linguistics from the University of Limpopo. She is currently Academic Director at the Southern African Higher Christian Education Trust (SAHCET). She is also involved in editing, tutoring and teaching English and Yoruba languages online. She has published articles in DHET-accredited journals. Her research interests include identity in language use; teaching, learning and use of languages in diverse cultural, linguistic and professional environments; and communication in gendered spaces. She is an avid reader, poet and advocate for women and children-related issues.

**Nobuhle Ndimande-Hlongwa** is a professor, Dean and Head of the School of Arts in the College of Humanities at UKZN. An NRF-rated social scientist, Hlongwa is an established researcher with many publications, some of which are written in isiZulu, thus contributing to the promotion and intellectualisation of isiZulu as a language of scholarship in higher education. Her book entitled *Ukuhlelwa Kolimi* (Shuter and Shooter, 2009), translated as ‘Language Planning’, is still the only

book written in isiZulu in the area of sociolinguistics. She has co-guest edited several special issues of *Alternation*. Ndimande-Hlongwa is the Chairperson of the Community of Practice for the Teaching and Learning of African Languages (CoPAL). She is also the treasurer of the African Language Association of Southern Africa.

**Gugulethu Mazibuko** is the Academic Leader: African Languages, Linguistics and Development Modules at UKZN in the School of Arts (African Languages). She has published in the fields of literature, language planning and onomastics. Mazibuko has done research on the development of isiZulu literature, which has led to the publication of an article in the *Current Writing Journal* and a chapter in a book titled *SA Lit Beyond 2000* (Indiana University Press, 2013). She has edited a number of literary works, including *UNodumehlezi KaMenzi*, an epic poem by Mazisi Kunene, and *Zidla Inkotha*, a poetry anthology published by UKZN Press. She translated *Golden Melodies from Hindi Cinema* into isiZulu; the book is called *Imizwilili*. She is the assistant editor for the *South African Journal of African Languages*.

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**Bongani Mbatha** is a lecturer in the School of Social Sciences and Language Education at the University of the Free State, teaching creative arts and isiZulu. Before this, he was a teaching assistant at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, USA, teaching isiZulu and introduction to African literary studies, where he received his MA in African cultural studies in 2012. He is currently working on his doctoral thesis on the construction of young Black African men’s masculinities through kwaito music. His research interests include gender studies, African cultural studies, African popular culture, Black performance arts and African literature.

**Bonakele Mhlongo** is a lecturer in the School of Language and Arts at UKZN. She holds a PhD in African languages. Mhlongo is well grounded in pre-service teacher education owing to her many years of experience. Her research interests are language pedagogy, reading for learning and gender issues. She has published, worked on various projects and supervised postgraduate students writing on these themes.

**Sipho A. Ntombela** is a lecturer at the Wits School of Education in the Division of Languages, Literacies and Literatures. He holds the following qualifications: STD, BA, BAHons (Literature), BAHons in Linguistics (Translation), PGDipE (Curriculum), MA and PhD. He is a former schoolteacher and office-based educator who served as HoD, Principal and Subject Advisor (IsiZulu). His research focuses on oral literature and Indigenous knowledge systems.



**Sicelo Z. Ntshangase** is a lecturer in the Language and Arts Cluster at UKZN, Edgewood Campus. He has written several journal articles and presented several research papers on pedagogy, especially on dual language education, translanguaging, interactive teaching pedagogy, language acquisition, bilingual and multilingual education, linguistic rights in education, language planning and language policy, gender and literature, isiZulu oral literature, African religion, philosophy and cosmology and the integration of technology into teaching. He is the sole author of three isiZulu books: an anthology of poems, a collection of short stories and a novel. His writings address issues such as patriarchy, sexism, homosexuality, transgenderism, classism, religion, family relations, racism, education and many more topics that are topical in modern societies. He has also served as an editor for publishing companies and has blind-reviewed several academic articles for various academic journals.

**Tsoaledi D. Thobejane** holds a doctoral degree in international education from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (USA). He obtained his MSc (cum laude) in community development at Southern New Hampshire University (USA) in 1998. Professor Thobejane has published extensively in the areas of gender, patriarchy and feminism, and education. He is presently the coordinator of the Unit for Gender Studies in the Department of Gender and Youth Studies at the University of Venda. He is the author of the following books: *The Fight for an Egalitarian Society: Towards Politics of Racial Harmony and Equity in South Africa* (Nova Science Pub Inc., 2010), *The Fight for an Egalitarian South Africa/Azania* (Nova Science Pub Inc., 2013) and *Post-Apartheid Education in South Africa: Towards Liberation or Equity?* (VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2010). As a human rights activist, he was detained at Nylstroom Prison under a state of emergency from 1984 to 1988. His work on gender-based violence includes (but is not limited to): 'Language and the Perpetuation of Patriarchy, Gender Based Violence on Men: A Muted Reality' and 'Gender Expectations within the Modern Institution of Marriage: A Case for South Africa'.

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**Editors:** Nompumelelo Zondi, Gabi Mkhize, Evangeline B. Zungu, Siseko H. Kumalo and Vasu Reddy

**‘Thetha Sizwe,’** or **‘Let your voice be heard’** is an audacious and timely scholarly intervention. It presents a rich collection of philosophical reflections that celebrates the resistive, subversive and creative role of cultural workers in critiquing heteronormative coloniality and patriarchy. It begins by exploring African cultural expressions which contribute aesthetic forms and cultural tools for the critical interrogation of coloniality, demonstrating the resistive potential of indigenous ideas of gender and sexuality characterised by fluidity. The material examples, include Yoruba oriki praise singing, Zulu philosophy of umsamo, and Izingane zoMa’s Zulu women’s songs, among others, which provide the basis for theoretical advances in cultural decolonisation and expand the terrain for radical inventiveness. Taken as a whole, this collection opens new political and philosophical spaces for the ongoing engagement with the challenges of creating theories and intellectual practices that can respond to the enmeshed realities in which African people find themselves.

**Amina Mama**

**University of California (Davis)**

## *Injobo ithungelwa ebandla!*

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