

**THEMES OF FORCED AND FORBIDDEN LOVE:
CROSS-CULTURAL TRENDS IN LANGUAGE
LITERATURES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO ZULU NOVELS.**

by

KHABONINA GRACE NKUMANE

**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of**

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SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR R.S. CHAPHOLE

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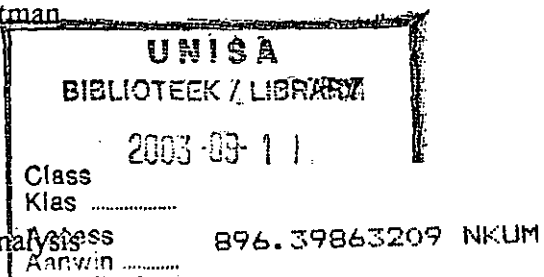


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DEDICATION

**THIS THESIS IS DEDICATED TO MY MOTHER,
NOMBANGO ALEXINAH KHUMALO AND MY LATE FATHER,
MZIMBA SOLOMON KHUMALO.**

DECLARATION

I declare that: **Themes of forced and forbidden love: cross-cultural trends in language literatures with special reference to Zulu novels** is my own work, that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this thesis was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university.


K.G. NKUMANE

SUMMARY

This study is a thematic exploration of forced and forbidden love. These themes are not only cross-cultural but also exhibit many sub-themes. Chapter one is a general introduction that sets out the aim of the study; the motivation behind the selection of the topic; a literature review on women's issues; the scope and composition of subsequent chapters and the definition of key terms that are crucial for this study.

An eclectic approach offers itself as suitable for this study. The second chapter discusses three literary theories. Womanism proved to be an indispensable literary method as this study analyses the extent to which the cultures of forced and forbidden love have affected women's lives. Literary onomastics exposes the relationship between the name and its bearer and the power the name imparts to its bearer. Psychoanalysis, as the final tool of analysis, exposes the psychological effects, caused by the cultures of forced and forbidden love, on female as well as on male characters.

Chapter three examines the social stereotypes contained in these novels. It also demonstrates how African names in particular determine sex roles. The psychological effects that women experience because of their marginalisation and because of how their names eventually determine their ~~peripheral position in society~~ are also explored. In chapter four the themes under scrutiny are explored to expose other salient themes inherent in them.

Chapter five gives a cross-cultural representation of the cultures of forced and forbidden love from various African language literatures. Chapter six is the last chapter. It is the general conclusion of the study, which presents observations and future suggestions.



CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

As far as anthropology can tell there is not now, nor ever has been, a human being who is not totally immersed in and pervasively affected by some culture.

(Kraft, 1979:103)

Human beings not only participate in the transmission of their culture, or in its reshaping, but they are in turn also shaped by it. Even in this fast changing technocratic era, culture still influences our lives to a great extent. Dworkin in Kramarae & Treichler (1985:112) expresses the view that culture no longer organically reflects us, but it possesses and rules us, reduces us, obstructs the flow of sexual and creative energy and activity, and it also penetrates even into what Freud calls the id, gives nightmare shape to natural desire.

The comments just cited show that culture permeates our daily lives. It has a hold on us. Culture is not really something we have a choice in keeping or discarding. It is in us and for us. It appears that no one can escape from it. Without it we would be empty shells and so would any other nation be.

1.2 Aim of study

The main purpose of this study is to expose and analyse the sex-role stereotypes and social inequalities which were perpetuated by the traditional practice of forced and forbidden love which appears as prominent themes in four IsiZulu novels: Kungenxa Kabani by S.S. Gcumisa, Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi by J.K. Ngubane, Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami by E.E.N.T. Mkhize and Kungavuka AbaNguni by I.S. Kubheka. An effort will be made to critically investigate the relevance of these traditional practices to the prevailing subordinate position of women.

This work situates gender studies in an urgent and primary position since its primary aim is to show how amongst the AmaZulu the ill-use of traditional practices by unscrupulous men has significantly contributed to the marginalisation, subordination and oppression of women in society.

This work sets out to show that gender studies are only a sub-part of a broader problem that societies have to grapple with.

This thesis attempts to explore the significance of the above mentioned traditions for today's women through, among others, the use of the womanistic theory. Womanism has largely been ignored in African languages to date. There is an especially urgent necessity for literary critics to examine womanism in as far as it applies to African literature. It is both unfair and incorrect to discuss it as a sub-part of feminism because it is not. Miriam Tlali, a well-known South African woman writer, does not fully regard herself as a feminist. Her response to a question posed by Cecily Lockett (Mackenzie & Clayton, 1989:74), as to whether she regards herself as a feminist writer, indicates her partial association with feminism:

Well, JA, I could call myself that. But not in the narrow, Western kind of way of speaking about a feminist. Black women are very much conscious of the fact that they are the very people to make the home and very little credit is given to their efforts which are so much crucial to the running of the home and the society.

Tlali's response highlights the fact that she only associates herself with feminism because of the fact that feminism is also a movement that fights for freedom of choice for women, and this underlines the common ground between feminism and womanism. Tlali's comment also draws attention to the broader perspective on the African way of life which links it to nation building.

Womanism, then, fits well with the idea of nation building that is suggested in Tlali's response, and therefore we can say without doubt that her comment also foregrounds womanism as a relevant and significant approach to the analysis of African literature. Many times the traditional practice of forced and forbidden love affects girls more than boys because a girl was, and is still, viewed in some societies as a vehicle through which the father could enrich himself through receiving the bride price. Although the main focus particularly falls on girls and women who are hard hit by these cultures, this study also aims to show that boys too are no exception. Let us mention from the onset of this study that the themes of forced and forbidden love also embrace arranged and preferential marriages.

One of the aims of this study is to indicate how the application of literary onomastics affords us the opportunity to further reveal the powerful character traits conveyed by the names of male characters, and how these names further widen the division between the two sexes. It attempts to examine how the names of female characters are associated with the submissive and passive roles that are assigned to women. Through the use of psychoanalytical techniques, the study aims to provide further insight into the harmful effects of the customs of forced and forbidden love on the characters. Although the study is limited to specific IsiZulu novels, it also indicates a cross-cultural practice of these customs. Today, unlike in olden days these customs manifest themselves in a process that is subtle in and of itself, for it manifests itself most often in covert, unarticulated ways. The aim of the study is, essentially, to trace the contribution of the traditional cultural practice of forced and forbidden love to the present subordinate position of women.

1.3 Motivation

My experience as an IsiZulu teacher for a period of fifteen years is the first reason that has initiated an interest in researching the role of female characters in some IsiZulu novels that handle the themes of forced and forbidden love. These themes actually emanate from the traditional practice of forced and forbidden love, the arranged and preferential marriages. It has come to our notice that for a number of years learners in schools have been expected to read literature that is written by men only. A close observation has revealed that these works promote a male perspective as the positive and the correct one with which all learners have to identify. There is no doubt then, that this promotes a more positive self-image for boys than for girls. The problem cannot only be shifted to the Department of Education, but also to the then Language Board which largely consisted of men and male writers. The domination of the Language Board by men continued the deep-rooted patriarchal tradition that girls at school and women in general had to cope with. Owomoyela (1993:312) supports this view by saying:

Course syllabi, textbooks, and anthologies of African literature have been dominated by male writers.

Although this situation is changing gradually now, literature written by men has conditioned these young people to fit into the sex-role stereotypes that we adults have and that are transmitted by

the prescribed literary works. Buchbinder (1991:132) concurs when he states that: "... literature is just one of the ways in which gender relations and gender ideology are produced and reproduced." For as long as learners and children in general are faced with literature that foregrounds unequal power relations between male and female, our society cannot hope to eradicate the problem of gender inequality. Our literature should be transformed at grassroots level if we aim to have a gender equitable society in future. Nomathemba Mabaso, the writer of the article, "When children are raised in sex-role stereotyped ways," in the *City Press* of July 18 1999, also expresses the need for the eradication of sex-role stereotypes when she says:

The systematic and all pervasive denial of freedom of expression to women and girls is everywhere. It pervades culture, **education**, history, economics and the home. It shows itself in the ill-treatment of a girl by a township boy; the socialisation of girls into being passive and boys into being active; the representation of history as having been made exclusively by men; and in the economic imbalances between men and women.(Emphasis mine).

Mabaso's comment highlights the fact that women's voices are considered inferior in almost all spheres of life, whether in education, in the running of the country or even in the home. Through education, literature reinforces stereotype gender roles in children, because young learners easily identify themselves with the characters they read about in their prescribed literature. The boy child, then, sees himself as a communicator, a hero, the strong warrior, the energetic hunter, the conqueror, while the girl sees herself as the submissive creature who is always subdued by man. Our study in the forthcoming chapters indicates that boys in literature are encouraged to be aggressive, competitive and independent; girls are rewarded for being good, passive and dependent. All of us, irrespective of our sexuality, have to challenge and eliminate the sex-role stereotypes with which our children are fed from the day they are born until they die.

It is only late in the 1980s that literary works written by female Zulu writers such as Emelda Mkabayi Damane and Ncamisile Makhambeni came to the scene. Even when this happened, it took time before both teachers and students noticed that these were female Zulu writers because they were used to the fact that literature is written by men. Reading and teaching male texts has become a normal tradition in our schools. No one bothers to question this tradition. In this study, we therefore, take it upon ourselves to question the organisation of the cultures of forced and

forbidden love in the selected texts, their effects on society and how the indelible marks of these cultures still affect the lives of women today.

The second motivational factor of this research has largely been heightened by the recent report issued in 1997 by the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE). The report published information on the Evaluation Workshops that were set up to assess the position of women in various sectors of South African society. The findings of the workshops are relevant to our study because the report revealed that in five of the nine South African provinces, culture still allocates a back seat to women. The article, "Gender equality: There's still a long way to go for women in South Africa," by Zohra Khan, in the *Sowetan* of Thursday 30 July 1998, for example, writes that the Mpumalanga Information and Evaluation Workshop, held in June 1998 reported that women not only had limited access to land, but that there were high levels of cultural stereotypes, customary and tribal laws which were cited as the main reasons for the lack of women's participation in the economic and social development of the province. In the Eastern Cape, the Evaluation Workshop, held in April 1998, cited traditional and cultural practices as the dominant forms of oppression against women. It is also reported that the gender division of labour ensures that women are over-represented among the poor. In the Free State, the Evaluation Workshop was held in June 1998. It revealed that a number of institutions are actively promoting gender equality. One of the issues highlighted was social and cultural bias against women, as well as traditional and cultural practices that confine women to the domestic sphere. Still in June 1998, the Evaluation Workshop, in the highly industrialised province of Gauteng, revealed that traditional and customary law is biased against women and high levels of violence are committed against them. In KwaZulu-Natal, which is one of the provinces prioritised by the CGE, politics and high levels of crime have been reported to have a direct impact on the living conditions of women, most of whom are poor and live in rural areas. From the evaluation reports received from the five provinces, it appears that culture still determines the course of life of many African women. Judging from the fact that our culture is pro patriarchy, and affected by poor living conditions in which women find themselves, it is therefore not surprising also to meet the meek African woman who has been created by the African male writers in literature. The abundant negative stereotypes of women in literature, and the perpetual use of culture to keep women silent and away from participating in important decision-making structures has heightened the urgency of this research.

The picture of the submissive African woman is contradictory to some of the historical facts that tell of very strong African women story. Royal women, such as Princess Mkabayi kaJama (Zulu), Queen Labotsibeni (Swati), Queen Modjadji (Lobedu), and Queen Manthatisi (Tlokwa) have been reported to have displayed remarkable abilities and notable leadership qualities in African history.

These women were considered as heroines even during those highly patriarchal times. Mkabayi is remembered for her strong character. She proposed a wife, Mthaniya, for her father, Jama, after the death of her mother, who died immediately after giving birth to her and her twin sister Mmama. When King Senzangakhona was born, the nation was grateful for her actions. After the death of King Jama, she imposed herself on the nation as regent because Senzangakhona was too young to ascend the throne. Mkabayi was the first woman ruler in KwaZulu. Msimang (1994:125) says; "This was unheard of in Zulu history but the men soon succumbed to her guide and domineering character." During her reign she ordered the killing of Sojiyisa, Jama's "love" son, whom she regarded as a threat to Senzangakhona's reign. During Shaka's time Mkabayi showed her powerful influence on the Zulu kingdom. She also plotted the killing of King Shaka.

Queen Gwamile Labotsibeni Mdluli will always be remembered among the emaSwati for the role she played after the death of her son king Bhunu, father of King Sobhuza II. King Sobhuza II could not ascend the throne after the death of his father because of his tender age. Malunge, the son of Mbandzeni, was appointed as regent. According to the siSwati culture the Queen has more power than a regent. Queen Labotsibeni took most of the decisions for King Sobhuza II. In spite of contempt and insults from the emaSwati she was determined to take Sobhuza II to school, though the emaSwati did not realize the importance of education at that time. When the king went to further his education at Lovedale Missionary Institution in the Cape Colony, the Queen was suspected of plotting the assassination of her grandson.

The emaSwati acknowledged the need for education after their king had gone to England to negotiate about the land that was taken away from them by the British Colonial government. After his return he was honoured with new praises that contained a new perspective of the emaSwati on the importance of education. The queen valued education and she stood firm behind the king, giving him comfort and support. In her praise poems she is referred to as a brave and a strong-minded woman. Nyembezi (1958:157) writes:

Yiso lesi sibindi esikhulu kangaka esabangela ukuba uLabotsibeni abongwe ngokuthi:

Mgwami ongavuthwa naseziko,
Owehlule izimbiza zabelungu namaSwazi.

(It is this bravery that earned Queen Labotsibeni the following praises:

Food that does not get cooked even when cooked,
You conquered the pots of the white people and the emaSwati).

Queen Labotsibeni was known as a fighter who never feared white people. She fought against the Boers' forced labour and oppression. She also encouraged the tree plantation defiance campaign against the government of Swaziland. She saw it as a hurdle to prevent her people from obtaining education, and promoted the education of her nation against all odds.

Queen Modjadji was a rain doctor. She could manipulate the skies to produce rain in times of dire drought. Her rain powers drew people, kings, and nations from far away places. She gathered great wealth and this gave her power and economic status. It is not surprising that she became Queen and ruled over the Lobedu tribe. Her position of Rain Queen was hereditary. Her daughter later became the rain doctor and also adopted her mother's name. Up to this day the area of the Lobedu is still known as GaModjadji in recognition of her political prowess.

Manthatisi imposed herself as regent for her son Sekonyela, after the death of her husband, Mokotjo, who was king of the Tlokwa tribe. Her action was contrary to Sesotho tradition, but she was a successful military leader and this gained her the loyalty of her subjects.

Given such heroic leadership of women, it is no wonder that some African women writers regard the docile mendicant African woman as a literary creation. Debating the existence of a docile African woman Ama Ata Aidoo (in Jarrett-Macauley, 1996:159) attests that:

On the other hand, if she did exist, then she was a mutant creation of the cumulative trauma from the last five hundred years' encounter with the West; the last one hundred years of colonial repression and denials; current neo-colonial disillusionment and denials, and a natural environment that, in many parts of the continent, was behaving almost as an implacable enemy.

Aidoo makes us believe that the image of the docile woman is the result of influence over the African male writer by Western culture. The debate, whether this entrenched patriarchal culture came with the white colonialists or is inherent in African society, has been a bone of contention among a number of African writers. The docile image of woman is believed to be derived from colonial education or, more accurately, from the white man's wife and her helpless, dependent, unproductive life in the colonies (cf. Jones & Palmer (1987), Owomoyela (1993)). According to this view, the European imperialists also brought with them the norm of feminine subordination in the face of masculine power and oppression. In the presence of this argument, in this study we align ourselves with the views of Buchi Emecheta and Lloyd Brown who reject Aidoo's image of a free-spirited and independent African woman whose problems, as woman, have flowed from colonialism rather than indigenous mores. This, however, should not be interpreted to say that it is only African culture that is sexist. We believe that any culture that promotes the welfare of men above that of women is equally sexist. Sexism, therefore, does not only exist in African culture. With regard to the question of docility we could only be at ease with the view that the Western culture with its subordinate view of womanhood added more salt to the wound. The historical roles played by the four African women leaders prove that, given a chance, women could be excellent rulers and sometimes better leaders than men. Women's contribution is very crucial not only to the running of the home but also to other important issues in society.

The third and final motivational factor is the rampant violence against women and the high numbers of cases of rape and abuse. These perpetual conditions seem to suggest that the lives of women are meaningless. Women played an integral role in the democratisation of this country because they believed that national liberation would automatically come with gender liberation. Now, with two democratic elections behind us, women in South Africa see that sexism is not going to be erased without posing a challenge to the deep patriarchal domination that exists in society today. As people, men and women differ in their physical structure rather than in terms of how they think or feel. Zohra Ebrahim, the first black woman president of the Institute for Personnel Management in South Africa, acknowledges the fact that in the first three years of democracy, South African women have achieved significant goals, such as representation at most levels of government, the gender commission, the women's budget and an office for the status of women. Her discontentment with these achievements reveals that a woman is unable to secure herself better employment, because of her lack of education. She makes the following comment:

While these achievements are laudable, the everyday life of most South African women tells a different story. Most women who work are employed as domestic workers, cleaners, rural farm workers, teachers and nurses, or in clerical/administrative posts. While these are valuable positions, they reflect a particular mind set of women as workers. That mind set, formed by the male nation, starts from home and is taken to the work place. It purports that women are caregivers and helpers of men only. There is much to do before meaningful numbers of South African women enjoy true equality with their male counterparts (*True Love*, September, 1997: 138).

Ellen Khuzwayo's view is similar to Ebrahim's regarding the fact that women have been the underdogs and in the lowest rung of society, primarily because they were not given the same opportunities to start when men started their education. She stresses that women were misfits in industry because of their lack of education. If they did come to the cities, communication problems prevented them from getting good jobs like men. A lot of them took to beer making and some worked as charwomen, doing washing and cleaning for white families (Mackenzie & Clayton, 1989:60).

South African women and black women in particular, need to improve their living conditions by learning from their counterparts in other developing countries. They should not allow women's issues to be put aside while racial disparities are addressed. Women of all races have to notice that they suffer certain common disadvantages. All people, not only women, have to set about addressing the alarming gender problems and the eradication of the negative male and female stereotypes that our children come across in schools, at home and in society at large.

1.4 Scope of study

This study consists of six chapters. In the introduction, attention is given to the aim, the motivation, and the definition of key concepts. A literature review, based on academic research into women's issues, is provided as background to what has been researched thus far. As such, this study hopes to make a significant contribution in this field.

In the second chapter, consideration is given to the theoretical perspectives that inform this critical investigation. Emphasis is placed on the womanist theory. There is a discussion of the most important terms that are related to womanism, which are defined and elaborated on. Concepts

such as Afrocentrism and the literary canon are discussed within the framework of womanism. This chapter also outlines the other two attendant literary theories used in this study i.e., literary onomastics and psychoanalysis. The employment of onomastics reveals the fact that the names of the characters found in the novels in this study are gender prescriptive. Psychoanalysis, which mainly scrutinizes the behaviour of the characters in the selected novels, examines the end results of the socialization process in men and women.

Chapters three and four form the core of this study. These chapters are concerned with a detailed examination of the selected novels. Chapter three firstly examines each of the selected novels in terms of the sex role stereotypes attached to women and looks at how culture empowers men, as well as at its contribution to the relegation and suppression of women in society. Secondly, it focusses on how the names of characters prescribe gender roles and thirdly, it reveals the psychological effects of gender inequality and of personal names on the characters.

The fourth chapter scrutinizes the themes under discussion and exposes other sub-themes inherent in them. Among these themes we can briefly mention the themes of oppression, submissiveness, child marriage, discrimination, protest, freedom and obstinacy. This chapter indicates that the traditional cultural practice has diverse effects on a human being.

In chapter five a cross-cultural exemplification of the themes of forced and forbidden love is given. Literary examples are drawn from the siSwati, isiXhosa, Sepedi, Tshivenda, Senegalese novel, So Long a Letter by Mariama Bâ and a Nigerian novel, One is Enough by Flora Nwapa.

Chapter six is a general conclusion in which the main observations are summarized and provides suggestions for future research are made.

1.5 Literature review

Our literature review briefly revisits research carried out on the themes of forced and forbidden love. The larger part of the literature review pays attention to academic research works carried out on women's issues in literature. In this regard, then, Doctoral theses, M A dissertations, B A. Honours articles and other relevant academic articles will be reviewed.

1.5.1 Existing research on women's issues

Makhambeni's B. A. Honours article entitled: "An analysis of certain prominent themes in Zulu novels," provides an insight that forms part of the discussion in this research. In her study, Makhambeni provides a wide survey of themes in IsiZulu novels. Themes of forced or forbidden love form part of the variety of themes she has discussed.

Regarding the themes of forced and forbidden love, she highlights the fact that these themes are a result of parental control. She stresses the fact that parents in accordance with traditional practice, compel their daughter to marry a man of their choice much against the girl's will. Another significant factor that she mentions is the fact that the traditional setting of those times condoned the practice of such customs.

In his doctoral thesis entitled: "A Feminist Critique of the Image of Women in the Prose Works of Selected Xhosa Writers (1909-1980)," P T. Mtuze (1994) searches for the images of female characters in Xhosa literature, and indicates how these images have changed over the years. Mtuze argues, and finally concludes, that the suppression and stereotyping of women is universal as it transcends all racial and national barriers. His study exposes the manner in which the Xhosa woman is oppressed and discriminated against by the Xhosa writer.

Mtuze compares female stereotypes used by male writers to those used by women writers. He reveals the stereotypical subservient roles played by women in male-authored works during the first twenty years of written Xhosa prose fiction. He discovered that women writers were not different from their male counterparts when it came to character delineation in those years. Women were still portrayed as little creatures that should succumb to male domination and supremacy. He asserts that female writers not only confirm sexist stereotypes, but also seem to coax women back to their former glorious state of subservient housewife.

"The depiction of women characters in selected Venda novels," is a dissertation submitted by A. Mawela (1994) for her M A degree. She takes a close look at various roles assigned to women by the Venda society. Like other research works on women's issues, Mawela's study dwells on

the negative delineation of female characters. In her own words she admits that: “ ... some writers portray characters in order to influence the attitude of society about women, whether it be for the better or worse. Some writers tend to portray real women, though reluctantly, while others portray women as bad characters to give women a bad name” (Mawela, 1994: 2).

Like Mtuze, Mawela traces the depiction of female characters from the initial stages of novel writing in Tshivenda, and indicates how the changing times have influenced character delineation in the present literary works. The women in Venda challenge the present conditions to express their discontentment about the roles they play in society. As in most societies, patriarchal and cultural challenges are not warmly welcomed by the Venda society.

Women use many ways to challenge the oppressive structures of society. They do not have to shout loudly all the time. They can present their grievances through songs. In her M.A. dissertation; “Voicing their perception: A Review of Swazi Women folk Songs,” S.R. Dlamini presents song as an instrument through which the Swati women express their concerns, attitudes, and feelings. She reveals that the Swati woman is no exception to patriarchal domination.

Dlamini ascribes the emergence of women’s organizations like the Swaziland Women Action Group Against Abuse, abbreviated as SWAGAA, in Swaziland as a challenge to the patriarchal domination and abuse of women prevalent in her country. The following description of SWAGAA’s function provides a more comprehensive idea of women’s problems in Swaziland:

Besides making the women aware of their rights, this movement intervenes in cases of women abuse. Such abuse can be physical as well as emotional. There are various kinds of abuse the Swati woman is subjected to. They can be cultural and sexual, or financial. As long as a woman is a victim of abuse this action group steps in to rescue her (Dlamini, 1996:2).

“Images of Women in some Zulu literary works: A Feministic Critique,” is a recent M. A. dissertation by N. Masuku (1997). Like its precedents, the study peruses the portrayal of female characters by male and female writers. The negative portrayal of female characters seems to be of great concern, as she asks the following questions:

Is it a fact or fallacy that male authors are biased when it comes to the depiction of their female characters? Do female authors depict their women characters differently from male authors? Do they also exhibit any sexist, distorted and chauvinistic interpretations in their portrayal? (Masuku, 1997: 6).

“Elements of feminism in M. A. Kekana’s *Nonyana ya Tokologo*,” is a B A. Honours article written by M. J. Maponyane (1990). Maponyane exposes the cultural constraints that are imposed on women in Northern Sotho society. She addresses the cultural norms and values which distance females from being actively involved in the political and economic structures of their society.

The above cited academic research shows various similarities with this study. The common factors are the addressing of women’s issues concerning the positions they occupy in society, gender equality, women’s struggle against male domination and the stereotypical portrayal of female characters by male writers. Although this study touches on some of the literary aspects that are also discussed in the above mentioned studies, it differs from the others in that it employs the womanistic literary theory as the major tool of analysis, rather than the feminist literary theory that is recurrent in the above mentioned studies. This study further illustrates how the names of characters further divide men and women by the prescriptive gender roles that are inherent in these names. It goes on to analyse the psychological behaviour of both male and female characters which have been affected by the imposition of forced or forbidden love. After it has outlined all these, it also reveals that there are other significant sub-themes inherent in the themes under study which further show the marginalisation of women in society. To mention but a few, these include: the themes of oppression, child marriage, and submissiveness. It indicates that these traditional practices are not only confined to IsiZulu culture but are also found in literary works from other African languages.

1.6 Definition of key concepts

The concepts to be defined are the keys to an understanding of the topic and of the work as a whole. It is necessary to define and clarify these concepts before we proceed any further.

1.6.1 Theme(s)

The concept “theme” is a kernel of this study. Although its meaning is known to most literary researchers, because it has been repeatedly defined in the many academic researches that treated theme as the main idea, as a crucial concept in this study too, we also feel obliged to define it. Cohen (1973: 198) defines theme briefly as “The essential meaning or main concept in a literary work of art.”

This study looks at themes of forced and forbidden love as essential in the selected novels. Brooks and Warren (1959:273) claim that:

Theme is what a piece of fiction stacks up to. It is the idea, the significance, the interpretation of persons and events, the pervasive and unifying view of life which is embodied in the total narrative ... some comment on values in human nature and human conduct, on good and bad, on the true and false, some conception of what the human place is in the world.

Brooks and Warren’s definition implies the affinity between theme and the subject of the discourse. Theme is derived from the subject of the discourse. Their definition takes into account the persons and the events narrated in the story. It therefore, shows the interrelationship that exists between the two concepts. Lenake (1984:15) distinguishes between the two concepts and states: “The term subject-matter relates to ‘what’ is being said in a poem or in a ‘literary work of art’, while theme refers to the underlying idea of a poem or of a ‘literary work of art’.”

In our study the discussion of theme will take the subject matter into consideration. Theme is contained by the subject matter. A more helpful explanation of the concept ‘theme’ is given by Abrams (1981:141), who says: “... the term theme is more usefully applied to an abstract claim, or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader.”

Important observations can be deduced from Abrams’s definition. Theme is viewed as an abstract claim or doctrine that a writer persuades a reader to assimilate a work of art. Theme may be implicit or explicit in nature. An understanding of theme, then, requires a thorough knowledge of

the work's subject matter. For a reader to be able to conceive theme in a particular work, the characters and all the events should be taken into consideration.

1.6.2 Force(d)

The term "force" implies coercion, compulsion and enforcement. According Hornby and Cowie (1974: 336) force means to "compel, oblige; use force to get something; to make somebody do something." The term here is used with the connotation of pressurising somebody to do something against his or her will.

1.6.3 Forbid(den)

To "forbid" is to order somebody not to do something; order that something shall not be done; used to express a wish that something may not happen (Hornby & Cowie, 1974: 336). In this study the term is used to refer to a prohibition or an inhibition.

1.6.4 Cross-cultural

The term "cross-cultural" refers to the fact that the themes of forced and forbidden love are dealt with in the literature of various cultures. This however, does not suggest that Africans possess a common culture. Considerable cultural diversities can be observed even within one national group. The term "cross-cultural" in this context specifically points to the fact that a number of writers, belonging to different cultural groups, have at some stage written about the practices of forced and forbidden love.

1.6.5 Language

"Language" is a means of communication that uses words. Fromkin and Rodman (1983: 3) state that "We live in a world of words." They further assert that:

The possession of language, more than any other attribute, distinguishes humans from other animals. To understand our humanity one must understand the language that makes us human. ...it is language that is the source of human life and power.

The above definition highlights that language is one of the predominant cultural representational systems. Our experience and our world is represented by means of language. A language enables us to speak and be understood by others who know that language. We come to perceive our world through the system of values inherent in the words we use. The words one finds in a particular language reflect the views and values of that society. In this study language is viewed as a vehicle of communication which exposes the social inequality between the sexes through the use of the themes of forced and forbidden love. We concur with Fromkin and Rodman (1983: 270) when they say, "Language cannot be sexist in itself, just as it can't be 'dirty,' but it can reflect sexist attitudes just as it can reflect attitudes as to what is or is not considered "taboo." Thus language is the main means by which cultural values are recycled and sustained from generation to generation.

1.6.6 Literature(s)

Morris (1993:6) says:

'Literature' is normally used to refer to a body of texts that are perceived to have certain aesthetic qualities; this body of writing is often also called the 'literary canon'. Secondly, 'literature' is also an institution which is embodied primarily in education and publishing. And, finally, 'literature' is a cultural practice involving the writing, reading, evaluation, teaching and so on of the literary canon.

The first explanation, of literature as a body of respected writing with aesthetic qualities, and the last explanation, of literature as the production of writing are more relevant with regard to our view of literature. These two explanations take into account the relationship between literature and life. Creative forms of writing can offer special insight into human experience and that it also sharpens our perception of social reality. Literary texts, therefore, provide a more powerful understanding of the ways in which society works to the advantage or disadvantage of women. This is why feminists and womanists are interested in literature as an influential cultural practice embodied in powerful institutions. Womanists are looking at the perceptions of reality which the great books of our language offer us. In addition, the strong emotional impact of imaginative writing may be brought into play to increase indignation at gender discrimination and hence help to end it. Literature constructs a representation of that already existing or past reality by means

of words. Morris further makes an important observation in stating that “moreover, in many cultures the literary canon is esteemed as the most prestigious form of representation; in literature, it is claimed, we find the expression of the highest ideals and aspirations of humankind, the noblest examples of human thought and action to emulate and aspire to.”

1.6.7 Novel

Hawthorn (1992:1) quotes Hornby who defines a novel as:

A fictitious prose narrative or tale of considerable length in which characters and actions representative of the real life of past or present times are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity.

This study places emphasis on the themes of forced and forbidden love as they manifest themselves in the selected IsiZulu novels. There are relevant and important points contained in the above definition. The novel is fictitious and it therefore depicts imaginary characters and situations. Although its characters and actions are imaginary they in some way or other are representative of real life. As we proceed with the study we shall bear in mind that the authors of these novels present us with life-like people and situations in a fictitious manner.

1.6.8 Culture

In society, people carry within themselves certain patterns of thinking, behaviour and feeling which are learned throughout their life time. As soon as some of these patterns of thinking, behaviour and feeling establish themselves within a person's mind, “culture” is formed. This might be the reason why some scholars view culture as “learned habits”. Odetola (1983:1) defines culture as: “a man's social heritage, all the knowledge, beliefs, customs and skills acquired as a member of society.”

Hofstede (1991:5) compliments Odetola by also stating that:

Culture (two) is always a collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live within the same social environment, which is where it is learned. It is a collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.

Both definitions highlight that culture is learned, not inherited. It derives from the social environment, not from one's genes. Hofstede further emphasises that culture influences the way people think because the sources of one's mental programmes lie within the social environment in which one grew up and collected one's life experiences. The programming therefore, starts within the family; it continues within the neighbourhood, at school, in youth groups, at the work place, and in the living community.

Hofstede describes two categories of culture. Culture (one) refers to Western languages culture where culture commonly means civilization. We selected culture (two) because it is more appropriate to our study. Forced and forbidden love are traditional cultural practices that are learned and not inherited. Culture (two) according to Hofstede is all encompassing because it also refers to the ordinary and menial things in life: greeting, eating, showing or not showing feelings, keeping a certain physical distance from others, making love, or maintaining body hygiene (Hofstede, 1991:5).

1.6.9 Femininity

The term "femininity" refers to a female person, or a womanly person. According to the Collins Thesaurus Dictionary (1993:250) this concept entails: "delicacy, gentleness, girlishness, womanhood and womanliness." Kramarae & Treichler (1985:157) say: "it is the female object" or "female eunuch." They state that the term femininity is a counterpart to the machismo stereotype of masculinity, that was developed by the patriarchal system. The concept will therefore, be defined in relation to masculinity. The conception in this study is that femininity is regarded by patriarchy as the deviant "other", and clearly does not match up to the standards of human perfection set by, and embodied in, the masculine ideal.

1.6.10 Feminism

According to Billington (in Kramarae & Treichler, 1985:158) "feminism" may be defined as:

A movement seeking the reorganization of the world upon a basis of sex-equality in all human relations; a movement which would reject every differentiation between individuals upon the ground of sex, would abolish all sex privileges and burdens, and would strive to set up the recognition of the common humanity of woman and man as the foundation of law and custom.

Feminism, as explained in the above passage, is a revolutionary movement that aims to eradicate the inequality between the sexes. It seeks to bring about social change in women's lives by advocating a change in the way in which society views women. It advocates that society should accept and accommodate femaleness as an equal and not as the other. Feminism is a critical and a theoretical practice that is committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism, and is not simply a concern for gender in literature. These factors draw the common ground between feminism and womanism but, they do not suggest any dissimilarities between the two approaches.

Feminism is seen to be more Western in origin. According to Weixlmann & Baker (1988:5) the term "feminist" has come to mean "radical white woman" who is concerned about the differences between male and female. Weixlmann & Baker further add: "it is seldom taken, as a matter of course, to mean, or even to include, women of color." Both movements are relevant to the struggle of women. Some background knowledge of feminism is needed for this study because feminism is one of the reasons behind the emergence of womanism. Womanism, unlike feminism, does not have a white and middle class connotation, hence its relevance in the examination of African literary texts.

1.6.11 Gender

"Gender" is often used as a synonym for sex because it is related to biological maleness or femaleness. There is a distinction between the two concepts, though sex is physiological, while gender is cultural. In contemporary use the term refers to the socially imposed dichotomy of masculine and feminine roles and character traits. Scott (quoted in Zinsser, 1993:54) in her 1986 essay "Gender," gives a systematic explanation of this new synthesis. She describes gender as: "a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, the knowledge that establishes meanings for bodily difference. ... primary way of signifying relationships of power."

Gender obviously has a lot to do with the relationships of power between the sexes. McKinnon in Kramarae & Treichler (1985:174) provides an even clearer explanation that pins sexuality to gender. He defines gender as: "A division of women and men caused by the social requirements

of heterosexuality, which institutionalizes male sexual dominance and female sexual submission. If this is true, sexuality is the linchpin of gender inequality." It is clear that, when discussing gender, heterosexual relationships play a major role. Sexuality is a vital concept in gender studies, which examine the all inclusive concept of gender. It is a factor of all other relations. It covers everyone's history because nothing is gender neutral.

1.6.12 Masculinity

Sattel (1983:119-20) in Kramarae & Treichler (1985:258) says "masculinity" has nothing to do with femininity. He says masculinity:

Is not the opposite of femininity. The starting point of understanding masculinity lies...in the asymmetrical dominance and prestige which accrue to males in this society. Male dominance takes shape in the positions of formal and informal power men hold in the social division of labor; greater male prestige includes, and is evidenced by, the greater reward which attaches to male than to female activities, as well as the codification or differential prestige in our language and customs. What our culture embodies, in other words, is not simply two stereotypes - one masculine, one feminine - but a set of power and prestige arrangements attached to gender.

Masculinity refers to the powerful nature of men granted to them by society and culture. It consolidates the various social positions into which culture compartmentalises people.

1.6.13 Patriarchy

"Patriarchy" embraces masculinity. It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions of society, and that women are essentially deprived access to such power. Womanists use patriarchy to refer to a social system characterised by male domination over women. Patriarchy is viewed as: "... any kind of group organization in which males hold dominant power and determine what part females shall and shall not play, and in which capabilities assigned to women are relegated generally to the mystical and aesthetic and excluded from the practical and political realms" (Rich in Kramarae & Treichler, 1985:323).

Patriarchy not only refers to the prevention of women from occupying powerful positions in society. It also causes the negative connotations men attach to women. In Morton's view patriarchy is described as:

A way of structuring reality in terms of good/evil, redemption/guilt, authority/obedience, reward/punishment, power/powerless, have/havenots, master/slave. The first in each opposite was assigned to the patriarchal father, or the patriarch's Father God, frequently indistinguishable from one another. The second, to women as 'the other' and in time to all 'others' who could be exploited. The father did the naming, the owning, controlling, the ordering, the forgiving, the giving, considering himself capable of making best decisions for all (Kramarae & Treichler, 1985:323).

The definitions of patriarchy reveal that women are the objects of attack. Patriarchy is everywhere because it is the male hierarchical ordering of society. Men of different classes, races, or ethnic groups have practised it. Hartman sums it up briefly by stating that: "Patriarchy is not simply hierarchical organization, but hierarchy in which particular people fill particular places" (Kramarae & Treichler, 1985:323).

Traditionally in the IsiZulu family system power is vested in the father, who is unquestionably the head of the family. This can be cited as one of the reasons that prompted men to select husbands for their daughters and wives for their sons, because in the power stratum children rank lowest, and they are customarily expected to uphold the authority of the parents.

1.6.14 Sex

The words "sex" and "gender" are interrelated. These terms are composed of interrelated components of gender divisions, sexual divisions of labour which vary by culture and across time. The terms sex and gender usefully suggest the complex interactions of biology and culture and suggests that sexuality is intricately related to gender (Rubin in Kramarae & Treichler, 1985:411). A distinction still needs to be made between sex and gender. Sex is biological, whereas gender is sociological. Sometimes gender is used instead of sex to emphasize the social or cultural nature of the process by which individuals are assigned to different sex groups. Kramarae & Treichler (1985:409) explain the term in two ways. Firstly, sex is considered to be the property or quality

by which organisms are classified according to their reproductive functions: either of two divisions, designated male or female, and secondly, it refers to male and female collectively. In this study, the term sex will be used interchangeably to refer to both men and women and to refer to a particular gender.

1.6.15 Stereotypes

“Stereotypes” form the mental sexual compartments to which an individual has to conform. Stereotyping thus refers to a process wherein individuals are socialised into thinking that they have to act and think in ways appropriate to their sex. Sekhukhune (1988:165) in Mtuzze (1994:3) explains stereotyping as follows:

Most of these stereotypes which are, for the moment, exemplified by idiomatic and proverbial expressions relegate the social status of a woman to that of a nonentity. The sex role stereotypes of men have acquired aggressive qualities and command absolute power and authority while those of women demonstrate lack of assertiveness and certainty.

Contemporary sex role stereotypes include the assignment to men, as Sekhukhune rightly puts it, of traits such as independence, objectivity, competitiveness, assertiveness, aggression, and ambition. Women are associated with traits such as dependence, emotionality, nurturing, and a preoccupation with physical appearance. These preconceptions give men the power to dominate women.

1.7 Conclusion

This introductory chapter has paid attention to the aims, scope, framework of the study and the definition of concepts. It has also stated that womanism is employed as the primary tool in our analysis. Other subsidiary theories such as literary onomastics and psychoanalysis are also employed. Literature review provided us with background information that shed some light on the subject under discussion. It briefly surveyed the problems that women are faced with in other cultures. In short it indicated that the social position of women is the same in most cultures and still needs a lot of improvement. We reiterate that this study concentrates on the culture of forced and forbidden love as one of the major contributory factors to gender inequality and the suppression and relegation of woman in the IsiZulu society.

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CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPING AN ECLECTIC ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

A man [or woman] with one theory is lost. He [she] needs several of them, or lots! He [she] should stuff them in his [her] pockets like newspapers.

Bertolt Brecht (in Makaryk, 1993:vii)

The objective of this chapter is to present an eclectic theoretical framework that forms the basis of the analysis in subsequent chapters. Three literary theories are used collectively as tools for the critical analysis of the selected novels. The employment of womanism, literary onomastics and psychoanalysis will indicate when combined, that these theories complement one another and yield a productive analysis of literary works of art under investigation.

Today, there is simply no neutral way for literary students and critics to read literature for its own sake. Eagleton (1983: viii) foregrounds the complaint by some literary critics that literary theory is impossibly esoteric and that its arcaneness is related to the study of nuclear physics. The protest is that some theorists confuse the student by getting in between the reader and the work. In his appraisal of literary theories, Eagleton further argues that literary education does not exactly encourage analytical thinking. He allays the fears of certain literary critics concerning the obscurity of literary theories by stating that without some kind of theory, however unreflective and implicit, we would not know what a "literary work" was in the first place, or how we were to read it. Some African literary scholars also feel that we cannot remain in the grip of the old practice in literary analysis. We need to move on. Chaphole's (1993:21) plea for the consideration of literary theories in the analysis of African Literature seems to be in line with what Eagleton has suggested. It advocates a change of approach in the teaching and reading of literature. In his own words, Chaphole argues that literary study is a specialised discipline and needs a rigorous theoretical thrust. He continues to say that in order to set forth our principles and procedures in terms which

permit question and discussion, we need two things, i.e: a theory or theories of literature and an approach to the text derived from the theory or theories.

The above views not only suggest a change in the way we look at literature, but also express the importance of literary theories in the teaching and the studying of literature. Literary theories are not just fashionable ways of analysing literature, but they also broaden and develop the literary knowledge and the thinking ability of budding literary critics. Drawing on womanism, literary onomastics and psychoanalysis will enrich our analysis.

2.2 The nature and historical perspective of womanism

“Womanism” recently emerged in the African-American community. In fact it is the African American women who gave birth to the womanist idea. Black women writers have themselves played prominent roles in womanist criticism. Womanism is a term associated with Alice Walker, who has fought hard for the recuperation and recognition of a tradition of black women writers within which she can discover a theory of black female creativity. Womanism, then, is commonly known as black feminism. In order to obtain a full understanding of this concept let us first look at the origin of the concept womanist. Kramarae & Treichler (1985:495) say the term “womanist” is derived from womanish, which is the opposite of girlish. They say a womanist is:

A black feminist or feminist of color. From the black folk expression of mothers to female children, “You acting womanish,” i.e., like a woman. Usually referring to outrageous, audacious, courageous or *wilful* behavior.

They further explain a womanist as:

A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers woman’s culture, women’s emotional flexibility and women’s strength. Committed to the survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female.

The above definitions are significant in that both state the origin and the nature of womanism. The first definition explains that womanism refers to a black feminist and that it originates from black mothers, who in the moulding of their daughters, reprimanded them not to act in a girlish manner.

Womanism, then, must be understood to be linked with mature behaviour, which is different from that of a young girl. A womanist is, according to this definition, any black woman who displays bold, daring, adventurous and determined actions.

The second definition further suggests that a womanist is not just a determined woman, but she also appreciates women's culture and women's strength. Black women as women of colour are distinct from other women because of the common African cultures they believe in. The appreciation of women's culture suggests that womanism is culturally coded. Its nature reflects African women's historical, cultural and spiritual experience, especially when it refers to the uniqueness of and the struggle involved in being black and female in a society that is hostile to womanhood. Womanism in this context urges that in spite of the many cultural assaults, and no matter how much culture tries to communicate to woman she is minor, that she should take a back seat. A real womanist should rise above all these stereotypical cultural notions. Working together with other members of the community she should move forward to obtain unity in her community. The definition also conveys the idea that a womanist is a real, supportive, wilful woman, who is committed to the well-being of both sexes. A womanist is an emotionally flexible woman who can endure various life situations: the opposite of a docile woman. She is also not a separatist because she has the interest of all people at heart, irrespective of their sex. There is an explicit urge and determination within black women for a self-love that will enable them to be and feel relational, committed, capable and inquiring. It is evident that womanism, in Walker's thinking, is an Afrocentric vision. The main idea behind womanism is black unity.

Ogunyemi, in an article: "Womanism: The Dynamics of the Contemporary Black Female Novel in English," gives Alice Walker's definition of womanism:

Black womanism is a philosophy that celebrates black roots, the ideals of black life, while giving a balanced presentation of black womandom. It concerns itself as much with the black sexual power tussle as with the world power structure that subjugates blacks. Its ideal for black unity ... (1985:72).

The distinguishing factor that links womanism to black women is recurrent in all the above definitions. Another prominent factor is the appreciation of black life, black ideals as well as black unity. The latter definition indicates that although womanism fights for the attainment of black

unity and the welfare of all black people it is also greatly concerned with the unequal power relations between men and women, as it is also aware of the white power that subjugates blacks.

According to Makaryk (1993:9) Black feminist criticism and theory emerged from the complex and conflicted relationship of black women to black men during the Black Power Movement in the 1980's and civil-rights movement of the 1960's, and of women of colour to white women during the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1970's. This may be deduced from Makaryk's statement that the womanist idea emerged because African American female voices had been left omitted from feminism, and from the writings of black male writers. Cummings (in Sanders, 1995:61) further adds that:

The minimal presence of African American women in Afrocentrism points to an even greater need for the womanist perspective. The apparent lack of African American women in the conceptual framework of Afrocentrism is a continuation of their exclusion from dialogues about African Americans, a primary reason for the womanist concept emerged.

The exclusion by white feminists from the literary tradition is perceived as the pre-condition for the establishment of womanism. Womanism is empowered through its opposition to established theory and its resentment of exclusion. Its claim is that the literary tradition has been ignorant and insensitive of any alternative tradition.

The exclusive nature and characteristics of womanism are somewhat related to its antecedents, feminism and the patriarchal literary tradition. The discussion of the nature of womanism will be based on these exclusive factors because they explicate the nature and characteristics of womanism. Sanders (1995:9) defines a womanist thus:

In essence, a womanist is a black feminist who is committed to the survival and wholeness of the entire people, male and female.

Juxtapositioning the womanist idea with the survival of all people points to two interrelated tasks for womanism. The first task is centring the black experience in the human experience, which is part of the task of womanism: to fight racism and assert black ideals in a society that says to be blacks is to be somewhat less than human. To define womanism as black feminism also suggests

that womanism is itself a reactionary theory to some tenets of feminism. The fact that womanists had to distinguish themselves and express a unique perspective is Afrocentric in operation. We must bear in mind that womanism is not an extension of feminism but a critique and refinement of it. Nnaemeka (in Irele 1995:82) gives the response of Clenora Weems, an advocate of what she calls: "Africana womanism," to a question whether she regards herself as a feminist or not vividly highlights the controversy around feminism. Her response is as follows:

I think to talk of the terminology, feminism, we have to deal with the inception of the term itself and what its original design was. Who designed it and what were the needs of the women who designed it? It was a term created, designed and defined by white women It was exclusionary. Black women were not accepted; they were not invited to be part of it Therefore my whole thesis is that we have to create a more feasible, workable terminology, because when you buy the terminology, you necessarily buy the agenda. Long before the advent of feminism, black women were active. Therefore when I think of strong black women from Africa, from the total diaspora, I never think of them as feminists, because I know what feminism means to me, I know it means "get back."

Weems' response is manifold. It does point to the fact that womanism or black feminism came as a result of the exclusion of black women by white feminists who designed feminism with their own welfare at heart. When writing about contemporary Black feminist criticism, it is important therefore to remember that the existence of feminist studies was itself an essential precondition for growth. Humm (1994:172) stresses the fact that while many Black critics have attacked the elitism and homophobia of much white feminist writing, it remains true that Black feminist criticism has developed from the space created by the study of white women's literature and that culture, and African feminist criticism grew from Afro-American criticism. Black women had no space in feminism. They had to take the back-seat, to "get back," right at the rear end because they were not in the feminist agenda in the first place. Weems further advocates that black women have to come up with a more feasible terminology that will be relevant to their unique needs as blacks.

Weems' response significantly points out that feminism should not be regarded as a forerunner of womanism because, according to her, black women were active long before the advent of feminism. These women from Africa and from the total diaspora could never be thought of as feminists. Hardman-Cromwell (Sanders, 1995:106) concurs with Weems in this regard for she also feels that:

If a womanist is one who views the world and makes decisions out of a consciousness of her identity as female and as African American, and who values this identity, then black women writers began giving voice to womanism centuries before the term was employed.

Weems' view of feminism corresponds with the perceptions of other literary scholars such as Weixlmann and Baker (1988:5) who also conceive feminism to be a strictly white movement. They point out that in the language of the academy, the word feminist has come to mean radical white woman. They further state that the term itself is seldom taken to mean or even include women of colour. The feminist movement seemed to offer some redress of women's issues but women of colour increasingly saw that the concerns and standards of the movement were those of white, middle-class women who tended to ignore the different needs and desires of women of colour and Third World women. Womanists could not fully accept feminism as necessarily relevant to their struggle. Hence the need for a different word for black women, because if black women do not find it for themselves they will be lost.

The second task is centring the human experience from the point of view of black experience. The centring of human experience as well as black experience connects womanism with Afrocentrism. Womanism therefore should be conceived as a movement that fights for the liberation and advancement of black people. Womanism goes beyond Afrocentricity because it calls for a process that considers the health and wholeness of the entire community. In other words womanism is a movement concerned with community building. Cummings (Sanders, 1995:59) adds that:

Womanists are concerned about the entire community and holistic in approach, which means that both men and women can come together in dialogue to define and address the needs of the entire African American community.

The holistic approach means that womanism is a non-elitist movement. It does not prioritise people's needs according to the particular class to which they belong in society. Hence it is virtually classless. It considers all people in the community, male and female. The recurrent humanist vision is central to black feminism. The humanist nature of womanism has earned it universal status. It is more closely associated with human solidarity than anything else. Womanism is a process of self-conscious struggle that empowers women and men to actualise a humanist, universalist, and compassionate vision of the community. The fact that womanism aims to

promote the survival of the entire Black people suggests that a womanist should possess qualities of being challenging and bold, being inquiring, pushy, and straining toward the survival of the whole community. The idea involves love of one's people, being rational, being committed to health and the survival of all people. To be good womanists, we must be universalist toward ourselves as a people, as a nation and love ourselves.

The usage of the term womanism has now gone beyond Alice Walker's definition. Black women in many parts of the world, as well as in South Africa, have adopted womanism as a symbol of their unique experience as women. This experience is exclusive to women because it touches on all the structures that denigrate a woman. It remains a priority for men and women, even in South Africa, to mobilise and organise the nation for the liberation and the respect of women. Nationalism and patriarchy continue as the major themes in women's politics. Hassim says:

This means that the challenge to feminism [womanism] is to confront not only patriarchy but also those women's organisations which remain committed to a more narrowly defined nationalist project (1991:67).

Womanism, like other women's movements challenges the patriarchal oppressive structures that block the development of women. Hassim stresses that womanism only challenges patriarchy but ~~matriarchy too is challenged~~, in order to enhance the development of women to a very great extent. This reminds us of what other womanists and the Africana womanists argued about at the first international conference on "Women in Africa and the African Diaspora: Bridges Across Activism and the Academy" held in Nigeria in 1992. Nnaemeka (Irele, 1995:83) reports that while the Western feminist and womanist participants complained about the presence of too many male (mostly African) participants, the African women demanded that the conference agenda include a serious debate on hierarchies among women and woman-on-woman violence and the abuses that result from these inequalities. Besides exposing the fact that important issues related to African woman are hijacked and not discussed by feminists, the incident in Nigeria implicitly draws attention to the fact that womanism also fights the abuse of women by other women. This is unique to African women because, for example, it takes into consideration the situation of women in a polygamous situation where the chief wife has authority over the other wives. It also refers to the situation between the mother-in-law and the bride. The fact of the matter here is that womanistic scholarship remains one of the most powerful critical and analytical tools in African

literature and has immense possibilities for fostering intellectual maturity and social change. Black women in South Africa are not different from the other women in the world. They are no exception from the social marginalisation that other women experience all over the world. They also need to belong to an organisation where they will not be marginalised because of their race. They need to belong to a movement that will cater for their unique cultural needs, and womanism is an ideal haven for them. South African black women need to belong somewhere after they have realized that their involvement in the struggle did not earn them their freedom. Makaryk (1993:9) confirms that:

Many black women recognized that while the Black Power movement of the 1970's was radically Afrocentric, it also remained powerfully androcentric, with the liberation of women within the group being subordinated to the aspirations of the group as a whole.

As we deal with womanism, we are also operating within the realm of gender inequality between men and women. It is no vague claim that womanism has begun to assert itself in the context of the broader political transition in the whole world and in South Africa. Many women had thought that the liberation of the nation would obviously occur simultaneously with the liberation of women. Women, however, also hoped that the overthrow of apartheid would also mean an overthrow of patriarchy. This was not the case. In terms of social liberation women still find themselves in the same position they were before 1994 in South Africa. This situation calls for a number of organisations that can speak and act regarding women's situation. Buchbinder (1991:122) agrees with Makaryk in his comment:

In different countries, in different contexts, with different theories, slogans and purposes, women variously enlisted for social action, only to find that the freedoms for which they marched did not necessarily include freedom from oppression on the basis of sex.

Women all over the world committed the same blunder, trusting that national liberation also ensured the equality of the sexes. Women did not simply stand by their men but they fought alongside them for the black community's freedom. They fought as equals, but at the end of the liberation struggle they were not treated as equals. The situation remained the same even for the black women who belonged to the various political parties. The domination of political

organisations by men and the marginalisation of women from decision-making positions prevailed until very recently. Positions that confine a woman to the management of a home do not develop and prepare her for the management of national issues. Issues linked to home management do not empower the women to challenge social structures which oppress them. It is noticeable that national liberation movements do not guarantee women's emancipation. Women still find themselves in the midst of lacking direct access to decision-making structures. Kgositsile states that there has been a refusal by many organisations to engage with womanism. She argues that:

Men are so comfortable with being waited on that many are not particularly keen to discuss women's emancipation even if they are supposed to be revolutionaries. Women, on the other hand, are so used to "catering" for others that they tend to hold on to the roles that retard their development (Hassim, 1991: 69).

This short survey of women's position not really-only in the liberation movement as a whole indicates the strong patriarchal structure upon which our society is based. Women have been allocated a special place, one which reinforces their subordinate political and social status. This realisations empowering women to take the lead in creating a non-sexist South Africa. The ways in which men and women operate in society are not natural and given, but are historically and culturally constructed and socially located. Therefore they can be changed

Patriarchy forms a barrier which womanism attempts to break down. Womanists challenge the traditional view of relational patterns by calling for a critical analysis of the African community. To survive we must also examine the manner in which we relate in our community. We cannot afford to continue dysfunctional relational patterns. In this sense womanism could be conceived of as a movement that also concerned itself as much with the black power tussle as with the world power structure that subjugates blacks. It is evident that sexual identity and sexual divisions are deeply embedded in the cultural experience of African women. It is conditions like these that motivate African women to take their pens and describe their own life experiences as they really are. Even in writing women are faced with men who form strong barriers when it comes to the publishing of women's literature, maybe because it exposes how abusive they have been to the mothers of the nation. Smith (Makaryk, 1993:9) proclaims that a Black feminist approach to literature which embodies the realization that the politics of sex as well as the politics of race and class are crucially interlocking factors in the works of Black women writers, is an absolute necessity.

2.3 Concepts related to womanism

2.3.1 Afrocentricity

Afrocentricity is a concept that is unavoidable whenever there is a discussion about womanism. Afrocentrists present the African-American male perspective, which too often defines women in traditional roles. The fact that both womanism and Afrocentrism have emerged as parts of an oppressed people's culture of resistance, does not conceal their incompatibility, which has become a source of concern. Specifically for our study it is important to know how the male and female relationships in the context of the Afrocentric notion are constituted, since Afrocentrism claims to be an all inclusive perspective.

A proponent of Afrocentricity is Molefi Asante, an African-American man. The Afrocentric nomenclature includes several terms derived from the work of Molefi Asante. These terms are Afrocentric, Afrocentricity, Afrocentricism and Afrocentrism. In his own words Molefi defines Afrocentricity as the belief in "the centrality of Africans in post-modern history." Molefi's view of Afrocentricity is brief and all inclusive. It places Africanness at the centre of the lives of all Africans. By so doing it raises African consciousness in all Africans that have been affected by modern ways of thinking. Williams (in Sanders, 1995:46) defines Afrocentrism as follows:

Afrocentrism is a spiritual and philosophical ideology (a way of living, thinking, and knowing) that places African-American history, culture and heritage at the centre of black people's lives. Afrocentrism involves black people's conversion from conditioned white consciousness to a new African American and African-centered thinking and acting. It involves the creation of ritual to support and reinforce new black consciousness. Afrocentrism affirms a universal African consciousness that is a collective consciousness.

Williams' definition of Afrocentricity concurs with Asante's because both definitions lay emphasis on Afrocentricity being the starting point in a way of thinking and doing things for all black people who have been grossly affected by Western culture. Like womanism it excavates the African past in an effort to free African-Americans and all Africans from an oppressive Eurocentric consciousness and to create for them a new, African-centred way of thinking and acting. Sanders (1995:10) says that Afrocentricity has come to expression in the African-American community as

a profound recognition of the richness, significance, and uniqueness of the African American cultural heritage in a society that devalues that heritage. It is an important African public challenge to white supremacist myths and intellectual justifications. It stresses the re-building of a universal African collective consciousness among all black people and this consciousness conveys its spiritual nature. Consciousness, as described by Asante, expresses the black people's shared commitments, fraternal reactions to assaults on black people's humanity, collective awareness of black peoples' destiny, and respect for the ancestors. As such, advocates of Afrocentrism have been accused of being historical separatists and reverse racists and of writing inspirational history.

The Afrocentric idea demonstrates the vitality of African American culture and history, as well as the African heritage. It signifies a commitment to standing in the middle of the black experience, whether in the United States or in Africa or worldwide, and starting one's thinking there. Afrocentricity becomes part of a large ideal and strategy which is actually old in the Black community. Asante suggests that through Afrocentric thinking and action African Americans become empowered and liberated. The kind of empowerment suggested by Asante is associated with black nationalism. The visualised hope is that Africans will take over writing so that it speaks the truth about African American history and culture and about the African heritage. His main concern is that the black national cause becomes the principal interest of the people and that all other interests become subordinate considerations.

Williams feels that black people travelled the route to Afrocentrism in the 1960s and 1970s. She thinks back to cultural nationalists like Amiri Imamu Baraka and Ron Karenga who urged African people to put the African heritage and Afro-American culture and history at the centre of their lives and consciousness. Williams recalls how people donned their African names, their Afros, and read books written by black authors. Today here we are on the verge of the new millennium playing a variation of the same tune and calling it Afrocentrism or as in the most popular perspective initiated by President Mbeki, the African Renaissance. Afrocentricity or the African Renaissance encourages a way of thinking that says "down with the Western culture as the centre of our consciousness and lives and up with African culture and African heritage". One can say the Afrocentric idea existed among those slaves who told missionaries and others who wanted to know about black folks. This means to talk about the meaning of being Black.

Afrocentricity as described by Asante is all inclusive. At first glance it seems to bear striking similarities to womanism. In his Afrocentric perspective Asante has asserted that both male and female scholars must properly examine the roles women have played in liberating Africans and others from oppression, and resist the imposition of sexist repression and subjugation and the exercise of economic and political authority. Contrary to Asante's assertion, Afrocentricity as developed by contemporary male scholars is perceived and questioned by womanists as a perspective that militates against African American women's personhood and freedom. The observed contradictions between womanism and Afrocentricity reveal that womanist thought is Afrocentric, though all thinking about Afrocentricity is not womanistic.

A number of womanists have exposed the gaps they observed in the definition of Afrocentricity. Womanists like Dolores Williams in her article, "Afrocentrism and Male-Female Relations in Church and Society" (in Sanders:1995:45), level harsh criticism against Asante's Afrocentricity. She argues that Afrocentricity as developed by Asante, is woman-exclusive while it pretends to be inclusive of all black people. She further points out that women are invisible in Afrocentricity and that it remains misogynistic and sexist because it is grounded in Western patriarchal norms. In her essay, "A Womanist Response to the Afrocentric Idea: Jarena Lee, Womanist Preacher," Loraine Cummings joins the other womanists in highlighting the sexist nature of Asante's Afrocentric thought. She argues in a similar fashion to Williams, that the African American woman is minimally involved in the foundational precepts of the Afrocentric idea and that, where women are involved, patriarchal ideology is perpetuated. It seems that womanism and Afrocentricity only share the same history and not the equality between men and women. After reading Asante's book Afrocentricity, Kariamuwelsh gives us a description of Afrocentricity that does not accommodate a woman at all. She says, Afrocentricity resembles the black man, speaks to him, looks like him and wants for him what he wants for himself (Sanders,1995:45). According to Welsh, Asante should be likened to a male luminary because his book only contains names of men who played important roles in African American history. Welsh further points out that in his chapter entitled "The Essential Grounds," Asante lifts out from African American history the figures important for an understanding of what Afrocentrism is. The figures are all male. The list includes men like: Booker T, Washington, Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King, Muhammad, Karenga and Malcom X.

In his discussion of Afrocentrism, Molefi refers to three kinds of intelligence which support the movement toward Afrocentricity and empowerment. These are creative intelligence, re-creative intelligence, and consumer intelligence. Creative intelligence designs new forms of consciousness and action. Re-creative intelligence expands these created designs and actions to new heights. Consumer intelligence makes use of and perpetuates what has been created and re-created. Consumer intelligence neither creates nor re-creates new forms. Asante points only to African American males as he illustrates this intelligence and nationalism. Black women are neither referred to nor singled out as examples in his decision (Sanders, 1995:47). Names of black women and their deeds are excluded from the list. There is no doubt therefore that Asante's form of Afrocentricity in the book is woman-exclusive while it pretends to be inclusive of all black people.

Women are invisible in Afrocentrism. Asante only begins to refer to women when he defines the nature of male-female relationships within Afrocentric thinking. Asante's Afrocentrism regards sacrifice as a vital component of male-female relations. There are four aspects to Afrocentric relationships. These are: sacrifice, inspiration, vision and victory. Asante is given credit for attempting to increase black people's understanding by including black men in his notion of sacrifice in the relationship, because it is generally known that the black community often associates the word sacrifice with black women's roles.

Williams (Sanders, 1995:48) says that Asante buys into white Western standards about womanhood and into 1960s notions of black womanhood when he suggests that every man should want his lady to be Isis, and Harriet Yaa Asentewaa and that every woman should want a Turner, King and Garvey. As used in the West, "lady", is a concept white patriarchy has created to signify the pedestalization of white womanhood and the devaluation of black womanhood. It is obvious by his reference to African goddesses and extraordinary African and African American women that Asante has taken up the notion of African American women as superwomen. Womanist writers such as Michelle Wallace have shown the notion to be devastating to black women's struggle to provide real and meaningful images of themselves.

In Asante's Afrocentricity individual freedom in male-female relationships is subordinate to the group's demands. He claims that all relationships are subject to whatever is necessary for the

collective will of the people. He therefore postulates that a woman's time to create and a man's time to produce must be looked upon as a giving to the collective will. One of the problems for black women here is that Asante's reference to women creating and men producing sounds like some of the 1960s black nationalist propaganda which claimed black women's roles were to reproduce babies for the revolution. He maintains that relationships which are based upon more than one woman can also be based upon the principles of Afrocentricity. In other words, a black man can have more than one woman or wife and still be Afrocentric. But no such provision is made for black women. The relationships between men and women mean that everything is subservient to the Afrocentric world view, presenting itself clothed with male examples. The gravest limitation of Asante's Afrocentrism is that its advocacy of the dominance of the people's collective will can yield tyranny that oppresses women as long as the Afrocentric vision lives. Afrocentricity is sexist and its support of male dominance makes it a convenient instrument for helping to hold black male supremacy in place in the African community. Afrocentricity emphasises male experience above that of women. Cummings (in Sanders, 1995:59) expresses this difference explicitly when she says:

Yet Afrocentrists continue the patriarchal aspects of the Eurocentric male perspective, while womanists reflect on the entire African American community from a female perspective. While Afrocentrists assert the validity of a separate and distinct voice from the European one, womanists further that distinction by validating the unique perspective of African American women. Afrocentrists are not womanist, but womanists are Afrocentric.

Cummings's explanation highlights that Afrocentrists have been mainly influenced by Europeans in their way of thinking. Afrocentrists are separatists in nature. They assert a particular male voice of an African man which does not accommodate the African woman. They continue to perpetuate a patriarchal vision of the African American community. Patriarchy assumes male superiority at birth, a notion which fosters and upholds the oppression of women and children, especially female children. Patriarchy is destructive to both men and women, a false perspective that has cultivated an environment in which violence, oppression, and the dehumanization of women and children run rampant. Womanists challenge the patriarchal Afrocentrists. Patriarchy is paternalistic, and implies the superiority of one group, and its right to dominate and rule, but womanists are concerned about the entire community. What the proponents of Afrocentricity ignore is that the fruits of an oppressed group's cultural transformation cannot be passed from generation to generation.

2.3.2 Literary Canon

Canonicity refers to the criteria for the evaluation of a literary text. Women not only experienced marginalisation in political and traditional social structures but also in the literary tradition. This brings us to the question of the literary tradition as well as the literary canon. The literary canon refers to a list of principles, regulations, or standards that are used to evaluate literature. The literary tradition has long been dominated by male writers. Literary works written by African women were not noticed at all. Humm (1994: 173) attests to this when she says:

Until the 1970's Black women were misrepresented or marginalised in most critical texts. Even as late as 1979, anthologies either did not mention the work of Black women at all or casually dismissed writers ...The writings of Afro-American women are simply absent in the Black literary histories written by men.

Men wrote about women's experiences in ways that suited their needs. Their writings described the lives of women from their male perspective. The African women's perspective has too often been subsumed into the African male perspective, which consolidates the connection between the literary tradition and the traditional social structure of the African people. Owomoyela (1993:311) believes that besides the subjugation of the black people by colonial powers which promoted non-participation of the black woman, the fact that women were traditionally confined to the home contributed significantly to their marginalisation from the literary tradition. He puts his beliefs as follows:

The relative scarcity of women writers in the African literary canon may be partly explained by the opposition of colonial education, family, and gender policies to women's engaging in pursuits apart from domestic ones.

Domestic tasks remain for most women a tremendous user of time. Family life also makes its own demands. Women may stop writing because their male relatives feel they are being disloyal by telling too much about issues considered private. Women had to maintain their silence especially on issues that touch on their marital relationships. Husbands have been known to threaten to take actions such as leaving the marriage or establishing other relationships if their wives do not stop writing. Buchi Emecheta writes about her husband's destruction of her manuscript in her (1975) autobiographical Second Class Citizen (Owomoyela, 1993:312). These domestic pressures on women easily explain the gaps in women's writing.

When women started writing during the late colonial period, their works were not recognized unlike that of male African writers of the same generation. The non-participation of women in the literary tradition seems to have fostered the view that literary works by men were representative of all views of life, including that of women. The literary canon was structured in such a way that it favoured men's literature as universal. Warhol and Herndl (1993:191) comment as follows with regard to the question of the literary canon:

One of the axioms of traditional literary study has been that "great literature" represents "universal" experiences.

The information presented by this statement is only partially true because men in their literature present reality as they see it, from a man's point of view and not from a woman's perspective. Such literature therefore, cannot be universal. Androcentric literature only approximates the particularities of a single sector of society, the male, and it cannot be viewed as universal. The male writer in this case feels affinity with the universal, precisely because he thinks his view is shared by the whole universe.

This has different consequences for the female writer. It does not allow her to seek refuge in her difference. It draws her into a process that uses her against herself because it solicits her complicity in the elevation of male difference into universality and, accordingly, in the denigration of female difference into otherness without reciprocity. To put this directly, misogyny is abundant in the literary canon. Women are taught to think like men, to identify with a male point of view, and to accept as normal and legitimate a male system of values, one of whose central principles is misogyny. According to Fetterly, quoted in Warhol & Herndl (1993:534), this is perceived as the immascultation of woman by men. The process of immascultation does not impart virile power to the women writer or to women in general. On the contrary, it doubles her oppression. Schweickart (in Warhol & Herndl, 1993:534) takes this point further by saying:

She suffers not simply the powerlessness which derives from not seeing one's experience articulated, clarified, and legitimized in art, but more significantly, the powerlessness which results from the endless division of self against self, the consequence of the invocation to identify as male while being reminded that to be male-to be universal-...is to be not female.

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For a woman, then, literature does not necessarily spell salvation. In fact, a literary education may very well cause her grave psychic damage. Women have to study literature that undermines them as a lesser beings.

Judgement worth, of course, is at the centre of the question of canonicity. The question to ask here is: what makes literature great? What makes it worth studying in a university? What makes it worth reading? Joanna Russ in her book: How to Suppress Women's Writing, points out that many judgements of taste are based on an exclusion of difference. This means that literary works from female writers were viewed as inferior because they represented a different view of life to that expressed by male writers. Russ herself states that people are threatened by difference and are apt to characterize it as inferiority. She further attests that the threat posed by women's writing was effectively suppressed for decades (Warhol & Herndl, 1993:191). Women writers reveal a very different African experience and a different literary tradition from that encountered and revealed in writings by African male writers. The marginalisation even spread beyond the personal. Women still have relatively less access to publishers than men do. Many publishing companies are owned by men for the obvious reasons that they are the ones who were first engaged in the literary tradition. Manuscripts written by men received preference over those written by women.

The fact that written literature and the literary arts in general were established by colonial education in Africa undoubtedly influenced the way in which they have portrayed men and women. This is as true for colonial literature written by Europeans and set in Africa as for African literature itself. From the beginning, then, literature, was mostly produced and dominated by male authors. Even when the feminists started writing, no one among them and no African male writers sought to incorporate the struggles, experiences and issues which were specifically related to African women. This process has resulted in a distorted and invalid representation of African women in literature.

A great task lies ahead for the womanist writer. She has to disrupt the process of immascultation by exposing it to consciousness, by disclosing the androcentricity of what has customarily passed for the universal. No one can accurately reflect and speak about African women better than

themselves. Cummings (Sanders, 1995:58) puts it nicely when she says, “others attempt to discuss their understanding of our experience, but they cannot tell the entire story.” Womanists are voicing concerns of African women which are often very different from those articulated by their white female and African male counterparts.

2.4 African Women Writers and the exponents of womanism

Our reality is not that we are “neither white nor male,” *our* reality is that we are *both* black and female; and it is in the belief that our narratives can be transformational that we begin. The difference is crucial, for what we are undertaking is a process of affirmation, to proclaim that selfhood, our very own, which has heretofore been “othered.” As black women we have recognized the need to rewrite or to reclaim our own *her*stories, and to define ourselves. We are not reaffirming our presence or “actualising” ourselves as if we have been absent, we know we never left; we are simply, but quite radically, reclaiming our own *stories*, which have for so long been told for us and been told wrong. Our literature has therefore become a drive for self-definition and redefinition, and in any discussion of this drive must recognize this, its proper context (Busia, in Weixlmann and Baker, 1988:1).

Womanist writing comes with its own agenda. To begin with, this agenda is transformational and affirmative. It is aimed at eradicating traditional concepts that have been largely imparted by male written texts. It empowers women to express themselves through literature. The principal goal is that women writers want to retell their stories to the audience from a woman’s point of view.

The earliest writings of a people in the process of self-identification are often autobiographical in form. By such means women write themselves into history. They write of realities in ways male African writers do not. Owomoyela (1993:320) says:

Women who want to be writers tend to undergo a period of self-examination, and autobiography thus becomes an important form for them. African women write autobiography in different tones, from distanced, socio-cultural to the cautiously personal and the frankly personal, thinly disguised as fiction. Autobiography is of course a structured mode of writing, and related to fiction in the sense that it constructs the self as part of an integrated discourse.

The above explanation of the autobiographical nature of women’s writing draws attention to the fact that most women’s writings are personal in that they relate various personal experiences of

women. The narrative voice tells her story from various angles which range from more personal intimate stories, to a very distant discussion of socio-cultural problems that also affect the writer as a woman. Many African women write about social and political issues, and about women's domestic and personal lives.

African women critics are divided into three major groups. The division is more of a geographical nature and has nothing to do with different opinions. The groups are those of Afro-American feminist criticism, African feminist criticism and the Caribbean feminist criticism.

2.4.1 Afro-American feminist criticism

As mentioned earlier, Afro-American women, and especially Alice Walker, are responsible for the emergence of womanism. Humm(1994:172)attests that Afro-American criticism began in 1974 with the publication of a special issue of Black World containing essays by June Jordan and Mary Helen Washington, and the publication of Alice Walker's "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens". There are many African womanist writers who belong to this group. They are; Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, Barbara Smith, Barbara Christian, Valerie Smith, Mary Helen Washington, Gloria T. Hull and Toni Cade Bambara. These Afro-American feminists undertook a total reassessment of Black literature and literary history, centring on Black women writers. In their search they are also discovering the differences and multiplicities of Black women's aesthetics. This enabled black feminist critics to reconceptualise the literary tradition to include a greater range of black women's writing.

In this group the main focus will be on the contributions of Alice Walker, Barbara Smith and Barbara Christian because they were prominent in the inception of womanist criticism. It is important to mention at the outset that although Alice Walker enlarges the terrain of Black feminist criticism, she never rejected white aesthetics. Walker's essay techniques parallel those of white criticism. The main reason for this is that Walker learnt her lessons about feminist criticism from Virginia Woolf. Humm (1994:186) says: "She continually 'rewrites' Woolf by substituting Black for white names in quotations from Woolf." Her very beautiful account of her mother's garden, which names her mother as a Black artist, closely resembles Colette's famous paean to her mother. The topics and forms of Walker's criticism also depend on other white forerunners.

Walker was recognized as one of America's leading writers. In her article; "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens" (1984) she sought out the biographies of Black women, revealing these to be rich and crucial texts and enlarging the field of Black literature. She describes her position as a mediator between contemporary culture and the Afro-American belief system. In this article she is both a story teller and a philosopher. Her role as narrator therefore is a crucial one both in her essays and in her creative work. In The Temple of My Familiar (1989), Walker deals with a complex story which mixes the spiritual narratives of people speaking in tongues, with historical accounts, autobiography and dreams, refusing to represent women's bodies, heterosexual practices and racial and sexual violence from any single perspective. Walker's theme in this article is one of parent knowledge and of listening to ancestral voices rather than formal education. In "Saving the Life" she gives a very special interactive epistemology of connectedness with deep roots in African culture. In this work she argues that the oral stories told by her female ancestors have equal value to a Black heritage. Many of Walker's pivotal images of women are drawn from African oral literature and myth. The Color Purple (1983), is a novel which demonstrates that the opposition between critical and creative discourses is a meaningless opposition. In this novel she indicates explicitly that women best change their theories about experience by bonding sexually with other women. "One Child of One's Own" (1984), is an autobiographical account of Walker's entry into an identity as a Black woman professor and mother. The piece prevents us from viewing racism as removed from ourselves or as a process which we, Black or white, do not personally participate. It is about integrity and creative freedom in culture, language and in academic curricula. All Walker's writing, her novels as well as her critical essays, explores key critical issues: the role of Black communities and Black history; and the significance and richness of myth and Black culture.

Smith is a major theorist who has almost singlehandedly created the field of Black feminist criticism with important anthologies of writing, criticism and Black women's studies. She named Black feminist criticism and gave it a direction. She made the following points. The first is that feminist criticism must recognise the long-term literary history of Black women. Second, criticism must make an ideologically inspired reading of difference. These two points have valuable significance for women's writing today. Firstly, they urge literary bodies which despise women's writing to take into account the literary works written by women and, secondly, they argue that

the literary world should be prepared to accommodate women's work and its differences. In other words women's literary works should not be segregated because of their different nature.

In her pathbreaking essay "Toward A Black Feminist Criticism" (1977) she sets out to widen the contours of Black aesthetics. She looks at how Black women's politics affects their art, and also examines the textual representation of politics. In accordance with feminist and womanist thought, Smith raises the problem of audience as the major one for the Black critic. She goes on to create the term "simultaneity of discourse" to define Black feminist criticism. Simultaneity of discourse is a way of reading which focuses on textual structure and in particular on the interrelation of structure of discourse, of race, gender and sexuality. In Home Girls, Smith defined a Black feminist standpoint as built on a notion of autonomy but not on separatism. While Smith's main focus is on absence, other Black feminist critics, together with Smith, explore new configurations of race and gender in literary texts.

Christian also made a number of significant contributions to Black feminist literary criticism. Christian was the first Black feminist critic to write a book-length text about Black women's literary history, titled the Black Feminist Women Novelists (1980). This was followed by Black Feminist Criticism (1985). Christian's task is to articulate clearly the nature of Afro-American literary feminism. Features of this feminism, in Christian's view are threefold. First are its positive images of Black womanhood. Second, it is an Afrocentric feminism which stresses the importance of self-knowledge. Thirdly, she draws attention to the need to widen representations of Black women's friendships, to which she herself contributes with accounts of the buried stories of Black lesbians (Humm, 1994:187). Christian focuses on images of mothering. For example, she finds positive images of mothering in Black slave narratives. What she tries to do is to trace Black women's sense of self-identity to the mother and daughter relationships which are replicated in the community culture created by Black women today. Throughout her criticism Christian adopts a Black womanist perspective. She claims that the kernel of Black feminist literary criticism is dialogue both with foremothers and with ordinary Black women.

Walker, Smith and Christian address the significant issues of Black feminist criticism. Most importantly, all these critics extend Black literature into community art and into African spirituality and question the conventions of literary criticism and literary history.

2.4.2 African feminist criticism

The connections between African and Afro-American feminism are less problematic. There are explicit overlaps and shared concerns. Currently African feminist criticism, like Afro-American feminist criticism has a complex interdisciplinarity. Critics often draw from ethnography, history, politics and white feminist theory as well as on traditional literary criticism.

Traditionally women told tales and sang songs to children in the family compound, and excellent women narrators were appreciated both by the family and the community, but the common misconception is that the professional oral performer is male. This is true even today. In prestigious events such as the inauguration of the State President it is a male oral performer that cites the praises of the particular President. Finnegan is right to make the distinction that some genres are the specific preserve of men, others of women, but there is variation in specialization throughout the continent. Certain kinds of poetry, particularly lullabies, are typically delivered or sung by women. Each culture is likely to have certain genres considered especially suitable for women. References to men seem to occur even more often. Men, rather than women, tend to be the bearers of the poetic tradition (Finnegan, 1976:98). As a result poetry by African women was rarely included in early African poetry anthologies. Traditional scholarship on oral literature has also tended to focus on male oral artists. This tendency also adds to the marginalisation of women from playing prominent roles in oral literary tradition. Instead women use other methods of story telling, such as singing, to comment publicly on issues that affect them. Mvula (Owomoyela:1993:313) comments that:

By singing about their familial problems, the women construct and reconstruct their personal histories, as well as reflect on the values and attitudes of the society.

Women use folk songs as a traditional literary art form, to voice their family problems, to rebuild their own history as women, and to make known to the larger society what their social problems are. Through song women advocate women's independence and emphasize the role of choice in women's lives and speak of women's need for solidarity with women.

During the period 1900-1950 a number of women writers, working in African languages, emerged. As early as 1913 or 1914, Lillith Kakaza wrote and published a novelette and a long piece of fiction in Xhosa. Victoria Swartbooi also wrote Xhosa fiction in the 1930s. Violet Dube published a volume of Zulu short stories in 1935 and a novel in 1936. The writing of women of this generation has received much less attention than that of men. Their work never received proper critical attention, in comparison to the attention given to male writers of comparable achievement. Only since the 1970s has the writing of African women really come into its own and found acceptance. Writers such as Ama Ata Aidoo, Buchi Emecheta, Bessie Head, Lauretta Ngcobo, Mariama Ba, Miriam Tladi, Nafissatou Dallo and Aminata Sow Fall have received attention because of the awareness raised by the women's movement, which has also been an important stimulus in getting the writing done.

Varying circumstances within different regions of Africa dispose women to differing priorities in their writing. Many African women novelists deliberately keep their focus on personal, emotional, and domestic elements in the lives of women, letting the ideas come through indirect means and not theorizing about women's roles except emotively and generally. This view links well with the themes involved in women's writing. African women's writing consistently portrays women in various struggles for self-definition. This struggle generates conflict, which is regarded as a source of creative power. In the writings of African women, certain themes present this process, and according to Owomoyela (1993:336) the themes may be summarised as follows:

- (1) the contradictions of motherhood,
- (2) the struggle for economic independence and success,
- (3) the precariousness of marital relationships,
- (4) tradition and modernity in relation to the role of women,
- (5) the politics of colonialism and neocolonialism and their effects on society in general and women in particular, and
- (6) the nature of power relationships in society.

The themes are frequently combined, with differing emphases depending on the writer's intention. Marriage and sexual relationships are often intertwined with the subject of motherhood. Womanist

writers challenge specialist genres and engage easily with autobiography in a complex understanding of African culture and history. Southern African women have struggled most urgently against racial oppression. Their feminist writings are flooded with social and political ideas. For example, Bessie Head is equally concerned with race and gender in A Question of Power (1974). In her other multi generic novel, A Bewitched Cross-road: An African Saga (1984) she incorporated interviews and history. Many other autobiographies by African women challenge Western notions of subjectivity. Ellen Khuzwayo with her novel, Call Me Woman (1985), interweaves sociology, political speeches, private life and letters to create a new kind of feminist testimonial. This autobiography is scored through with social science reports about a history of unbridled and violent political aggression. Khuzwayo's novel simply confirms that literature is never outside, or distant from, history. Miriam Tlali also wrote about her own experiences. Her first novel, Muriel at Metropolitan, focuses on the world of work, and on race issues in South Africa. This novel was banned when Longman took up the overseas publication rights. A lot of material has been removed from the present version to make it acceptable to the white reader. Muriel at Metropolitan and "Mihloti" are specifically about experiences of black women in the South African social and political context. "Mihloti" is a collection of prose fiction that points to the subjection and oppression of women. Tlali does not see the problem between men and women as based on their different sexes. She thinks the problem is in the power of the sexes. She puts this explicitly:

While the white women were concerned about the problems that arise between male and female, we were aware that the real problem is not so much a question of sexism as it is the issue of power: where does the power really lie between the two sexes? (Mackenzie & Clayton, 1989:74).

Tlali's opinion in the above passage is based on the events at the Congress and Book Fair she attended in Montreal and in Toronto. Tlali feels that it is this very question of power that has created the sexist attitude of man towards woman. She points out that a woman gives birth, something that men cannot do. Men are also aware of the power that a mother has over her offspring. According to Tlali it is the comparison of these power levels that is responsible for the state of sexual inequality that exists between men and women. In the book of short stories, When the Caged Bird Sings, Tlali alludes to the fact that in this country the problems of women cannot be isolated from the general struggle of the nation. She stresses that we cannot speak of national

liberation and ignore the liberation of women. The two liberations have to go together simultaneously.

There are other important themes that are particularly crucial to African women writers, such as fertility, polygamy and motherhood. The confrontation with polygamy is expressed by Mariama Ba in her So Long A Letter (1981), Flora Nwapa in her One is Enough (1981) and Buchi Emecheta in The Joys of Motherhood (1979). Ba in her letter-like novel displays how the Muslim religion has been imposed on Africa. In this religion, which permits polygamy, a woman must play a humble role towards her husband. The conflict between tradition and modernity is a theme that has concerned many African writers, both men and women. Women writers are concerned particularly with women's roles in this process. In this novel Muslim polygamy, in which a wife can be abandoned, is an important theme. The novel indicates how Islam condones the libidinous nature of man as a norm that is realised through polygamy, and how women on the other hand must accept and live with the status quo. For Ramatoulaye in So Long A Letter, tradition is oppressive. It is something that can hurt as well as console. This epistolary novel reveals all the hurt and joy that Ramatoulaye, the writer of the letter, and her friend, Aissatou, experienced through the various phases of their growing from girlhood to womanhood. The letter with its confidentiality becomes a truly intimate medium for the woman who wants to tell the story of her inner life.

Nwapa in One is Enough narrates the story of a strong successful business woman, Amaka, who finds herself in an unhappy marriage because of her barrenness. As a result of her infertility she is badly treated by both her husband and her mother-in-law. She manages to escape this patriarchal and matriarchal assault immediately after her mother in-law has informed her that her son has children by another woman. Nwapa's novel indicates that a barren woman has no place in African society, and it does not matter how successful she might be in other areas of life.

In The Joys of Motherhood, for example, Emecheta anticipates Nigeria's independence from Britain and women's independence from enforced polygamy. Emecheta searches history for explanations of the social problems African women encounter. The novel deals with overturning myths about mothering, and motherhood as the subject comes up again and again as part of the

novel's theme. On the other hand she creates her own history by making symbolic analogies between the condition of her women characters and the condition of the country in which these women live. In the Ditch (1972) and Second Class Citizen (1974) relates stories about British and Irish feminism. This is due to the fact that Emecheta spent most of her life in Britain. In these novels she indicates how black women who find themselves in an all white society successfully fight patriarchy. In her Second Class Citizen, a female character, Adah manages to obtain a divorce and she also manages to care for her five children in a hostile environment. The black woman is portrayed as a survivor of difficult circumstances.

A number of African feminist critics and writers draw attention to the facts raised by African women writers when white feminist critics gloss over race, while post-colonial critics turn to allegory rather than to gender. In "To be an African Woman Writer," Ama Ata Aidoo graphically catalogues a long list of well known critical studies of African literature which omit women writers. Hence a subversion of the contemporary male canon is a crucial step in the creation of African feminist aesthetic. A historically rooted African aesthetic is a clear aim, although this was undervalued during colonialism. These concerns suggest that criticism must be based on what one might call a simultaneity of response to what is a historical constant. For example, in African literature men and women are frequently described not as individuals set into a wider social frame but as men and women set into a cosmic schema. It is because of this reason that Rhonda Cobham and Chikwenye Ogunyemi examine the ways in which Black women's writing is in dialogue with history and myth.

African-language writing by women is also continuing to develop. E. M. Damane has written two IsiZulu dramas, Awuthunyelwa Gundane , Hawu Ndlalifa and one novel, Lalela Mngani Wami. She has also co-authored a short story book, Amavenge, with a well known isiZulu writer, D.B.Z. Ntuli. Like other women writers in her drama, Awuthunyelwa Gundane , Damane protests against the sexism and oppression of the patriarchal structure. Her female characters are very strong women.

There are certain culturally specific differences between Black American and Black African women but there are similarities in their thinking. Both stand at the crossroads of two critical

directions: nationalism and the white feminist critique. They see themselves defined by the notion of an African women's cultural diaspora while knowing that this vast cultural history is precisely the dominant marginalised by the dominant national and white American cultures. To achieve status as writing women they are encouraged by the academy to renounce a folk identity. The most obvious common binding factor between the two is oppression.

2.4.3 Caribbean feminist criticism

Work describing the women's literary tradition in the Caribbean are similar to African criticism's account of African women's literary cultures. Caribbean critics also describe the Caribbean female tradition in broad terms, in relation to Caribbean history and consequent changes in women's self-expression. One dominant factor in the Caribbean female literary tradition is that like the African and European canons, it has also been male-dominated. This argument is highlighted by Boyce Davies and Fido's text, Out of the Kumbla: Caribbean Women and Literature (1990). The collection of essays focuses on the main themes, which are the importance of community creativity rather than individual experiment; issues of exclusion and dispossession; and the creation of a multi generic writing. The major and significant collection is Caribbean Women Writers: Essays from the First International Conference (1990). The book is a collection of critical essays about familial Caribbean writers. The collection as a whole contains definitive bibliographies of the French, Dutch and Spanish speaking Caribbean, which go some way to eradicate the negative images of women which dominate the Spanish Antilles as elsewhere. The notion of a communal voice, and an ethic of caring as well as the cross-fertilisation of international Black feminism, mean that Caribbean writing has a unique and a critical place in Black feminism.

Womanism as a literary theory is not to be used as a wrecking ball with which to demolish and do violence to African literary texts; rather, it is employed as the key with which to unlock meanings in their multiplicity and paradoxes. It is put at the service of cultural productions by increasing our understanding of them. In literature for example, it is expected that a serious womanistic critic, or any critic for that matter, of African literature must be an "inoutsider" who pays equal attention to cultural contexts and critical theory. Black feminist literary criticism parallels, in its development, the careers of Black writers also trying to create a literary identity

in the midst of racial and sexual antagonism. This is why much Black writing is shaped by contemporary sexual practices and cultural history. It is revealed in works of the aforementioned Afro-American feminist critics that Black feminist cultural and material readings and readings of language difference alike, are grounded in the concepts of Black community and in a continuing dialogue between literature and sexual politics. Black feminist criticism requires, the womanists insist, a radical history, and a study of how Black women create and support through language what becomes, for them, a flourishing culture (Humm, 1994:178). More importantly, the womanist scholarship has effectively challenged the way in which African women are portrayed in African literatures.

2.5 Onomastics as a literary device

Literary onomastics is important for the writer who wants to call their characters by a certain name. Names of characters play a significant role not just for the sake of naming as an art form, but also for the literary critic who has to identify the unseen characters by their names. Most often namelessness entails a lack of identity. Literary onomastics has become one of the literary devices employed by writers to communicate various messages and intentions to the reader. When defining literary onomastics Alvarez-Altman(1987:1) says:

Literary onomastics is a more specialized literary criticism in which scholars are concerned with the levels of significance of names in drama, poetry, fiction and folklore.

Alvarez-Altman distinguishes onomastics as that part of literary criticism in which names of characters are examined for the influence they have in a work of art. The meaning of the names of characters is important to the work as a whole. Ashley, like Alvarez, further stresses the implications of names in literature. For Ashley the meaning of names and their current applications in literature is significant. She says onomastics is:

A study of the origin and history of proper names. From a Greek term meaning "names," onomastics is concerned with the folklore of names, their current application, spelling, pronunciation, and meanings ... (Alvarez-Altman,1987:11).

When engaged in the study of names a critic should first strive to know the origin and the history of a particular name or proper names. According to Nuessel (1992:1) proper names "are not connotative; they denote the individuals who are called by them; but they do not indicate or imply attributes as belonging to those individuals." Pulgram (1954:34) is quoted by Nuessel to have stated that the distinguishing quality of proper names is that they connote nothing and have, strictly speaking, no meaning. What is expected from the onomastics critic then is to trace the origin and the history of the proper names he comes across in his literature. The original Greek version of onomastics as explained by Ashley encouraged the knowledge of the traditional beliefs surrounding a particular name, the contemporary situation to which the name referred, how it was written and pronounced and what it means. The above definition indicates the relationship between a name and folklore. "Folklore of names," in this context, could be understood to mean that names should be studied against the traditional beliefs or background of the community in which they are used. These beliefs of any particular society should be taken into consideration because they throw more light on the origin and history of the names that the writers use.

Onomastics stresses the utilitarian function of literature because it concerns itself with the author's communication of his message. With literary onomastics words are regarded as the basic counters of literary art, for it is in words and through words that literary meaning is conveyed to the reader. Words release their magic through meaning. The beauty of using carefully chosen names in literature is achieved because always these names relate to the common living conditions in which we find ourselves. To a large extent then, art exposes the author's feelings and opinions about the moral and the political issues prevalent in society. I. A Richards (in Alvarez-Altman, 1987:12) says that "Badness in literature" is observed by seeing how names comment upon and judge moral and political issues in fiction. Names expose both the author's investment of self in the work and the problems arising from the fact that "the poem belongs to the public". "The poem" stands for any name in a literary work of art. The literary work produced by an author belongs to the reader who is part of the larger community, and as such the reader should be able to analyse the names of characters used by the writer if he belongs to the same culture as the writer."Poetry" in names refers to the hidden meaning or the various connotations a name might have. The word "poem" relates to something made. Writers invent the names of characters as they do with poetry. Alvarez-Altman (1987:12) says:

Names in literature frequently demand to be considered as if they were complete little poems, with all the richness that implies. We must see in each name all of a poem's "cerebral phosphorescences," ... for in names writers of skill pack many connotations and ... "tell all the truth/But tell it slant" they produce little puzzles for the critic who must "by indirection find direction out."

Modern literary onomastics, therefore demands inventiveness, restraint, skill, taste, insight and industry from the writer. If names are to be read as little poems, this simply says no name can be taken to be simple. Any name therefore should be unpacked, deconstructed and reconstructed again if any critic wants to obtain its full understanding because writers hide the truth in names. A name should be treated as a jigsaw puzzle that needs to be assembled to see its full picture. Ferlinghetti (Alvarez-Altman, 1987:11) compliments this view by saying:

When studying names in literature we are in fact seeking for both the "pot of message" and the poet or the maker who performs "high above the heads of the audience".

This means that when analysing names in literature one is actually engaged with searching for some closed kind of meaning that the author purposefully conceals from the audience or the readers. Meaning is expressed by the writer's manipulation of the name and the skill used to make his point clear.

The fact that the writer performs above the heads of the audience means that with his skill he sets the mind of the audience at work. The audience have a puzzle to undo. Names have "vibrations," or at least create them or set them up in the mind of the reader. Collecting and listing names for a work of literature is not enough. Literary onomastics places demands on the critic because he/she must be an expert, that is able to grasp both what the author intended the names to mean and what they do actually mean. The author may be playing games with the words that he uses in his text. It takes hard work and a lot of imagination on the part of the reader to distinguish between what is reading out of a work and what is reading in, what is there as a result of the writer's conscious intention and what is accidental or imagined by the reader. It is therefore important that one must be able to comprehend the name as the creator wrote it.

We should take into consideration questions like: what does the name mean to the reader, and what is there to read into simple, ordinary names? The careful writer may be using simple names from real life or have chosen them because they just sounded right. When studying names of characters in literature, in Ashley's words we are taught to look, as it were, for bumps on the cortex which may indicate something in the nucleus, some emphasis in fiction which hints at deeper truth or significance (Alvarez -Altman, 1987:20). Ashley adds that the conscientious writer must consider not only what a name conveys and what it can convey but also what misleading connotations it might have in the language and even those into which the work may be translated. It may be a good suggestion that one must use a dictionary of the correct language when interpreting names, otherwise the real meaning of the names may be lost. Literary critics need to know the naming systems and the naming traditions at various periods and in various places. Names are to be considered as an integral part of a work of art. Critics have to pay more attention to how the names function in the work of art, whether they have meanings that can be looked up or not. This involves a whole linguistic and cultural context and factors such as the psychological, the sociological, and historical more; taxing than simple taxonomy.

2.5.1 Naming as a cultural practice

Moleleki (1988:15) observes that “writers mature within a culture; they learn their skills and their craft within that culture; and so inevitably reflect some aspects of that culture in their writing.” Moleleki's comment highlights the fact that literary works of African writers usually have some traditional flavour. Most African writers in the process of finding their own voice have had to go back to their roots. The manner in which writers use the names of characters in their works reflects the fact that personal names are not cultural universals. Cultural practices associated with the naming of children vary from one society to another.

African personal names are known as family names or “*amagama asekhaya*” in isiZulu. These names are widely observed to possess much meaning. The available records of our traditional naming practices come from the missionaries. The reason for this might be that during this time our people were unable to write. They only started Western schooling with the arrival of the missionaries and it would therefore, have taken some time before they would have been able to

preserve our culture in writing. It has been observed that, traditionally personal names were unique and meaningful. A missionary, Josiah Tyler (1891:33) quoted by Suzman (1994:254) noted that:

The names of persons in Zulu are derived from circumstances connected with their birth. For instance, if a small snake happens to be seen or killed when a boy is born he is called *Unyokana* "a little snake." Should the infant be a large one, he receives the appellation *Ungagumuntu* "As large as a man", etc.

Suzman (1994: 254) tells us that Webb & Wright (1986:87) observed that Tshaka's mother was called *Nandi*, "Nice", because her mother was pleased by everything in the Langeni tribe, so when she gave birth, the father said that the child's name would be *Nandi*. Suzman further states that these accounts were later supported by ethnographers like Bryant (1949) and Krige. Krige (1936:74) quoted by Suzman (1994:254) confirms that in the traditional name giving among the AmaZulu, the father or grandfather named the child within a few weeks of birth after consulting other members of the homestead. Krige emphasises that it is the father or the grandfather that named the child after this consultation. What is striking is that it is not the woman who carried the child who had the honour of naming her child. After the woman has brought the child onto earth the honour of naming is taken away from her and given to the man. Women should have been the first name givers for their children. The giving of a name to a child had significance within the larger family, to such an extent that the child was rarely the focus of his or her name. Many African names as a result, point to various circumstances that the family had gone through at a certain period.

In the isiZulu culture names point to different people and social categories relevant to the name giver at the time of the child's birth. As the fathers and grandfathers were namegivers, a tendency developed to give the name of the father to the first baby boy. For example if the name of the father is *Mxoshwa* "Chase him" the first baby boy would also be named *Mxoshwa*. Culturally, children and other family members do not call elders by their names. For example if a baby boy was named after his father, the other members of the family had to respect the boy's name by replacing it with another name. The child, then, had to be given an alternative name or a second name to avoid the real name. S.E.Ngubane (1996:1) in his paper titled, "Cultural significance of Zulu personal name" concurs that:

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The name will be used with some reservation within the family because members are not all supposed to call their elders on first name basis. The family members and associates will find an alternative name to avoid using the father's name.

In most instances a praise name could serve as a suitable alternative second name for the boy. In this way a number of African people ended up having two names. For example if the boy's surname is *Nxumalo* his name would, then, be called *Zwide*.

If the first born child was a girl the association with the father would still be maintained. Names like *uNtombikayise* "The father's girl," emerged. In some instances a praise name would be used but this would be joined to the end of the girl's name. Names such as *uZamantungwa* "the girl of the *amaNtungwa*," came up. This would be a name for a girl child born into a *Khumalo* family, and declares that the child belongs to the family as well as the *Khumalo* clan. In the history of the AmaZulu names of princes and princesses of the Royal kraal indicated the link with the king. Kings and Queens are therefore, given personal names which are joined by the personal name of their father. King Shaka was known as *uShaka kaSenzangakhona*, "Shaka of Senzangakhona", Princess Mkabayi as *uMkabayi kaJama*, "Mkabayi of Jama". In this manner names also recall to memory different ancestors. This was done to bring back the memory of that particular ancestor so that it would be carried over to future generations in the family.

Naming children in this traditional fashion elevates the name of the father but not of the mother. The mother of the child does not feature anywhere in the child's name. Such a cultural naming system does not even provide that the names of girls should at least show the association with the mother. This is the effect of the patriarchal system which is so dominant in our society.

Suzman (1994: 253) refers to Koopman (1992) who discusses the "extra meaning" in names and the "social comment" they make about the community. Namegiving according to this observation provides an outlet for the regulation of social relations in the communities. It allowed people to communicate their feelings indirectly, without overt confrontation and possible conflict. Culturally, then, the AmaZulu children were given names that reflected values and attitudes which emanated from the social fabric of the name givers. Original and idiosyncratic names emerged. These names are usually tangentially related to the child. It seems as if it is still impossible to give children

names that are not connected to certain circumstances. Fromkin & Rodman (1983:187) elucidate this point when they say, “ although the naming of children is more conventional and the language provides a stock of personal names, many parents coin a name for their child that they hope (usually in vain) to be original.”

2.5.2 Classification of names by Susan M. Suzman

Suzman (1994:258) acknowledges the fact that IsiZulu names have been well-studied synchronically. She further points out that although the social context of naming is much more flexible in the current isiZulu society, name givers still give children names that emanate from the social fabric of their lives. Suzman (1994:258-263) classifies names into three categories, i.e., names as pointers, names reflecting social/ financial position in life and those that reveal the child's sex and birth order.

2.5.2.1 Names as pointers

Names in this category can be described within a social framework that makes reference to some significant aspect of the name giver's life. This category emphasizes the social input that is part of the naming tradition. In this case the social context within which naming is embedded becomes part of the name itself. Names point outward from the individual toward various people, or toward institutions relevant to the namer's state of mind. Sociolinguistic aspects of naming are seen in names that are injunctions to individuals in the larger society. The referential value of names plus their social input underlies the idea of names as pointers. Suzman (1994:261) found that people gave personal names that pointed to the mother, the father, birth circumstances, the child, the child's sex and religion. Examples of names that fall into this category according to Suzman (1994:259), are names such as: *uThulani* “Be quiet” The name points to the mother-in-law who complained that her daughter-in-law could not bear a son, so the daughter-in-law named her second son *Thulani*, enjoining her mother-in-law to be satisfied and stop complaining. *USikhonkwane* “Nail”. The mother had a traditional polygamous marriage, and said she had hit the nail on the head by having a boy. *UMfaniseni* “ Who did he look like?” mother-in-law said to her *makoti* who had an illegitimate child. The mother indirectly replied with this name, asking

who the child looked like, if he did not look like his father. Suzman gives a number of these names but, unfortunately, we cannot exhaust the whole list here. What is observable is that these names are directly focussed on the namegiver's personal life. A single name may be chosen by different parents for very different reasons. They are questions or commands that often identify sources of conflict. These names make the sources of conflict public by pointing at the person responsible. Suzman (1994:260) refers to Tonkin, who in her study of Kru names (1980:655) in East Africa noted that names are "messages to others". She also quotes Alford (1988) who noted that naming among the Dogon may involve a "message from the name giver".

2.5.2.2 Names reflecting social/financial position in life

Some names reveal the social circumstances of the family. Names that fall in this category distinguish a social class. Among these names Suzman (1994:261) mentions names like: uNdumiseni, "Praise Him". This name is based on the success of the father, who came from a proper Zulu kraal and was the first one to go to school and became a *teacher*. UNjabulomzwandile, "Happiness at the increased family." The parents are happy because the family has grown larger. There are names that reveal a different attitude to the above one. Names given by a poor woman without support for her children display a different attitude from those given above. Names such as uMuntukafi, "A person doesn't die." The mother's parents were angry when she had an illegitimate child. This might indicate that the mother slept and didn't eat, but she didn't die. USipho, "Gift." When the mother gave birth, the grandmother fed her because she didn't have any money.

2.5.2.3 Names that refer to the child's sex and birth order

The traditional family would contain many children, and they were frequently named in terms of one another. Boys were always favoured as future providers and heads of families; so it was particularly good to have a boy first, in which case he received a name like uVusumuzi, "Revive the home". The father who named his son uMandlakhe, "His power," referred to his power to have a son. Girls were welcome as helpers for the mothers and sources of *ilobolo*. Girl's names such as uLindiwe, "Awaited," point to the period the parents waited before they had a baby girl

or, may refer to the fact that other children died but the parents still waited and had hope that one day they would have a girl. A name such as *uPhumzile*, "Relief," directly identifies a girl as a helper for her mother. The fact that boys were favoured as future providers and heads of families shows that the child is introduced to the existing gender inequality before he even knows it. Powerful names such as *Vusumuzi* already have much more power thrust upon a baby boy than the name of a girl which would indicate she is nothing more than a helper of her mother in the family.

2.5.3 Classification of names by Altman-Alvarez

The field of literary onomastics is vast. Other than the names of characters, literary onomastics also takes into account names of places and cosmic symbols. These names are studied in their relation to theme, structure and other literary symbols. According to Alvarez-Altman (1987:11-12) literary names can be studied within three general focuses and there are twelve families of names, six techniques of nominology and three typologies. The three general focuses are: families or classes of names, the technique used by authors in naming and the typologies or functions of names. Here we will only concern ourselves with the twelve families of names in literature.

The anonymical family of literary names does not convey a sense of clearly marked individuality or personality. These names impart a sea of anonymous faces that at times generate fear or have infinite implications. These names may in turn be divided into twelve other categories. These are; nameless, alluded, implied, generic, numerical, titles, initials, anagrams, neologisms, acronyms, computerised and programmed names. Diacritic names are attributive in nature. These are capable of conveying the nature and characteristics of characters and their attributes. There are ten categories in this family. These are personality traits, trade identities, numerical names, abstractions, special ranks, change of names, charactonyms, label names, emblems, and praelognomen. Chimerical names are purely coined names with no precedent. The ten categories here are purely invented doublings, phallic names, unusual, hyphenated, elliptic, slang, misused or deliberate distortion, fantastic and transliteration. Mythological names are mostly found in mythical stories such as folktales. Names in this category include names from Greek, Roman, Nordic, Saga, Epic, Indian, Exotic, Semitic, Sanskrit and African names. Biblical names refer to

names that show an association with Hebrew, Aramaic, New Testament Greek, Prophetic, Pentateuch, Apostolic, Biblical analogues, Hagiographic, symbols of names of the sixty-six books of the Christian Bible. Etymological simple names are traceable to the exact original language, contextual, common, suitable to content and unsuitable context. This category of names requires a thorough knowledge of the Indo-European family of eleven languages. Etymological multilingual names consist of names that are built on two languages, three languages, transformations, transliterations and punning. National identity names reflect a country, a capital, a city, a village, town or suburb. Toponymical family names touch on geographical matters such as a municipal building, corporation, railroad station, bay, island, beach, lake and mountain. Paronomastic names recall the creativity of the authors in punning. Punning relates to the author's ability to play around with words. It therefore includes puns-simple, puns-combined, straight and ironic names, nicknames, disease names, change of gender names and phrases of names. Historical family names involve ancient history names such as the middle ages, the renaissance, modern names, political names and names that indicate a social rank. Hagiographic names takes into account the lives of saints and variants of their names.

2.5.4 Changes in the naming practice

In the traditional naming process women did not play a major role. Name giving was seen solely as a man's duty. Webb & Wright (1987) in Suzman (1994:254) insist that the name does not come from the mother, for she might *qopa* which means to talk at cross purposes with the child's father. In farms and urban families, however, fathers do not play a significant role as name givers because of migratory labour. Name givers are frequently the mother and female relatives. The shift in the naming process reveals that names given by women point less frequently to mothers. Names with new connotations came into being. These names reflect the mother's state during pregnancy and birth in the farm population. Names such as *uNduduzo*, "Comforter", *uNomusa*, "Kindness" came on the scene (Suzman, 1994:267 & 269). Today even when the father is there to give a name to his child, the mother unlike traditionally, is also given an opportunity to name her child. A major change in name giving reflects a shift away from some social comment names, usually negative in connotation, in the older rural naming practice. Children are no longer given names that bring to mind the unpleasant experiences related to their birth. In the urban areas people are more positive in their outlook.

The older rural AmaZulu name givers identified very particular social circumstances, that emanate from intense social relations. Studies of contemporary urban names have however noted an emotion-related theme. According to Suzman (1994:268), Herbet & Bogatsu (1990) found 50% emotion related names in urban Sotho and Tswana names, and Koopman (1989:34) has observed that 18.5% of his names referred to the: "relationship between parent and child, including injunctions to the child and feelings of love, pride and happiness." The absence of positive feelings about the birth of children has been noted in older rural namers. Urban names often display positive emotions that are in conjunction with religious themes. Both emotion and religion are negligible categories in the rural traditional way of naming; but they become increasingly important in farm and urban situations, where traditional and fundamentalist church affiliations are strong.

The naming practice was also changed by Western factors like acculturation, education and Christianity. Modern names differ significantly from traditional ones and they provide evidence that the world view within which names are given is in the process of redefinition. New names were mostly a result of education or Christianity. For the child to be baptised and to be able to attend school it had to possess an English name. The English name was used at school, in the church and at work. The school name and the baptismal name served almost the same purposes. New Biblical names adopted from the scriptures and God-related names appeared. Names like: *uJosefa, uMariya, uDanyela, uJakobho*, etc. are proof of this. African people in general at a particular period preferred their Western names to their traditional ones. Zungu (1984:17) quoted by Ngubane (1996:2) comments that:

It is also worth mentioning that up to the late sixties, people felt very embarrassed if one called a person by his Zulu origin name. The Africans preferred names of foreign origin to their own Zulu origin names.

At a particular period, calling a person by his/her African name was like an insult. People regarded their African names as shameful and of a lower status. Currently the situation has changed. Many young people are using their African names in all situations. This may be due to the work of the Black Consciousness Movement and the current emphasis on the African Renaissance. More African people now want to be associated with their traditional roots. Ngubane (1996:6) refers to Nsimbi in Koopman (1986:23) who appreciates the use of African in names:

There are many good traditions and customs which the African tribes are losing much of this inheritance in an attempt to adopt western culture wholesale ... In my opinion the use of African names ought to be preserved ...

Today people live in a variety of societies. It is observed that names are not static but evolve over time, often losing their referential meaning. Names also change with societal changes because a number of people are moving from the rural to urban environments and their societal framework is transformed. Another important shift is that modern urban names do not point to the odd or exceptional physical characteristics of the child but to the child's appearance. Names like *uNobuhle*, "Beauty", *uZinhle*, "The girls are beautiful," point to parental aspirations for the child.

2.6 Psychoanalysis and art

Our starting point in this section is the notion that a human being, whether the author or reader, is a psychological being. Freud's interest is in the psyche and its productions. In his classical psychoanalytical literary theory Freud traces art to the dream, and sees the dream as a route to the unconscious. This view seems to suggest that psychoanalysis provides for the origin of art, since it stresses the fact that all art is a reflection of a state of mind. This means that the activities of an artist are initiated by the forces of the unconscious.

In our view a literary text consists of three individuals. The first is the writer, the creator of the text, the second is the reader, who gives new birth to the text in the process of reading, and the third individual is the character, who at the stage of the creation of a text exists only in the mind of the author.

Freud extends his analysis to the strategies whereby the artist, like a dreamer, creates compromise formations by which an unacceptable wish becomes, through the construction of an acceptable form, not only conscious but a highly pleasing work of art. Makaryk (1993) emphasises the fact that it is, therefore, to the reader that psychoanalytic criticism should turn, seeing in the act of reading the re-creation of the reader's core self. The reader's core self is re-created by the third individual in a form of a character. The reader sees himself represented by the character who is the conveyor of the message of the text. During the reading process the reader's mind forms various mental pictures about the writer, the characters and the milieu as he/she reads the text. He

experiences the text cognitively, emotionally and socially. He laughs and cries with the characters as the situation in the text changes. These effects on the reader demonstrate that psychoanalysis has a place in literature. Strelka (1976:33) concurs: "the reader identifies with that hero and thus experiences the pleasure of feeling invulnerable, of being the centre of attraction and the chosen of women, and of being invariably successful."

In order for art as it is initiated from the unconscious level of the mind to reach the conscious level, a means of interpretation common to both art and psychoanalysis has to be employed. Art externalizes the hidden activities of the unconscious by using language. If art is a dream as Freud suggests, the dream has to be interpreted for it to be accessible to the reader and the only way to do this is by using language. Makaryk (1993:165) further points out that like the dream, the surface or manifest content of the work contains within it a latent meaning which can be deciphered through interpretation. With regard to the above view Strelka comments as follows:

The application of psychoanalytical methods to literary criticism is justified mainly on the grounds that both psychoanalysis and criticism are involved in the interpretation of symbols - the symbols of the human subconsciousness on the one hand and those of literary language on the other (1976: ix).

The symbolism of art, like the dream, reveals unconscious content in a relatively consistent relationship between symbol and unconscious meaning. To further support this common ground between psychoanalysis and art, Goldstein (in Strelka, 1976:260) affirms that:

Psychoanalysis uncovers these terrifying repressions by penetrating defences; this the analyst does through a study of the analysand's language. The psychoanalytic critic studies the language of a writer, or of the character created by that writer, to discover what is beneath the surface of description and speech and to determine what is being defended against.

These definitions consolidate the role that language plays, from the initial stages of writing a work of art up until its comprehension and concretization by the reader. Bateson (in Strelka, 1976: vii) calls this process the "literary cycle." In this cycle the language is used as a form of expression by the writer but as a means of comprehension by the reader.

Both psychoanalysis and art draw their information from human nature. As with the dream, the surface or manifest content of the work contains within it a latent meaning which can be

deciphered through interpretation. Interpretation of the unconscious is only possible through the use of a language. Psychoanalysis and art use language to reveal unconscious content to the conscious. Freud is quoted (in Skura, 1944:1) as having asserted that "the poets and the philosophers discovered the unconscious before I did." This is an acknowledgement of the relationship that exists between psychoanalysis and art. Skura (1944:2) further highlights the fact that "everything we understand about the way we think is helpful in understanding the way literature works". The poets share with the analysts a knowledge of the unconscious depths, which in this case can be related to the underlying meaning of a poem. For the meaning of the unconscious to come into the open one has to interpret all the symbols by using language. Hirsch (in Skura, 1944:1) declares that "meaning is the affair of consciousness" which is very true but this can only be attained, as Ferenczi (in Skura, 1944:1) suggests, that "what is related to consciousness only becomes comprehensible and explicable when the meaning behind it is plumbed"

Freud himself later discarded the dichotomy of the conscious and the unconscious as an identification of the parts of the mind, and limited it to describing whether or not we are consciously aware of a particular thought, whatever that thought might be. There are different ways of being aware of things and different aspects of a text which compel a certain kind of awareness. Rather than looking only for unconscious or conscious meaning, the analyst describes a whole range of what has been called "modes of consciousness," or modes of representation. Freud discovered the variety of ways in which we become aware of ourselves and our world and the means by which we represent both (Skura, 1944:4). Skura's argument aims at showing that other connections exist between psychoanalysis and literary criticism.

As literary critics we are interested in psychoanalysis not so much for what it reveals about human nature, or even about the particular human being, but for the way in which it reveals anything at all. Changes in consciousness taking place moment by moment in the actual process brings us closer to what goes on in literature than the theory, with its rigid hypothesizations.

2.6.1 Jung's views

Carl Jung is an alienated follower of Freud. He is conceived of as the founder of analytic psychology. In his early word association experiments, he discovered the basic elements of personality. His interest in the human psyche and personality resulted in his collaboration with Freud. The collaboration that started in 1909 did not last long since Jung had different views from Freud about other important matters of the human psyche. His interest in the myth dimension of dreams and fantasies led to his increasing difficulty in accepting Freud's Oedipus complex as the underlying universal cause of all neurosis and to a conviction that the single sexual drive theory of libido was inadequate. The emphasis that Freud put on infantile sexuality is not the only cause of the separation between the two. Further differences with Freud over the role of transference in analysis, the nature of dream symbolism, and the meaning of seduction fantasies also contributed to the separation in 1913. After his break with Freud, Jung went about devising his own theory of personality. In this Jung concentrates on the ego, the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious. The basis of his theory is that beneath the personal unconscious lies a collective unconscious. Our discussion of Jung's theory will encompass concepts such as the collective unconscious, the libido, and his dream interpretation. The understanding of these concepts is crucial.

The unconscious is the most important part of the mind in Freud's theory because it is seen as the driving force behind the human psyche. To Jung the collective unconscious is important because it contains "all the contents of the psychic experience of mankind" (Strelka, 1976:8). The collective unconscious consists of two levels, that is, the personal level and the non-personal or the transpersonal level as it is sometimes called. To define "the collective unconscious" Corsini and Wedding (1989:121) say: "what is meant here is that all human beings, from the most remote past to our present days and into the foreseeable future, share the same inherited predispositions for psychic functioning." The above definitions point out that the collective unconscious takes into account all types of human experiences, and that it is innate because the conscious originates from it. What particularises the content of the collective unconscious is the fact that it can be inherited. Nietzsche (in Strelka, 1976:7) refers to this and says:

This ancient element in human nature still manifests itself in dreams, for it is the foundation upon which higher reason has developed and still develops in every individual; the dream carries us back to remote conditions of human culture, and provides a ready means of understanding them better.

The conscious as it brings us into contact with reality is responsible for assigning value to the contents of the collected unconscious. The content is still tumultuous in nature and for it to make sense to the human subject it should reach the conscious level. Makaryk (1993:384) differentiates between the personal conscious and the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious is, "... different from the personal unconscious (which Freud dealt with) because it is not made up of individual, unique or repressed contents, but of those that are inborn, universal and recurring." The personal unconscious consists of everything repressed during one's development. According to Corsini and Wedding (1989:127) the personal unconscious is composed of elements that had once been conscious and are relatively easily available to consciousness.

The collective unconscious or the nonpersonal unconscious includes the archetypes, which are inborn psychic predispositions to perception, emotion and behaviour. It is formed by the instincts together with the archetypes. Archetypes are described as tendencies to produce form that is relatable to instincts which represent the precipitate of the psychic functioning of the whole ancestral line. They are the accumulated experiences of organic life in general, repeated a million times, and condensed into types (Makaryk,1993:384). Both the archetype and the collective unconscious contain accumulated psychic experiences that are traceable to the ancestral past. "Archetype" refers to the inherited, unconscious ideas and images that are the components of the unconscious. Corsini and Wedding (1989:121) add that archetypes exist in us as potentialities; in our life circumstances which include our family and our environment. Some archetypes play an important role in the development of the personality, such as the persona, the shadow, the animus or anima and the self.

This layer of the unconscious is not directly amenable to consciousness; it is observed indirectly through its manifestations in eternal themes in mythology, folklore and art. Makaryk (1993:508) presupposes a relationship between the archetype and a work of art. He conceives a literary archetype as " a typical or recurring image, character, narrative design, theme, or other literary phenomenon that has been in literature from the beginning and regularly reappears". The concept

of recurring images or characters may refer to the types of characters that appear time and again in various types of prose genres and in poetry.

Contrary to Freud's theory, Jung postulates that if a man's instincts compel him to a specifically human mode of existence, so the archetypes force his ways of perception and apprehension into specifically human patterns. The fact that archetypes are unconscious structures suggests that a child is born with inherited psychic predispositions. The archetype is conceived as the agency that directs all psychic activity. It therefore acts to correct or compensate for conscious attitudes and values that are one-sided, fixated or development inhibiting. Jung's thoughts are perceived as mythocentric rather than logocentric. His thoughts are concerned with essence rather than function, with the symbolic rather than the meaning and with the diachronic or historically continuous aspect of language.

Jung deviated from Freud in his conception of the Oedipus complex. While Freud equated the libido with sexual energy, to Jung the libido is energy from the unconscious. Libido is the psychic energy independent of sexuality (Reber, 1985:402). Sexuality for Jung is more than mere instincts. Libido as an energy concept is a quantitative formula for the phenomena of life, and Jung's perception of it urges us to conceptualize libidinal energy as the force of urgency in the human mind to live.

According to Jung, the Oedipus complex or story is but one mythological pattern among many. From the Jungian point of view, Freud seems to have missed the point about this myth. Oedipus and his parents try to thwart fate, with disastrous results. Oedipus must face up to the mystery of his tragic fate, the mystery of the Sphinx to murder his father and marry his mother and then consciously accept the inevitable tragic guilt. It is to be noted that the incest is incidental and that the incest itself is not desired by Oedipus, nor is he punished for it. To clarify our story further Chaplin (1985:12) says that the Oedipus complex was named after the Greek tragedy by Sophocles in which the hero, Oedipus, unwittingly killed his father and married his mother. Freud does not refer to the Oedipus complex as a story but explains it by basing his argument in the instinctual drives.

Dream work is the core of the Jungian theory. The main difference between a classical Freudian approach to a dream and a Jungian one is based on repression. To Freudians a dream is the result of the emergence of repressed contents from the unconscious. It is therefore viewed as a distortion that must be unravelled. In the Jungian view the dream is seen as a metaphorical drama. A Jungian views the dream phenomenologically. In the drama of the dream there is the unconscious message expressed in symbolic form, a message not necessarily repressed or hidden, but rather trying to reveal itself. In Freudian psychoanalysis the dreamer would be asked to associate "freely" to any given symbol in the dream while in the Jungian theory there is no free association. The specific symbol in the dream is used in the interpretation. Thus the dreamer in the Jungian approach is asked to say what comes first into his mind when he thinks about his dream.

Jung introduces the concept of amplification in his dream interpretation. This is opposed to the free association in Freud's dream analysis. Corsini and Wedding (1989:136) say, "an amplification is what an object actually is." They further state that amplification may come from yet another source of the unconscious. This includes the archetypal nature of the unconscious and will take into account mythology, fairytales and literature in understanding the various symbols and dramas featured in the specific dream.

2.6.2 Jacques Lacan and structural psychoanalysis

There are two reasons to view Lacan's psychoanalytical theory as structural in nature. The theory rests upon Lacan's opinion that the unconscious is structured like a language, and that human subjectivity is caught within a system of signification. His view is that the text itself, as a linguistic structure, has its own psyche. Before Lacan, applications of psychoanalytic theory to the arts considered the psychology of the person, whether the artist, character, or audience not the text. It is therefore not surprising to learn that this theory has a lot in common with the linguistic theories of philosophers such as Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson. Structural psychoanalysis places language at the centre of psychoanalysis. Language for Lacan is a system of signifiers that form a closed autonomous order. Lacan's stress on the symbolic order is based on his post-Saussurean analysis of the linguistic signifier. The signifier is meaningful not because it refers to a definite signified that determines it, but because it stands in opposition to another signifier.

Lacan postulates the existence of three orders in human experience. These are: the imaginary, the symbolic and the real. Lacan's theory is seen as a radical revision of Freud's ideas. In his discussion of the unconscious, Lacan moves from the view that if the unconscious is to be understood to be the prelinguistic locality that contains the instinctual representatives, then to him the unconscious is the effect of the human subjects entry into the linguistic order. Lacan's statement suggests that the human subject's ability to speak should be traced back to the unconscious. According to him the unconscious is the origin of speech or of language.

Lacan holds the view that a human subject is born into a symbolic order which consists of a linguistic system that has built in societal imperatives. This could be interpreted to mean that a human subject is born into a specific social environment that will have an effect on the subject's life from the day he is born until his death. By this Lacan refers to the norms and values that determine a subject's way of life from time to time. This reminds us of what Buchbinder calls the sex-gender system into which all people are born. This point also confirms true what Goldstein (Strelka, 1976: 262) says about psychoanalysis when he emphasises that "psychoanalysis is always aware of the past (which depressives concentrate on), of the present (the focus of hysterics), of the future (the compulsive element of obsessives), and the need to integrate the three." Lacan claims that the subject is an effect of the symbolic, decentred within the play of signifiers. He further claims that language is not just the world of words which creates the world of things but that man speaks because the symbol has made him man (Makaryk, 1993:561). According to Lacan an individual is not born human but only becomes human through an incorporation into a social and cultural order.

Lacan's theory is influenced by Melaine Klein's object relations theory. Klein's work is based on the psychoanalysis of children. Lacan's imaginary theory is related to the mirror stage in the life of a child. With his theory of the mirror stage, Lacan answers the traditional psychoanalytic theories of development. This stage is represented concretely by the child's reflection of itself in the mirror. At this stage the child is conceived to be forming an external relation with other objects when it sees itself in the mirror. It is, then, through the mirror stage that the child gains access to the symbolic order. Makaryk (1993: 560) says " thus, the formation of an I concept, the ego, occurs within the realm of the imaginary: the subject assumes an image, or, as in another

Lacanian formulation, the subject becomes object." In other words Lacan suggests that for the child's ego to be the subject, it must internalize a principle of otherness as a consequence of its own desire. The desire here relates to the "Other", the imaginary figure, the "Other" image in the mirror. Lacan moves on to say that the "Other" is an effect of signification. The "Other" indicates another meaning to the child. Lacan is determined to separate sex drives from any natural or instinctual base. For him the desire does not stem from the unconscious but from the imaginary.

The mirror stage is characterised as a state of helplessness and incoordination in the infant's life. During this stage, though the child experiences an imaginary state of mastery and bodily unity. The child's experience of itself is very personal at this stage. Eagleton (1983:164) concurs:

This self, as the mirror situation suggests, is essentially narcissistic. We arrive at a sense of an "I" by finding that "I" reflected back to ourselves by some object or person in the world. This object is at once somehow part of ourselves we *identify* with it and yet not ourselves, something alien.

The child makes an imaginary identification with its reflection and takes this as a model for its interaction with the external world, and especially the mother. Unlike Freud who traces the origin of the Oedipus complex from the unconscious, Lacan sees the imaginary state as the source of the formation of the Oedipus complex. The child's entry into the symbolic order breaks this imaginary unity and fantasy, and all impulse and desire is then mediated through signification. This signification causes a repression of desire, which results in the split between conscious and unconscious knowledge.

The real is beyond all signification and yet can only be accessed through the signifiers that are available to us through language. Lacan diverges from Saussure's equation of the signifier and the signified to expose the unstable relation between the two, illustrating not only that the signifier slides over the field from which the signified is represented, but also that, beyond any sign system or infantile fantasy, there exists a real which defies and yet demands representation. Lacan's formulation of the subject's constitution in language leads him to revise Freud's unconscious mechanisms of condensation and displacement according to Roman Jakobson's tropes of metonymy and metaphor as the two fundamental poles of all language. If the unconscious is structured like a language, then its mechanisms can best be described by rhetorical tropes. The

unconscious, with its store of memories, words and images, moves along a chain of signifiers which can mistake one signifier for another similar to it and substitute that signifier, or it can find one signifier to be proximate to another and so provide an associative link. The crucial point for Lacan is that the process of symbolization effects a cut, a castration, which shatters the illusion of unity with desire for the "Other" while at the same time promising a substitution in representing desire in language. Language acts like the "Name-of-the-father" in the human subject, separating the subject from the mother while inserting the subject into the social order of names. Naming destroys the imaginary wholeness of the prelinguistic, preOedipal state. Lacan in this regard is highly dismissive of the ego-psychologists and subject relationists who see the autonomous ego as whole and stable, an entity with its own energies and aims.

Lacan's work has implications for literary criticism which are wider than the classical applications of psychoanalytical theory to a given work of art. Lacan emphasizes that language structures the human subject; it not only mediates all relations to the other and the real but defines it. Lacan makes the analysis of language and its productions in culture the central task of the critic and analyst. The features of Lacan as a post-Saussurean and as a French scholar who has been influenced by deconstructionism are evident in his emphasis that language consists of a play of signifiers. Lacan is of the opinion that a text does not contain a fixed meaning. The signifier is meaningful not because it refers to a definite signified that determines it, but because it stands in opposition to another signifier. To literary critics this could be interpreted to mean that a work of art should be conceived in reaction to various objects, as opposed to a single object.

2.7 An eclectic analytical framework

The use of womanism, literary onomastics and psychoanalysis enables us to realise that a person is a gendered subject, a cultural subject and a psychological being. All these aspects are inherent in the state of being human. Womanism has indicated that women are still waging an ongoing war against patriarchy. Women's exclusion from powerful social and political structures has not silenced them. Through song and literature women have been able to assert their pain to the whole world. We have also observed that womanism stands at the crossroads of two critical directions, namely nationalism and the white feminist critique, neither of which can fully engage with African women's culture.

African women writing aims to represent the collective concerns of the Black community and also to strive that Black critics share the conviction that criticism must empower writers who were marginalised and excluded from the African male and the white literary tradition.

The cultural naming processes continue to indicate the exclusion of women from important cultural issues because the naming process was dominated by men. We have been made aware that names are circumstantial. Names are pointers or references because there are various influences that operate in the naming of a child. The circumstances under which a child is named are very important.

Jung's collective unconscious, and Lacan's symbolic order, stress the significant effect of the social environment on a person. The behaviour of the characters in the selected texts will be analysed in association with the environment in which they are portrayed. The characteristics of the environment interact with the nature of the people in it. Wilson quotes Bandura (in Corsini & Wedding, 1989: 242) who comments that:

Personal and environmental factors do not function as independent determinants; rather they determine each other. Nor can "persons" be considered causes independent of their behaviour. It is largely through their actions that people produce the environmental conditions that affect their behaviour in a reciprocal fashion. The experiences generated by their behaviour also partly determine what individuals think, expect, and can do, which in turn, affect their subsequent behaviour.

The following chapter presents evidence that the cultures of forced and forbidden love have adverse effects for both men and women, and that the names given to male characters in these texts show sexual inequality among the sexes; and that, in the end these cultures, as they form the living environment in which the characters find themselves, have psychological effects on the behaviour of the characters.

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CHAPTER 3

GENDER STEREOTYPES IN THE NOVELS UNDER SCRUTINY

3.1 Introduction

When society does not grant women the power to make choices, women must summon the courage to claim that right for themselves.

Deirdre Lapin (in Hay & Stichter, 1995:159)

Elaine Showalter in her books, A Literature of Their Own and Towards A Feminist Poetics, has turned her attention to gender studies, arguing that feminist and womanist literary critics should, with considerable caution, consider questions of masculinity and be willing to focus on male texts, not as documents of sexism and misogyny, but as inscriptions of gender and renditions of sexual difference (Rabinowitz & Richlin, 1993:75-76). This chapter, then is about the deconstruction of gender. It examines the presentation of characters, both male and female, in terms of gender role categorization and stereotyping. Two issues are of importance here: firstly, the issue of a masculine literary history is addressed through the examination and the tracing of the logic of phallogentrism in these male texts. Secondly, the analysis takes the form of close reading. The texts are deconstructed by means of searching for the "blind spots." The analysis is aimed at hearing the silences, reading between the lines for desires, or states of mind, that cannot be articulated in the social arena and the languages of phallogentrism. The concern here is the hearing and the representation of the feminine elements in the texts. The purpose of close reading is to draw the relationship between the text's formal structures and their underlying perception of the feminine. Therefore, gender inequality, contradictions, exclusions and the repressions of the feminine occupy the centre stage in this chapter.

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section traces the voice of women in the texts. It concentrates on the role of mothers, sisters and grandmothers with regard to the role they play during the decision making period of forcing or forbidding a child to marry a particular individual.

Here, our objective is to assess how the IsiZulu novelists whose works are analysed in this study, empower women with regard to the decision making process about their children, brothers, sisters and grandchildren. The second section scrutinises the names of characters. The emphasis is on how the names of characters reveal gender inequality and gender roles. The third and final section analyses the behavioural patterns of the characters who are affected by these cultures. It concentrates on the effects of the traditional pressure on the psychological state of the characters and shows how this unhealthy psychological state in turn influences both the victims and the perpetrators of these cultures to violate the cultural norms and values that they are supposed to uphold.

3.2 Gender stereotypes and the voice of women

“Gender” has been defined earlier on as a concept that takes into account the relationships between the sexes, while the concept “stereotype” refers to the mental sexual imprints that are prevalent in any society. The concept of stereotype also refers to the social division of labour between the sexes. We completely concur with Sheila Ruth (1980:18) when she says that a stereotype is:

A concept related to role, yet distinct. Defined by one author as a “picture in our heads,” stereotype is a composite image of traits and expectations pertaining to some group (such as teachers, police officers, Jews, hippies, or women)- an image that is persistent in the social mind though it is somehow off-centre or inaccurate. Typically, the stereotype is an over generalisation of characteristics that may or may not have been observed in fact. Often containing a kernel of truth that is partial and thus misleading, the stereotype need not be self-consistent, and it has a remarkable resistance to change by new information.

Ruth conveys the idea that stereotypes are socially constructed. They originate from the way society perceives its way of life. The stereotype is associated with the tasks that men and women carry out in life as different sexes. These tasks are expectations that society attaches to a particular sex. These stereotypes become ingrained images in society’s mind set and as time goes on become very difficult to change.

The language and the words used in a text reflect the norms and values of society. The writer uses language to carry the message across to the readers. A text, then, is not a reflection of prior meanings but rather part of the never-ending process of the construction of the meanings through which we live our lives. Sexual difference therefore, originates in and is constructed through language. This suggests that there is a strong relationship between language and sex. It should be borne in mind that the language is not responsible for sexism but it merely reflects it. It is not the language that is sexist but society. Society to a large extent inscribes sexism through language, hence Fromkin and Rodman (1983:270) state that:

The question as to whether the language we use affects the culture and views of society is still being debated. But there is pretty much a unanimous opinion that the language we use is affected by the views and values of society. This is very apparent when we look at how sexism in society is reflected through language.

It is therefore not surprising that words for women with abusive or sexual overtones abound in literature. Frank (in Jones & Palmer, 1987:15) says according to Kenneth Little women in male-authored African novels tend to fall into a specific category of female stereotypes: girlfriends or good-time girls, workers such as secretaries or clerks, wives and other male appendages, and prostitutes or courtesans. Fewer pejorative terms such as these exist for men. Language as such, becomes a vehicle through which the writer exposes the most salient features of culture. In order to be able to achieve his goal, the writer creates imaginary characters who, by means of language, depict culture in society as a whole. Writers shape their characters to serve a specific purpose in a work of art, and this is in line with the stereotypes that readers come across in a particular literary text. Characters in turn are the means through which the writer communicates his culture and traditions. Ngcanga comments that:

Character studies in literature often depict the way people perceive their culture from time to time and as such, writers form images in response to their culture. They draw their material from the social history and as such their works reflect the social conditions prevailing in their times (Mtuze, 1994:7).

Since literature originates from the problems prevalent in society, it is evident that it expresses a dual philosophy of life: that of the writer as well as that of society. From the above facts we deduce that any work of art mirrors the cultural context from which it originates.

3-2-1 Kungavuka AbaNguni (I.S.Kubheka):Summary

This novel tells a story of forbidden love between Nomusa Gumede and Thamsanqa Khumalo. Nomusa Gumede is the daughter of a rich educated man, Themba Gumede who is a qualified teacher. He is a very strict father of two girls, Nomusa and Ntombi. His authoritative and aggressive nature could be ascribed to the fact that he does not have a son. Like many parents, he loves his daughters dearly and is very jealous of them. The story is based on his eldest daughter, Nomusa, who is working as a nurse.

The conflict between Nomusa and her father starts after he has noticed that she is in love with Thamsanqa Khumalo. Thamsanqa's family background is the opposite of Nomusa's. His parents are poor and to make matters worse he is unemployed. Gumede does not see any possibility of Thamsanqa marrying his daughter. He regards Thamsanqa as a useless fortune hunter who only wants to marry his daughter so that he can get access to his money. To him Thamsanqa is too poor to marry his child. Gumede does not accept Thamsanqa. He even swears that "*Kungavuka AbaNguni*," which means that the AbaNguni ancestors will be resurrected from the dead if Nomusa marries Thamsanqa. All this means is that Thamsanqa will never marry Nomusa.

Gumede's love for Nomusa makes him behave in an unbecoming manner. He is convinced that his actions are geared towards securing a better future for his daughter. In order to safeguard her money from being misused by Thamsanqa he demands a bank statement from Nomusa. When Nomusa fails to submit the bank statement, her father beats her because he believes that is using her money to buy cigarettes for Thamsanqa. Gumede hates Thamsanqa so much that he associates all his bad luck with Thamsanqa. On one of his business visits to Durban he is accosted and robbed by thugs and unfortunately Thamsanqa happens to be in the same vicinity too at the same time as Gumede. Thamsanqa has gone to Durban to look for work. When Gumede returns home he learns that Thamsanqa has also been in Durban. His hatred for Thamsanqa increases and he holds him responsible for the injuries and the robbery he experienced in Durban. He believes that Thamsanqa must have been one of the thugs.

Thamsanqa is lucky in Durban and is able to buy himself a car. The crux of the matter is when he asks for Nomusa's hand in marriage. Gumede flatly refuses to talk to the people who are sent to negotiate the bride-price on behalf of the Khumalo family. He breaks the usual cultural norm and demands to talk to Thami's father personally. On Khumalo's arrival, Gumede tells him that he will never allow his daughter to marry Thamsanqa. He refuses to change his mind even after his own father, Muziwempi, tries to persuade him. The story ends tragically. During the negotiations, Nomusa goes to town and is knocked down by a bus. She becomes a paraplegic. Ironically Thamsanqa witnesses the accident and reports it to the Gumede family. Gumede's father is very disappointed at hearing the news and says to his son "*Nabo-ke abaNguni bakho ndodana sebevukile*" which means that Thamba Gumede's ancestors have been resurrected. This signifies that Gumede's wishes come true as the paraplegic Nomusa will never get married for the rest of her life.

3.2.1.1 MaNkosi

It must be pointed out from the outset that throughout his novel *Kubheka* depicts women as indecisive, weak, and dependent beings who do not have the courage to teach girls about chastity. Woman plays her traditional role in this novel. Therefore, he sees the woman's responsibility as revolving around the home and church and keeping a check on the maidenhood of young girls. Only one female character, Thandi Nkosi, Gumede's wife, is depicted in detail in the novel. Other female characters found in the novel play minor roles only. MaNkosi throughout the story is concerned with finding ways and means of talking to her daughters about the preservation of their maidenhood.

She is depicted as a naive ignorant woman who takes time to notice what is going on with her children. But Gumede, a man for that matter, is the first to realize that Nomusa is in love with Thamsanqa. He even takes the initiative of discussing the matter with his wife. The following comment by Gumede reveals that MaNkosi is irrational and dependent on him for reasoning.

"Mnhh, ngiyezwa. Akengiwumise kanje umbuzo wami: ake ngithi uyaphuma uyolima insimu uze uyitshale uqede, kuthi lapho sekubonakala ukudla kwakho kufike isiqhotho sikugandaye kungabonakali nalapho bekukhona. Uqale phansi futhi ulime, utshale bese uyalinda. Akuthi-ke lapho usukhihliza bese kufika izinkomo, akengithi nje zakwaKhumalo, zifike ziwushaye ziwubhuqe. Ungenze njani?" (*Kubheka*:3)

("Oh, I understand. Let me rephrase my question: let me say you go out to plough a mieliefield until you finish it; when your crops are visible it becomes destroyed by a storm to such an extent that it cannot be recognised where it was. You start afresh and plough again, you plant and wait. When it starts blossoming the cattle arrive, for example Khumalo's cattle, they arrive and eat all your crops. What would you do?")

It takes MaNkosi longer than expected to understand that Gumede is actually telling her that Nomusa is in love with Thamsanqa. She cannot make head or tail of a straightforward metaphor used by her husband. Her response reveals her as a naive numskull. The traditional belief that women are unable to do as well as men in anything requiring the use of the mind is confirmed here. MaNkosi's response confirms the myth that women are less intelligent than men:

"Cha Baba, kangisezwa manje. Kanti izinkomo zakwaKhumalo sezike zangena yini ngoba bengithi akukalinywa nje? Ngabe uhlola ukuthi zingene mzukwana kwalinywa?" (Kubheka:4)

("No Father, I do not understand now. Did Khumalo's cattle enter the mieliefields because I thought they are not yet planted? Are you predicting that they might arrive when they are planted?")

After realizing that his wife does not understand, Gumede comes out forthrightly and tells her that she is not doing her work as a mother:

"Angazi-ke noma usazothi ngithule yini uma ngithi kawuwenzi umsebenzi wakho, wani? Wobuzali. Mina wakwaGumede sengiphuze sengikholiwe"(Kubheka:6).

("I don't know if you will still say I am silent when I say you do not do you work, what work? Your work as a parent. I the son of Gumede have drunk enough and I am satisfied").

As can be observed from the above passage Gumede reminds his wife of her maternal role. In womanist terms Gumede's initiative could be viewed as the constructive thinking of a man who shows concern for his children, but on the other hand his efforts reinforce role-categorization especially with regard to women. MaNkosi must take care of her children. The stereotype of a woman as a child minder and nurturer is re-affirmed. It is her duty to guide her girls about love matters and to keep an eye on their chastity. It is typical of men to expect their wives to mould their daughter's characters. Gender, therefore, is not simply produced by masculine thought, but

rather is a product of that thought, as it relates to the particular ways in which women's productive, reproductive and domestic life is organised. Buchbinder (1991:133) rightly asserts that: "the myth of the mother is the effect of a division of reproductive labour, as well as the result of the repression of the maternal/ feminine within a masculine imagination of self." Gumede refers the problem of child rearing to his wife because he sees it as a feminine problem. He is traditionally exempted from this task. Culturally he cannot give advice, let alone talk to his girls, about love matters. As a man he should pay attention to his businesses and not to feminine issues like this one. Hofstede assents (1991:81) that:

Men are supposed to be more concerned with achievements outside the home—hunting and fighting in traditional societies, the same but translated in economic terms in modern societies. Men, in short, are supposed to be assertive, competitive and tough. **Women are supposed to be more concerned with taking care of the home, of the children, and of people in general, to take tender roles.** (Emphasis mine)

Like many African writers, Kubheka expresses the traditional view that women's social responsibilities revolve around the home and children. What this emphasizes is that a woman cannot run away from the fact that a woman's place is in the kitchen where she has to keep herself busy with household chores such as cooking, washing, sweeping and scrubbing the floors. This is what happens in a real-life situation. This is in accordance with the division of work in the African society. Krige (1950:184) reiterates that:

On the whole, the rougher tasks requiring strength are done by the men, while to the women falls the work that requires more continuous attention. The housework naturally falls within the sphere of woman's activities, and cooking and beer making, sweeping, washing of utensils, and the fetching of firewood and water are the work of women. In this they are helped by their daughters, who at an early age begin to fetch water, sweep, and look after their baby brothers and sisters.

Women are regarded as people with less physical strength and, therefore, they should carry out less important housework. Girls are socialised very early in their lives as to what their roles will be when they reach adulthood.

Throughout the story MaNkosi plays a minor role. She is depicted as a flat character who has no initiative and who cannot stand on her own to solve the problem at hand. Commenting about flat characters Rimmon-Kenan (1983:40) notes that:

Flat characters are analogous to “humours”, caricatures, types. In their purest form, they are constructed around a single idea or quality and therefore can be expressed in one sentence. Furthermore, such characters do not develop in the course of the action. As a consequence of the restriction of qualities and absence of development, flat characters are easily recognized and easily remembered by the readers.

To describe MaNkosi in one sentence, one can confidently say that she is a coward. Her major weakness is her lack of confidence and self-esteem. This trait curbs her from acting as an independent adult. She is nervous about talking to her daughters about women’s issues. She does not seem to have any confidence in her own capabilities. This becomes evident where Kubheka has employed the stream-of-consciousness technique (Cohen, 1973:38), or the penetration into the “inner life” as Ewen (in Rimmon-Kenan, 1983:42) calls it. When using this technique the author describes the usually expected logical order and transitions, of the flow of inner thoughts, feelings, memories, and psychological associations jostling within a character’s mind. When using characters as caricatures the writer employs “unsubtle exaggeration of one aspect or trait of character” (Cohen, 1973:38). Kubheka has used this technique to expose MaNkosi’s cowardice and lack of self-confidence:

Yena-ke wakoNkosi wayezoqala athini ezinganeni zakhe? Kwakufanele aphinde amazwi omkhokheli okuthi abafana yizinto ezingcolile? ... Pho-ke wayezoqala kuphi uma ethi uyala izingane zakhe ngobuntombi bazo? (Kubheka:57)

(She, the child of Nkosi, what would she begin to say to her children? Was she supposed to repeat the words of the reverend’s wife which said that boys are filthy things? Where would she begin then when she gave advice to her children about their maidenhood?)

As readers we have the impression that for a woman to do her parental responsibilities effectively, there always needs to be a man who will supervise her from time to time. It seems that MaNkosi is unable to perform her task without Gumede’s help. She is a teacher by profession but her indecisiveness does not indicate that she is used to dealing with children. Hence she appears as a caricature who is merely used to carry out the writer’s objective which is that women need to be supervised like children to carry out their tasks as mothers. Kubheka strives to show that an educated woman should not differ from an uneducated one. Kubheka’s objective is to bring to the fore the assumption that women are afraid to teach their children the truth about adult life. Kubheka has clearly stated this objective through Gumede’s mouth:

“Mntanami, uke uzwe kuthiwa ingane yakwaSobanibani ithe uma isisebunzimeni yakhipha amazwi abuhlungu okuthi: MAMA NGINJENJE INXA YAKHO. AWUNGITSHELANGA INDLELA OKWAKUFANELE NGIHAMBENGAYO, WANGIYEKA NGENZA UKUTHANDA. NGIKHIPHA MAMA KULOLUDAKA ESENGIKULO NGENXA YAKHO. NGIKHIPHA MA,” amazwi amnandi layo mntanami?(Kubheka:31)

(“My child, have you heard that when somebody else’s child was in difficulties she uttered undesirable words which say: MOTHER I AM LIKE THIS BECAUSE OF YOU. YOU DID NOT SHOW ME THE CORRECT WAY OF GROWING UP, YOU ALLOWED ME TO DO MY WILL. TAKE ME OUT OF THESE DIFFICULTIES THAT YOU’VE GOT ME IN. HELP ME OUT MOTHER,” are those nice words my child?)

To emphasise his point clearly, Kubheka has written the words that carry the core of his warning in capital letters in the text. He overtly condemns women for all the wrongs that children commit on their way to adulthood. It is mothers who have to guide children about adulthood, and not men. The writer more than anything else aims to expose the fact that women are ignorant and irresponsible when it comes to the upbringing of their children. Some women, like MaNkosi, as the excerpt suggests, become alert only when the damage to their children’s lives has already been done and the situation is irreversible.

3.2.1.2 MaCele

In her endeavour to find a better way to address her children, MaNkosi consults Gumedede’s mother. It is a common African/Zulu practice to consult a grandmother concerning family problems relating to the upbringing of children. The strong relationship between the grandmother and her granddaughters is underlined. The relationship between grandmothers and grandchildren is historical. In the olden times grandmothers were the ones who traditionally narrated folktales to the children. This role brought them closer to the children than to their parents. Krige (1950:27) describes the relationship between grandmothers and their grandchildren nicely when he says:

The mother’s mother, *umakhulu*, *umamekhulu* or simply *ukhulu*, or *ukoko*, is the one who pets and spoils you, with whom you may play and whom you may tease. If you take her things she will hit you playfully with a stick but she will not allow anyone else to hit you, so you can do just what you please.

The strong bond of kinship and family plays an important role in the Zulu social system and forms an integral part of their culture. The grandmother in particular plays a special role in a Zulu family system. MaNkosi consults her for advice about Nomusa's problem. It is obvious that old men and women have come across a number of problems in their lives and therefore are able to provide solutions based on their experiences. Kubheka presents MaCele no differently from the way in which he presented MaNkosi. She is presented as an indecisive old woman. MaCele, however, does agree that the girls should be taught about the preservation of their maidenhood, but she does not provide any solution for MaNkosi's problem. At first she suggests that she will have a check on the chastity of the girls but quickly points out that these children are educated and her checking on them might be viewed as barbaric by the children and by the church.

“Ungahle ubaqhube nje ubaethe lapha ngizobahlola ukuthi basaphelele yini? Bangathini bona nje? Sengikhuluma indulo-ke manje. Angathini uNkosikazi umkamfundisi uma ezwa ukuthi senze into enjalo? Mntanami angibalekeli bunzima basekhaya, ngikhuluma amaqiniso. Phika ngizwe” (Kubheka:66).

(“You can accompany them here so that I can check if their maidenhood has not been tampered with? What are they going to say? I am talking about things that belong to the ancient past now. What would the reverend's wife say if she could hear that we have done something like this? My child, I am not running away from the difficulties of our home, I am speaking the truth. Don't you agree”).

Besides using education and the church as excuses for her inability to solve the problem, MaCele brings up the fact that as a young mother she never had to deal with the problem that MaNkosi is faced with because she does not have girls. Instead of coming up with a possible solution she becomes nostalgic and recalls the time when maidens, *amaqhikiza*, used to teach teenage girls about taking care of their virginity. She becomes disappointed when MaNkosi tells her that the school system does not provide such lessons for girls:

“Ngivele ngazi ukuthi uzophendula usho njalo. Engingakwazi-ke ngukuthi engekho amaqhikiza lapho ezikoleni kuthiwa kazitshelwe ngubani amaqiniso ngobuzona?” (Kubheka:69)

(“I knew that you would give me that reply. What I don't know is that if maidens are not there at schools who should inform the children of the truth about their nature?”)

As readers we were hoping that MaNkosi would at least find a solution that would encourage her to talk to the children through their grandmother, but it does not happen that way. MaCele is unable to help and refers MaNkosi to the minister's wife for advice.

"Linye ikhambi enginalo mina MaNkosi mayelana nalenkinga yakho: wela uye kuNkosikazi ukamfundisi uyozikhalela kuye" (Kubheka:69).

("There is one solution that I have, MaNkosi, concerning your problem: go to the reverend's wife and present your problem to her").

MaCele's failure to offer help to MaNkosi reveals these female characters as real caricatures who are merely used to prove the author's point of argument, which is that women are weak minded beings. Owomoyela (1993:337) supports the above view in stating that:

Tradition often means woman as mother, grandmother, guardian of old ways, and teacher of those ways to the young. But assuming these roles is difficult when women see opportunities in societies moving toward modern technological development.

Tradition, as Owomoyela attests, recognizes the position of women as a teacher of moral values to children, but Kubheka places women below technological advancement. It is inconceivable that MaCele undermines her ability as a grandmother merely because of the changing times because grandmothers are still strong pillars in the African family system.

3.2.1.3 Church Women

MaNkosi approaches the minister's wife as advised by her mother-in-law. It is on Thursday, the usual prayer day for women, that MaNkosi tells the minister's wife about her problem. This is an indication that other women in the story are also engaged in church activities, like many other women in any similar society. The minister's wife is not given a name in the text. She is not called by her surname nor by the minister's surname. Her name reveals the title and the profession of her husband. Hence she is called *ukamfundisi* (the ministers wife). This woman enjoys the attributes of a wise and a respectable person because of her husband's duty. The description of a character in this manner shows a definite bias towards female characters. What Katherine Frank says is true when she attests that:

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Until recently most African novels have been written by men, and they tend to focus on social, historical, and political rather than personal or domestic themes. **By and large women characters are defined in these novels by their relations to men: they are someone's daughter or wife or mother**, shadowy figures who hover on the figures of the plot, suckling infants, cooking, plaiting their hair. (Jones & Palmer, 1987:114-115) (Emphasis mine)

Women in most male-authored African novels tend to fall into specific categories of female stereotypes such as *umkamfundisi*, which is a male appendage. A minister's wife helps other women in her congregation with a number of problems. It is unthinkable that she is unable to help MaNkosi with her problem. Instead she highlights that she also has the same problem. As the mother of the congregation a number of women in her community rely on her for advice. It is not surprising to see her helpless, because she is a character with no name in this novel. She is not defined as a person in her own right, but in terms of her husband's duty in that society. This reveals that characters who are described in terms of their husband's profession are dependent not only on their husband's status for living but also for reasoning. Her response to MaNkosi shows that she cannot offer any help for the problem at hand:

"Ntombi yomuntu, uma ngikutshela iqiniso elimsulwa ukuthi nje nami kungime emphinjeni ukuthi ngingase ngithathe ini ngihlanganise nani ukuze ngiphume kulobubunzima engikubo. MaDlamini nami iqiniso engilaziyo ngukuthi nami kuyangixaka ukuthi ngingakhuluma ngithini nengane ngiyizala, ngezinto ezisinda njengalezi zakosimilo"(Kubheka:96).

("Daughter of a person, if I can tell you the honest truth, I also do not know what I should do to get out of this problem I find myself in. MaDlamini, the truth that I also know is that I find it difficult to figure out how I would talk to a child I have given birth to, about difficult things such as morality").

When realizing that she has failed to come up with a solution, she suggests that the matter should be discussed with the other women who will be attending the prayer meeting that afternoon. Women in this novel are depicted as helpless creatures with the exception of MaMsomi and MaMkhize. These two women display courage when the matter is discussed after the prayer meeting. Although it appears that these two women are of a different calibre, the writer does not depict them in a similar practical situation to MaNkosi so that readers are not totally convinced that they are not preaching an impractical gospel. There is nowhere in the text where we encounter these women putting their suggestions into practice so as to prove their courage. It

seems as if the writer wanted to protect himself by indicating that other women are not as cowardly as like MaNkosi, MaCele and the minister's wife.

MaNkosi and the other women in the text have been presented as passive characters who cannot initiate anything on their own. During the *lobola* discussion MaNkosi and Nomusa are marginalised. This act of the marginalisation of women on issues that concern them is in line with Gumede's character, because he views a woman as a nonentity.

3.2.2 Kungenxa Kabani (S. S. Gcumisa): Summary

Bhekokwakhe has just finished school and is working as a teacher at Empangeni when his father advises him that it is time to acquire himself a wife. Unlike his father, Bhekokwakhe feels that he is still very young and is not ready for marriage. Cele, Bhekokwakhe's father, has already laid his eye on the girl he wants his son to marry. The chosen girl is Ntombiyethemba Sikhakhane.

MaXimba, Bhekokwakhe's mother, supports her husband in the matter by emphasizing the fact that she also would like to have someone who will help her with the household chores. Besides, like all mothers, she would like to have grandchildren and take care of them while she is still alive. The problem between Bhekokwakhe and his father is caused by the fact that Ntombiyethemba is too much of a traditional girl and is illiterate. Bhekokwakhe suggests to his father that he would like to marry Lungile, a girlfriend he met at the College. Their different opinions about what constitutes good qualities in a wife cause conflict between Bhekokwakhe and his father. Cele likes Ntombiyethemba because she is a local girl and can carry out most duties in a rural area such as fetching water and firewood. Bhekokwakhe on the other hand has been influenced by modern ways and wants a woman who is educated like himself, a woman who will understand him. Cele becomes adamant and does not take his son's request into consideration. He continues with marriage arrangements in Bhekokwakhe's absence. A wedding date is set and the marriage takes place.

After the marriage ceremony Bhekokwakhe leaves home and never comes back. He does not even bother to send money to his wife. His traditional marriage causes him much unhappiness, to the

extent that he indulges himself in liquor and becomes an alcoholic. However, he remains determined to marry Lungile. He requests her to come and live with him as his wife. Together with his friend, Mzimela, Bhekokwakhe goes to pay the bride price for Lungile. Back home Cele tries several attempts to bring his son back home but fails each time. When all his attempts have failed he personally accompanies Ntombiyethemba to Empangeni. On their arrival they find that Bhekokwakhe is living with Lungile. The story ends in tragedy. The two women fight and both are killed in the process. Bhekokwakhe is badly injured in his spine and becomes paralysed from the waist downwards. He stays in hospital for a long time and shortly after his release his parents find out that he is mentally deranged.

3.2.2.1 MaXimba

MaXimba is Bhekokwakhe's mother. The female stereotypes of woman as a man's pillar of strength and as a man's complement are clearly manifested in this novel. Woman in this way appears as a function of the masculine project of self-definition. Cele enjoys undivided support from his wife in his endeavours to force Bhekokwakhe to marry Ntombiyethemba. Women feature only as subordinate throughout the novel. After Bhekokwakhe has had several discussions with her mother about the chosen girl, it becomes apparent that she holds the same opinion as her husband:

“Nami kodwa mntanami ingane kaSikhakhane bengiyithanda kabi. Bengithi iyoke idishazele lapha kwami exhibeni. Hamba uyolala mntanami uphumule ucabange kahle” (Gcumisa:7).

(“I too, my child, also like Sikhakhane's child very much. I thought she would walk into my kitchen. Go to sleep my child, rest and think well about this”).

Although MaXimba acknowledges the fact that Bhekokwakhe does not love Ntombiyethemba she persuades him to think positively about his father's decision. Her comment reveals her fullest support for her husband, and she refrains from taking a conclusive stand against him. Viewed in this light, MaXimba appears as a real womanist who incorporates cultural issues into her philosophy. She has the interest of everyone at heart. To keep peace in the family she does not challenge her husband's decision by supporting her son. The support she gives to her husband, however, affirms the submissive wife stereotype one finds in this novel. She is a good mother who

guides her son to respect the wishes of his father. She persuades her son to yield to his father's way of doing things:

“Wo mntanami, ezinye izinto zasekhaya kuye kudingeke umntwana uma ezalwa ekhaya azibekezelele nje. Uyihlo uhlose ukukusiza akulobolele yena umkakho”(Gcumisa:7).

(“Oh my child, as you are born into this family you are supposed to tolerate in some matters. Your father wants to help you by paying the bride price for your wife”).

According to MaXimba's statement Bhekokwakhe must be submissive and like her, yield to his father's wishes. MaXimba's suggestion re-affirms the demands and expectations of traditional culture and of patriarchy that children should not challenge the decisions taken by adults on their behalf, but should comply with them. MaXimba does not strongly express her views to Cele about Bhekokwakhe's problem. We align ourselves with Jane Tompkins (in Bressler, 1994:102) when she laments that:

“What enrages me is the way women are used as extensions of men, mirrors of men, devices for showing men off, devices for helping them get what they want. They are never there in their own right, or rarely. The world of the Western contains no women. Sometimes I think the world contains no women.”

MaXimba is depicted like the woman described in the above quotation. She remains quiet and subordinate to the male so as to maintain the smooth running of her home. She supports Cele to get what he wants. Therefore, she does not exist as an independent person, but as an extension and helper of her husband. She has no say at all in Cele's decision about Bhekokwakhe's chosen wife. MaXimba's situation indicates that total subjugation of a woman to a man destroys her right and ability not only to think for herself, but also to think for her children too. MaXimba's situation explicitly reveals that women play insignificant roles in their families. Women are not initiators of important decisions in their families but are followers of their husbands and their decisions.

3.2.2.2 Bongiwe

Bongiwe is a sister to Bhekokwakhe. She finds herself in the same predicament as her mother. It is more difficult for her to challenge the authority of her father if her mother goes along with

him. What motivates Bongiwe's advice to her brother is the fact that their father, who is the head of the family and thus has authority over them, cannot be persuaded to change his decision. All the members of the family have to abide by the rules and the expectations of the father and, moreover, he is going to carry all the bride price expenses in this case. In a traditional society of this nature it becomes impossible to dismantle the prevailing patriarchal system. It is either that one succumbs to the traditional patriarchal value system or leaves it. Bongiwe's advice to her brother is that he should abide by their father's decision because it cannot be challenged at all. He should reconsider his decision and permit his father to pay the bride price for Ntombiyethemba:

“Wo, mntakamama, mina ngibona ukuthi kungcono usale usuwenza nje nanxa kade ungakahlosi ukuganwa. Isimo sasekhaya uyazibonela nawe ukuthi sinjani. Malungana nentombi okufanele ikugane, mina ngikweluleka ukuba usale usuvuma ukuba kulotsholwe yona lena yaseMbekambazo” (Gcumisa: 13).

(“Oh, my mother's child, I think it is better that you should just do it even if you were not prepared to get married. You can see how the situation is at home. Concerning the young woman that you should marry, I would advise you to agree that the bride price be paid for the one of eMbekambazo”).

We should take into consideration that Cele did not consult anyone in his family about his decision. This could be cited as one of the reasons behind Bongiwe's advice. Because Bhekokwakhe has no choice and no say in the matter he must let his father's will be done.

3.2.2.3 MaNzuza

The writer has said very little about Ntombiyethemba's parents. MaNzuza is Ntombiyethemba's mother. We do not hear much about her personal views regarding her daughter's situation. Does her silence indicate the marginalisation of women in literature and by society in general? Does it indicate the relegation of women to inferior positions, which is prevalent in the African/Zulu society? It does clearly demonstrate the exclusion of women in matters that pertain to their children, as well as from important matters like the bride price. The fathers of the children involved finalise all the wedding arrangements without any consultation with their wives as mothers of these children. The following lines demonstrate this:

Sebevumelene baqeda oCele noSikhakhane ngawowonke amalungiselelo omgagco uNtombiyethemba waphuma wahambela izihlobo zakhe eyocimela (Gcumisa:73).

(When Cele and Sikhakhane have agreed upon all the wedding arrangements Ntombiyethemba visited her relatives in accordance with the traditional ceremony of acquiring gifts from relatives before the marriage).

We only learn about Ntombiyethemba's mother through a dialogue between Ntombiyethemba and her friend, Thembekile. Thembekile asks her friend about her mother's stand concerning her marriage. Ntombiyethemba replies:

"Cha, umama zikhona izabana angenzela zona, naye azifumene kumuntu amlayelwa ubabezala behleba bexoxa yona lensambatheka yokugana kwami"(Gcumisa:44).

("No, my mother has tried something for me, she was referred to this person by my father-in-law when they were discussing my unusual marriage").

We learn of MaNzuza's stand through what her daughter says about her. According to this extract Ntombiyethemba's mother has conspired with Cele to consult a witchdoctor who would provide her with some traditional herbs that will make Bhekokwakhe love Ntombiyethemba. This confirms the age old stereotype that mothers or women would do all they can to see their daughters married. The heroine's mother in this novel embodies traditional cultural values. She does not disapprove of forced love or arranged marriage. She also reinforces the same patriarchal values that are imposed by Cele upon her daughter. Instead of moulding her daughter, it seems that MaNzuza stresses a strong and positive message of self-sacrifice to Ntombiyethemba. To flout the ideals not merely of one's society but also of one's own mother is a difficult and sometimes heartbreaking task. The plight of young women like Ntombiyethemba is a lonely, difficult and often an immensely sad one. In their pursuit of suitable marriage partners for their daughters, mothers like MaNzuza confirm the traditional concept that marriage is the destiny of every girl or woman. Katherine Frank (in Jones & Palmer, 1987:16) states that:

Like their daughters' suitors and husbands, these mothers want to see their daughters securely married and perpetually pregnant. They cannot imagine a destiny for their daughters other than the one they have endured, ... A woman may gain the whole world but she would have lost her soul if she doesn't become a male's extension or somebody's mother.

MaNzuza has come to Cele's assistance with the hope that her daughter would be securely married to Bhekokwakhe. Mothers like MaNzuza hold to the traditional belief that woman's destiny is with her husband. This suggests that a woman's life is not complete without a man. Gcumisa wants to convey the message that parental choice guarantees a happy marriage. It is the dream of every mother to see her child happily married and having children. Ntombiyethemba's mother's actions extend the power that patriarchy have over women and society in general.

3.2.3 Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi (J.K.Ngubane): Summary

This story is about Bajwayele, the daughter of Manamuza and kaMemunce. Bajwayele is forced by her father, Manamuza, to marry Zulumacansi, who is well known at Buthunqe for his many herds of cattle. Bajwayele does not yield to her father's wish because she is in love with Potolozi. Besides, she believes that as a woman she has the right to marry the man of her choice. On the other hand Manamuza is a traditional man who believes that, according to traditional practice, he has the right to compel his daughter to marry the man he deems fit.

Manamuza does not recognize Potolozi as an eligible husband for his daughter because he is a coward and is not as rich as Zulumacansi. Bajwayele's rejection of Zulumacansi angers her father, to such an extent that he physically abuses her. After her father's brutal actions Bajwayele agrees to marry Zulumacansi. However, the marriage does not last for long. Bajwayele runs away from her matrimonial home to her aunt's home in Benoni. Her escape causes a misunderstanding between Manamuza and Zulumacansi who physically attacks Manamuza for he believes that the latter is responsible for his daughter's disappearance. Bajwayele is found at Benoni and on her arrival at home she is sent back to her matrimonial home. To everybody's surprise Bajwayele disappears for the second time and she never returns home.

3.2.3.1 KaMemunce

In most cases, women are depicted as docile and helpless, with the exception of a few women who manage to outwit their adversaries. Others assume powerful attributes that are normally associated with men, and become giants, thereby contradicting the stereotype that women are always

submissive and docile. KaMemunce, Bajwayele's mother differs from the type of women we came across in the other novels. From the onset KaMemunce does not align herself with her husband's actions. Ngubane introduces us to the image of a hardened, intractable, traditional woman who is as tough as man. She despises the selection of marriage partners for her daughters by Manamuza and views this as the selling of their children. Ngubane presents us with an assertive traditional woman who takes a firm stand against forced love:

"Ziyolokhu zaba nkulu nje inxa kusuka abanumzane bangene ezindabeni zezingane, bedayisa ngabantababo. Mina owami angidayisi ngaye engelona ijazi" (Ngubane:50).

("These cases will forever be difficult because men interfere in the affairs of children, by selling their children. I am not selling my own child like a coat").

KaMemunce despises men who involve themselves in the affairs of their children. The statement that she would not sell her child like "a coat," means that men like her husband, Manamuza, do sell their children like objects under the guise of culture. According to this statement girls are dehumanized into objects that can be bought by any man who has plenty of cattle or money in today's terms. Manamuza protects himself by claiming that he is simply adhering to traditional culture. This, however, does not weaken KaMemunce's ability to fight for her daughter. Unlike the other women, she does not succumb to her husband, who seems to respect his culture above his own children. Manamuza uses culture to hide his greediness for cattle:

"Lisiko lakithi nina kaBongani."

"Silwane sini isiko? Nitholani-ke ngesiko lakini?... Ake ubheke nje ukuthi zingaki izingane ezizalela emakhaya ngenxa yelobolo. Lihle lelosiko uma libanga lokho?" (Ngubane:51)

("It is tradition, mother of Bongani").

("What type of an animal is tradition? What is it that you achieve through your tradition? ... Look at how many children have given birth to babies outside wedlock because of the bride price. Is tradition beautiful if it causes this?")

KaMemunce abhors the tradition of forced love because it has forced many girls to give birth to children before marriage because young men cannot afford the high bride price. Girls who are not

fortunate enough to get married, and thus fill their father's kraals, desert their homes in numbers because of the pressure they endure from their fathers. She shows contempt for the *ilobolo* custom that has brought disintegration to a number of families:

“Ukube kuya ngami ngabe seliyafa liphele nya nalo lelilobolo. Wonke lomnakalo ophakathi kwezwe ubangwa yilo. Amadoda asehlala phansi athamele ilanga liphuma lize lishone uba egabe ngokuthi abantabawo bazolotsholwa” (Ngubane:50).

(“I wish the bride price could be totally abolished. It is the cause of all the corruption in this country. Men bask in the sun from sunrise to sunset with the hope that bride price will be paid for their children”).

KaMemunce displays brave qualities like a man. She is depicted as a fairly strong willed and a domineering woman. During the period when Manamuza has gone to look for Bajwayele at Benoni, KaMemunce, cannot stand the pain and the loneliness caused by their absence. The long disappearance of her daughter and her husband becomes unbearable for her. She gets annoyed and approaches Zulumacansi at his home to tell him that she wants her family back, because if it were not for him they would not have gone away:

“Ngifuna ukuba usho ukuthi wamusaphi uyise kaDumezweni noBajwayele. Uma ungakwenzi lokho ngisayokuzwa umthetho. Nango mina nango wena, ngifunga uMemunce. Lezinkonyana zigcwele isibaya njena, zizoke zinciphe. Ngiyabona ukuthi awungazi kahle” (Ngubane:99).

(“I want you to tell me where you took Dumezweni's father and Bajwayele. If you do not do that I am going to seek legal advice. It will be me and you, I swear Memunce. This kraal that is full of cattle will soon be empty. I can see that you do not know me well”).

The men who are with Zulumacansi at the time of KaMemunce's arrival are alarmed at her bravery. KaMemunce is a bold, assertive woman. These men, however, show disapproval for her actions. The norms and values of traditional society demand that she should respect Zulumacansi as a man and as her son-in-law. Mariama Ba, a female Senegalese writer, in an interview at the end of the Dutch edition of her book attests to men's disapproval of women's power to challenge culture when she states that:

In all cultures, the woman who formulates her own claims or who protests against her situation is given the cold shoulder. If the woman who expresses herself orally is already labelled in a special way, the women who dare fix their thoughts for eternity are criticised all the more. Thus women are still hardly represented among African writers (Schipper in Jones & Palmer, 1987:46).

This clearly demonstrates the inequality between the sexes that prevails in any society. A woman who shows strong qualities, and who fights against patriarchy, is viewed negatively by men. Zulumacansi, after Bajwayele's second escape, states that Bajwayele is as obstinate as her mother:

“Uma ifunze unina baba ngingayenzenjani? Ngoba nawe uyasho uthi kawukho ndawo” (Ngubane:181).

(“If she is a replica of her mothers, what should I do about her? Is it not that you also said you are also nothing to her”).

According to traditional custom a woman must succumb to man's control. She should not be above a man. Zulumacansi's and Manamuza's conversation confirms that a bold, strong woman who shows masculine qualities such as aggressiveness and bravery, cannot be tolerated, for such traits are suitable only for men and not for women.

3.2.3.2 Qimbile

Qimbile is a sister to Zulumacansi. She is presented as an open minded person who is aware of the problems surrounding the nature of her brother's marriage. She does not keep this feeling to herself but emphasises it to her mother:

“Mama, kepha angijabuli kahle ngalomsindo kaZulumacansi. Kukhona okungahambanga kahle,” kusho uQimbile (Ngubane:61).

(“Mother, I am not happy about Zulumacansi's wedding. There is something that did not go well,” said Qimbile).

Although Qimbile is married and wishes that her brother marry Bajwayele in a proper manner, her concern is not taken into consideration because according to custom she remains a minor and cannot make any significant changes in the running of her home. Her mother holds a different

opinion because she thinks that people are jealous, and that is why they are talking negatively about her son's marriage to Bajwayele. The mother avoids the fact that Bajwayele has been forced to marry her son. All that Zulumacansi's mother wants is to support, and make things right between, her son and his bride:

“Okufanele ukuba sikwenze thina ukuba samukele umakoti ngazo zombili...Into esiyaziyo thina ukuthi uPotolozzi waphoxa uZulumacansi” (Ngubane:62).

(“What we are supposed to do is to welcome our bride with both hands ... What we know is that Potolozzi provoked Zulumacansi”).

Zulumacansi's mother protects her son and puts all the blame upon Potolozzi. Like many mothers she wants to see her son married, no matter what it takes. Although women characters like KaMemunce, Zulumacansi's mother and Qimbile play a minor roles, Ngubane presented us with lively women in this novel. Women as minors in the family traditional system cannot change the order of things but have to abide by the norms and values of the family.

3.2.4 Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami (E.E.N.T.Mkhize): Summary

Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami is a story of a marriage arrangement between two friends, Khumalo and Ndlovu. Ndlovu requests that his son, Mbandlanyika, marries Khumalo's daughter, Ntombana. Ntombana is not consulted during the proceedings. She has a boyfriend, Magwagwa, who is very poor and does not have the required number of cattle to marry her. Ndlovu's request is met with enthusiasm because Khumalo knows that he owns many herds of cattle. When Khumalo accepts Ndlovu's proposal Ndlovu gets excited and promises to give Khumalo sixteen herds of cattle for his daughter.

On learning about the marriage arrangements, Ntombana flees home to seek refuge from her uncle. Her father fetches her and literally accompanies her to Ndlovu's kraal. He collects the cattle and drives them home the same day. To defy her father's coercive actions Ntombana plans to disgrace her parents-in-laws publicly by violating all the taboos that should be respected by a married woman. This is against Zulu custom. Ndlovu cannot withstand the embarrassment and the humiliation, hence he expels her from his kraal.

MaBhengu acknowledges the fact that a woman has the right to marry a man of her choice. In this way she shows support for her daughter's choice. She even takes the matter up with Khumalo. Khumalo cannot be swayed to change his thoughts because of the cattle he is going to receive from Ndlovu. MaBhengu bursts out with anger at Khumalo's adamant and coercive actions:

"Lowo ngumcebo wakho nje wedwa," kwasho uMaBhengu enyipha, "othokozisa wena wedwa futhi. Mina okwami ukujabula akukho ezinkomeni, kusenganeni yami lena othi angifikanga nayo lapha ekhaya wena oyithengisa okwembuzi ngenxa yokuthanda izinkomo. Mina-ke ngicabangela umntanami ngenjabulo yakhe, hayi umhlambi wezinkomo ezitholwa kuphume izinyembezi" (Mkize:34).

("That is your wealth alone," said MaBhengu with a frowning face, "it only brings happiness to you. My happiness does not lie in the cattle, it lies with my child whom you claim I did not bring along to this home, and you want to sell her like a goat because of your love of cattle. I am thinking about my child and her happiness, not about the large herds of cattle that are received when a lot of tears have been shed").

MaBhengu shows truly motherly feelings for her daughter. As a woman, she knows that her daughter's happiness lies with the man that she loves and not with Mbandlanyika. She disapproves of Khumalo's actions which reduces Ntombana's status to that of a goat which is for sale. MaBhengu stands by Ntombana, and she is the one who comes up with a plan that will help Ntombana escape her arranged marriage:

"Ntombana mntanami," kwasho unina sekuthi akakhale, "ungakwenzi okubi uzibulale. Siza mina ungasibulali mntanami....Kodwa uma esho ngoba eqinisile, ungesabi mntanami ngoba mina nginalo isu lokukwephula, ukhululeke kuMbandlanyika" (Mkize:74).

("Ntombana my child," said her mother with a trembling voice, "do not commit sin and kill yourself. Help me my child by not committing suicide. ... If your father is serious about this, do not be afraid because I have a plan that will free you, and set you free from Mbandlanyika").

The popular female stereotype of woman as a shrewd and tactful being is emphasised. It is not MaBhengu's intention to plan the sabotage of Khumalo's wish for her daughter but she is forced to do so by the circumstances around her. Her husband's obstinacy drives her to do this. As a mother, MaBhengu fears that her daughter might resort to suicide as the only possible way out of this situation. This, to a certain extent, indicates the strong relationship of sisterhood that exists between the mother and her daughter.

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3.3 Literary onomastics and gender roles

This section pays attention to the analysis of the names of the main characters who are directly affected by the culture of forced and forbidden love. Attention is paid to the fact that names convey various attributes which characterises male and female characters in different ways. It is the aim of this study, since it concerns itself with gender inequality between the sexes, to indicate that some of the attributes displayed by a name point to the current sexual roles we find in society. It has been noted in the previous chapter that traditionally name-givers were men. Nuessel (1992:3) contends that "those who give names are usually in positions of power and authority. Consequently, the act of naming implies that the naming group has a measure of control." This however, could mean that the namegiver bestows certain powers on a name. What all this means is that names have power. Nuessel cites Bosmajian (1974a) who frequently observed that the ability to name is an important power. More specifically Bosmajian states that:

The power that comes from names and naming is related directly to the power to define others- individuals, races, sexes, ethnic groups. Our identities, who and what we are, how others see us, are greatly affected by the names we are called and the words with which we are labelled (Bosmajian, 1974a:5 in Nuessel, 1992:3).

There may be some truth contained in Bosmajian's statement of the common belief that personal names contribute to the way in which we view ourselves and also to how other people perceive us as well. This underlines the strong relationship between a person's name and his or her whole psychological perspective on himself or herself. Viewed in this light, a name is assumed to have a significant effect on an individual's ego. The above statement also points out that names contain a certain kind of power and that this power in turn determines the distinctiveness and uniqueness of each individual. To be named by someone who is in a powerful position means that the namegiver is likely always to exert some control over the existence of the named individual. By now we already know that names are carefully considered so that exactly the right name is bestowed and that names are chosen by the parents through various procedures. To be coupled with the above notion is the meaning of the name. The power of a name lies in its meaning. It may be that the parent who is giving the name does it with the hope that the name will be a self-fulfilling prophecy, i.e., the child will have the attributes and the powers attached to the name. Nuessel moves on to say that "from this perspective, it may be said that you are what you are

named." It goes without saying that we cannot divorce ourselves from our names. If the words with which we are labelled are always with us, then it means that we display our labels wherever we go. Labels normally separate the quality of various garments from one another, and this is what our names do. They separate us from being the same as the next person.

3.3.1 Names in Kungavuka AbaNguni

It is true that, like parents, writers give names to their characters with a specific purpose in mind, as such names of characters may contribute to the plot, theme and other literary elements of a text. In this novel we shall look at two names that of Nomusa, the heroine, and of Thamsanqa. The plot of the story is centred around her so that she is at the centre of the discourse. The name Nomusa, means the "mother of kindness" or "kindness". Nomusa is an emotion-related name. This kindness is associated with the mother's situation during her time of pregnancy. MaNkosi might have been very kind during her pregnancy. It is known that many women are very short tempered during this time in their lives. However, the situation is not the same for all women. It is true that some become very kind and gentle throughout this period. The name Nomusa, therefore points to MaNkosi's situation during and at the time of Nomusa's birth. The writer explains the circumstances surrounding Nomusa's birth as follows:

Kwathi kusathiwa hhawu waze wamuhle umakoti webantu, wabe esemuhle ngempela. Wazibula ngentombi abayetha igama bathi nguNomusa, abaNguni bebonga umusa kanina (Kubheka:8).

(When the bride was praised for her beauty, she was indeed beautiful. She gave birth to a first born baby and they named her Nomusa, the abaNguni family thanking the mother for her kindness).

What is of significance to us is how the name, Nomusa, contributes to the plot of the story. Nomusa, as her name suggests, is a very kind girl who feels pain and pity for the poor. This is evident in her friendship with Thamsanqa. In a conversation with her mother she tells her that she would love to marry Thamsanqa, as poor as he is, the day she decides to get married:

"Uyabona Mama ngothi uma sengikhulile sengifuna ukugana ngihambe ngizithuntuthele uThamsanqa ngiziganele yena. Akeve elungile umntanabantu. Angazi ukuthi yini uma ngimbuka ngivele ngizwe ngimdabukela nje"(Kubheka:76).

("You see, Mother, the day I am a fully grown up woman and am ready to get married I will go and shake the dust from Thamsanqa and marry him. He is very kind. I do not know why when I look at him I feel pity for him").

The above extract depicts Nomusa as a person who does not discriminate amongst people on the basis of wealth. Unlike her father she does not despise Thamsanqa because of his poor family background. Nomusa never stops showing her kindness to Thamsanqa even after her father has beaten her up for giving her money to him. The fact that she does not know why she feels pity for Thamsanqa is proof enough to indicate that the kindness that she exhibits is in her nature. Murphy (1957:105) (in Nuessel, 1992:5) confirms some psychological example that reinforce this claim, when he reiterates that: "given names, surnames, nicknames, and assumed names have numerous important significances in the development of individuals, and often give clues to their attitudes toward themselves and others with whom they have been closely associated." Nuessel's statement brings new light to the fore, which is that a name influences the psychological being of an individual. The psychological effect of Nomusa's name on her nature is made evident by her statement that she does not know why she feels pity for Thamsanqa. In this way it seems that a name partly influences the way in which an individual thinks. It sort of presupposes what one should and should not do.

The name, Nomusa, indicates feminine virtue. It is devoid of masculine or any powerful aggressive qualities. As the story progresses Nomusa conforms to her father's demand to give him her monthly salary at the end of each month. Gumede could not conceal his happiness from his wife:

"Cha angizimisele mpela ukuba ngiyeke ukujabula uma ingane yami yenza intando yami. Kanti ngabe ngingumzali onjani? Uyabona MaNkosi lemali engiyiphethe yimali kaNomusa ayisebenzile. Savumelana noNomusa ukuthi kuzothi njalo ukuphela kwenyanga athathe imali ayiholayo ayifake ebhangi abheke ngayo ikusasa" (Kubheka:193).

("No, I am not prepared to hide my happiness if my child carries out my will. What kind of a parent would I be? You see, MaNkosi, this money that I have is Nomusa's money that she has worked for. We agreed with Nomusa that at the end of each month she will take the money that she earns and put it in the bank to take care of tomorrow").

Nomusa submits to her father's control and even though, later on she shows signs of disagreeing with him she does so in a very subtle manner.

The giving of a name to a child has significance within the larger family. This is true if we take into consideration that some names reveal the circumstances of the family at the time when the child was born. Thamsanqa is one such name. The name Thamsanqa means a "blessing." Doke (1990:783) explain the word *thamsanqa* as "a less-used term than the true Zulu busisa." The name Thamsanqa is a synonym of the most used Zulu name Sibusiso. Thamsanqa is also an emotion-related name. The Khumalo family fell blessed with a baby boy who would look after the family when the father is no more. Herbert (1994:3) concurs that:

Boys, on the other hand, are more likely recipients of names commemorating family members or acknowledging roles within the family.

Herbert's comment indicates that boy's names were linked to an ancestor or to the role of the father that the boy should assume later in life. The name, Thamsanqa, then, means that the parents are happy because their son will be a blessing in their lives. This name also presupposes the expectations of the parents from the young boy. For example, from Thamsanqa, they would expect a number of achievements that would bring more blessings and happiness into the family.

In the story the opposite happens in Thamsanqa's life. He is unemployed and therefore unable to take care of his family and as such his name does not fulfil its prophecy. The name is used in an ironical manner. He wants to marry Nomusa Gumede and his stumbling block is the fact that he is unemployed. He is an unfortunate person. In the following example the writer describes his failed attempts in his endeavours to get employment:

Kwaba mnyama amehlo ngenxa yezinyembezi. Indoda ikhala ngoba kushona ilanga ngempela (Kubheka:210).

(His eyes could not see because of the tears. The man cries because it is already sunset).

The name does not bestow any blessing on its bearer nor on his family. The cause of such a course of events could be ascribed to the intention of the writer. The writer wants to send across the

message that a rich family such as Gumede's, segregate against the poor when it comes to marriage. Placing Thamsanqa in a powerful position would jeopardize the intention of the writer. As a result Thamsanqa is portrayed as a lazy young man who enjoys sleeping during day time. Gumede perceives Thamsanqa as a lazy person and hates him for that. Besides being viewed as a lazy person Thamsanqa is designated by his name. He shows respect for old people. He respects Gumede, MaNkosi as well as Nomusa. He knows how to apologise when he has made a mistake. He apologises to MaNkosi for delaying her daughter on her way home:

"Nami ngenze icala nje ngokumlibazisa. Into kwenza kubelukhuni ukuba umuntu avele adlule nje kuNomusa engakhulumanga ngoba vele wazifuzela igama lakhe" (Kubheka:74).

("I also made a mistake by delaying her. It is difficult to easily walk past Nomusa without talking to her because she is as kind as her name suggests").

Thamsanqa is also a kind person. Mathanda Gumede, an elder brother to Nomusa's father, does not understand why his brother hates such a kind person:

"Ungafane ungitshela nje ukuthi yini oyizonde kulomfana olunge kangaka" (Kubheka:201).

("Can you tell me what is it that you hate so much about such a kind young man").

Gumede refuses Thamsanqa to marry Nomusa even when his economic status has improved. Instead of bringing blessings his name becomes a curse. He experiences luck towards the end of the story when he was still looking for work in Durban. An unknown young man who was running from the police came across him and pushed a big parcel in his jacket. The mysterious parcel turned to be money. Thamsanqa is miraculously saved from his poverty. Instead of improving his dignity Gumede claimed that he has stolen the money. This increases Gumede's suspicious belief that Thamsanqa stole the money. The writer does not develop him as a convincing character. Although it is commended that the writer conveyed the message of forbidden love successfully, Thamsanqa has been too flat a character. He then appears as a caricature that is simply used to achieve the goal of the writer.

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3.3.2 Names in Kungenxa Kabani

Three names will be discussed in this novel, viz. Bhekokwakhe, Ntombiyethemba and Lungile. John Stuart Mill's (1806-1873) observation (in Nuessel, 1992:1) that: "proper names are not connotative; they denote the individuals who are called by them; but they do not indicate or imply attributes as belonging to those individuals" is very important for us. Nuessel further quotes Nicolaisen (1978:40) who observed that "words *connote* and names *denote*." The fact that names denote suggests that names signify or symbolize something. Some names, as the following discussion will show, signify feminine, masculine, independent and docile attributes.

Ntombiyethemba indicates the epitome of submissiveness. She epitomizes the type of all the women who have resigned themselves to explicit subordination to parental control. The name, Ntombiyethemba, means the "girl of hope". She finds herself in an awkward position where she gets married to a man who never loved her. Ntombiyethemba does not fulfil her parents' hopes by marrying Bhekokwakhe, but she helps a man from another homestead accomplish his plans. She becomes a real pawn in Cele's hands. Ntombiyethemba could have saved herself the embarrassment of marrying a man who never proposed love to her, but she falls in the category of those youth who believe in maintaining respect towards old people. One would concur with Odetola (1983:4) when he says that "in most African societies the personality of an individual is significantly interwoven with cultural factors ... the naming and presentation of a baby after birth is often culturally prescribed." Ntombiyethemba's passive nature throughout the novel signifies a strong interrelationship with the Zulu culture that demands humbleness from a woman. She agrees to marry Bhekokwakhe not because she loves him, and not because she has no choice or say in the matter, but because she does not see any problem with the way in which things are done.

In this novel Gcumisa has successfully portrayed two antithetical scenarios. Ntombiyethemba represents the uneducated, traditional, loyal youth who still respect traditional society as well as traditional custom. Bhekokwakhe and Lungile on the other hand belong to the educated, modern, and rebellious youth who challenge the traditional customs which inhibit personal freedom. Since traditional society is more structured and less fluid than modern society, the breaking down of such a structure is difficult. At some stage in her life Ntombiyethemba does become sceptical

about the nature of her marriage, but she remains very meek about the problem and does nothing to change the situation. In her conversation with Thembekile it appears that she remains hopeful and optimistic that one day Bhekokwakhe will love her:

“Naphezu izinto zingimele kabi kangaka, angizothi nyaka. Ngizomhlalela, uyoze unembeza umudle, abone ukuthi ngiyintombi enesimilo” (Gcumisa:44).

(“Although things are so bad, I will not move. I will wait, his conscience will worry him, he will realise that I am a young woman with good morals”).

Ntombiyethemba’s decision to persevere in the unpleasant marital situation in which she finds herself serves a dual function. It strengthens Ntombiyethemba’s hope that one day Bhekokwakhe will realise that she is the right woman for him and, for Cele’s wish to be realised, she has to stay put with her in-laws. She becomes Cele’s weapon to get his wish realized. Any movement against this perseverance would mean that their hopes would be shattered. She remains the only means through which Cele can get Bhekokwakhe to do his will. She does not take any initiative to look for Bhekokwakhe on her own. She represents the fact that humility, dignity, and perseverance are highly rated attributes in womanhood. She is totally dependent on her mother and father-in-law to take further actions on her behalf. It becomes evident that her stay at her matrimonial home is for the sake of her husband’s parents:

“Nakuba ngisahleli Mama, sengihlalele nina noBaba”(Gcumisa:143).

(“The reason I am still staying here Mother, is that I am staying here for you and Father”).

Ntombiyethemba remains too submissive. There is nothing she attempts on her own to win Bhekokwakhe. This may be viewed in two ways. It may be that the writer re-affirms the fact that a woman has no power to solve problems on her own without help from a man. It is Cele himself who stands up and searches for Bhekokwakhe until he finds him. The other reason could be that the writer wants to depict the fact that men control women’s lives. There is Ntombiyethemba who is deserted by her husband, but she could not move out of that frustrating situation on her own. This novel indicates that women’s lives are characterised by victimization by men. Women are contingent on someone else, either as wives, sex-objects or mothers. The objectification of African

women as creatures of sex not only influences their identity but is also used by African male writers to legitimize their sexual and social exploitation. The stereotype of the African female as a breeder of children is re-affirmed by Gcumisa. Ntombiyethemba is informed by her father-in-law to pay Bhekokwakhe a visit so that she can fall pregnant:

“Ngithi ufunani lapha?” kubuza uBhekokwakhe ngephimbo elithanda ukushuba kunakuqala.

“Ubaba uthe angize lapha kuwena,” kuphendula uNtombiyethemba ephendula ngenhlonipho.

“Uthi ubaba othi woza lapha? Uthi woza uzokwenzani lapha?”

“E ... ubaba uthe angize lapha kuwena ngizo ... ngizofuna isisu,” kuchaza uNtombiyethemba ngokwesaba (Gcumisa:163).

(“I am asking you what do you want here?” Bhekokwakhe asks with a sterner voice than before.

“Father said I should come to you,” Ntombiyethemba replied with respect.

“You say it is father that said you should come here? What did he send you to do?”

“Er ... father said I should come to you to ... to fall pregnant,” Ntombiyethemba explained in a frightened manner).

Cele controls Ntombiyethemba’s life. It seems as if she is his slave who cannot say what she wants and what she does not want. Marshall (in Jarrett-Macauley,1996:10) says:“since slavery, stereotyping Black women as sexually denigrated has been instrumental to our subordination.” Ntombiyethemba becomes subordinated to her father in-law. Her whole life is dependent on him. Cele has paid her bride price and this makes him think that he has the right to tell her when to make babies. It is obvious that Cele views a woman as a sex-object and as a child breeder. Marsden quoted by Marshall (in Jarrett-Macauley,1996:16) makes a relevant comment:

Men just see us here as breeding animals. I don’t think they see us as women who have a right to say what we want.

Ntombiyethemba does not relinquish hope. As her name suggests she remains the “girl of hope” for herself and for her parents in-law. Bhekokwakhe’s parents hope that, for as long as she is still with them, their son will come back. She respects Cele so much so that she decides to remain silent about her emotional suffering. Jones (1987:2) show quite clearly that women of all races, and womanhood itself, have not been fairly treated by African male writers in their literary works.

They comment on the silence of African male writers about issues that concern women as follows:

While it is true that most male writers have not been able to communicate to us how women feel on the burning issues of polygamy, motherhood and relations between the sexes and have simply presented the traditional picture of the woman cosily accepting her lot, it is not true to say that all male writers have been unsympathetic towards women, or have lacked the ability to present truly complex women, or have merely given us stereotypes.

What is interesting in the above argument is the view that male writers resort to stereotyping merely because they are either unable or unwilling to present a woman in her totality. Ntombiyethemba's name denotes her as a woman who is seen to be accepting her role as a woman without question. The writer has presented us with a truly traditionally-minded girl, who wants to bear children for the man who has abandoned her. Ntombiyethemba remains determined to fulfil her task as a woman, irrespective of the fact that her marriage has become so unbearable for her. The pain of rejection is made evident by the following comment she makes to her in-laws:

“Naphezu sengiyinhlekisa kubantu, ukuhleka kwabo akunamkhuba kangako. Okubuhlungu wena mama, nosisi, ukungagoni ngane. Bonke abantu benda bagone izingane,” washo lokhu kwaphinde kwathi wohlo izinyembezi (Gcumisa:143).

(“Although I am a laughing stock to people, the laughter does not worry me so much. What is painful, mother, and you sister, is to carry no child on my laps. All people get married and carry children on their laps,” she said this and cried heavily).

She becomes the victim of gossip in her community but she rises above it all. This marriage brings her severe psychological and emotional pain. The writer also depicts Ntombiyethemba as a martyr. Culturally and traditionally, Bhekokwakhe is her lawful husband. In her mind she views herself as doing the correct thing by holding on to what she thinks is rightfully hers. At the end of the novel she fights and dies for the husband she truly believes is lawfully hers:

Bhekokwakhe also experiences forced love. His father, Cele, has already chosen a wife for him. His name means “looking after one's things.” To further elucidate this name, one may point out that it also refers to a self-centred person, someone who puts himself first above others. In other words it designates a person who looks after his own interests or a selfish person. Right from the

beginning of the story Bhekokwakhe defies his father's instructions to achieve his own goals. Throughout the narration he remains adamant and refuses to yield to his father's decision to marry Ntombiyethemba. He tells his mother that if he is forced to marry he would rather marry a girl that he loves, and not the one chosen by his father:

“Baba, ngifisa ukuphinda ngigcizelele futhi ukuthi mina angikazimiseli ukuganwa. Kodwa-ke uma ngabe ngiphoqelelwa ngakho okungenani kungalotsholwa yona lena yakwaNdlovu intombazane”(Gcumisa:14).

(“Father, I wish to reiterate that I am not prepared to get married. But if I am forced to do it the bride price would rather be paid for the Ndlovu young woman”).

Bhekokwakhe informs his parents about Lungile so as to counteract his father's decision for him to marry Ntombiyethemba. As a result of his father's coercive actions, Bhekokwakhe deserts his home. He neither writes nor sends money for his chosen wife. When his mother blames him he reminds her that Ntombiyethemba was never his choice and that she might be the cause of his disappearance:

“Mama kuhle kukhumbuleke ukuthi akumina engathi akuyocelwa leyontombi oyishoyo. Kungenzeka ukuba nembangela yokusithela kwami kangaka yiwo lomthwalo ongesindayo engethweswe wona ubaba ngenkani” (Gcumisa:47).

(“Mother, it is better to be remembered that it is not me who said that the bride price should be paid for the young woman you are referring to. It could happen that the cause of my long disappearance is this heavy burden that father has placed on me by force”).

The story largely concentrates on Cele's and Bhekokwakhe's actions against one another. In his endeavours to follow his heart, to look at his own interest, Bhekokwakhe finds himself defying his father's actions time and again. In contrast with Ntombiyethemba's name, which reveals passive feminine attributes, Bhekokwakhe's name announces powerful masculine attributes. This name, as is evident from Bhekokwakhe's actions, empowers him to challenge his autocratic father. It drives and impels him to stand up against his father and fight for what he wants. To truly act in accordance with his name, by looking upon his own interests, he takes Lungile to his home and introduces her to his parents. As expected, Cele becomes very furious at Bhekokwakhe's actions.

This is illustrated by the following conversation:

“Yini lena ongena nayo emzini kababa? Ngiyabuza?” uCele ubuza imibuzo eyijojisa eduzane.

“Lona umakoti wami,” kusho uBhekokwakhe ngesibindi.

“Uletha isindindwa uzosikhweza phezu kukamakoti? Ugila mkhuba muni nje kodwa?”

“Lona engifika naye umakoti wami. Lona omshoyo owakho.” Kusho uBhekokwakhe (Gcumisa: 149).

(“What is it that you bring to my father’s home? I am asking?” Cele asks questions simultaneously.

“This is my bride,” said Bhekokwakhe with bravery. “You have come with this prostitute to despise your bride? What is this bad thing that you are doing?”

“This one that I brought along is my bride. The one you are referring to is yours,” said Bhekokwakhe).

Like other male characters in general, Bhekokwakhe displays brave, independent, and aggressive attributes. In his pursuit of personal freedom and satisfaction and to further defy his father’s idea of forced marriage, he and his friend Mzimela, approach the Ndlovu family, at Njengabantu, and pay the bride price for Lungile.

Lungile is Bhekokwakhe’s girlfriend. The name Lungile means “the kind one.” It also refers to someone who is “morally good” and to “what is right.” The name suggests gentle and girlish attributes. It suggests a woman who aligns herself with what is right, and what is righteous. The writer conveys two types of female stereotypes through the use of this character. These are the stereotypes that an educated woman does not respect culture, and of woman as the Great Giver of life. Lungile is a teacher by profession and finds herself in a hot love triangle. She met and fell in love with Bhekokwakhe while they were at the Teacher’s College. After leaving College Bhekokwakhe encounters a problem because his father wants him to marry Ntombiyethemba while he is in love with Lungile. Cele expects Bhekokwakhe to follow his orders and leave Lungile. Although Lungile is amazed at hearing the news she does not leave her boyfriend. She does not end her relationship with Bhekokwakhe, but remains determined to do what she thinks is right for herself. She would be Bhekokwakhe’s wife in her own way. The following conversation with Bhekokwakhe states explicitly that she is prepared to be Bhekokwakhe’s wife no matter what it takes:

“Nanxa ngibona kahle ukuthi uzogcagcelwa yilentombi yakho olotsholelwa yona, kepha mina ngisazimisele ukuba umkakho nami ngeyami indlela” (Gcumisa:68).

(“Although I am quite aware that you will end up being married to this young woman for whom the bride price has been paid, I am still prepared to be your wife in my own way”).

Lungile is portrayed as a woman who does not give up easily. She was the first one to fall in love with Bhekokwakhe, so she will love him as long as that is right for her. Her decision can be viewed in various ways. Culturally, as a woman, she does not have the power and the means to fight against Cele’s decision. She has to respect his decision because according to traditional custom the father had the right to choose a wife for his son. Lungile acts according to her name. She acknowledges Cele’s decision because as a woman she has no grounds and no right to challenge it. If it were not for her good character and her kindness, she could have fought and told Bhekokwakhe not to yield to his father’s demand. The above excerpt states a different right, a right of choice, that she would continue to love Bhekokwakhe even though he now has a wife. At the same time Lungile’s actions indicate the powerful force of acculturation. The writer presents us with the whole spectrum of an educated woman who takes advantage of the educational, economic, and attitudinal opportunities offered by modernization. The importance of education in the liberation of African women is emphasised by Katherine Frank (in Jones & Palmer, 1987:23) with regard to Emecheta’s writings:

Emecheta, more than any other woman writer in Africa today, sees education as the most potent means of women’s liberation. Most obviously, it equips women to be economically independent, to prepare for a job or profession that will enable them to take care of themselves and their children without the help and protection of men. **...education also gives women a vision of human experience beyond the narrow confines of their own lives; it bestows a kind of imaginative power, a breadth of perspective, an awareness of beauty, dreams, possibility...** Even if they cannot literally escape the imprisoning constraints of their patriarchal world they can imaginatively transcend them through the means of books (Emphasis mine).

Lungile’s confinement to Bhekokwakhe should be viewed in the light of the above quotation. She represents the stereotype of an educated woman, a woman who neither rejects modernization nor unquestioningly appropriates the past in order to redefine her identity. Her decision to stay with Bhekokwakhe reveals that patriarchy and culture cannot stand in her way. Education gives her

a vision that strengthens and stretches her love for Bhekokwakhe beyond the confinements of culture.

Lungile's name also signifies a selfless woman. The female stereotype of woman as the Great Giver of life also manifests itself through her character. She loves and cares deeply for Bhekokwakhe. She wants him to make the right choices for himself. She is against Bhekokwakhe's newly acquired drinking habit. She complains about it and persuades him to stop taking liquor for his own sake:

“Ukuyizwa nokuyibona kwakho akusho lutho Bheki uma ungangethembisi noma ungenze ngiqiniseke ukuthi uzokwenza konke okusemandleni akho ukuthola indawo engconywa kunalena ukuze wehlukane nanotshwala” (Gcumisa:69).

(“The fact that you do understand and you acknowledge my suggestion does not mean anything, Bheki, if you cannot promise me or assure me that you will do everything in your power to get a better place than this one so that you can stop taking liquor).

Lungile shows interest in Bhekokwakhe's life. She wants to give him love and to help him to live a better life. She is a real womanist who wants to help the man she loves irrespective of the fact that he is about to marry another woman.

3.3.3 Naming in Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi

Two character names, Zulumacansi and Bajwayele, will be analysed here. The name, Bajwayele, means “get used to them.” This name highlights the plot of the story. Bajwayele is forced by her father, Manamuza, to marry a man she does not love, a man she is not even familiar with. If we relate Bajwayele's name to the story it simply means that there is no need for her to know Zulumacansi well before he marries her because she will “get used to him” and she will also “get used to” loving and staying with him as her husband. Bajwayele informs her father that she is afraid of Zulumacansi because he is old, aggressive and fierce-tempered. Her father dismisses her complaint by emphasising that a woman should persevere in marriage and that all men are fierce-tempered. According to him Bajwayele must just persevere, no matter what:

“Kepha-ke baba uZulumacansi unolaka.”

“Akulutho lokho mntanami. Onke amadoda anolaka. Umendo uyakhonzelwa”
(Ngubane:57).

(“But, father Zulumacansi is a fierce-tempered man.”

(“That is nothing, my child. All men are fierce-tempered. You must persevere in marriage”).

Manamuza’s comment further highlights that there is no need for a woman to marry a man of her choice because all that a woman needs to do is to persevere and subject herself to her husband. To him perseverance is a female attribute that guarantees an everlasting union between a wife and a husband.

Zulumacansi’s sister, Qimbile, does not like the controversy surrounding her brother’s marriage to Bajwayele. She feels that the correct procedure has not been followed, hence the malicious gossip in the area originates from this. Her mother protects him and says:

“Pho singabe sisenzani mntanami, lokhu sekonakele? Okufanele ukuba sikwenze thina ukuba samukele umakoti ngazo zombili, **simjwayeze** ekhaya. Labo abahlebayo sibayeke ngoba uma siphike nabo kuyodilika umuzi kaBhekokwakhe”
(Ngubane:62).

(“There is nothing we can do, my child, because things have already been spoiled. What we are supposed to do is to welcome our bride with both hands, and **get her used** to this home. We should ignore those who are gossiping because if we listen to them Bhekokwakhe’s home will be destroyed”).

Zulumacansi’s mother’s response also highlights the gap between her son and the bride to be. As a mother she fights against any force of disintegration in her family. She therefore urges her daughter that they must show their support by making his bride feel comfortable and welcomed. Above all they should strive to “get her used” to their home.

The writer, through stressing Bajwayele’s mystical beauty, confirms the popular stereotype expressed by the IsiZulu proverb that says; *Ikhiwan’ elihle ligcwal’ izimpethu* (A fine fig is full of worms). This proverb literally means that a fig may look very attractive on the outside, but when opened it may be found to be full of worms. Metaphorically this expression is used of a

person who looks beautiful on the outside, but whose character is bad. It is mainly of women that the expression is used, although men are not excluded. As beautiful as she is, Bajwayele becomes the cause of conflict between Zulumacansi and her father. The writer has endowed her with such astonishing beauty that Zulumacansi cannot easily forget her even after she has disappointed him by escaping to Benoni. It is her beauty that attracted Zulumacansi, it is also this beauty that ensured her father would use her as a commodity. The following lines describe the way in which Zulumacansi is captured by Bajwayele's astonishing beauty:

Iyakhuluma uZulumacansi akasezwa lutho olunye. Asho ngeahliziyo athi selokhu aba khona akazange ake ambone umuntu omuhle kangaka (Ngubane:17).

(She is talking and Zulumacansi cannot hear anything. He admits in his heart that he has never seen such a beautiful person since he was born).

Other characters in the story also highlight her beauty. Some members of society blame Manamuza for forcing her beautiful daughter to marry a man she never loved. In their comments it becomes apparent that with her beauty Bajwayele could have been married to any man:

Abanye bamsole kakhulu uManamuza ngesenzo sakhe, ukuba intombi iyinhle kangaka yena ayiganise songathi ibe yaliwa (Ngubane:60).

(Others blame Manamuza for his action, of forcing his beautiful daughter into marriage as if nobody would marry her).

Viewed in this light, Bajwayele's beauty fulfils the stereotype of woman as a rose, woman as something to be cherished. When blamed by KaMemunce for the disappearance of both Manamuza and Bajwayele, Zulumacansi in turn blames this woman for having borne such a beautiful girl:

“Lokhu icala likuwena, wena owazala umuntu omuhle? UButhunqe bungaka uthi ikhona enjengaye?” (Ngubane:100)

(“The problem is with you, who gave birth to a beautiful person? In Buthunqe, as big as it is, there is no one like her?”)

Bajwayele's beauty portrays her as a rose no man can resist. Such beauty is dangerous to those who are drawn to it, such as Zulumacansi. Because of her beauty, Bajwayele is easily forgiven by

Zulumacansi for her first disappearance. Zulumacansi spends most of his life trying to win Bajwayele's love. Her second disappearance, which signifies total rejection, affects his dignity and manhood especially because he enjoys a high status in his neighbourhood. Bajwayele's beauty leads to the fall of both Zulumacansi and her father. Manamuza himself attests to this in his conversation with Zulumacansi:

“Ngiyezwa nje mkhwenyana; kodwa konke lokhu esikukhulumayo akuyi ndawo ngoba nangu uBajwayele ubalekile, kasimazi lapho eye khona. Ukwehlulile konke ukuhlakanipha kwethu singamadoda” (Ngubane:181).

(“ I do understand my son-in-law; but all these things we are talking about do not matter because Bajwayele ran away, we do not know where she has gone to. She has overcome all our cleverness as men”).

The stereotype of a beautiful woman as a fig and the cause of social misery is expressed through Bajwayele. Both Manamuza's and Zulumacansi's efforts failed. Manamuza degenerates into an insignificant man. To him Bajwayele's second escape indicates total failure and that he has no power over his own child. Zulumacansi could not win Bajwayele's love even after wasting a lot of money by buying love herbs that would cause Bajwayele to love him. All his attempts failed.

The name Zulumacansi, has two meanings: a literal and a figurative one. Literally it means “a Zulu hand woven mat” and figuratively it refers to “a real traditional Zulu man,” “a conservative Zulu man.” These meanings complement each other. A hand woven mat does not change. It remains a woven piece of grass. Zulumacansi's actions in the story depict him as a man who does not change with time, therefore he is a truly traditional man. His name designates a man who does not deviate from his culture and his traditional roots. It refers to someone who lives up to his culture. His name also reveals male attributes, such as aggressiveness and obstinacy.

Zulumacansi works as a kitchen boy in Durban. Durban as a city should have had some Western influence on him but his behaviour shows that he is from a rural neighbourhood. He likes to keep his beard long and plaited. The writer describes his obsession with his beard and says:

Njalo nje uma enesikhathi asiqaqe, asifake ibhulashi, asigcobe eseluka imiqhino emibili emide. Nayo lemiqhino ayihlanganise, omunye ulale phezu komunye (Ngubane:1).

(Every time when he has the time he undoes it, and brushes it, smears it and weaves it into two long plaits. These plaits will be joined, one on top of the other).

The habit of keeping a long beard depicts Zulumacansi as a traditional Zulu man who believes that a man must not cut his beard. The fact that he finds himself in a big city like Durban does not change him at all.

Zulumacansi believes in the maintenance of his culture. Now that he has decided to marry a wife, he writes a letter to his brother-in-law to remind him about the cattle that are still outstanding from his sister's bride price. When Masovenyeza, his sister's husband, resists acknowledging his debt, Zulumacansi approaches the local chief and opens a case against him. He demands these cattle in order to fill the gap that would be created by the bride price he is going to pay for Bajwayele. He still adheres to traditional ways of doing things. As can be seen, he still holds on to the traditional idea that the cattle received through his sister's bride price should in turn be used to pay for his wife's bride price too. What Ragussis (1986:17) has observed is true when it is related to Zulumacansi's actions and personality:

A man's name is not like a cloak that merely hangs around him, that may be loosened and tightened at will; it is a perfectly fitting garment. It grows over him like his very skin; one cannot scrape and scratch at it without injuring the man himself.

Zulumacansi's traditional and aggressive nature leads him to despise Bajwayele's boyfriend Potolozzi. He despises him because Potolozzi's father does not have large herds of cattle like himself. He meets Bajwayele and Potolozzi and provokes Potolozzi. He holds on to the IsiZulu saying that: *Noseyishayil' akakayosi; noseyosil' akakayidli, noyidlil' udl' icala* (Even he who has struck it [bird] has not roasted it). This is very often used by a young man who learns that the girl he is wooing has fallen for somebody else. It is a declaration on his part that he is not prepared to admit defeat. Zulumacansi starts an argument out of nothing, and when Potolozzi shows anger he whips him, and tells him that he should respect him:

"Mina wena mfo waseMayezeni, akushiwo njalo kimina!" Asho eyigaxa emahlombe kuPotolozzi imvubu. Kwadilika isigqoko ensizweni yaseMayezeni, sisisha ... Wasicosha uZulumacansi isigqoko wamemeza wathi: "Nasi isigqoko sakho ntangayethu!" (Ngubane:42-43)

("Take this you man of Mayezeni, you cannot say that to me!" He whipped Potolozi with a sjambok on his shoulders. The new hat of the young Mayezeni man fell down, ... Zulumacansi picked it up and shouted: "Here is your hat my colleague!")

It looks as if Zulumacansi's name has grown into his skin, as Ragussis (1986) has suggested. Zulumacansi traditionally believes that when a man wants to marry a woman he should fight and win that woman through his bravery. His name indicates masculine attributes such as aggressiveness, fierce temper, physical strength and brute force. The setting in which the story takes place permits such behaviour. Traditional society acknowledges such behaviour only if it is a man and not from a woman.

Zulumacansi is an arrogant man who does not show respect for women, not even for his mother-in-law. He threatens to assault KaMemunce for her daughter's disappearance:

"Ngingahle ngikugininde amadodlwana khona manje! Ujama phambi kwami?" asho esikaza idolo lesalukazi ngewisa (Ngubane:75).

("I may beat you and destroy your knees just now! You are standing before me?" he said while indicating that he could beat the knee of the old woman with a knobkerrie").

If one takes into consideration that Zulumacansi is a rude, temperamental and traditional man, one can align this behaviour with his character. In traditional societies there is a tendency to place women and children in same category. Men have the notion that they can do as they please with women, as they can with children. He does not only end by intimidating KaMemunce, but he also continues to assault Manamuza, his father-in-law, and instructs him to fetch Bajwayele from Benoni:

"Suka khona manje uye eBenoni ubuye naye umkami. Uyezwa!"(Ngubane:77)

("Leave now, go to Benoni and come back with my wife. Do you understand!")

Zulumacansi is endowed with the brave qualities of a real Zulu man. He is not a coward. He believes in the use of brutal force to achieve what he wants. This abnormal behaviour cannot be detached or even scraped away from his name. If it is his name, it is in him and with him.

3.3.4 Naming in Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami

The names of Mbandlanyika and Ntombana will be looked at here. The name, Mbandlanyika, lacks sense if one thinks about it. Its meaning is not clear at face value. It consists of both diacritic and chimerical qualities. Its chimerical features stem from the fact that it is an invented doubling. It is a compound name that consists of two verbs: *bandla* and *nyika*. The verb *bandla* is a euphemistic word which means to choose. The word also means to “disown, or to ostracise.” The other verb, *nyika*, means “a complicated affair,” “a matter difficult of solution” or ‘something requiring disentangling.’ Markey (1982:138) (in Nuessel (1992:1) stated that: “it is generally accepted by philosophers and logicians that, while names have reference they lack sense.” In essence this claim means that a proper name is an abbreviation of a description of a certain individual because most names are descriptive of a particular circumstance. This approach to proper names is philosophical in nature for it states that every proper name is a description of specific properties. In terms of philosophy, one of the primary functions of a name is reference. It is not possible to refer to an item without that item or person having a name.

The name Mbandlanyika could therefore, be taken to refer to an impossible and ostracised person, someone who is not easily understood. It implies a person with a difficult personality. The manner in which Mkize describes him befits the above explanation:

Yinde lensizwa, izacile ngoba zonke izinyama zayo zomelele emathanjeni. Imihlathi lena ungathi eyembongolo ngobude nokubela obala. Okufike kwayiqeda ukuba ibe yindlobho. Ngesikhathi ibabuka bamane babona isihlonti somlilo sibanzela okombani. Mubi umbhemu lona ungathi udla amasele emfuleni. Ibeshu lakhe limnyama bhuqe noboya balo sebuqothukile (Mkize:8-9).

(This young man is tall, and skinny because his flesh is glued to his bones. His jaws are like that of a donkey with its long protruding structure. What is worse is that he is a one eye-jack. When he looked at them they saw a light of fire flashing like lightening. This man is ugly as if he eats frogs in the river. His loin skin is pitch black and its hair is rubbed off).

The meaning of his name is linked to his nature as well as his personal appearance. The writer has used the direct method in depicting Mbandlanyika. It is evident from the writer’s description that Mbandlanyika is not a friendly person. The facts that he is very skinny, he has one eye, is as red

as fire, possesses only a rubbed off loinskin, suggest a scary person. The discussion between Ntombana and Magwagwa throws more light on the behaviour of this character. Mbandlanyika is described as an aggressive, ill-tempered, and very rude person. Magwagwa explains to Ntombana that the loss of his eye is associated with his rudeness:

“Into uyathanda nje ukuchwensa abantu ngoba ethi yena uyayishaya induku. UMpiyakhe waliqhumbusela khona lokho ukuba amkhinyabeze ekuchwenseni abanye abantu” (Mkize:9).

(“He likes to despise people because he knows that he is a good stick-fighter. Mpiyakhe pierced his eye because he wanted to discourage him from despising other people”).

This extract stresses that Mbandlanyika is a person of great strength. To understand Mbandlanyika's name in totality we must take into consideration the reduplicated stem of the verb *nyika*. The reduplicated stem is *nyikanyika*, and as a verb it means to “fight one's way through.” It also means to “tear to pieces”, or to “smash about.” The name Mbandlanyika also designates someone who is powerful and who likes fighting. This name is associated with very strong masculine powers. The fact that Mbandlanyika is described as a rude person who likes fighting suggests that he is likely to use force to attain whatever he wants. He therefore cannot be disassociated from violence. To find his way through, he smashes every obstacle he comes across. Mbandlanyika is a man who is unsuccessful in courtship hence he does not have a girlfriend. When he gets a chance to propose to Ntombana things are spoiled and he ends up beating her. He forces Ntombana to tell him why she doesn't love him. When Ntombana points out that she cannot love him because of his ugliness, his bony structure and his one eye, he smashes her face several times with an open hand:

“Ntombazane kaKhumalo,” kwasho uMbandlanyika emdumela ngendlovuyangena ngengalo, emmukula ngempama, “sengikubonile ukuthi uyachwensa futhi uyihlo akakufundisanga kahle. Uthuka bani ngendlobho? Hi?” (Mkize:63)

(“Young woman of Khumalo,” said Mbandlanyika, grabbing her by her arm, and hitting her with an open hand, “ I have realised that you are arrogant and your father did not teach you well. Who do you insult as a one-eye jack? Hey?”)

A man such as Mbandlanyika uses brute force to achieve his objectives and to command respect from a woman. His name is endowed with fearful and gruesome qualities which apply to a hard-

hearted and a cruel man. The ill-treatment and victimization of women is nothing serious for a traditional man like Mbandlanyika. His name possesses stronger masculine qualities than that of Ntombana.

The name Ntombana is itself a diminutive. It is a diminutive of the noun *intombi*, which refers to a fully-grown girl. Ntombana refers to a girl who is not a complete young woman. It refers to "a little girl." This name connects well with Ntombana's actions in the story. Ntombana, as Khumalo's little girl, is forced to marry Mbandlanyika against her will. The name itself suggests submissiveness; it does not contain any powerful or aggressive qualities. The writer seems to have used the name in a very ironic way, because as readers we expect Ntombana to obey her father's instructions, but her actions are contrary to those of a little girl. She fights against her father's coercive actions but, as a child and a girl for that matter, there is not much she can achieve on her own. She has to follow her father's instructions. She is eventually helped by her mother who comes up with a plan of defiance which will force Ntombana's in-laws to send her back home. Ntombana remains determined to free herself from forced marriage by executing her mother's plan successfully. She doesn't behave like a frightened little girl. The defiance plan is discussed in detail in the following section (3.4) which pays attention to the violation of stereotypes. The plan works well, for Ntombana and Ndlovu send her back home and demands back the bride price.

The stereotype of a woman as a flower of the nation is again emphasised by Mkize. In many cases, it is this overwhelming beauty that motivates the fathers to sell their children like objects. The concentration of the writer on the beauty of a woman confirms that it is difficult for a man to resist a beautiful woman, especially if she is handed over by the father to the chosen man. Mkize, like many of his contemporaries, highlights Ntombana's astonishing beauty. She is described in the following manner:

Muhle umuntu lona. Usho ngamehlo akhe amakhulu athi ukuhleka noma ubuso bona bungakahleki. Amashiye lawa ethi awahlangane phezu kombombo. Ikhala lona lime mpo okwentaba yaseSandlwana. Ithi uma seyihleka intombi kaKhumalo kuvele uthotho lwamazinyo amhlophe njengobisi. Ikhanda lime mpo phezu kwentamo enkulu okweyenkunzi yenkomo. Umzimba wayo ugcewele waye wathi ukusha kancane okhalweni bese kuvumbuka idanda lakwabo elihlezi phezu kwezitho ezakhiwe kahle zalingana (Mkize: 1).

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(This person is beautiful. She has big eyes that keep smiling even when the face is not. Her eye brows are spread as far as the ridge of the nose. The nose is as straight as the mountain of iSandlwana. When the young woman of Khumalo laughs beautiful teeth that are as white as milk appear. Her head stands right on top of a neck that is as big as that of a bull. She has a full figure that is slimmer at the waist and she has big hips that are built on top of beautiful well built legs).

The descriptive method employed in the portrayal of Ntombana seems to be a common tool found in a number of prose works written by African male writers. This marks the colonial heritage that our African writers have acquired from English literature. Schipper (in Jones, 1987:41) points out that:

In the novels-especially in the Francophone ones-on the other hand, a lot of attention is devoted to the looks of the white woman, her white skin, the colour of her eyes and her hair, her hair style, her clothes, her make-up.

Such a description renders a woman as a desirable thing by men. It has also been indicated that in the other novels too, the beauty of these girls who are forced into arranged marriages is manipulated by their fathers to acquire more wealth for themselves. The saying that "a thing of beauty is a joy forever" seems to be true in this regard. Both the father and the girl's husband become beneficiaries. A beautiful girl is a joy to the father who acquires himself a number of cattle as well as to the husband who receives an adorable wife.

Sex role standards and expectations are clearly discernible in these names. Besides indicating personal attitudes and motives, the names of characters may be discussed using the methods of psychoanalysis. The fact that many characters live in accordance with their names means that a name has psychological significance.

3.4. Violation of stereotypes

In this section an attempt is made to trace the origin of personality traits, behaviour, conflict and other related psychoanalytical reactions of the characters. The point of departure here is that literary characters are perceived and treated as if they are real human beings who are caught up in real life situations. It has been observed in the cases of forced and forbidden love discussed here, that these cultures have caused unresolvable conflicts between parents and their children, and that

forced marriages leave young people with painful emotional psychological experiences. We concur with Ernst Kris who is quoted by Arlow (in Corsini and Wedding:1989:19) when he says: "psychoanalysis may be defined as human nature seen from vantage point of conflict". Psychoanalysis views the mind as the expression of conflicting forces. This literary theory, then lends itself as a capable tool of research into the conflict that one encounters in the selected literary texts.

In any given cultural context, male and female behaviour patterns are fixed by norms. According to Freud these are represented by the superego. Since the superego implies the existence of a moral code, it is therefore directly linked to the norms and values of society. The superego consists of the internalized parental and social injunctions. Anyone trying to break these rules can expect to meet with serious problems in a community in which the ruling group produces images and conceptions of the others to legitimise the status quo. This emphasises the connection between people and their social environment, underlining the reciprocity between the environment and personality. Personal and environmental factors do not function as independent determinants; rather, they determine each other.

Odetola (1983:4) concurs that in most African societies the personality of an individual is significantly interwoven with cultural factors. The social environment provides the only source of socialisation for the child. Between the age of about five to eight, the process of socialisation begins in full force. The distinction between the sexes also becomes noticeable from the point of view of differential roles. The environment is also significant in the development of the personalities of these young people, through the transmission of the society's norms and values and the acquisition of acceptable patterns of behaviour, especially leadership qualities, attitudes towards elders and authority, and communal norms. Odetola (1983:7) emphasises the role played by the family in the socialization process of the child in the following passage:

It should be noted that the human personality derives from the emotional responses of significant others, such as parents and other members of the family, to the child, especially through the process of socialisation. It is through this process that the child acquires a self-image by interacting with others. The attitudes that create the self-image are those of approval and disapproval, acceptance or rejection, interest or indifference demonstrated by those with whom the child interacts. In Africa the extended family has a significant role in the development of the self-image of an individual.

This study as a whole discusses ideological clashes between parents and their children. The young people in almost all the novels, are driven by the id to reach for their sexual desires and the parents, backed by the strong cultural system of values and norms present cultural constraints to curb their children's wishes. In other words this study presents of a tug of war between the id and the superego. The superego imposes the moral code that each person learns during the socialization process, and its main function is to suppress the drives of the id. Each human infant has to be civilised and acculturated to incorporate and integrate the ideals and values, the inhibitions and the taboos of society.

The youth affected by these cultures find themselves in a real dilemma because they have to deal with the ego that directs the id and the superego in order to deal with the real world. The cultural practices of forced love, arranged marriages and forbidden love reflect the contradictions and conflicts that are prevalent in humans as social beings. The traditional pressure by parents on their children evokes conflict as well as revolutionary actions that lead to the violation of norms by the young people. For Freud, the human mind is the expression of conflicting forces, and some of these forces are conscious and while others are unconscious. Parents too, in the protection of their ego enforce harsh disciplinary measures upon their children and by so doing also violate the very same norms they want their children to uphold. The parents and their children are depicted in a day to day conflict which is not only between individuals, but also between a person and the environmental circumstances of the novels, and it is this environment that seeks to determine their fate. In this case it seems as if it is the external conflict that stimulates the internal conflict which is experienced by the characters.

3.4.1 Violation of stereotypes in Kungavuka AbaNguni

The authority that fathers exert on their children results in violent behaviour and destruction of the norms and values of society. It is not only parental authority that is violated but also the whole cultural make up of the society. The source of conflict between Nomusa and her father is his prohibition of amorous love between Nomusa and Thamsanqa. Gumede finds himself at loggerheads with Nomusa because he wants to control and suppress her pleasure drive. Nomusa's case reveals how the general behaviour of a character is affected by family relationships.

Gumede thrashes Nomusa because he is of the opinion that she is in love with Thamsanqa and that she provides him with money to buy himself some cigarettes. After her father's actions Nomusa is so emotionally affected that she cannot sleep and cries for the whole night. The fact of the matter is that Nomusa is not yet in love with Thamsanqa at this stage. Her father punishes her for the sin she has not yet committed. Her father's punishment prompts her to do the opposite. The words she whispers during her crying indicates that her father's behaviour is the cause of her negative attitude towards her parents:

"Usho bona ngizobalungisa"(Kubheka:81).
("I will show them").

The above words contain Nomusa's anger towards her parents. This speech foretells that instead of succumbing to her father's wish Nomusa is prepared to do the opposite. Nomusa and Thamsanqa were just ordinary friends. There was no intimate relationship between the two. Kubheka conveys this in the following passage:

Iqiniso ngukuthi uNomusa wayecasukile ngoba naku eloku ekhathazelwa ukuthi udle inyama kodwa yena ebe azi ukuthi akayidlanga. Imbewu yase itshalekile. Itshalwa ngukuthi akanalo ithuba lokuphendulana nabazali bakhe abanelise ukuthi lento abamcabangela yona ayikho ngoba ingekho (Kubheka:102).

(The truth is that Nomusa was annoyed by the fact that she was being blamed that she has ate the meat but she knew that she has not eaten it. The seed was already sown. It is sown by the fact that she does not have the opportunity to reply to her parents and satisfy them that what they think about her does not exist at all).

It is evident from the above extract that Nomusa's decision to love Thamsanqa is motivated by the suspicion of her parents. She remains determined to listen to her id and violate the superego by doing exactly what her parents believe about her. Nomusa respects her parents so much so that it is difficult for her to explain to them that she is not in love with Thamsanqa. They neither ask for her opinion nor give her a chance to explain the situation. Their actions are characteristic of a truly traditional home where children have no say even in matters that concern their lives. MaNkosi too, believes that Nomusa has an intimate relationship with Thamsanqa.

"Kanti kuliqiniso ukuthi uthanda lolova wakwaKhumalo? Khuluma phela ngizwe, uthanda yena?" (Kubheka:136)

("Oh it is true that you love this Khumalo boy who is a loafer? Talk, I am listening, do you love him?")

Nomusa's reply to her mother's question reveals her innocence. It reveals her anger and an indication that she is pushed by her parents' autocratic ways to disobey them. Behind the writer's explanation of the human being there is a realistic picture of the influences that determine human behaviour. She angrily replies to her mother and tells her that she will then fall in love with Thamsanqa because it is what they believe she is doing:

"Ngifuna ukuba ningizwe kahle. Ngithi lomfana wakwaKhumalo enilokhu ningizindlela ngaye ngizosuke ngivele ngizikhethela yena nje bese ngibona-ke ukuthi niyojabula yini. Futhi ukuba ngizoziqokela yena, nginithandele yena, ngizonijabulisa impela. Sekuyangicacela Mama ukuthi kanti nobaba ungiqandula ngempama nje ucabanga ukuthi ngithanda lomfana. Hhayi-ke ngiyabonga ngoba nobabili ningikhethela umkhwenyana," kubalisa uNomusa ngokuzidela (Kubheka 138).

("I want you to understand me well. I am saying I will just choose myself this Khumalo young man that you suspect I am in love with and see if you will be happy. I will choose him and love him for you, I will indeed make you happy. It is now obvious Mother that father hits me because he thinks I love this young man. Oh I am thankful because both of you have chosen my groom," complained Nomusa not worried about what she said)

As the story progresses, Nomusa does exactly what she told her mother. She goes against the authority of her parents and falls in love with Thamsanqa. Unfortunately her unreasonable father forbids her to marry Thamsanqa. Out of the frustration caused by her father's refusal to acknowledge her love for Thamsanqa, Nomusa goes to town with the aim of easing the frustration she is experiencing. She was so mentally disturbed that she did not notice the bus that left her a paraplegic. It is observable from Nomusa's case that nothing is permitted to come between the love of two people. Freud (in Malcolm, 1981:9) describes the importance of sexual love for those who are still young and says:

Sexual love is undoubtedly one of the chief things in life, and the union of mental and bodily satisfaction in the enjoyment of love is one of its culminating peaks. ... Again, when a woman sues for love, to reject and refuse is a distressing part for a man to play; and, in spite of neurosis and resistance, there is an incomparable fascination in a woman of high principles who confesses her passion.

Nomusa is faced with a difficult problem because she has to suppress the love she has developed for Thamsanqa. She has announced her passion for him. Gumede wants to destroy this love and therefore conflict is unavoidable, because to reject and to refuse someone that you love is a very distressing part to play, as the above quotation suggests.

It is not only the victims that suffer from the consequences of the culture of forced and forbidden love. Parents too are also hard hit by the adverse effects of their own actions. Gumede prohibits Nomusa from marrying Thamsanqa but, at the same time, disregards his own father too. During the bride price negotiations, Gumede deviates from the normal tradition and demands that Thamsanqa's father be called so that he should witness the proceedings for himself. According to the IsiZulu custom the father of the groom does not form part of the negotiating team that is sent to the bride's home. Gumede does the unexpected and demands that Khumalo be called because he personally wants to talk to him. Kubheka describes Gumede's uncouth actions and says:

Wasuke uGumede wabhekana nomfowabo kaKhumalo, engaphenduli nalokhu okuxoxwayo, amtshela nje ukuthi akahambe aye ekhaya ngoba akukude ayobiza uyise womfana ufuna ukubonana naye mehlo, luyakhulunywa loludaba naye ukhona angezwa ngenzwabethi. Liphenduke ibandla elikhona limbukisise uGumede. Kutholakale ukuthi lento ayishoyo ulindele ukuthi mayenziwe (Kubheka:255).

(Gumede talked directly with Khumalo's brother, Gumede has not given a reply to the matter they were discussing, Gumede informed Khumalo's brother that he must go home because it is not far and call the father of the young man; he wants to see him with his naked eye, so that he should be present when they discuss this matter to listen for himself. All the people who were there turned their heads and took a careful look at Gumede. It was realised that he wanted his will to be carried out).

Gumede wants to see his will done. In the process he not only violates the cultural norm but he also violates the respect due to his father. Traditionally he is supposed to respect his father. It is awkward that he demands to be respected while he cannot respect his own father. Themba Gumede's obstinacy creates conflict between him and his father.

It is a traditional custom that when people come to pay the bride price the bride is called in to acknowledge them whether she knows the people or not. After noticing that Gumede is not prepared to do this his father suggests the implementation of this procedure.

Ikhehla laqhamuka ngombandela wokuthi uGumede kulungile akhulumele ukusindisa ingane yakhe olakeni kodwa kufanele ukuba ike ivele lengane evikelwayo kekuzwakale ukuthi yona iyabazi yini lababantu evikelwa kubo. Isiko lithi umcelwa kufanele asho ukuthi uyabazi yini abantu abazomcela, khona ezothi uma ethi akabazi babe ukudla kwesibhaxu emashingeni (Kubheka:258).

(The old man said that it is right for Gumede to talk on behalf of saving his child from poverty, but this child who is protected must also come and acknowledge whether she knows these people she is protected from. Tradition demands that the bride should state whether she knows the people who have come to request her hand in marriage, so that if she says she does not know them they should be beaten up).

After Khumalo's arrival, Gumede addresses the people who are gathered at his home. He tells them that Thamsanqa will never marry Nomusa:

“Kungabayini ukuba ngidedele ingane yami iye lapho ngingathandi ukuba iye khona kuyavela okuvelayo sengiyaxakwa nokuthi ngiya kanjani ukuyolekelela ingane yami? Phakathwayo kungavuka abaNguni bahambe emabaleni kunokuba ingane yami ingaya kwaKhumalo. Ngiyaphela lapho kangisenalo eledlula lelo” (Kubheka:262).

(“What would it be if I release my child to go to where I do not want her to go, and when there are problems I am unable even to go there to help my child? Phakathwayo, the abaNguni ancestors will be seen walking in if I allow my child to get married to the Khumalo family. I have finished talking, I do not have to say anything more”).

Gumede flatly forbids Nomusa to marry Thamsanqa. The unpleasant father to daughter conflict has changed Nomusa from being a respectful to an aggressive girl. Gumede's arrogant nature means that he cannot respect his own father. This also conveys the truth that men are unable to conform to the behavioural norms and standards they set for their children. It seems that men often have quite different norms, those that suit their male convenience.

3.4.2 Defiance of stereotypes in Kungenxa Kabani

Bhekokwakhe fights against his forced marriage. Cele wants Ntombiyethemba for his son. Cele wants to transfer his love for Ntombiyethemba to Bhekokwakhe. If he loves her, his son should love her too. Any genuine love between Bhekokwakhe and Lungile suffers tremendously

Bhekokwakhe is a very narcissistic person. Let us not forget that his name means "looking upon oneself." Narcissism is viewed as a personality disorder in psychoanalysis. Reber (1985:462) explains narcissism as:

A personality disorder characterised by an exaggerated sense of self-importance. ... preoccupation with fantasies of success, wealth, power, esteem or ideal love and inappropriate emotional reactions to the criticisms of others.

Bhekokwakhe does not want to consider his father's advice. He wants to pursue ideal love with Lungile because it is important to him. Self-importance plays a major role in his life. If he considers the issue of marriage, it probably will not be with the girl chosen by his father:

"Wena dade ngivele ngabona nje ukuthi lendaba uyazi ukusuka nokuhlala. Sengike ngayibona. Mina engikwalayo ukuba ngikhethelwe intombi okufanele ibe umkami" (Gcumisa:12).

("I have realised, my sister, that you know this matter from the beginning to the end. I have seen her. What I do not want is that a young woman should be chosen for me as my wife").

Customs, behavioural patterns, norms and values vary from society to society. They reflect the culture and the value system of a particular society. The environment is a source of pain and dissatisfaction in the lives of the victims of forced and forbidden love. The milieu in which the events take place is indispensable because it shapes the mental structure of the characters and this, to a great extent, affects their psychological being. Among the AmaZulu, respect, among other things, plays a vital role in binding the family together and also in determining the hierarchy or seniority of the members of the family. Children should respect one another but what is of great importance is that they should pay great respect to their elders, such as brothers, sisters and parents. Respect is mutual. It is not only the youth who should show respect to the elderly but the old should also do the same. Hence there is an IsiZulu saying that says, *Kuhlonishwa kabili*, which means that respect is two-fold.

Bhekokwakhe's defiance of his father's instructions stems from the fact that the culture of respect is not reciprocal in this story. It is one sided. It is commendable that children should give respect to their parents, but it should also be borne in mind that respect can have erosive and adverse

effects if it is not reciprocated, or if it is used as a means to tame, oppress or to put others in their rightful places. It is expected that as a child Bhekokwakhe should respect his father's word. Respect is used negatively as a means of oppression in this story and it evokes a negative and violent response from Bhekokwakhe. Respect is used under the guise of culture, rule and custom to force Bhekokwakhe to love a girl that he does not love.

Respect takes various forms. It can be oral, behavioural and physical. The pressure that Bhekokwakhe endures from his father makes him defy all forms of respect. This pressure is stored in Bhekokwakhe's unconscious mind and comes out in the form of a slip of his tongue. The unconscious, according to Freud, is that part of the brain which is not controlled by an individual. This is the domain of the psyche that encompasses the repressed id functions, the primitive impulses and desires, the memories, images and wishes that are too anxiety-provoking to be accepted into consciousness (Reber, 1985:799). Freud mentions three ways in which one can know about the existence of the unconscious. It is represented through dreams, paradoxes, slips of the tongue and free associations which take the form of jokes. After the arranged marriage has taken place, MaXimba asks her son if he has given some money to his wife. Bhekokwakhe replies to her in a manner that shows no respect for his mother. His reply reveals a slip of his tongue. It exposes what is repressed in his unconscious:

"Mntanami uti umphile nje imadlana umkakho?"

"Konke niyokuthola kubaba, Mama," kusho uBhekokwakhe.

"Qha bo, mntanami ngisho openyana abaqondene nomakoti."

"Ehene, konke lokho uyokuthola kubaba" (Gcumisa:86-87).

("My child, did you give some money to your wife?")

"You will get everything from father, Mother," said Bhekokwakhe.

"No, my child, I am referring to the money that belongs to the bride."

"Yes, you will get all that from father").

Bhekokwakhe tells his mother that his father must be responsible for the financial well being of Ntombiyethemba. She has been chosen by his father, so there is no need for him to take care of her. His father must see to her needs, not him. Bhekokwakhe's lack of respect is directly linked to his father's unreasonable actions, which seem to undermine him as a person who has a right to choose his own wife.

Bhekokwakhe never accepts Ntombiyethemba. He becomes very critical about everything she tries to do. This psychoanalytical symptom showed by Bhekokwakhe is called transference, which is defined generally as the passing on, or displacing or “transferring” of an emotion or affective attitude from one person onto another person or object (Reber:1985:785). Within psychoanalysis, this is an emotional state that consists of the displacement of feelings and attitudes applicable to other persons, usually one’s parents, siblings, or a spouse. Bhekokwakhe transfers the anger he feels for his father to Ntombiyethemba. She experiences unfair treatment and negative transference from her so called husband. He criticises the way in which she makes his bed and the way in which she irons his clothes:

“Kungabe kambe ukuphela kwendlela lena okungalungiswa ngayo umbhede?”

“Zi-ayinekile nje lezizingubo uma zinjena?”

“Awubheke! Ziwashuwe-ke lezizingubo uma zinjena? Nci, nci, nci ...!” kuqhuba uBhekokwakhe ngokusola (Gcumisa:90).

“Is this the only way to make up a bed?”

“Were these clothes ironed when they look like this?”

“Look at this! Were these clothes washed if they are like this?” complained Bhekokwakhe).

Ntombiyethemba is crucified for Cele’s actions. She also becomes a victim of Bhekokwakhe’s violent actions because she agreed to marry a man who never loved her. Besides the fact that Bhekokwakhe does not love Ntombiyethemba their personalities are too incompatible. Conflict would in any case occur. Bhekokwakhe is educated and Ntombiyethemba is an illiterate, traditional rural girl. They would never view things the same way.

The frustration that Bhekokwakhe suffers pressurises him to stay away from his home for a very long period. Conflict between him and his father sharpens when he comes home with Lungile to introduce her to his parents. He wants to show Cele and Ntombiyethemba that he will never change his mind. His parents do not accept Lungile. His mother asks:

“Niyini naye lona enihamba naye Bhekokwakhe?” kuphinda kubuza unina sakufudumala.

“E ... lona ... lona Mama umakoti wami ...” (Gcumisa:148).

“What is the relationship between you and this person you have brought along Bhekokwakhe?” her mother asks again with an angry tone.

“ Oh ... this ... this Mother is my bride ...”).

Cele cannot tolerate his son's actions and chases Lungile from his home. Bhekokwakhe responds harshly by leaving with Lungile:

“Phela uma umxosha, Baba, nami ngeke ngisale,” kusho uBhekokwakhe ehlehla nyovane nesikhwama eyophuma ngomnyango (Gcumisa:150).

“If you chase her away, Father, I will not remain behind,” said Bhekokwakhe, taking some steps back with his bag, reaching for the door).

The situation is such that there is nothing that will prohibit Bhekokwakhe from proceeding with his love for Lungile. As Freud (1986:107) puts it, “the id knows no judgement of value or morality.” The id is a dark, inaccessible portion of personality and if allowed to take too much control, it could lead human beings to destruction. It is a biological instinct that includes sexual and aggressive impulses at birth and it represents the total personality. It is evident from the above passage that the central point of conflict between Bhekokwakhe and his father is Ntombiyethemba. Compromise seems difficult between the two and this takes the conflict in the story a step further.

Conflict normally affects the behavioural patterns of individuals and it usually leads to further reactions on the part of the characters which can be analysed psychoanalytically. Bhekokwakhe is deeply hurt by his father's act in chasing Lungile. The conflict between the id, that is, his wanting Lungile to be accepted as his wife and the superego, that is, Bhekokwakhe's acceptance of Ntombiyethemba as his wife, drives Bhekokwakhe mad and he decides to leave with Lungile. His aggressive and arrogant nature is the result of the suppression of his feelings for Lungile. After this incident Bhekokwakhe arranges that his friend Mzimela accompanies him to pay the bride price for Lungile. According to the isiZulu custom the groom does not pay the bride price on his own, as in Bhekokwakhe's and Lungile's case. Bhekokwakhe appears determined to keep on violating any cultural obstacle on his way to achieve his goal, which is to marry Lungile. As Freud puts it, “the drives or wishes strive for instant discharge regardless of what they will meet within the world” (Jefferson & Robey:1991:146). Bhekokwakhe is bold and confident about his decision to marry Lungile:

“Bangabuye bathini yani phela ngoba ubaba wamlobola-ke owakhe umakoti mina owami engimlobolayo uLungile” (Gcumisa:160).

(“What else could they say because father paid the bride price for the bride that he has chosen, I will pay the bride price for the one that I have chosen, Lungile”).

Bhekokwakhe’s defiance of his parental authority causes him to suffer severe neurotic problems. Psycho-neurosis is an organic dysfunction that is normally related to the transgressing of distressing and painful feelings that one experiences. Reber (1985:471) stressing that psycho-neurosis indicates a causal role played by unconscious conflicts which evoke anxiety and lead to the use of defence mechanisms that ultimately produce the observed symptom. The constant headache that Bhekokwakhe suffers after his marriage to Ntombiyethemba is an indication of psycho-neurosis:

Uma eke walucabanga wayeze aphantswe yikhanda kuthi aliqhume lisakazeke. Wayeze aphunyuzwe ukuthola isithongwana. Ngenxa yokuphithana kwengqondo ngenxa yalesisimo ayekusona wagcina elingekile waqhabula etshwaleni besilungu. Wayethi wenzela ukuba athi ukuswakama ukuze akhohlwe yilesisimo ayebhekene naso (Gcumisa:60).

(When he had been thinking about this matter he suffered from a terrible headache. He would get relief by falling asleep. Because of the confusion caused by these circumstances he found himself in, he ended up tempted to take liquor. He did this with the hope of achieving happiness so that he could forget about this situation he was faced with”).

He also suffers from withdrawal symptoms. He tries to escape reality by taking too much alcohol, to the extent that it becomes detrimental to his state of life. Withdrawal, according to Reber (1985:831), is:

a pattern of behavior characterised by the person removing him or herself from normal day-to-day functioning with all its attendant frustrations, tensions, and disappointments. Here the sense is of a neurotic removal of self from normal social discourse, accompanied by uncooperativeness, **irresponsibility and often a reliance on drugs and alcohol** to facilitate this social remoteness (Emphasis mine).

Bhekokwakhe neglects his school work because of his drinking problem. Liquor consumption weakens him. He cannot pay enough attention to his school work anymore. He drinks liquor

during tea time and does not come back to work. At times he carries a bottle of liquor in his book case so that he can drink at school whenever an opportunity presents itself. Before his marriage to Ntombiyethemba, Bhekokwakhe was able to resist liquor and did not even take a drop of it:

Phela engakakhungathwa yilenkinga eyamholela kulesisilingo umsebenzi wakhe wayewenza ngokukhulu ukuzimisela. Kwakwala nalapho umsindo sekungubuhhomuhomu endaweni yokuphuzela anganaki nakunaka (Gcumisa:61).

(Before he was troubled by the problem that led to this temptation he performed his work with great determination. He would even ignore the noise that came out of the shebeen).

Bhekokwakhe could not face his problems alone. Consequently, he gets caught in a web of distortion and confusion and eventually indulges himself in liquor. His transformation from a hardworking teacher, who loved and respected his parents, into a vain, confused young man with distorted socio-cultural values is a result of parental suppression. This is a stressful episode in Bhekokwakhe's life. His ego is on the verge of disintegration. Mzimela, Bhekokwakhe's best friend, encourages him to console himself by taking more alcohol:

“Ungethuki Bheki ndoda yamadoda. Ungethuswa yini nje uma kwazi mina ukuthi usuphuza kanye nathi? Kungethi isimo okusona ngisazi kahle ...?” kududuza uMzimela

“Hheyi Mzi ndoda! Ayibangabikho enye indlela yokulinga ukudambisa imizwa yekhanda elingisukayo uma ngicabanga ngempilo yami ngaphandle kwalena” (Gcumisa:62).

(“Do not be scared, Bheki, man among men. Why should you be scared if it is me who knows that you now drink together with us? Isn't it me who knows the situation you are faced with ...?” Mzimela comforts him.

“Oh Mzi man! There was no other way to relieve the headache that troubles me when I think about my life except this one”).

It is Lungile who steps in to help Bhekokwakhe with his drinking problem. She points out to him that she does not like his deteriorating condition, which is caused by his drinking problem. She succeeds in helping Bhekokwakhe to give up liquor.

Lungile encounters the problem of having to end her love affair with Bhekokwakhe, has to marry the girl chosen by his father. Through a character like Lungile, Gcumisa conveys the stereotype

of educated women who deliberately and maliciously sabotage the happiness of other women in a male-dominated society. According to the norms and values of society it is expected that Lungile should put an end to her sexual relationship with Bhekokwakhe after he has informed her that his father wants him to marry another woman. Lungile does the unexpected. She continues to love Bhekokwakhe as if nothing has happened. This should clearly be seen as a deviation from the traditional norm. She feels that she also has the right to love Bhekokwakhe. Lungile commits herself more to Bhekokwakhe despite the fact that he is about to marry:

“Bheki ubukhona bami lapha bungubufakazi bothando olumsulwa nolujulileyo enginalo ngawe. Kumele ukuba usubonile ukuthi yize usuganiwe enye intombi, yalotsholwa, anginyakazi. Futhi angizothi nyaka,” kusho uLungile (Gcumisa:68).

(“Bheki, my being here is evidence of the pure genuine love that I have for you. You must have realised that even though you are married, to another young woman, I am not shaken. And I will not move,” said Lungile).

This is culturally viewed as deviant behaviour. The writer conveys the popular stereotype that educated women have no respect for the marriage of other women. When Ntombiyethemba arrives at Empangeni and finds Bhekokwakhe with Lungile she does not hesitate in throwing punches at her. Lungile does not fold her arms and accept the assault. She fights back. These women fight because each of them believes that Bhekokwakhe is hers. Ntombiyethemba becomes hysteric about the whole situation. Hysteria is a kind of emotional outburst and was viewed as a psychiatric female disorder. Reber (1985:337) says; “hysteria was, until relatively recently, assumed to be solely a dysfunction of women and caused by a wandering uterus. He continues to explain that the psychoanalytic theory has helped in providing a more reasonable etiology but the link between gender and the disorder has not been completely severed; males were rarely so diagnosed. Ntombiyethemba’s emotional outburst is viewed as hysterical in the following lines:

“Wena ntombazane ufunani lapha endodeni yami?” ubhekise kuLungile lapho useluThukela uqobo lwalo. Washo wafingqa imikhono yelokwe ayeligqokile eshutheka namacala alo kwayekugqoke ngaphansi. Waqonda kuLungile wafike wazithela zambili zalandelana izibhakela kuLungile kwawela phansi konke ayekuphethe (Gcumisa:169).

(“You, girl, what do you want from my husband?” she asked Lungile and she was very angry like the Thukela river. She folded her arms and the hem of her dress inside what she was wearing underneath. She went to Lungile and threw two punches at her and all the things Lungile was carrying fell down).

Such a behavioural reaction is bound to occur in a society where women are subjected to unreasonable patriarchal control. Ntombiyethemba is driven mad by the unpleasant circumstances of her arranged marriage. Gilbert and Gubar (1984:53) describe the relationship between hysteria and patriarchal oppression when they say:

Recently, in fact, social scientists and social historians like Jessie Barnard, Phyllis Chesler, Naomi Weisstein and Pauline Bart have begun to study the ways in which patriarchal socialization literally makes women sick, both physically and mentally. Hysteria, the disease with which Freud so famously began his investigations into dynamic connections between the *psyche* and *soma*, is by definition a “female disease, ...”

The fight between Lungile and Ntombiyethemba reveals that women’s lives revolve around jealousy and passion. Ntombiyethemba has been passive throughout the story but the moment she finds Bhekokwakhe with another woman, nobody needs to tell her what to do. Jealousy and anger overcome her and she attacks Lungile. It also shows that arrogant behaviour is unavoidable when a person is angry. Viewed in this light, this aberrant behaviour exhibited by Ntombiyethemba, indicates beyond doubt that social environment has a tremendous influence on the behaviour of characters. Importantly, the words used by the character portrays much of the personality of the speaker. Ntombiyethemba is arrogant and this has been concealed by the fact that Cele took the initiative to solve her problems. Like many other writers, Gcumisa, indicates the stereotype that women are irrational beings who fight and even kill one another for a man.

3.4.3 Deviation from the norms in Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi

Ngubane deviates from the stereotypical presentation of female characters as found by other African male writers. The view stated by Jones & Palmer, (1987:2) that “... it is not true that all male writers have been unsympathetic towards women, or have lacked the ability to present truly complex women, or have merely given us stereotypes,” is confirmed by Ngubane.

Ngubane presents us with life-like female characters in his story. Bajwayele, the heroine of the story, believes she must fight for what she believes is right. She is a victim of forced love. Her happiness could not be true and genuine if it is based on false love. She is driven to marry Zulumacansi after she has endured severe sjambokings from her father. She is depicted as a

rebellious young woman who cannot be forced to marry Zulumacansi, whom she never loved. Bajwayele stays only a few days at her new home and escapes to Benoni:

“Uphi umakoti? Uphi umakoti?” Phinde uBajwayele. Bagijime baye emfuleni, nalapho bamfice engekho. Bathi abanye uyotheza. Sifike isikhathi sokubuya, do umakoti! Baqale bakhombise ubuso obumuncu bonke manje lapha ekhaya. Kuthunywe abantu baphuthume ngako Manamuza ukuyobika lomhlola. Bayabuya nakhona bathi akazange alubeke ngalapho uBajwayele (Ngubane:65).

(“Where is the bride? Where is the bride?” Bajwayele was nowhere. They ran to the river, and they did not find her there. Others said she had gone to fetch firewood. The time for her to come back arrived, the bride was not there! They all started getting worried in this home. People were sent to rush to Manamuza to report this disaster. When they came back they reported that people at Manamuza’s home said Bajwayele had never arrived there).

Bajwayele could not accept her marriage to Zulumacansi, and she is depicted as a non-conformist. Bajwayele could not suppress her rejection of Zulumacansi, yet she cannot cope with the conditions in which she finds herself. She must make a choice between Zulumacansi and her own life. She chooses her own way and runs away from Zulumacansi’s home to Benoni. Unlike many girls who persevered in such marriages Bajwayele defies her father’s coercive actions. After a long search, her father finds her at Benoni. On her arrival back home, Zulumacansi comes to fetch her back to his home. This time she does not even stay for a day. She runs away from her married home for the second time during the night. Bajwayele’s protest against forced love is representative of the frustrations and the bitter lives of the thousands of girls who have found themselves in this predicament. Bajwayele’s second disappearance becomes a problem for both Manamuza and Zulumacansi because Zulumacansi put the blame on Manamuza for Bajwayele’s first disappearance. Her second disappearance renders both men helpless:

“Nami baba, ungibona ngivuke ebusuku nje, ngithi ngize kuwena. UBajwayele lapha akasaziwa ukuthi ushonephi. Sesimfune sagijima yonke indawo kepha kasimtholi!”

“Awu, usebalekile futhi mkhwenyana?” (Ngubane:176)

(“As you see me having waken up in the middle of the night, I decided to come to you. Bajwayele has disappeared and no one knows where she has gone to. We have looked all over the place but we could not find her!”

“Oh, she ran away again, my son-in-law?”)

It is not only the victims of forced love who violate the norms of society. Those who also benefit from it find themselves committing actions that are culturally reprehensible. After Bajwayele's first disappearance Zulumacansi physically attacks Manamuza. The writer describes this event as follows:

Ekuthatheni kwakhe uZulumacansi abese eyigaxile imvubu kuManamuza; inhliziyo isikhumbula ukuthi yilo lelixhegwana elimonele yena izinto zisamhambela kahle. Aphakamise izandla uManamuza athi: "Awu, mkhenyana! Pho sengingasale sengibulawe nguwe mntakababa? Yini enginayo ongeze wayithatha? Yona intombazane uthi ngingeyilande lapho ikhona?" (Ngubane:77)

(Zulumacansi starts beating Manamuza with a sjambok; his heart remembers that it is this old man that spoiled his things when they were going well. Manamuza raises his hands and says: "Oh, my son-in-law! Why do you have to kill me, my father's child? What is it that I have and you cannot take? Do you think I will not go and fetch the girl where she is?")

What is ironic is that Manamuza did not listen to his daughter when she told him that Zulumacansi was an arrogant man. This story presents the case of a man who forces his daughter to marry a man that he himself is afraid of. His daughter must persevere for as long as this would benefit her father. Manamuza himself could not face Zulumacansi but forced his daughter to stay for the rest of her life with the man that he himself fears so much. According to traditional custom the groom must respect his father-in-law. He is culturally not supposed to lift his hand against his father-in-law. According to tradition Zulumacansi should have been taken to the traditional court where he would be reprimanded and be fined heavily for his aberrant behaviour towards his father-in-law. Surprisingly, Zulumacansi is not taken to the traditional court because it is not only Manamuza who is afraid of him but all the people of Buthunqe, and prior to this incident with Manamuza he had just won a court case against his brother-in-law, Masovenyeza. This might be the reason why Manamuza offers himself to go and look for Bajwayele.

3.4.4 Cultural deviation in Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami

The rebellious behaviour of many female protagonists found in novels written by African men seems to be directly linked to the female struggle for freedom. Time and again in these novels we encounter women characters who have internalized the clash between personal freedom and

African societal values. Ntombana Khumalo is one such character. She finds herself in direct confrontation with an uncompromising cultural milieu. She is in the predicament where she has to leave her boyfriend, Magwagwa, and marry Mbandlanyika. Her marriage is arranged by her father, Khumalo, and his childhood friend, Mbandlanyika's father, Mabalengwe Ndlovu. After Ntombana has received the message from his father through her mother, that her father wants her to marry Mbandlanyika, she sends her mother back to her father with the message that she will never marry Mbandlanyika as long as she lives:

“Mina ngithanda ukukutshela ukuthi mina angeke ngize ngigane isilwane ngisibhekile. Nami nginenhliziyo ethandayo, nekhethayo engakufuni. Mina angisiso isishimane sentombi. Uma uthanda nawe ngingakutshela nje ukuthi sengizikhethela othandwa yinhliziyoyami ngoba INHLIZIYO INGUGO WAMI. Akekho omunye umuntu engingamgana ngoba ngithunywe ngomunye umuntu. Ungahamba nje uyomazisa lokho mama ngeke ngize ngikwenze uma ngisaphila. Uma sengifile ngiyomgana-ke lowomfokazi othandwa ngubaba.” kwasho uNtombana qede zehla izinyembezi zagingqika ezihlathini (Mkize:21).

(“I would like to tell you that I will not marry an animal. I also have a heart that is capable of loving, that can choose what it doesn't want. I am not a young woman who is not being courted. If you like I can tell you that I have already chosen the one who is loved by my heart because THE HEART IS MY DECIDING FACTOR. There is no other person I can marry because I am sent by someone else. You can go and tell him that, mother, I will not do that while I am still alive. When I am dead it is then that I am going to marry this man chosen by father,” said Ntombana and after that she cried and tears rolled down her cheeks).

Ntombana does not show the traditional woman's image. She chooses to pursue personal love and individual freedom. She strongly objects to her father's authority. The id is at war with the superego. She wants to stick to the man she has chosen for herself. She rejects Mbandlanyika for his ugliness and because she believes that she has the right to reject a person that she does not love. But traditional life does not permit such individualistic values and the state of balance of women's traditional identities has been upset through the turmoil that has been created by modernization. Jones and Palmer (1987:17) states that this means that the New Woman in Africa often wavers helplessly between her allegiance to her culture, her African identity, and her aspirations for freedom and self-fulfilment. Ntombana continues to defy her father's instructions and informs him that no one has the right to choose for her whom she should love:

“Baba,” kwasho uNtombana esaphukule umlomo, “nami-ke ngiyakwazisa ukuthi kusukela khona manje ngeke ngize ngimthande uMbandlanyika. Selingelami-ke iliba, sengiliqomile nalo langiqoma. Ngibulale baba!” (Mkize:49)

(“Father,” said Ntombana with her pouting mouth, “I also inform you that as from now I will never love Mbandlanyika. The grave is mine, I have chosen it and it also chose me. Kill me father!”)

Female protagonists, like Ntombana, in these novels appear as torn, and confused in a milieu of cross-cultural conflict. Central to such heroism lies the real source of conflict implicit in African feminism, because personal freedom is by definition an individualistic ideology which is in contrast with the communal nature of African society. African heroines are faced with this dichotomy. Communalism implies a standard value of submergence, rather than of self-realization.

To fight for the attainment of personal freedom Ntombana violates all the taboos she is expected to revere as a bride in her matrimonial home. Freud, in his Beyond the Pleasure Principle, emphasises the fact that the strongest socialization source in the life of the child is the family. He says that each human child has to be socialised with the aim of incorporating the norms, values, attitudes as well as the taboos of the society within which he is living. On the day that was supposed to be her wedding day, Ntombana shows extreme bravery and defies all the taboos she should respect as a bride. She smears the upper part of her body with children’s faeces, and smelling as bad as she does goes out half naked to the centre of Ndlovu’s kraal. She calls all the elderly members of the Ndlovu homestead by their real names. According to the isiZulu custom known as *ukhlonipha* the bride should avoid certain words and names as a form of respect towards her in-laws. Ntombana’s behaviour is viewed as the most serious cultural violation:

“Maye webantu! Maye webantu!” kwasho uNtombana esho empongoloza ngezwi eliphakeme, “Kodwa ngabe ngivelelwa yini nje? Mina ngigane umfana kaMabalengwe? Mina Ntombana ngigane umfana womthakathi uMabalengwe? Umthakathi uMabalengwe aphakelwe yimi impela? Angithi sithi silele uMabalengwe abe egibele imfene?”

“Mina Ntombana ngihloniphe abafowabo kaMabalengwe oNqakamatshe nawoMbilikicane? Phinde nikubone lokho! UNtombana futhi ngeke asiphakele lesiya salukazana esidonse imixhiliba lapha exhibeni! Kusho mina-ke ntombi yaseMantungweni uma ningazi!” (Mkize,100)

“Ubani othi uNtombana uzohamba ngemuva kwezindlu zikaMabalengwe? Konje nilindele ukuba ngihloniphe indlu kaMabalengwe ngiyibize ngokuthi incumba? Ngeke ngikusho lokho mina!”

“Wo ngiyanzwa nibabaza ukuthi ngiwabizelani amanzi ngoba uyise kaMabalengwe nguManzini! Konje nilindele ukuba ngithi amacubane noma amandambi noma amajiliba noma amada? Ngeke akwenze lokho uNtombana!”

“Konje nilindele ngihloniphe igama lenja ngoba uyisemkhulu kaMabalengwe kunguZinjaziyayikhonkotha? Nginyanidabukela ngoba uNtombana ngeke akwenze lokho nanini!”

“Niyababaza, ngoba nithi angiwahloniphisile ngani amahlombe kanye nekhanda? Ngizohlonipha bani lapha emzini kaMabalengwe? Yekani amabele namahlombe kanye nekhanda kuthole ilanga!”

“Mina Ntombana, ngingadli phambi kukaMabalengwe? Ingani ngizidlela ukudla kwami nje? Wo! Ngiyanzwa nibabaza ngoba ngibiza ukudla ngoba unina kaMabalengwe kunguNokudla! Konje nilindele ukuba ngibize ukudla ngokuthi ukunkiba? Ngeke ngize ngikwenze lokho! Niyezwa? Nazi izinkobe zami ngizozidla phambi kwakhe uMabalengwe lowaya” (Mkize:101).

“WeMabalengwe!” kwasho uNtombana ebhilita, “Mina angisiye umalokazane wakwakho! Ngidedele wena Mabalengwe! Ngidedele-bo!” (Mkize:102)

(“Oh people! Oh people!” said Ntombana shouting with a loud voice, “What is it that is happening to me? I should marry Mabalengwe’s son? I, Ntombana, should marry a son of Mabalengwe, a witch. Should I really dish out food for Mabalengwe, who is a witch? Is it not that when we are sleeping that Mabalengwe rides a baboon?”)

(“I, Ntombana should respect Mabalengwe’s brothers called Nqakamatshe and Mbikicane? Never, that will never happen! Ntombana will not dish out food for that old woman who stays in that hut! It is me who is talking, the girl of the amaNtungwa if you do not know!”)

(“Who says Ntombana will walk behind Mabalengwe’s houses? Are you expecting me to respect Mabalengwe’s house and call it with the hlonipha term *incumba*. [*Incumba* is a hlonipha term for a house] I will never say that!”)

("Oh, I can hear you complaining about why I call water by the name of *amanzi* (water) because Mbalengwe's father is Manzini! Are you expecting me to call the water by its hlonipha name *amacubane* or *amandambi* or *amajiliba* or *amada*? [*Amacubane, amandambi, amajiliba* and *amada* are all hlonipha words for water]. Ntombana will never do that!")

("Are you expecting me to respect the name of the dog because Mabalengwe's forefather is Zinjaziwayikhonkotha? I feel pity for you because Ntombana will never ever do that!")

("You are astonished, because you are asking why I am not covering my shoulders and my head? Who am I going to respect in this house of Mabalengwe? Leave the breasts and the shoulders to bask in the sun!")

(" I, Ntombana, should not eat in front of Mabalengwe? Why should I not enjoy my food? Oh! I can hear you complaining why I call food by the name *ukudla* because Mabalengwe's mother is Nokudla! Are you expecting me to call food with its hlonipha term *ukunkiba*? I will never do that! Do you understand? Here is my cooked mealies I will eat them in front of Mabalengwe").

("You Mabalengwe!" said Ntombana acting in an exaggerated manner. I am not your bride! Release me Mabalengwe! Release me!")

Ntombana's erratic behaviour helps her reclaim the freedom she initially planned with her mother. Her dismissal from Ndlovu's kraal affords her the opportunity to be available to Magwagwa. Ntombana's behaviour is not at all surprising, considering the fact that women internalize a subservient role from childhood. Given Ntombana's home history, of an abusive father, a lot of repression and anger has built up inside her. The only way to revenge herself and to make her voice heard is to violate all taboos and this will certainly destroy the wishes of her father. Her violations are directed towards the people who have coerced her into this undesirable marriage. In the light of Ntombana's actions of defiance, one can thus dismiss right away the stereotype of the docile, traditional African woman who mutely and passively surrenders to the whims and dictates of the African man. The very idea of the violation of cultural norms suggests some measure of consciousness, that certain traditional cultures are oppressive when it comes to women. The power to counteract male dominance points to the fact that women cannot be subjugated for ever.



3.5 Conclusion

Running throughout these novels which present the cultures of forced, arranged and forbidden love, is the recurrent refrain that African women and the cause of womanhood have been very inadequately served by African male writers in their works. What we would like to reiterate here is the notion that the black woman's current subordinate role is a traditional African social phenomenon. The global picture presented by these novels contests the idea that African cultures are not oppressive.

A text in general is viewed as a reflection of history and of prior meanings. The author is the sole creator of a text, but the writer is not the sole creator of the meaning. Conflicting cultural meanings flow from the characters as the created social beings who thereby reproduce and perhaps reflect history. If African culture was not oppressive, writers could have striven to maintain this notion in their writings, so as to fight against infiltration by Western culture. Mtuze (1994:4) opposes the claim that Western culture is responsible for the current subordinate position of women. He points out that: "Black male patriarchy existed long before whites arrived in the Cape and is built into much of black culture and tradition." It has become a common habit to blame everything that deviates from African culture Western civilization. Seemingly there is little evidence preserved in literature about the traditional social conditions of pre-colonial times.

The preceding analysis of the novels has revealed that literature is both a highly mediated reflection of a prior reality and a potent construction of it. It has also been indicated that women's silencing is the effect of her relegation to the private, domestic sphere.

The heroines in these novels are the champions of change and justice and they inspire other women to fight for their rights. This chapter has indicated that our African culture does not cater for individualism. The culture of silence that dominates African society does not offer women the opportunity to express their ideas about being a woman in African society. It has been observed that a woman is forever expected to keep a low profile in order to maintain her dignity as a mother. A woman should be a good example to her nation throughout her life. She is supposed to be the real Mother Africa. Miriam Tlali (in Jones & Palmer, 1987:49) attests to this notion:

“It is a problem when men want to call you Mother Africa and put you on a pedestal, because then they want you to stay there forever without asking your opinion-and unhappy you if you want to come down as an equal human being!”

The heroines in the novels are representative of two kinds of youth. Ntombiyethemba represents the youth that accepts the social norms and parental control as the sole destiny of their lives. The so called faithful youth respect their parents, wishes and do not rebel against them. Viewing Ntombiyethemba's behaviour in this light, one can postulate that she propagates the stereotype that every girl should obey the authority of the parents even if this means losing one's individual freedom.

The second category of youth is represented by the resistance hero and heroines: Bhekokwakhe, Nomusa, Bajwayele and Ntombana. These women, especially Bajwayele and Ntombana, are the epitomes of women's resistance and revolution. They clearly represent the new breed of women. They have risen above the challenges that confronted them. They refuse to accept the dictatorship of their parents. Their fate is not in the hands of their parents as in Ntombiyethemba's case. Their rebellious behaviour is an outcome of their oppressive parental control. These heroines, however, managed to outwit their adversaries by resisting and destroying the male dominance that prohibited them from attaining their individual freedom.

The above discussion also highlighted the relationship between people's names and sexual roles. It has been illustrated that names of male characters are endowed with powerful masculine and aggressive qualities. This is in contrast with the names of female characters, that reveal less power and are mostly inclined to indicate submissive feminine roles. The relationship between literary onomastics and psychoanalysis has been clearly underlined by indicating the psychology of these names. Characters behave and live according to their names. The fact that they cannot escape the fate that is determined by their names, means that they are prisoners of their names.

The effects of patriarchal domination which strip women of their rights to choose their marriage partners, together with the psychological impact of names are dealt with in the section which discuss the violation of stereotypes. This part of the study indicates the relationship that exists between a person and the environment. The psychoanalytical behaviours of the characters are

mostly determined by their social environment. It has been illustrated, too, that a hostile environment stimulates violent behaviours by the characters. Therefore, the violation of stereotypes by the characters indicates a strong relationship between the characters actions and their environment.



CHAPTER 4

EXPLORING THE THEMES OF FORCED AND FORBIDDEN LOVE

But all great artists have a theme, an idea of life profoundly felt and founded in some personal and compelling experience. This theme then finds confirmation and development in new intuition. The development of the great writer is the development of his [her] theme—the theme is part of him [her] and has become the cast of his [her] mind and character

(Fisher, 1980:1)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the themes of forced and forbidden love as the central ideas in the novels under scrutiny. The exploration of these themes is aimed at their critical examination which will expose other secondary themes inherent in them. Discussions about theme cannot be totally separated from the message that we as readers infer from a text. A text may have one theme which is the central idea and simultaneously communicate various messages which are associated with the impression about life that a reader gets from a text. Our purpose here is, therefore, to go beyond the discussion of the central themes, i.e, forced and forbidden love, and uncover the various hidden communications in the texts. The exploration of these central themes demonstrates in multiple ways the uncontrollable divergencies of the content or the subject matter. Finnegan (1976:377) puts it aptly when she says: “of course, even then we need to remember that, as in the case of written literature, there can be no final definition of the purpose and use of oral [written] literature.” We therefore discard the idea of a single definite theme or meaning and, suggest that multiple meanings can be ascribed to one text. Belsey (in Warhol & Herndl, 1993:601) makes a significant contribution to the idea of multiple meanings by stating that:

Instead it becomes *plural*, open to rereading, no longer an object for passive consumption but an object of work by the reader to produce meaning.

The above quotation foregrounds the shift of emphasis from the writer, as the individual speaker about the text to the reader as the producer of multiple meanings. The text is no longer restricted to a single, harmonious authoritative reading. Benstock (1987:18) complements Warhol’s suggestion by asserting that: “language can never be confined to its mooring, language slips and slides away from intended

meanings to arrive at thoroughly unexpected destinations.” It is evident that writers and their reactions do not write stories for the sake of story telling but they do so with the intention of sharing ideas and other life experiences with the reader. Hence Finnegan (1976:377) affirms that:

Amid all the theorizing about the possible functions of stories there is one point which, it seems, is often overlooked. This is the likelihood that within a culture stories are likely to have many functions. They will vary with the content and tone ...

Jones and Palmer (1987:1) takes this point a little further and states that: “the African writer as we have come to know him is inevitably a public figure adopting a public stance, functioning as the eye, the conscience and at times the intelligence of his people, assuming the role of a prophet or sage or seer.” This view suggests that a writer is someone who has an important role to play in society. Besides being observant about what is happening around him, he informs people about various aspects human about life and invites them to share in his philosophy of life by writing a literary work of art. Manyaka (1995:133) concurs with Jones when he says: “it is the duty of ‘every poet’ to let his fellow countrymen see, hear and observe things around him.” He adds that by so doing, the poet is also fulfilling one of those tasks performed by poets of being the ear and eye of society. The poet or any writer then, is an eye opener to many. His writings draw attention to various salient issues in society.

As defined in chapter one, theme can be regarded as what a piece of action “stacks up to”, the interpretation of persons and events and the unifying view of life that is presented by a text. More important is the idea that theme is related to the subject of the discourse as well as the interpretation of life presented by the work itself. Relevant here is the comment by Pretorius and Swart (1982:4) who believe that theme is “the interpretation of life as conveyed by the story as a whole.” This comment emphasises that meaning is not readily available to the reader. Readers must read the whole story in order to be able to uncover its hidden or its multiple meanings. This implies that in order to arrive at the theme of any literary work, the work concerned must be considered in its entirety.

Love is the central idea in all the novels under scrutiny. It is divided into two broad categories, viz. forced and forbidden love. There are sub-themes that are derived from the themes of forced and the forbidden love respectively. The selected novels explicitly deal with the dilemma in which youthful

people, especially young women, find themselves because of the practice of forced and forbidden love that often results in forced, arranged and forbidden marriages. Most of the secondary themes are directed to the larger society, but there are those that specifically address the universal cries of women. These include themes such as submissiveness and abandonment. Other themes include ideas as: forced love does not prosper, forbidden love yields catastrophic results, oppression, child marriage, discrimination, protest, freedom, that love initiated through the use of love charms does not succeed and that the obstinate die in obstinacy .

4.2 Major themes

The question of forced love and arranged marriages seems to suggest that in African tradition a woman, or a man for that matter, is not considered whole if she/he is not married. Both themes, forced and forbidden love, confirm the significance of love and marriage in a person's life. Marriage is still regarded as highly important in African culture. Mbiti (1969:133) demonstrates this notion by saying:

For African peoples, marriage is the focus of existence. It is the point where all the members of a given community meet: the departed, the living and those yet to be born. ... Marriage is a drama in which everyone becomes an actor or actress and not just a spectator. Therefore, marriage is a duty, a requirement from the corporate society, and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate. Otherwise, he who does not participate in it is a curse to the community, he is a rebel and a lawbreaker, he is not only abnormal but 'under-human.'

Mbiti's comment highlights the importance of marriage. It stresses that marriage is not an option but a necessity. According to this statement society discriminates against the unmarried and views them as a curse, abnormal and law-breaking citizens. Society attaches great respect to a married person while most shun the divorced and the unmarried. Nobody likes to be viewed as abnormal or as a curse by his/her community. It is society's expectation that all people should get married and participate in the institution of marriage. According to the above statement marriage is compulsory.

4.2.1 Forced love/arranged marriage does not prosper

The theme of forced love encompasses preferred and arranged marriages. In IsiZulu an arranged

marriage is known as *ukuganiselana*. Forced love or marriage can be defined as the type of love that comes into being against the will of one of the spouses involved. The theme of forced love conveys the thought that it is not always possible for a man or a woman to marry the person he/she loves. This theme deals with young men and women who find themselves in the predicament of being forced to marry a man or woman they do not love. There are various reasons one can assume to be the cause of forced, arranged or preferential marriages. These reasons range from economic, social, and religious to cultural aspects. This culture involves the selection of mates by parents, which was one of the many functions performed by the traditional extended family. Odetola (1983:20) explains as follows:

Traditionally and ideally under the extended family system, the selection of mates was an integral part of the collective responsibility of the extended kin group. ... The marriage was therefore arranged through the orders of the parents and the words of the go-between. Another important aspect of mate selection in the traditional extended family was the fact that a wedding was not considered as a matter between two individuals based on mutual compatibility and life-long companionship but rather a conjugation between two families.

We can infer from the above explanation that in the traditional family it was the duty of the parents to initiate and conceal the marriage arrangements. Nothing is mentioned about the prospective couple. Nevertheless, there was a good intention behind the whole selection process, which is the viewing of marriage as a union between two families rather than a relationship between two individuals. The arranged marriage extends the relationship beyond the two individuals to include other family members as well.

Ngubane in Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi (1985:55) explains the culture of *ukuganiselana* by using one of the women characters, KaMemunce. She explains it to Bajwayele as follows:

“Kuliqiniso futhi ukuthi kulisiko lakithi elihle ukuba ingane ikhonjiswe umuntu ophilile, ingazilahli ehuzwini elizodlala ngayo.”

(“It is also true that it is our beautiful custom that a child be shown a person who is well off, in order to avoid that she ends up with a hooligan that will ill-treat her”).

The above extract conveys the good intention of the culture of *ukuganiselana*. Forced and arranged marriages are viewed as offspring of forced love. The practice of forced and arranged marriages seems

to foster the idea that a woman's life is not whole without a man and also that a man's life is not complete without a woman. O' Barr (in Jones & Palmer, 1987:63) asserts that:

The issue is most often discussed in terms of whether and how women are social beings in their own right or whether they 'need a man' to be considered whole.

The tradition of forcing a child to marry a man or woman that he/she does not love clearly reflects the way in which men in particular abuse their powerful positions in society either as rulers of their nations, or as heads of their families. It shows how men transfer the abuse of power in the public sphere, to their family unit. Mseleku puts it nicely when he says: "the texts move away from men's abuse of power in 'the public sphere', to men's abuse of their power as the 'head' of the family in the 'private domain' (1996:54). Three of the selected novels, i.e., Kungenxa Kabani, Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi and Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami, convey the message that forced love does not succeed.

Potash (Hay & Stichter, 1995:83) indicates that in some places and among some families an arranged or forced marriage is used to benefit the marriage arranger. In virtually all African societies, traditional marriage is confirmed by the payment of bride price by the husband and his close relatives, to the bride's father and his close relatives. Presumed beneficiaries are men, especially fathers. This is more likely to occur in hierarchical societies or in societies with emergent stratification, where marriage can be used to consolidate power. It is evident that economic status is one other influential factor which impelled fathers to force their daughters to marry a man with plenty of cattle. The selected novels indicate that most men who enter into marriage arrangements of this nature want to fill their kraals with the cattle is acquired through bride price. Such men do not consider the fact that a marriage should be a successful union. The girl becomes an economic commodity which will enable the father to collect as many cattle as he can to fill his kraal. In some cases arranged and forced marriages occur for good reasons. Parents force their children into marriage because they want to save themselves the embarrassment of having old and unmarried children in their homes. They take it upon their shoulders to make marriage arrangements for their children.

Kungenxa Kabani, a novel by Gcumisa, indicates the latter point beyond any imaginable doubt. Cele is the initiator of his son's marriage because he is the one who raises the subject. He believes that his son is of age and should get himself a wife. We should bear in mind that Cele is a traditional man. The issue of forced love in Gcumisa's novel is purely based on cultural grounds. There is no economic gain

for Cele in this marriage. Instead, as a traditional father, he believes that he should incur all the expenses with regard to the payment of the bride price for his son's wife. In traditional societies where the traditional way of life is still practised there is nothing wrong with this. Odetola (1983:21) makes an important observation by stating that in the extended patriarchal family, authority resides in the father. He further explains the fact that the head of the family, the father in this case, has absolute control over the family and over the family's economic, social, religious and political functions. Odetola believes that forced love, arranged marriage and even the payment of the bride price by the father maintains the status quo. Hence he says:

As a result of the position of the father, he plays a prominent role in the selection of mates for the young members of the family; he pays and receives bride-price, and he is responsible for the marriage (ceremony) expenses and the general expenses for the upkeep of the family. He is therefore both respected and feared (1983:21).

Cele compels Bhekokwakhe to marry Ntombiyethemba because as the head of the KwaDlaphanyeke homestead he has the customary right to do this. Bhekokwakhe cannot do as he wishes in his father's homestead. Cele is prepared to pay the bride price and, therefore, sees no need for his son to maintain that he is not ready for marriage:

"Ishumi lonke lamabheka nenkomo eyodwa kanina ayoshaywa yimina Bhekokwakhe," kuchaza uCele egcizelela ..." (Gcumisa:4).

("Ten herds of cattle and the one cow for the mother will be paid by me Bhekokwakhe," Cele explains and emphasises ...").

Bhekokwakhe is driven by his domineering, chauvinistic father to marry a girl he does not love. Cele practises forced love beyond the boundaries of his homestead. In his patriarchal traditional view, it is right for him even to court a wife for his son and to force him to court the girl that he, as his father, has identified as a good wife. He cannot conceal his love for Ntombiyethemba. Let us capture him telling his friend, Zondi, about the courting incident:

"Lo mfana wakho ibisimqome eyeshele nini?" kubuza uZondi.

"Wo, hhiya, ayikaze imqome. Phela ubeyeshelwa yimina siqu. Yimina futhi engiyiqashayo."

"Yebo?"

"Angiyithandi okwalapha! Into undodana nje lona wami ubethimula ethi ukuganwa akakakufuni"(Gcumisa:19).

("Your son is in love with her, and when did he court her?" Zondi asks.

"Oh, no, she never fell in love with him. I personally courted her for him. It is also me who is paying the bride price."

"Is that so?"

"I love her very much! It is my son who was protesting that he was not ready for marriage").

Cele cannot suppress his feelings for Ntombiyethemba. He forcibly proposes to her in her father's house. He is proud to tell his son that he has already courted her on his behalf:

"Noyise wayo uVikinduku noma sesiké saqhethisana nasenkundleni yakomkhulu nje, esengimangalele ngokuyidlalisa ngikweshelala kuyona ekhaya kubo ..." (Gcumisa: 2-3).

("Her father Vikinduku laid a charge against me at the chief's tribal court, charging me with courting her on your behalf at her home ...").

In order for Cele to be able to see her around his home, his son must marry her. His id drives him to press Bhekokwakhe to marry Ntombiyethemba, so that his wishes can be realised. We recall that the id seeks immediate and complete satisfaction of its drives without considering anything but its own immediate pleasure. This immediate requirement of the satisfaction of the drives indicates that the id is not capable of any afterthought, self-reflection or planning. Cele loves Ntombiyethemba in such a way that he cannot think properly and never considers the consequences of his actions. The fact that he cannot wait for an appropriate time or place to court her, indicates clearly that he wants immediate satisfaction. Cele is portrayed as a traditional autocrat. Bhekokwakhe has no right to do as he wishes in his father's homestead but has to abide by his father's choice. When he realises that Bhekokwakhe is reluctant to do his will, Cele goes to the extreme of verbally instructing him to court Ntombiyethemba:

"Uma ungafuni ukuganwa yiqomise-ke intombi kaVikinduku. Yiqomise-ke!" Sekusho uyise sakunengwa (Gcumisa:4).

("If you do not want to get married court Vikunduku's young woman. Court her!" says Cele this with an annoyed tone).

Culture reveals man's essential nature. Cele is a staunch traditionalist. He does not expect his son to disagree with him in any matter. He is not only forcing his son to marry a girl he does not love, but

he is also forcing Ntombiyethemba to marry a man she does not love, a man who has never courted her, a man she is never sure will love her. Although he is also aware that Ntombiyethemba is not a beautiful girl he convinces his son that he will also come to love her because she has beautiful legs.

“Futhi angingabazi ukuthi nawe uzoyithanda. Ithi kanti ayigabise ngabuhle nje obutheni kepha ibe yintombi ziphelele. Inyathela ngabantwana ngiqinisile,” kuchaza uCele (Gcumisa:2).

(“I have no doubt that you will also love her. Although she is not so beautiful she is a perfect young woman. She has beautiful legs, I swear to you,” Cele explains).

If a girl is good enough to be a wife in Cele’s eyes his son should see the same. He does not believe that his son should marry a woman of his own choice. In African culture, as already explained by Odetola (1983) there is a dominant traditional belief that a bride is not only responsible for her husband that she also has to take care of the family as a whole. Most important is that she should take care of her parents in-law. The bottom line in this novel is whom the girl that Bhekokwakhe decides to marry should satisfy his father as the head of the family. Cele spells it out loudly that only Ntombiyethemba will be the lawful bride at his kwaDlaphanyeke homestead:

“Ukuthi kufanele uganwe yintombi enezimpawu ezifunwa uwena Bhekokwakhe, kusho bani?” Kubuza uyise ngolaka kuvevezela amadevu. “Okabani lomuzi leyontombi eyokwendela kuwona? Akuzolotsholwa intombi eyanelisa mina nhloko yalomuzi kaBaba, nonyoko-ke? Akuntombi yesekhaya okwazeka ukuthi ikwazi ukuhlakula, ukugaya, ukukha amanzi nokutheza izinkuni okumele igcagcele lapha KwaDlaphanyeke?” (Gcumisa:5)

(“Who said that you must marry a young woman who has the personality traits that you want, Bhekokwakhe, who told you that?” his father asks with his moustache trembling with anger. “Whose home is that young woman going to be married into? Are you going to marry a young woman that satisfies me as the head of my father’s homestead, or one that satisfies your mother? Is she not a young woman who belongs to our neighbourhood whom we know is able to weed with a hoe, to grind mealies, to fetch water and collect firewood, that should be married into the KwaDlaphanyeke homestead?”)

Cele is an arrogant man who shows much pride in himself and too little consideration for others. Bhekokwakhe is obliged to marry a home girl, who is able to carry out feminine chores like hoeing weeds, grinding mealies, fetching water and collecting firewood. This story clearly indicates how

traditional men like Cele, in this case, condition young men to fit into the sex-role stereotypes to which he, as the head of the family, subscribes. Stimpson (in Benstock: 1987:2) confirms this male dominance over the social role of women:

... they have decided who will have power, and who will not. In so doing men have relegated woman, as women, to the margins of culture, if not to silence and invisibility.

It is ironic that Cele has sent Bhekokwakhe to school but now he refuses to let him marry an educated woman as himself. Instead he wants to chain him to an illiterate woman. Although Bhekokwakhe is prepared to reconsider the issue of marriage, he remains adamant that he is not prepared to marry Ntombiyethemba:

“Mina angikazimiseli ukuganwa njengoba ngishilo naphambi kwakhe ubaba. Kodwa-ke uma isimo sasekhaya sesingiphoqa ukuba ngiganwe ngiyothanda ukuziqashela mina intombi eyoba umkami. Hhayi kodwa ukukhethelwa” (Gcumisa:7).

(“I am not ready to get married, as I have stated in front of you, father. But if the circumstances here at home compels me to marry I would like to choose for myself the young woman who will be my wife. I don't want somebody else to choose for me”).

Bhekokwakhe objects to his father's suggestion. He will only change his mind if his father allows him to marry his own chosen girlfriend and not the one chosen by his father. Bhekokwakhe's obstinacy is perpetuated by his father's patriarchal control. The above passage indicates how the general behaviour of children and of people in general is affected by family relationships. Things do not seem to work out in Bhekokwakhe's favour because it seems impossible to escape his culture. Odetola (1983:4) makes an important remark when he asserts that in most African societies the personality of an individual is significantly interwoven with cultural factors. He adds that from birth to death the individual cannot escape the impact of cultural experience. The practice of forced love and arranged marriages indicates the relationship that exists between the individuals' private life and his or her cultural values. Bhekokwakhe is a young, educated man whose views about life are totally different from his father's. The above example indicates how Bhekokwakhe's individual life is intertwined with his cultural background.

Eventually, Bhekokwakhe yields to his father's coercive actions and marries Ntombiyethemba. The forced marriage, however, does not prosper. It fails. Bhekokwakhe abandons his chosen wife with

his parents and proceeds to pay the bride price for his own girlfriend, Lungile.

The novel, Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi, is in fact didactic about forced love. The marriage in this novel is merely to benefit the marriage arranger. Manamuza aims to enrich himself through the bride price. The heroine of this story is Bajwayele. Her father, Manamuza, arranges that she marries Zulumacansi, who is rich and has a high social position at Buthunqe. Bajwayele already has a boyfriend named Potolozzi. Manamuza is known to have enriched himself through the bride price that he received for his other daughters. The writer describes Manamuza's happiness at hearing the news that Zulumacansi wants to find himself a good wife:

Ibaphathe kahle nabanumzane baseButhunqe abazele izintombi ngoba sasigcwele izinkomo nezimbuzi isibaya sikaZulumacansi. Ikakhulu iphathe kahle uManamuza kaNomadinane waseButhunqe, owayeseze wanotha ngezinkomo zokulobola izintombi zakhe; wathuthuka waze wabekwa waba yinduna kaChief Dumdumu ngoba enye yezintombi zakhe ithathwe nguye belu uChief Dumdumu. Naye uChief uyithatha nje intombi kaManamuza akazenzi; kuthiwa vela muntu omuhle, kuvele izintombi zikaManamuza kaNomadinane, waseButhunqe bukaMagayi (Ngubane:3).

(The men of Buthunqe who have daughters become happy because Zulumacansi's kraal is full of cattle and goats. The happiest is Manamuza the son of Nomadinane who stays at Buthunqe, who has become rich through the bride price paid for his daughters; he worked his way up until he became a great captain for Chief Dumdumu because one of his daughters is married to Chief Dumdumu. His love for Manamuza's daughter is not of his own will ; it is because of her beauty. It is said that when a beautiful person must appear, the daughters of Manamuza the son of Nomadinane, who stays at Buthunqe will appear).

The writer highlights how men like Manamuza sell their daughters with the aim of acquiring more wealth for themselves. Man here is portrayed as the abuser of his own culture for his personal gain. Manamuza knows that he has beautiful daughters who have attracted men of outstanding status such as Chiefs; nothing will therefore stop him from using Bajwayele's beauty to attract a rich man like Zulumacansi. Manamuza does not consult with his daughter in this matter. He simply summons his wife, KaMemunce, and Bajwayele to inform them that Bajwayele must marry Zulumacansi. In fact, he instructs Bajwayele to go and fetch him some cattle from Zulumacansi:

“Usukhulile manje, Nomadinane. Ngifuna-ke mntanami ukuba ungilandele izinkomo kwabozalo lukaBhekokwakhe. Mina yihlo sengicabange ngabona ukuthi laphaya kulomfana kaBhekokwakhe, uZulumacansi, ungafike ukhonzele thina inkonzo enhle. Yilokho-ke engikubizele kona” (Ngubane:54).

("You are an adult now, Nomadinane. I want you, my child, to fetch me the cattle from Bhekokwake's offspring. I your father have thought and come to the conclusion that with Bhekokwakhe's son, Zulumacansi, you can establish a good relationship for us. That is what I called you for").

Although it was common practice in the olden days for a father to choose a man for his daughter, it is evident that Manamuza in this case is impelled by his love of cattle to force his daughter to reject her boyfriend and marry the man he has chosen. He is not after the well being of his children but wants to satisfy his greediness. Bajwayele attempts to explain to her father that she does not love Zulumacansi because of the age gap and for his bad temper. Her plea falls on deaf ears. She also draws her father's attention to the fact that, besides these reasons, she is in love with Potolozzi. Manamuza does not countenance any of her reasons. To counteract Bajwayele's resistance he sjamboks her, and orders her to pack her clothes there and then. In order to ensure that Bajwayele does not elope with Potolozzi, he personally drives her to Zulumacansi's home.

Manamuza makes this marriage look like the voluntary custom of *ukubalekela* (elopement), where the girl offers herself as a wife to a man who did not court her. Zulumacansi did court Bajwayele but she had not promised him anything. Zulumacansi is delighted at Bajwayele's arrival and sends the necessary cattle to Manamuza's home to honour this notable occasion. Things however, only go well for a very short period for Manamuza and Zulumacansi. Bajwayele flees to Benoni. She is found and brought back home but still remains adamant about her marriage to Zulumacansi. She tells her mother that she feels pity for Zulumacansi because she will never love him:

"Ngiyamdabukela uZulumacansi. Ukube ungomunye umuntu angabe usengikhohlwa nje. Ngokuya eGoli ngangithi uzocasuka, ngoba unobuqha, angikhohlwe. Impela ngiyamdabukela. Okungcono ngizohamba ngiyosebenza ubaba abuyise izinkomo zakhe."

"Wawukhonzelwa endulo, hhayi namhlanje"(Ngubane:156).

("I feel pity for Zulumacansi. If he were somebody else he would have forgotten about me. When I escaped to Johannesburg I thought he would be annoyed, because of his pride, and forget me. I really feel pity for him. The best thing is that I will go and work so that father can return his cattle").

("Homage was paid to marriage in the olden days, not today").

Manamuza cannot understand that his actions are all in vain and takes Bajwayele back to Zulumacansi's home. Zulumacansi tries hard to persuade Bajwayele to love him but fails. She tells him directly that she does not love him:

“Kangazi ukuthi ufuna ngikutshele kanjani ukuthi ubucu kabuhlangani entanyeni. Okungenani sengikhethe ukuba ngizihlalele nje ngedwa. Ngike ngilinge nokuthambisa inhliziyo, phinde. Kangizenzisi kulokhu” (Ngubane:167).

(“I do not know how you want me to tell you that I do not love you. I have decided to live alone. I will not even try to soften my heart, never. I am not pretending about this”).

Bajwayele chooses to remain single rather than get married to Zulumacansi. She cannot pretend to love him. She disappears before dawn the very same day she is brought back to Zulumacansi's home, and this time she is never found.

Ngubane makes use of minor characters, such as old women, to convey the idea that forced love does not prosper. After Bajwayele's first disappearance rumours spread all over Buthunqe that Bajwayele has fled. Some old women are also sceptical about the successes of forced love. However they view Bajwayele's situation as a problem that every mother, whose daughter is forced to marry a man she does not love, will undergo. They are aware that KaMemunce will not be the only mother to be affected by it. Ngubane presents their views:

Zizabalaze lezi ezinye zithi: “Qhabo bo, inkulu lendaba yelobolo. Musani ukumhleka umntakaMemunce ngoba ehlelwe silingo selobolo. Wonke umfazi ozele siyamzela. Sonke sizosala emakhaya, izingane zibaleke uma sizozahlukanisa namasoka azo ngoba sijahe ilobolo” (Ngubane:97).

(The other old women argued: “ Oh no, this issue of the bride price is serious. Do not laugh at KaMemunce because she is faced with this problematic issue of the bride price. All women who have children will come across this problem. We shall all be left alone in our homes, when our children have fled away, if we separate them from their boyfriends because we are desperate for the bride price”).

Ngubane has successfully demonstrated that love should come from within the individuals who are to be husband and wife. At the end of his story Ngubane uses Masovenyeza, who is the husband of Zulumacansi's sister, to open Zulumacansi's eyes to the fact that forced love does not succeed. Masovenyeza has realised that no one can force a woman to love a man whom she does not love:

“Uyabona, ngamakhosi lababantu; ngamakhosi okudalwa, okufanele ukuba sincenge kuwona, sizithobe phambi kwawo ngoba kangikhathali unamandla kangakanani, inhliziyo yomuntu wesifazane kawukwazi ukuyithandisa lokho engakuthandi”(Ngubane:180).

(“You see, these people are kings; they are natural kings, we are supposed to plead with them and humble ourselves before them, because no matter how powerful you can be, you will never make the heart of a woman to love what it does not love”).

Zulumacansi and Bajwayele’s marriage did not succeed in spite of all the endeavours by Manamuza and Zulumacansi.

In *Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami* we hear of Ntombana Khumalo who has a boyfriend, Magwagwa, of whom her father does not approve. Magwagwa is poor, and such a man, in Khumalo’s opinion, is not suitable to marry his daughter. He wants his daughter to be married to a rich man. Khumalo’s wish is realised when his friend, Ndlovu, requests him to allow his daughter, Ntombana, to marry his son, Mbandlanyika:

“Mntungwa,” kwacela uNdlovu emomotheka, “njengoba nawe uyasho uthi usuyemulisile intombi yakho ngiyacela ntanga ukuba ungivumele ngikulethele izinkomo ukuze thina sibe ngabalingani. Kungaba yinto enhle kabi uma lento ingenzeka ngoba thina sakhula ndawonye saganwa kanyekanye manje nakhu sakhe ndawonye. Uthini kuleso sicelo sami?” (Mkhize, 17)

(“Mntungwa,” Ndlovu requested with a smile, “ as you have just said that your girl is of the right age for marriage I request you, my friend, to give you cattle so that we can establish a marital friendship between us. It we could be a beautiful thing if this could happen because we grew up together, got married at the same time and now we live together. What do you say about my request?”)

Khumalo agrees to Ndlovu’s request without consulting his daughter. Moreover, he views Ndlovu’s offer as a reply by his deceased father. Knowing that his son has a problem with girls, Ndlovu becomes very excited when Khumalo accepted his proposal. Both parties enter into a marriage agreement for their children without their consent.

The marriage arrangement in this novel is based on the friendship of the two men. It is a marriage arrangement between two families that have known each other for a long time. Mbiti (1969:135) highlights the common African tradition of the arrangement of marriages by families who know each other:

In some societies the choice is made by the parents, and this may be done even before the children are born. This means that if in one household there is a boy, his parents go to another household where there is a young girl or where there is an expectant mother and put in an 'application' for the present girl or for the child to be born in the event it is a girl. Sometimes these arrangements may be made when two wives know they are pregnant. The children, however, get married only when they are old enough and *not* immediately after birth or while very young.

Again, in Ntombana's story, we come across a father who does not care about his child's feelings and interests. Khumalo is a selfish man who is only concerned with the collection of herds of cattle at the expense of his daughter's happiness. He makes sure that he secures himself sixteen herds of cattle out of this deal. This amount of cattle was normally given for a daughter of a chief or of a king. Traditionally for a daughter of an ordinary man, eleven herds of cattle would be given. The following response by Ndlovu indicates that Khumalo's wish was fulfilled.

"Mntungwa," sekuphendula uNdlovu. "Izinkomo eziyishumi nesithupha azilutho kimi. Ngiyozishaya kungasali ngisho nesikhala sodwa lesi. Into nje engijabulisayo ukuthi umfana wami uMbandlanyika uzothola umfazi omuhle nokhuthele njengalengane yakho"(Mkhize:17).

("Mtungwa," Ndlovu replies. "Sixteen herds of cattle is nothing to me. I will give them to you all at once. What makes me happy is that my son Mbandlanyika will get a beautiful and an industrious wife like your child").

He bargains for the highest bride price for his daughter. It was Khumalo's wish that Ntombana be married by a man who would give him the bride price that is normally paid for the daughter of a chief. His dream is eventually realised. Ndlovu easily agrees to Khumalo's abnormal demand because his concern is to obtain a wife for his son.

On the other hand, Ntombana must now forget about her boyfriend, Magwagwa. Her father's suggestion is not heartily welcomed. Khumalo physically assaults her to force her to accept Mbandlanyika as her chosen husband:

"Awuzwa ukuthi ngithini kuwe? Hi? Ngithi thanda uMbandlanyika kusukela khona manje! Ngithi khona manje! Uyezwa?" kwasho uyise emngenele ngemvubu (Mkize:46).

("Don't you understand what I am saying to you? I say, love Mbandlanyika from now on! I say now! Do you hear?" said her father, beating her with a sjambok).

Although the marriage did eventually take place it never succeeded. Ntombana, who had opposed her father right from the beginning, she defied him by breaking all the norms and values that a bride should revere in her matrimonial home. Her devious behaviour drives Ndlovu mad until he sends her back home. Khumalo in return is culturally obliged to send back Ndlovu's cattle.

Mkize, like Ngubane, makes use of one of his characters to proclaim that forced love does not prosper. To conclude his portrayal of the theme that forced love does not succeed, Mkize uses the very same man, Khumalo, to inform the people who are gathered at his home during Ntombana's and Magwagwa's wedding about this:

"MaZulu amahle," kwaqhubeka uKhumalo, "umthetho wenkosi, noma umthetho womzali nawo unayo imincele lapho ungakwazi ukweqela ngalena; lowomncele-ke yizindaba zothando eziphethwe yinhliziyi yomuntu. Naso-ke esami isifundo engisitholile. Angisho ukuthi izingane zenu ningaziganiseli abanumzane, nani nibadala kuleyo ndawo. Engiqonde ukukugcizelela ngukuthi uma umntanakho nizwana naye ekuvuma lokho okushoyo kuLungile, kodwa uma evusa umhlwenga kungcono uthambele lona lolosizi ngoba inhliziyi iya lapho ithanda khona. Kwenzeka enkosini uCetshwayo, nakimi kwenzekile, pho yini ezovimba ukuba kungenzeki kuwe na?"(Mkize:120)

("The beautiful Zulu nation," Khumalo continued, "the rule of the king or of the parent does have a limit where it cannot succeed; that limit is the love that is controlled by the heart of a person. This is the lesson I have learnt. I am not saying that you should not urge your children to marry grown up men, you are old enough to decide for yourselves. What I want to emphasise is the fact that if you and your child are on good terms and she agrees to your suggestion it is all right, but if your child does not agree it is better for you to compromise and experience some pain because the heart chooses what it likes. It happened to king Cetshwayo, it happened to me, so who are you to escape it?")

At the end of the story Khumalo has eventually realised the truth that no father may prescribe for his daughter whom to love. In short, his speech suggests that a girl has the right to marry the man whom she loves. Khumalo warns other parents that forced love does not prosper. He also makes reference to the fact that even King Cetshwayo could not succeed, so there is no choice for an ordinary man like him. Ntombana ends up married to her chosen boyfriend Magwagwa.

4.2.2 Forced and forbidden love themes

Forbidden love solely focuses on prohibited love which is the love that is out of reach and out of bounds. The novels under consideration indicate that the socio-economic status of the families and cultural factors play a major role in the consummation of forced marriages as well as in the denial of a marriage. A wealthy family, for example, would forbid their child to marry a person from a poor family background. Hay and Stichter (1995:85), have noticed that:

In other situations, the man or his family was deemed unsuitable because they were poor, came from a group with low social standing, or had a reputation of witchcraft, infertility, or other problems. Sometimes it was her family that objected; sometimes the woman herself decided against the marriage.

It is evident from the above quotation that there are various reasons such as poverty, witchcraft, and infertility which are abducts for the prohibition of a marriage. Marriage, then, is based on specific social circumstances. Odetola mentions that in all cultures, endogamy and exogamy are important factors which narrow the range of marital possibilities for the individual. Endogamy (Odetola, 1983: 35) is explained as:

the general norms or rules restricting marriage to members of the same group, tribe, village or other social group. It is used here to refer to the selection of a mate similar to the individual in that they are both members of the same broad social grouping and influenced by the same general norms. One may want to marry somebody who is similar to oneself in such areas as ethnic background, religion, and general social and economic status. Amongst the endogamous factors are propinquity, which refers to the proximity of individuals, and a common race, age, religion, education and occupation.

Kungavuka AbaNguni presents a story of forbidden love. Themba Gumede forbids his daughter, Nomusa, to marry Thamsanqa Khumalo. His objection is based on Thamsanqa's poor social standing; he comes from a poorer background than Nomusa. After a long conversation and arguments between the Gumede and the Khumalo family, pleading with Gumede to permit his daughter to marry Thamsanqa, Gumede remains adamant and flatly refuses to accept the bride price.

Nomusa has no alternative but to abide by her father's decision that she will never get married to Thamsanqa. As a minor, and a girl for that matter, she cannot dare to challenge her father's authority.

She has to show respect by honouring his decision. In his own words, Gumede tells the people gathered at his home that his daughter will never be married to a poor family:

“Uthi wena uma ngiphilile ngingasuka nginikele ngomntanami athathwe yizinja nje izinto ezingenalutho? Ungafa uvuke angeke ukubone loko” (Kubheka:32).

(“Do you think that if I am thinking properly I can just donate with my daughter to be taken by dogs that have nothing? You can die and be resurrected from the dead but that will never happen”).

Gumede associates Thamsanqa’s poverty to with of a dog because a dog owns nothing. Gumede’s arrogant attitude is based solely on the fact that Thamsanqa is from a very poor family. Other characters in the story, like Mathanda, Gumede’s brother, do not approve of Gumede’s actions. Mathanda’s speech in the following extract indicates that Gumede’s actions might lead to disastrous results if he continues to refuse Nomusa the right to marry Thamsanqa:

“Angazi ukuthi kukuhlupha ngani ukuthi ingane yakho iqome kwabani, ngoba vele angeke uyikhethela lapho iyokwendela khona. Kungathi kwehluleka uCetshwayo ethi uphoqa izintombi zeNgcugce ngomkhonto ukuthi aziqome lapho zingathandi khona, ubungubani-ke wena? Uma lengane yabaNguni ungafuni igane ucabanga ukuthi iyogana wena, wawukuzwaphi loko? Noma kuthiwa uyikhonze kanjani awusoze wayikhethela inxiwa” (Kubheka:201).

(“I do not know why does it bother you with whom your child is in love, because you will never choose her matrimonial home. Even king Cetshwayo could not succeed to enforce the girls of the Ingcugce regiment who were threatened with a spear to get married to the men they did not love, who do you think you are? If you do not want this daughter of the abaNguni to get married do you think she will marry you, where on earth did you hear such a thing? No matter how much you can love her you will never choose her a matrimonial home”).

Mathanda’s advice to Gumede touches on a well known historical incident which happened long ago in the Zulu kingdom. It draws attention to the universal truth that no matter how much parents love their children, they cannot choose whom they should or should not marry. Mathanda’s words signal a warning. These words foretell that Gumede’s obstinacy and prohibition might have adverse effects not only in the family relationships but also for Nomusa. His advice to Gumede reminds us about the historical story of the *Ingcugce* girls’ regiment who defied King Cetshwayo’s order concerning forced love. We will all remember that some of the girls who belonged to the *Ingcugce* regiment were killed and others fled their homes rather than marry the warriors chosen by the king. Reference to the brave

actions of the *Ingugce* girls' regiment questions the issue of passivity and submissiveness to the patriarchal order among African women. From as long ago as Cetshwayo's time, young maidens have fought for their rights to marry the men of their choice. Nnaemeka (in Irele, 1995:82) quotes Clenora Hudson-Weems who is said to have attested that: "Long before the advent of feminism, black women were active." This statement as well as the above excerpt, should erase the idea in the minds of many that black women are copycats of the lives of white women. From as far back as the time of King Cetshwayo women have showed resistance to any forceful measures that have interfered with their individual freedom and choices.

Gumede is a very stubborn man. No one can convince him to change his mind. Despite all these warnings and persuasion he remains determined that the marriage will not take place. After Nomusa has been called in by her grandfather to acknowledge the Khumalo family, her grandfather informs her that her father denies her the right to marry Thamsanqa. Nomusa cannot do anything. Her response is a rain of tears. She leaves her home in a state of confusion and sets off to town where she is hit by a bus. The accident leaves her a paraplegic:

Izwi labe lithi uNomusa ulimele kabi noma kungabonakali nje ngaphandle. Kwahlaluka ukuthi ulimale umgogodla kwaze kwalimala nomongo, okwakukhomba ukuthi noma uNomusa ephilile sekuyoba ngumuntu ohlala embhedeni nje ngoba esangezansi wayengeke esakwazi ukusisebenzisa. Umendo-ke? (Kubheka:263)

(The announcement was that Nomusa was badly hurt although this was not visible from externally. It was evident that her spinal cord was badly injured; this was an indication that even though Nomusa had survived she would stay in bed because the lower part of her body would never function again. What about marriage?)

Nomusa would not have gone to town if it had not been for the frustration that was caused by her father's refusal to allow Thamsanqa to marry her. This catastrophe could have been avoided if only Gumede had listened to his family. Nomusa's life was doomed forever. From the look of things she would never be able to walk, work or bear children, let alone marry the man she loves. Who on earth would marry her in this state?

In Kungenxa Kabani Cele forces Bhekokwakhe to marry Ntombiyethemba and forbids him to marry Lungile. His rejection of Lungile is based on the fear of the unknown. Cele does not approve of

Bhekokwakhe's proposal to marry Lungile because his family knows neither her nor her family. Propinquity in this case, as Odetola (1983) has suggested, plays a major role. Proximity acts to Ntombiyethemba's advantage and to Lungile's disadvantage. Cele is a traditional man who is uncomfortable with the idea of his son bringing home a stranger to join his family. Cele wants Bhekokwakhe to marry Ntombiyethemba because she is a home girl. She grew up before his eyes and her parents are well known to his family. His fear is evident in the following lines:

"Mina ndodana ngibona ukuthi ilungile yona lena kaVikinduku intombazane. Kumele kuvunyiswe yona ngoba njengoba ngishilo ngiyithanda kakhulu kanti kakadeni isiyehlulekile, ngithumele abakhongi bayocela isihlobo esihle. Yingane yasekhaya lena. Abazali bayo sibazi kahle, kanti noyise yindoda"(Gcumisa:4).

("I, my son, think that Vikunduku's daughter is the right one. She is the one that should be persuaded to agree because as I have told you, I love her very much and besides she has already agreed, I will send people to go and establish a marital relationship with her family. This is a home girl. We know her parents very well, and her father is a respectable man").

Parents like Cele, who perpetuate such marriages, do not trust girls or boys they do not know. It is worse than if the family is also unknown. This may be aggravated by the fact that parents are not sure of the behaviour and conduct of a girl or a boy who did not grow up in the same vicinity as their child. This is one of the major reasons that causes Cele to call any girl that he does not know, and who is in love with Bhekokwakhe, an *isindindwa* which means a prostitute.

During the period when Bhekokwakhe has deserted his home for about a year without writing or even sending money to his wife, Cele makes various attempts to bring him back. When he realises that all his attempts have failed, he personally goes to look for him. On his arrival at Empangeni, he finds that Bhekokwakhe has cohabited with another woman. He does not show any respect for her and calls her a prostitute:

"Kanti usunukelwa umoya wasekhaya nje ulahla umfazi phansi uhlala nezindindwa lapha? Esaphi sona lesisindindwa?"(Gcumisa:133)

("You hate your home and abandoned your wife behind because you are staying with prostitutes here? Where does this prostitute come from?")

Cele does not trust a woman that he does not know and the use of an insulting word such as *isindindwa* portrays him as a rude, traditional Zulu man who does not see any harm in insulting a woman. To him it does not matter whether his son loves that woman or not. It seems as if the only girls who deserve good names are those who grew up before his eyes in his neighbourhood, like Ntombiyethemba. Only the women he knows are capable of being good wives. Bhekokwakhe story also ends up tragically. His marriage to Ntombiyethemba did not discourage him from loving Lungile. He proceeds with his plans and pays the bride price for Lungile. Cele accompanied Ntombiyethemba personally to Bhekokwakhe's place at Empangeni. On their arrival they found that Bhekokwakhe is living with Lungile. A fierce fight breaks out between the two women. Lungile dies instantly while Ntombiyethemba dies minutes after she is taken into theatre. The writer describes this tragic moment:

Abakwasidlodlo bacosha isidumbu sikaLungile basifaka evenini. KuNtombiyethemba umphefumulo uphume engena nje endlini yokuhlinzela (Gcumisa: 171).

(The police picked up Lungile's body and put it in the van. Ntombiyethemba died while entering theatre).

Bhekokwakhe ends up paralysed. His tragic state is described by the nurse to his father, who stands motionless like a stooge as follows:

"Ngiyadabuka Mnumzane uCele ukukwazisa ukuthi indodana yakho ilimale imithambo nemizwa yomhlonzo. Njengoba ethinteke imizwa yomgogodla nje angeke aphinde akwazi ukuzihambela uma ngabe uyalulama" (Gcumisa: 171-172).

("I am sorry, Mr Cele, to let you know that your son's spinal cord has been badly injured. As his spinal cord has been injured he will never be able to walk on his own again even if he recovers").

Bhekokwakhe not only suffered from the physical injuries that he sustained in his spinal cord, but he also lost his mind. Gcumisa says:

Bathe bebona uBhekokwakhe wayedlubulundela ngayo inqola le ahleli kuyo. Usukela iphepha ebeliziphephukela nomoya. Alifice. Akhothame alicoshe. Alibuke. Alibukisise. Ezwakale eseqhuma egigitheka. Agigitheke... Bese elidabula ipheshana lelo libe zicucu. Azithi ji emoyeni, ziphephuke. Aphinde azilandele ngenqola ezama ukuzicosha futhi (Gcumisa: 172).

(As they are watching Bhekokwakhe gets away in his wheel chair. He chases a piece of paper that was flown around by the air. He catches it. He bends and picks it up. He looks at it. He scrutinises it. He is heard laughing out loudly. He giggles... He tears the paper into pieces. He throws the pieces up in the air, and the wind carries them away. He chases them with his wheel chair and tries to catch them again).

It is ironical that Cele shows emotional pain when he realises that his son is paralysed and mentally deranged because of him. To describe his pain the writer says:

Athi lapho uBongiwe ephosa amehlo kuyise, azibone izinyembezi kuyise zithi qatha ... qatha ... qatha (Gcumisa:172).

(When Bongiwe looked at her father, she saw the tears running on his face).

Themes of forced and forbidden love not only have disastrous effects for the prospective couple who have to contend with their parents' demands, parents too are the victims of their own actions. Their dignity also suffers severely. The two novels have indicated that forbidding a child to marry a man or woman of his choice affects the parents also who suffer emotionally, psychologically, and otherwise. Either they lose their children through death, or insanity, or the children disappear forever.

4.3 Secondary themes

4.3.1 Theme of oppression



The theme of oppression deals with the denial of individual rights to a person who is regarded as inferior or subordinate by one who is in a powerful position. In this study it reflects male supremacy and absolute power over women and their siblings. Patriarchy, to be more specific, selfishly and deceptively perverts privileges bestowed upon it by tradition, to the detriment and disadvantage of children and women. The novelists whose works are under scrutiny here, concentrate on the question of the misuse of and distortion of power and privilege in a socio-cultural milieu in which one segment of the population, obviously male, has more power than women and children. Patriarchal law is imposed upon the mother and her children because they are traditionally treated as minors in the traditional family setting. Msimang (1994:121) highlights the fact that women and children are accorded the same status in the IsiZulu culture when he explains that: "in this culture [Zulu culture]

my forebears maintained that a woman is a child: a perpetual minor whether before or after marriage. Thus a man with 1 wife and 4 children would claim that he has 5 children." These novels then, should be viewed as a response by the novelists to what they saw happening in their societies. Ntuli (1984:133) complements this view when he says: "throughout the ages writers have been found to express their displeasure about certain conditions or practices". He further emphasises this point by commenting:

When the poet [writer] exposes the evils or irregularities he notes around him, he wants to arouse in his readers a state of disquietude which will lead to some kind of reform (1984:134).

The novelists have observed that the occurrence of forced love or marriage and forbidden love or marriage is the result of the power imbalances between the sexes. Schipper's question in Jones and Palmer (1987:46) is appropriate to this matter when she asks: "why should men be more equal than women?" The answer to this question is that the issue of equality has to do with society's heritage of traditions and norms. In traditional African societies, the role of each citizen is to perpetuate the status quo, to assume responsibility for the continuity of the clan, to work within tradition, and to maintain the closed society. The oppression of young men and women into forced love or into arranged marriage by men reveals lack of confidence the father has in the choice of a marriage partner by his child. These cultures also declare the honourable position of men in society.

Oppression is associated with an autocratic way of doing things. It is a fact that African tradition does not cater for individualism. There is very little room for the consideration of individual feelings, since the aspirations of society as a whole are emphasised above those of the individual.

In Kungavuka AbaNguni, Gumede despises the opinions of his wife and those of his eldest daughter, Nomusa. He does not consider them as being of any value in the running of his home. The fact that Nomusa is now working as a nurse does not mean that Gumede will consider her views in any matter. In his eyes Nomusa will forever remain a minor:

"Uyabona," usho njalo ukhomba uMaNkosi ngomunwe, "mina noma angaze afunde abe ngudokotela lowoNomusa wakho, angeke angedlule ngolwazi ngoba ngiyamzala" (Kubheka:20).

("You see," he said, pointing a finger at MaNkosi, "even if Nomusa could be as educated as a doctor, she will never have more knowledge than me because I gave birth to her").

Gumede's statement represents a long held traditional belief which prevails in various societies, that a child will never know better than his/her parents. The fact of the matter as far as the parents are concerned is that, no matter how old or educated a child is, his parents possess better wisdom than him/her and he/she will remain a child for as long as he/she lives. Gumede too, subscribes to this view. He will never consider Nomusa as more knowledgeable than himself solely because she is his child. His disapproval of Nomusa's marriage is based on nothing else but his parenthood. His actions conceal his genuine concern as a father about the future of his child, and portray him as an unreasonable father who only wishes to safeguard his money against Thamsanqa.

Gumede groups women and children in one category, that of slow thinkers. In his argument with his wife about the stab wounds he sustained in Durban, he becomes very aggressive and does not wish to share his misery with her. When she questions him further about this, he is annoyed and commands her to keep quiet:

"Uyabona Dlamini iyonanto engcono leyo engase yenziwe ngumuntu wesifazane. Umuntu wesimame kufanele athule alalele ukuthi indoda ithini" (Kubheka:171).

("You see Dlamini that is the best thing that a woman should do. A woman should keep quiet and listen to what a man says").

Gumede is of the opinion that a woman should not interfere when a man is talking. A woman should be submissive and listen attentively to her husband as the head of the family. He is not only autocratic, but also pressurises his wife to keep quiet. Oppression and autocracy seldom cater for a variety of ideas or choices in any sphere of life. The writers portray most of the men who practice forced love or who forbid love as strict authoritarians. This is how Kubheka presents Gumede, as a total despot whose decisions cannot be challenged:

Wayesekhulumile-ke unnumzane uGumede, akekho awayengabe esedlula lapho ngaphandle kowayefuna ukubona ukuthi ulaka lwabaNguni lungakanani (Kubheka:177).

(The head of the family, Gumede, has talked, nobody can say anything further except those who want to see the anger of the abaNguni).

Gcumisa describes Cele as *indlovu-kayiphendulwa*, i.e., an elephant that never needs a reply. This is how Bongiwe describes her father:

“Nami ngisazoke ngizame ukumbonisa ubaba, nanxa engundlovu-kayiphendulwa nje”
(Gcumisa:13).

(“I will also try to convince father, even though he does not consider other peoples views”).

Traditionalists like Manamuza want their word to be perceived as law, and desire that it should be adhered to at all times. As the head of his family, Manamuza often wants for himself the same authority in his home as his father had, an authority that was sanctioned by tradition. He commands the same respect as his father. His word is to be regarded as law in his homestead:

“Uma izwi lomnumzane lingeze laba yilutho, pho, umuzi kungaba umuzi wani? Kulona okaNomadinane ngifuna izwi lami lihlonishwe; libe umthetho”(Ngubane:52).

(“If the word of the head of the family means nothing, what is the use of the home then? In this home of Nomadinane I want my voice to be respected; it must be the law”).

It is a common tradition among the AmaZulu to name a homestead after the father of the man who owns that homestead. In the above example Manamuza always refers to his homestead as *umuzi kaNomadinane* (Nomadinane’s homestead), while Gumede refers to his as *umuzi wabaNguni* (the homestead of the AbaNguni). This reveals the importance of patriarchy in an African home. This could be the reason why men never name their homesteads after their mothers. It also highlights the truth that in African tradition a woman is not considered to be important in a home because, as stated earlier on, she is regarded as one of the man’s children. This excludes women such as Mkabayi KaJama and Ntombazi from the royal families. These royal women had special privileges. They were allocated royal kraals.

Traditionally a woman never owned a home; that is the reason why even today it is difficult for a man to consider a woman as his equal in the running of the home. Khumalo in Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami does

not regard a woman as his equal partner. He will not share the running of his forefather's homestead with a woman:

“Mina lomuzi kababa uDlothovu ngingewuphathisane nomfazi, ngithi uma ngilibeka naye alibeke. Sale usuthula-ke manje, loludaba sengizoziphathela lona mina mathupha. Siza-ke uphume lapha endlini. Phuma”(Mkize:23).

(“I will not manage my father's, Dlothovu's home with a woman, who when I speak also speaks back. Keep quiet now, I will handle this matter on my own. Please get out of the house. Get out”).

Culture is non-reciprocal and hierarchical in nature when it is based on the relationship between a husband and a wife. Manamuza's statement says man is central as man, and his wife, KaMemunce, is peripheral as woman. Womanism is a politics directed at changing these existing power relations between women and men in society. It is aimed at improving the situation of inequality between men and women in all areas of life. It is evident from Manamuza's comment that it is always difficult to start sharing power if one is used to being the master. For people who never had power, the changes can only be for the better. The demands of change and adaptation to modern values disturb the balance of power and unsettle those in power. These requirements threaten their superior positions and do not guarantee any safety in the new order or a return to the old order. Offering a compromise solution is difficult and painful for both those who still adhere to the old traditional life and those who align themselves with modern life with its liberal views. Mseleku (1996:6) maintains that: “it is primarily for these reasons that you find many innocent characters suffering or dying in the texts—they become victims of the dominant order because change is painful.” The oppression apparent in these novels seems to stem from the fear of the unknown, the fear of adaptation to modern values, the problem of selfishness, the abuse of power by those having authority, who believe in holding and maintaining the powerful traditional structure of their forefathers.

The traditional setting in these novels explains the problem of adjustment from traditional to modern values. Patriarchy is portrayed as struggling for the maintenance and security of the traditional powers which such societies believe were bestowed upon them by their ancestors. Schipper (in Jones & Palmer, 1987:46) puts it explicitly when she says:

Men often want for themselves the same authority in their homes as their fathers had, an authority that was sanctioned by tradition and myths of the past. Young men want to marry virgins, and girls are given in marriage to husbands by fathers who do not have to ask their daughters' opinion. Women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, but have no right to ask the same in return. The men often have quite different norms, those that suit their male convenience.

Schipper reiterates that women have no voice in African culture. A woman's opinion is not highly regarded. A woman cannot expect a man to give her the same faithfulness as she does to him. The role of a woman is to remain quiet and faithful to her husband. This presents a conflict of values because according to the above excerpt men want only a certain section of society, the women, to keep up good traditional values while there are no restrictions placed upon men. It is not surprising even today to observe that very few men, if any, oppose the patriarchal system on which the society's value system is based. Zondi, Cele's friend, in Kungenxa Kabani, approves of Cele's decision to select a wife for his son. This becomes evident in their conversation with Cele:

“Enqaba ngaliphi? Enqaba ethini ukwenza intando yakho uwumzali?” Kubuza uZondi.
 “Engathi thina nampa nje oMaNgubane esabaqashelwa obaba sakhe imizi nabo?”
 (Gcumisa:p.19)

(“Why did he refuse? Why did he refuse to do your will because you are his parent?”
 Zondi asked.
 “Look at us. I am still with MaNgubane who was chosen by my father and we have built a home with her?”)

Zondi is alarmed when he learns that Bhekokwakhe refuses to do his father's will. As a traditional man, too, he shares the same views as Cele. He does not understand why Bhekokwakhe questions his father's decision. He also thinks Bhekokwakhe should honour his father's word and be content with Ntombiyethemba because the culture of choosing a wife for one's son is a long standing tradition. He is still married to his wife, MaNgubane, who was chosen by his father. This is their culture and according to these men it should be followed without any questions. This however, proves the point that culture is something which is imposed on one's essential self by the society into which one is born. Bhekokwakhe's refusal to abide by his father's decision would put him at loggerheads not only with his family but with his community as well. According to African tradition Bhekokwakhe has no right to disobey his father.

Ngubane in Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi presents us with Manamuza. In his discussion with his wife, it becomes evident that Manamuza's act in forcing his daughter to marry Zulumacansi is based on the old IsiZulu traditional saying: *Ubuhle bendoda izinkomo zayo*, (the beauty of a man is his cattle) which means that a man acquires respect because of the number of cattle that he owns. This could be further interpreted to mean that the beauty of a man lies in his ability to provide food for his family. Manamuza, like all traditional men, respects Zulumacansi because of the large number of cattle and goats that he owns. He therefore forces Bajwayele to marry because if she is married to him she will never go hungry:

“Futhi phela unempahla lomfana. Izinkomo zigcwele isibaya. Umntanami ngeke alambe”(Ngubane:48).

(“This young man has a lot of cattle. The kraal is full of cattle. My child will never suffer from hunger”).

Manamuza does not value the opinions of a woman or of a child. Bajwayele is instructed to discard her boyfriend Potolozzi, for Zulumacansi. She must suppress her love and feelings for the man she loves, in order to be able to marry the man chosen by her father.

It is clear from the above discussion that in societies that are characterised by male dominance, women hold hardly a higher status than children. KaMemunce, a woman who shows contempt for forced love, acknowledges that men are in control of the world:

“KuLungile Bajwayele, sale usuhamba mntanami. Uyintombazane. Umhlaba lona ubuswa ngamadoda” (Ngubane:60).

(“It is all right Bajwayele, you can go now, my child. You are a girl. This world is governed by men”).

KaMemunce's comment represents the views of many women. Later on in the story Bajwayele also utters a statement similar to her mother's. When Zulumacansi comes to fetch her shortly after her return from Benoni she boldly tells Zulumacansi that although men have power and control over her, they will never take away from her the power to love the man she has chosen for herself, because that power is granted only by God:

“Mhlawumbe ubaba unelungelo ngokomthetho wakini ukuba abenamandla phezu kwami. Nawe unawo amandla okungithatha ngenkani ungise emzini wakho. ... Kodwa engikwazi ngokungangabazi ukuthi akukho noyedwa onamandla okuba inhliziyoyami ayithandise lokho engakuthandi” (Ngubane:169).

(“Perhaps my father has the right according to your law to have power over me. You too have the power to take me to your home. ... But what I know without any doubt is that there is no one who has the power to make my heart love what it does not like”).

Bajwayele's statement further stresses that the power that men have over women is limited. The truth of the matter is that no matter how powerful Zulumacansi and Manamuza are they can never successfully force her to love a person she does not love. Bajwayele sees both Zulumacansi and her father, Manamuza, as symbols of oppression and injustice. They both represent the unfairness of the IsiZulu traditional custom to which she has been subjected. The fact that women do not play significant roles in their homes can be traced from our traditional past. African men accepted the status quo from their forefathers and saw nothing wrong with it. Men generally believe that this is a man's world and that women are subordinate to the traditional authority of men. Although things seem to be generally difficult for women we need to appreciate on the one hand our dignified and meaningful past, a past rich in a sophisticated and sensitive indigenous culture; on the other hand, the liberal and modern life with its emphasis on the rights of the individual. A need arises therefore to synthesise the two worlds, both traditional and modern, and to appreciate that culture is dynamic and not static.

4.3.2 Theme of submissiveness

Culture determines the nature of the interpersonal relations involved in every family unit. Thus, culture interacts closely with social organisation in the working out of family relations with a man, his wife and their children. The theme of submissiveness deals with the self-evident issue of the subjugation of woman to man as presented by the novelists. One of the important duties of womanism is to analyse the significance of gender in culture. This section, then, traces the authority of men over women in a culture where women are regarded as the 'Other'. It underlines the social inequality that prevails between men and women in the IsiZulu society. The texts reflect different types of traditional authority, power and of the Zulu man's sense of superiority over a woman. Here we are therefore concerned both with the theoretical truth and the historical fact of women's subordination to men.

Historically, women were, and still are, subservient to the head of the family, just like other members of the family. Most of the time they played very passive and secondary roles in the family decision-making process. Domestically, women were traditionally socialised into submitting themselves and their aspirations to the control of men. Miller (1990:246) contends:

The theoretical truth is that gender is not merely a supplementary issue that can be “added on” to a critical approach, like a caboose on a train; gender as an issue and feminist [womanist] criticism in particular invite a reappraisal of literature and culture from the ground up.

All four novelists reflect male superiority over the female. This shows how the inferior position of women has largely been perpetuated by literature. Miller’s call for the appraisal of literature and culture is of great significance if we take into consideration the fact that most of the IsiZulu and other African literature is prescribed to be read at schools. We assume that children associate themselves with the norms and the culture that is communicated by the literature they read. The appraisal of literature and culture then, could be aimed at changing the mindset of children. It also brings to the fore the relation of literate culture to patriarchy.

Submissiveness is another form of controlling female sexuality. Culture commands women and children in general to succumb to the will of the father. Cora Kaplan (in Selden:1985:132) puts it aptly when she says, “ideology is the universal penile club which men of all classes use to beat women with.” Traditional men as the heads of families want things to go their way.

In Kungavuka AbaNguni Gumede does not believe that a woman should question a man about his whereabouts. When arguing with his wife, MaNkosi, about Nomusa and Thamsanqa’s love affair, Gumede becomes angry and leaves his home for Durban without notifying his wife. When he comes back with stab wounds in his buttocks his wife demands to know where he was, and how he got stabbed. MaNkosi’s questions irritate Gumede and he instructs her to keep quiet and leave him alone:

“Ake uthi ukuvala umlomo wakho uphume kancane lapha endlini kengithi ukuphumula. Angithi usasikhumbula isifundo sami sokuthi umuntu wesifazane muhle kabi uma ethule? Thula-ke ntombi” (Kubheka:173).

(“Close your mouth and get out briefly from this house so that I can rest. You still do remember my teaching that a woman is very beautiful when she is quiet? Keep quiet then, lady”).

The oppression of silence is evident in Gumede's advice to his wife. Silence in this manner is used to compel submissiveness on the part of the woman. Submissiveness is a sort of repression. According to Reber (1985:640), in sociology and social psychology, repression refers to the limitations on a group's or an individual's freedom of expression and action by a dominant group or individual. To keep his wife where she belongs, Gumede demands that MaNkosi hold back her questions about his stab wounds. It is an African traditional belief that one of the important duties of a wife is to take care of her husband. As can be observed from the above passage this is not obvious to Gumede. A woman, according to Gumede, should concern herself with the health and welfare of her husband only if a man deems it necessary. MaNkosi is ordered to keep quiet and to get out of the house for showing that she cares about her husband.

Gumede's reaction reminds us of the popular African norm that a woman should not question a man about his whereabouts. This has been so popular in African culture that it became a significant piece of advice which old women, who have seen it all in marriage, would give to a bride on her wedding day. MaNkosi, who is still puzzled about Gumede's stab wounds, wants to know where and how her husband sustained those injuries. In reply Gumede reminds her that a woman does not have the right to question a man about his whereabouts:

"Bakhohlwa ngukukutshela ukuthi yimina umnumzane lapha ekhaya; ngako-ke yimina kuphela enginelungelo lokubuza lapha ekhaya ukuthi abantu bavelaphi, ..." (Kubheka:190).

("They forgot to tell you that I am the man in this home; therefore it is only me who has the right to ask people about their whereabouts in this home, ...").

Gumede's statement qualifies only a man as having the sole right to question his other family members about their whereabouts. As a woman MaNkosi has no right to ask the same from him. The head of the family, the father, Gumede in this case, has absolute control over his family. A woman should always give in to the authority and control of her husband, even in matters that concern herself and the running of the home as well. Like any minor, a woman shows no form of respect if she questions her husband about his personal life. Gumede's comment is evidence that we live in a male dominated culture in which women remain unacknowledged, and where women are forced into sex roles which demand that they be dependent, passive and nurturing. Our culture favours men. It does not impose strict rules which force them to assume sex roles that are not as crippling as those of women.

In Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami Khumalo too is revealed as an inconsiderate man who, like any other traditional man, does not consider the views of a woman in the running of his home. He does not pay attention to Ndlovu's advice that he should discuss the marriage proposal with Ntombana. He remains adamant and informs him that in his homestead his word is final. Ntombana has to respect his word:

“Futhi mina angizumcela uNtombana kuloludaba,” kwasho uKhumalo eswaca, “ngizomane nje ngimtshela engifuna akwenze kuphele ngalokho. Leyonto oyishoyo yokubutuza amagabade mina ngeke ngize ngiyenze” (Mkize:17).

(“I will not persuade Ntombana in this matter,” said Khumalo with a frowning face, “I will just tell her what I want her to do and that’s all. Your suggestion that I should level the plain with her will not happen”).

He also does not accommodate the fact that his wife might hold different views from him. MaBhengu is an assertive woman who fights for what she believes is right for her only daughter. MaBhengu objects vehemently to Khumalo's coercive actions in forcing Ntombana to get married to Mbandlaniyka. To remind her that she has no voice, Khumalo threatens to whip her with a sjambok:

“Sekusobala kimi ukuthi wena awusafuni lutho olunye ngaphandle kwemvubu!” kwasho uKhumalo esamkhomba ngomunwe (Mkize:35).

(“It is obvious to me that you do not need anything else except a sjambok, said Khumalo pointing a finger at her”).

Khumalo points out to MaBhengu that a wife who does not show respect, or who disagrees with her husband's opinion, should be reminded to do so by a sjambok. This means that respect, cooperation and submissiveness in a woman might be achieved by the use of a sjambok. The rejection of the women's views clearly indicates that, traditionally, women's views were not important in the running of the home.

In Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi nothing escapes Manamuza's authority as the head of the family. No one may defy his word. Manamuza's wife, KaMemunce, is against forced love and does not believe that he has the right to expel Bajwayele from his homestead simply because she shows contempt for his actions. Manamuza forcefully pressurises Bajwayele to get married to Zulumacansi. If Bajwayele is adamant and does not want to go with his decision, she must then depart from his homestead:

“Ingane engaphakathi kwawo lomuzi kufanele ihloniphe owami umthetho. Uma ingeke ikwenze lokho mayiphume ngesango ihambe, ibheke eMkhumbane”(Ngubane:52).

(“A child who is inside the parameters of this home must respect my authority. If she does not do that she must get out and go to eMkhumbane”).

Manamuza’s speech emphasises that a man’s word should be law in his homestead. A woman, to Manamuza, should do nothing else than support and be submissive to her husband. Like the other traditional patriarchal men Manamuza wants his wife to uphold his word:

“Yikho engingakufuni. Ukuba ngilokhu ngitshelwa ngumfazi ukuthi angenze lokhu ngesikhathi esingukuthi emzini kaNomadinane” (Ngubane:54).

(“That is what I do not want. To be told by a woman that I should do this at a specific time in Nomadinane’s homestead”).

According to Manamuza, a woman should stand by her husband at all times. She should not take a different route from the one taken by her husband in life. The above extract also indicates that while the male commands respect and is expected to be authoritarian, the female enjoys less respect and is expected to be submissive to the male. This confirms the conviction that our production of culture, its meaning and our consumption of culture influences our sex and gender system.

Ngubane’s novel portrays a milieu that is very traditional. In his book we also hear of Masovenyeza Qwabe, who is Zulumacansi’s brother in-law because he married his sister, Qimbile. Characters like Masovenyeza fit the setting in which Ngubane’s story takes place. Masovenyeza is a polygamous man. To command respect and order among his wives he uses a stick. He also believes that a woman should be submissive to her husband. He disciplines his wives by using his stick called *Sabisabafazi* which means ‘make women afraid’. If one of his wives has wronged him she will know that she will be beaten when they arrive at home. Ngubane writes:

Azazele yena ukuthi kuyothi kufikwa ekhaya uMasovenyeza athathe iwisa lakhe lokushaya abesifazane, ayelethe igama wathi nguSabisabafazi, aliphelelise edolweni kumkakhe (Ngubane:27).

(She would know that when they arrive home Masovenyeza will take his knob-kerrie, that he has named *Sabisabafazi* and hit the knees of his wife).

After Masovenyeza has lost a case against Zulumacansi he abandons all his wicked ways in beating his wives. He requests one of his wives to burn Sabisabafazi because he has accepted Christianity and will never again beat a woman in his life. The wife who has been given this duty cannot believe what she has just been told to do. Let us capture her talking to knob-kerrie:

“Hhawu!” ikhuluma newisa eziko. “Nguwe lona Sabisabafazi? Namuhla siyizalukazi eziqhugayo njena nguwena. Usuziqedile izingane zabantu kulomuzi. Kawukhethi ntombi iganile. Sonke sesigula ngamadolo ngisho nezingane imbala. Yifa mthakathi” (Ngubane:36).

(“Oh!” she is speaking to the knob-kerrie at the fireplace. “ Is this you *Sabisabafazi*? Today we are limping old women because of you. You have hurt the children of other people in this home. You do not even discriminate against married woman. We are all suffering from painful knees even children too. Die, you witch”).

Ntombiyethemba in Kungenxa Kabani, marries her husband, Bhekokwakhe, because she is submitting to Cele’s wish. Bhekokwakhe never proposed to Ntombiyethemba. Ntombiyethemba is the type of traditional girl who does not believe in challenging the authority of her parents, or of any adult for that matter. Although Bhekokwakhe has suggested that he would like to marry a woman of his choice, his father never considered his request. He pitches up to inform MaXimba and Bhekokwakhe that he is proceeding with the payment of the bride price and that no one should stand in his way:

“MaXimba nawe Bhekokwakhe, ngifuna nazi ukuthi ngizothumela abakhongi ngomhlomunye bayocela isihlobo esihle kwaSikhakhane eMbekambazo. Akukho muntu-ke ozobuye abeke elakhe kulona kababa umuzi” (Gcumisa:17-18).

(“MaXimba and you, Bhekokwakhe, I want you to know that I will be sending people to negotiate the marriage proposal with the Sikhakhane family the day after tomorrow at Mbekambazo. There is no person who will say a word in my father’s homestead”).

It is evident from the above discussion that silence is the most powerful metaphor for the exclusion of women from participating in matters that concern their lives, as well as from sharing equally in the running of their homes. The fact that men are somehow greater than women, which is recurrent in all the selected novels leads to the conclusion that man is superior to, and more human than, woman. Miller (1990:253) says; “ in African literature as a whole woman hardly has a mouth yet.” Voice is the rhetorical tool of unity, homogenization and empowerment. Censorship of speech and freedom of expression for women should therefore be recognized and addressed. Men like Gumede, Cele,

Khumalo, and Manamuza strongly believe that the censorship of speech helps them to achieve the submissiveness they expect from women and children. The repeated use of the expression *umuzi kababa*, 'my father's homestead' appears consistently in the novels. Such an assertion automatically relegates the woman to an insignificant being. Does this mean that in African culture a woman never owns a home? It is evident that no man in all these novels refers to his homestead as *umuzi kamame*, 'my mother's homestead'. The novels clearly reveal that our culture is fundamentally patriarchal. A woman therefore, can not be expected to play an equally significant role with her husband in the IsiZulu social system. The censorship of the freedom of expression on the part of women and children is viewed as the denial of human rights because women and children have the right to express their opinions on matters that affect them. The long existing culture of silence among women and children, about life threatening situations in their lives, could be said to have emerged out of such conditions.

4.3.3 Theme of child marriage

The point of departure here is the fact that the writers do not write about childhood or old age. Their interest is focussed on the midpoint of life which is the period where the issue of child marriage fits in. This theme analyses the misuse of traditional customs by unscrupulous men to achieve their goals. It concentrates on the coercion of children into marriage by their parents. The fact is that the child who is coerced into marriage is not allowed to voice his/her opinions about a matter which will affect him/her for the rest of his/her life. Traditional authority plays a significant role because the word of the father, as the head of the family, is final. It has been seen from selected novels that there were no further negotiations on the matter after the father had made his decision. Child marriage is viewed as a form of child abuse because the child's opinions are repressed by traditional authority. In our modern world this is conceived of as the violation of the fundamental rights of children, as enshrined in the current Constitution of this country and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A type of traditional custom, like forced and forbidden love, that encourages the denial of freedom of choice to children will be labelled as inhuman, and abusive, and as degrading treatment which violates human existence itself. The tradition of forced love forbids any person who is considered as a child, but who is actually a full human being in his own right, the freedom of choice, and of expression. The novels reveal that our African traditional culture does not permit individualism and self-fulfilment. Individualism is viewed as an enemy because it challenges the traditional order. Patriarchal authority is, as one would expect, very conservative in nature. It normally destroys and represses all those freedoms that promote individual interest above the patriarchal and the communal one.

Our novelists denounce the practice of child marriage which, in some cases as indicated above, has the blessing of some women, especially those mothers who perceive marriage only as a means of social mobility and material enrichment. A child, especially a girl, as Cham (in Jones, 1987:94) puts it, is conceived of as 'a lamb sacrificed, like many others, on the altar of materialism'. Girls in particular become the victims of tradition and of male power, and they become pawns in these destructive adult games that invariably end by negatively affecting the educational and experiential development of the children. In the process the institution of marriage is also distorted and the moral integrity and judgement of individuals who, for the most part, occupy high places in their communities, is compromised. Bajwayele and Ntombana are not honoured as daughters who should be steered and encouraged towards proper self-actualisation. They are, rather, seen as bait to land a big catch.

Nomusa Gumede in Kungavuka AbaNguni is forbidden by her father, Themba Gumede, to marry Thamsanqa. Her father cuts off her right to make an informed, independent choice. To make sure that Nomusa will not even attempt to fall in love with Thamsanqa, Gumede physically assaults her and instructs her to give him her salary every month because he is of the opinion that she gives her money to the unemployed Thamsanqa. Kubheka describes the incident as follows:

Yakhala impama kwabangathi ukhona odubule ivolovolo. Akekho osakhuluma lapho kuthule cwaka, uzwa kona loko kuqopha. Wabasothulini futhi uNomusa. Kwathi ngoba uGumede ebesehiphe uQwabe wonke wake wathi ukuthi hlwathi uNomusa. Wathi lapho evuka kwayiso leso, wathintitha ingubo yakhe (Kubheka:40).

(The sound of a palm of a hand was heard as if someone had pulled a trigger. No one was talking there, it was dead quiet, you just heard the noises of the beatings. Nomusa fell down again. This time Gumede hit her with all his strength and Nomusa fainted. When she woke up she rubbed off the dust from her dress again).

Gumede beats Nomusa for no offence at all. He pretends as if the disciplinary action is about Nomusa's irresponsibility in not saving money for herself. The truth is that he has never previously advised his daughter about money matters. In fact Gumede punishes Nomusa because he is truly convinced that she is in love with Thamsanqa. Nomusa is so severely beaten that she even passes out: *wake wathi hlwathi uNomusa*.

In Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi Manamuza uses his children as economic commodities. Bajwayele is instructed by her father to marry Zulumacansi. In traditional societies, for as long as the child still resides with

his/her parents, he/she has no say in the running of the home. The main conviction seems to be the belief that when a man spares the rod the child gets spoiled. The beating of children and women seems to be a normal action in a traditional setting. The use of the stick is one of the easiest methods of getting an aggressive and obstinate child or woman to listen. Manamuza uses the stick to command respect from his daughter. He physically assaults Bajwayele when she refuses to love Zulumacansi:

Ayidedele imvubu uManamuza, ikhale ehloambe, ikhale ezimbanjeni kuBajwayele kusuke esinamathambo. Lokhu umi ngasemnyango uManamuza, azenzele akuthandayo kuBajwayele (Ngubane: 59).

(Manamuza beats her with a sjambok, he thrashes her on the shoulders, on the ribs and Bajwayele cries painfully. Manamuza is standing next to the door, and he beats Bajwayele the way he likes).

KaMemunce's views totally differ from those of her husband. As traditional as she is, she does not condone the custom of forced love. She conceives it as nothing different from the selling of children under the guise of culture:

“Wena phela nokudayisa nje ngengane yakho ungakwenza uma bekunususela ngezinkomo. Ngikhohlwe ukuthi ukhona nje umuntu owake wathengwa engelona ijazi lamasotsha” (Ngubane:50).

(“You, if possible, can even sell your child if you are sure that you are going to get cattle. I don't think that there is any person who could be sold like coat of a soldier”).

In a traditional setting children do not have the right to query the instructions of their parents. Manamuza's beating of Bajwayele for refusing to love and to marry Zulumacansi is a clear case of punishing a child for an offence she did not commit. Bajwayele is punished for refusing to do the will of her father, not for an offence she personally committed. There is no concrete offence on the side of the child, except that of disobeying her father's instructions. Manamuza, as a traditionalist, does not view his disciplinary action in a negative way. This is a normal way of commanding respect from a stubborn child who does not want to observe his authority because he himself grew up like that.

Manamuza is a traditional man who adheres to his culture. His conversation with Manephu, a man who helped him find Bajwayele in Benoni, reflects that he perceives nothing wrong with the practice of forced love:

“Lentombazane eyelama uBajwayele sengiyibekela uMadundube, umfana kaMcikilishwa, iphoyisa lezintombi eButhunqe bukaMagayi” (Ngubane:93).

(“I have put aside the girl that comes after Bajwayele for Madundube, the son of Mcikilishwa, Mcilikishwa is a police for the maidens of Buthunqe of Magayi”).

According to the above statement, Manamuza selects people, who occupy high positions in his community, to marry his daughters. The purpose is obvious. Such people would not struggle for the bride price if they became husbands of his daughters..

In Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami Khumalo views his daughter, Ntombana, as the only tool he can use to collect cattle for himself. Khumalo is not a rich man, but wants to enrich himself through his daughter’s bride price. The writer depicts him talking to himself next to his cattle kraal. He speaks his wish loudly. Let us capture him saying:

“Sengathi ingathi uma isigana ngithole umkhwenyana oyongilobolela njengenduna noma mina ngingeyona nje”(Mkize:12).

(“If only when she gets married she can get hold of a groom who will pay the bride price as if I a chief, even though I am not”).

He is communicating with and thanking his father, who obviously is no longer alive, for giving him the only girl as his child. He is pleading with his ancestor to shower him with luck to acquire a sizeable amount of cattle through his daughter, the day some man shows up to marry her. He wishes that his daughter will bring him a bride price, equal to that of the daughter of the chief, the day she gets married. This extract foreshadows what is going to happen as the story progresses.

It is evident that the number of cattle that Khumalo wants to acquire through his daughter is planned well in advance. It is not surprising, therefore, to find him arguing with Ndlovu about the number of cattle that should be paid towards Ntombana’s bride price. The following auction like debate between Khumalo and Ndlovu shows how unreasonable men like Khumalo would sell their children under the guise of culture:

“Ishumi nanye ngamaqabuqabu ami Gatsheni?” kwabuza uKhumalo ukwenama kwakhe sekwehlile.

“Ishumi nambili lingabanjani Mntungwa?” kwabuza uNdlovu emjamele umngane wakhe.

“Sengathi usadlala Gatsheni. Amaqabuqabu ami lawa esikhuluma ngawo. Khuluma kahle ngizwe wena” kwasho uKhumalo esezibona izinkomo emqondweni wakhe.

“Wena ufuna izinkomo ezingaki ngalengane yakho? Shono lokho wena okucabangayo manje!”

“Unganginika ishumi nesithupha Gatsheni?” kwabuza uKhumalo izwi lakhe liqhaq hazela (Mkize:16-17).

(“Eleven herds of cattle for my favourite child Gatsheni?” Khumalo asked in a dissatisfied manner).

(“How about twelve, Mntungwa?” Ndlovu asked looking sternly at his friend.)

(“ It looks like you are not serious Gatsheni. It is my favourite child we are talking about here, you must talk sense,” said Khumalo visualising the herds of cattle in his mind.)

(“How many herds of cattle do you want for your child? Tell me what you are thinking right now!”)

(“Will you be able to give sixteen herds of cattle?” Khumalo asked with a trembling voice).

Khumalo’s highest bid for Ntombana’s bride price starts with eleven herds of cattle and finally ends up with the sixteen herds of cattle. This is the amount of cattle that he initially requested from his father. This amount of cattle was normally given as bride price for the daughter of a chief or of any other person who holds a high social standing and not for an ordinary person like Khumalo. He demanded the highest amount for Ntombana because she is his only child and he will never get any other opportunity to receive another bride price. Khumalo’s demand indicates that some men still adhere to the belief that a female is worthless to a family except for the bride price she will bring to it. This may be viewed as one of the reasons that prompted the commercialisation of *ilobolo*. Selfish men like Khumalo only thought of their own goals and wishes. It seems that men did not bother themselves about the predicament that their daughters found themselves in because of the high bride price their fathers demanded. An exorbitant bride price reduces a woman to an economic commodity.

Khumalo, like many other traditional men of his time, resorts to physical violence when he runs short of effective disciplinary measures. If this is determined by culture then culture is horrific. Ntombana Mkize, like his other colleagues, wants to convey the message that sometimes parents punish their children for the wrong reasons. When Ntombana persists in refusing to honour his father’s will, Khumalo beats her:

Ehluleke manje uKhumalo ukuzibamba, aqale ukumbhaxabula ngemvubu, aqale ekhanda, ehle nayo ize emahlombe inqume kabili emahlombe ize iyophelela ezithweni (Mkhize: 46).

(Khumalo could not control himself, and started beating her with a sjambok, he started at the head, down on the shoulders until it reached the legs. She started screaming now, she shouted at the top of her voice).

Khumalo beats his daughter severely and feels very pleased to see her crying. Physical punishment is used as an aid to restore the father's dignity, and respect, and to strengthen his position as the head of the family. Ntombana is beaten like a person who has no feelings. Culture, as observed through the actions of the father figure characters in these novels, denies the youth certain human rights such as the right for the children to say no to what they do not want. Like Manamuza, Khumalo also delivers her daughter like a bag of ordered goods to Ndlovu's homestead:

"Mbandlanyika," kwasho uKhumalo, "namuhla ngikulethele umalokazane wakho ukuba azokugana abe ngumfazi wakho. Ngifuna ukuba umphathe kahle umntanami, umuphe ukudla adle asuthe, uma eshinga ungesabi ukusebenzisa imvubu ngoba yiyo ethambisa iqondise izigwegwe nengugobabafazi. Sesiwuphethile owethu umsebenzi thina sinoyihlo, salobolelana kahle, sekusele ngakini ukuba nihlalisane kahle" (Mkize:96).

("Mbandlanyika," said Khumalo, "today I have brought you your bride so that she can be married to you and be your wife. I want you to take good care of my child, give her food so that she does not go hungry, if she is stubborn do not hesitate to use the sjambok because it does soften and straighten up crooked legs and aggressive women. I and your father have finished our duty, he paid the bride-price well, it is now you that must live well with each other").

There are two points that are of importance in Khumalo's statement. The first is that the best way for a man to care for his wife is to take care of her stomach. This is good advice because it underlines one of the fundamental responsibilities of a married man, which is to nourish his wife. The second is that when a man wants to enforce co-operation from a stubborn wife he should use the stick. This draws attention to male violence against women, which is presently an unresolvable plague in South Africa. It correlates with the high rate of domestic violence against women and children prevalent in our society today. Khumalo's advice to Mbandlanyika also provides us with the traditional root causes of domestic violence, which causes great harm to women and children. A woman in Khumalo's eyes deserves nothing else than a hiding if she shows any form of defiance or aggressiveness. This seems to suggest that a man can ill-treat a woman as he likes. It also promotes the view that any man who

has paid *ilobolo* (bride price) for his wife can beat her whenever she disobeys him. The beating of a woman, however, degrades her status and dignity to that of an object. Women are therefore subjected to the control of men throughout their womanhood. Boonzaier (1988:156), as quoted by Mtuze (1994:9), describe, male dominance and its prevalence amongst Africans as follows:

There is a widespread ideology of male dominance amongst Africans which emphasizes the idea that women pass through the control of different men throughout their lives. It is a system of control that stretches from cradle to grave. The father's control operates up to the time of marriage, at which point it passes over to the husband. ... This system confers the status of perpetual minor on African women ...

The consequence of such dominance indicates that women will never have equal rights with men and will be subjected to men for the rest of their lives.

In Bhekokwakhe's and Ntombiyethemba's case there are some incidents that point to the denial and disregard of children's rights too. When Cele realises that Bhekokwakhe totally rejects Ntombiyethemba, he decides to solve the problem on behalf of Ntombiyethemba. It is not that Ntombiyethemba is not capable of solving her problem, but Cele removes that opportunity from her. He conspires with MaNzuzwa, Ntombiyethemba's mother, who eventually consults a witchdoctor who provides them with traditional herbs that cause Bhekokwakhe to love Ntombiyethemba:

Ngakusasa ekuseni uyise wavuka waphuza umuthi wayophalaza wayesenika uBhekokwakhe naye umuthi wathi akaphuze aphilaze. Umuthi owawuphalaza uCele kwakungewona lona owawuphalaza indodana yakhe. Yona wayeyinike omunye.

.....
Ekuthambameni kwelanga uBhekokwakhe wazizwa efikelwa uthanjwana lukaNtombiyethemba ayengalwazi ukuthi luvelaphi (Gcumisa:49-50).

(The following day in the morning his father woke up and drank some herbal medicine to cleanse himself and he gave some to Bhekokwakhe and told him to cleanse himself too. The medicine that Cele cleansed himself with was not the same as the one used by his son. He gave him a different one).

(At sunset Bhekokwakhe felt some love for Ntombiyethemba and he couldn't identify its source).

Cele gives his son traditional herbs which will make him develop love for Ntombiyethemba. Bhekokwakhe does not know that the herbal medicine he has been given to cleanse himself with is

different from that used by his father. Fortunately for Cele, the herbs do perform short term miracles. Cele's endeavours throughout the story are centred around getting Bhekokwakhe to do his will and around saving Ntombiyethemba from being abandoned by his son. Cele wants to control Bhekokwakhe's passion. He must love only Ntombiyethemba because he has been chosen to do so by his father. The fact that Bhekokwakhe is not yet prepared to marry, and that he is forced to marry a girl he does not love, is a substantial case of child abuse. As a minor he neither has a say in nor freedom of choice in his own affairs. He lives for his father and he must therefore satisfy his demands.

Cele is the type of man who entrenches himself in the lives of his children without feeling any remorse about it. He does not regard a child as having any right to make his her own choices. We know through Ntombiyethemba's words that it is Cele who decided that she should go to Bhekokwakhe in order to fall pregnant. It is not his son and his wife who can decide when to have children but Cele because he has paid *ilobolo* for this bride. This in Cele's view gives him the right to decide everything for them. When Bhekokwakhe asks what brought Ntombiyethemba to Empangeni she can not hide the truth:

"E ... ubaba uthe angize lapha kuwena ngizo ... ngizofuna isisu," kuchaza uNtombiyethemba ngokwesaba (Gcumisa:163).

("Oh ... father said I should come to you in ... order that I should fall pregnant," Ntombiyethemba explained in a nervous state).

The above words indicate that Cele has reduced the status of Ntombiyethemba to that of a child reproducing machine that is mechanically driven. Cele's instruction is as objectification of woman as a sexual object for male consumption and this is one of the misrepresentations that womanism and feminism aim to eradicate. The question of children should be left solely to the couple themselves. Ntombiyethemba is not granted the benefit of the doubt that as a woman she can make important womanly decisions on her own. Cele represents the epitome of patriarchal control and oppression.

The novelists express the misuse of the privileges of tradition for personal gain at the expense of the well-being of the children. The novelists use the voices of young female and male children to launch a direct attack at the parents who meddle in the love affairs of their children. The characters that represent the youth are the novelists weapon's by which they demonstrate this vile practice. We agree with Cham (in Jones & Palmer, 1987:97) when she states that:

When elders lose their sense of responsibility and self-restraint and lapse into uncontrolled excess, then children are thrust forward to assume the role of moral arbiters. In the process, established cultural codes regulating communication and conduct between elders and youngsters are shattered. Thus respect for the elders, one of the central pillars of any society, runs the risk of becoming a casualty of the process of abandonment.

The family unit is a social and psychological environment where a child is prepared for the demands and expectations of adult life. An abused child who is denied a number of his/her fundamental rights reacts in different but strong ways to the situations he or she is faced with. The bold, rebellious actions of the hero and the heroines found in these novels have indicated this point beyond any doubt.

4.3.4 Theme of discrimination

Discrimination in these novels occurs when one of the spouses is rejected by the family of one of the spouses, or by the other spouse, on certain conditions. The theme of discrimination encompasses the theme of rejection and of abandonment. The chain of events starts off as discrimination, proceeds to rejection and in some instances ends up as abandonment. Such a form of prejudice touches on the social stratification we find in any society. It is often based on wealth, occupation, prestige or power, that is usually referred to as social class. Weber (in Odetola, 1983:66) concurs that stratification can take the form of class as well as being based on power and on status. There is some measure of inequality in all known human societies. Many of these forms of inequality have been built into the old and the new ways of social relations in our African societies. In general society is divided into social classes on the basis of income and wealth, occupation and occupational prestige, political power, education, residence and life style. These criteria are based on the socio-economic status of the members of society. Not all humans or citizens are equal in education, wealth or prestige. People who belong to the upper class are treated with respect in most societies. It is also common that these people look down upon those who are not rich and wealthy like themselves.

In Kungavuka AbaNguni, Gumede discriminates against Thamsanqa because of his poor socio-economic background. At the time Gumede makes the following statement Thamsanqa is not working. As compared to Nomusa, Thamsanqa is born of a poor family, and Gumede will not allow his daughter to marry such a poor man:

“... uthi wena uma ngiphilile ngingasuka nginikele ngomntanami athathwe yizinja nje izinto ezingenalutho? ... Ngithemba ukuthi kukhona okungomahlalela nje osekucuthele uNomusa ngoba kwazi ukuthi uGumede akanamfana, ngako-ke kungase kudle ifa eliyokwabelwa inkosazana. Ngimfunge uMuziwakhe, lingawa licoshwe yizinkukhu” (Kubheka:32).

(“...do you mean that if I think, well, I can just offer my child be married to dogs that have nothing. ...I am sure that there is a loafer who is waiting for Nomusa because he knows that I do not have a boy, he is hoping that he might get access to her inheritance because she is first born. I swear by my father’s name Muziwakhe, that will never happen”).

It is obvious from the above speech that he does not want his daughter to be married to a poor, unemployed man like Thamsanqa although he was self-employed and owned a car at the time when he proposed to Nomusa. Gumede associates Thamsanqa’s luck with theft. Gumede’s further rejection indicates that the newly rich Thamsanqa will continue to be discriminated against because of his historically poor background. Gumede has long forgotten that his riches are also based on sheer luck. He became rich after he won a bet on a horse race, which gave him much money to start his businesses.

The dissimilarities in socio-economic conditions between Nomusa and Thamsanqa’s families are used by Gumede to forbid his daughter to marry the man she loves. Gumede is educated. He was a teacher before he started his businesses. Kubheka describes Gumede’s riches by saying:

Babengasengi ezimithiyo ababethi unothile. Eqinisweni wayecwile shi emafutheni omnotho (Kubheka:2).

(Those who said he was rich were not telling lies. The truth is that he was drowning in wealth).

He owns two shops, one at Lamontville and the other at Mvoti. In his time, Gumede could have been classified as a high class citizen because he was not only educated but also very rich. Thamsanqa and Nomusa’s case is similar to that of pauper and princess.

Cele’s discrimination, preferring Lungile over Ntombiyethemba in Kungenxa Kabani is based on the fear of the unknown. It was, and still is, normal in the traditional family system for parents to want their sons to marry a girl whom the family know. Cele utters statements which suggest that he does not approve of his son marrying a girl whom his family does not know:

“Kungaba yinto enjani MaXimba ukuba izinkomo zobaba zilobole intombi esingazi kwayise nonina laba? Uthi kuyoke kulunge kodwa ukuba kubuyiswe umdlwembe nje okungaziwa lutho ngawo lapha ekhaya?”(Gcumisa:15)

(“What kind of a thing would it be, MaXimba, that the cattle of our forefathers will be given as bride price for a girl whose father and mother are unknown to us? Do you think it will be fine to fetch a wild unknown person, whom we know nothing about, into this home?”)

Cele’s comment not only exposes his fears but it also approves of Ntombiyethemba as a local girl who qualifies to be married to Bhekokwakhe, because Both families know each other very well. His statement tallies well with what Odetola (1983:20) explains about the involvement of both families in a marriage:

... families took a very keen interest to make sure they found the right wife or husband for their children. For instance in Nigeria, the mate would be thoroughly screened too to make sure they possessed a good name in the community, that they were not debtors, thieves or murderers, or a witch or wizard and not in possession of any bad medicine that could be used to kill others. In short, the family of the mate had to be completely cleared of any wrong doing.

The above passage indicates that this was a way of life. Perhaps it still is today. Cele cannot be condemned for his actions because he wants to be sure that his son acquires a wife from a respectable family. Besides the fact that he is a very autocratic man, one must commend his efforts because he has good intentions for Bhekokwakhe. He wants to make sure that Bhekokwakhe does not marry a woman who will bring his family many problems in future. With Ntombiyethemba it will be easy to sort out any problem that might arise because the families know each other very well.

MaXimba also shares the same sentiments with her husband. She compliments her husband’s idea in a very diplomatic manner:

“Ngangithi umntanami uyoganwa eduzane lapho ngiyoke ngibone nombondo, ...”
(Gcumisa:15).

(“I thought that my child would marry a wife from the surrounding area where I would be able to witness the traditional ceremony where foodstuffs are conveyed to the home of the intended bridegroom, ...”).

As a traditional woman, MaXimba wishes to see and to attend the important traditional ceremony that will be performed for her son. If the bride is from a far away place this might not be possible for her.

Bhekokwakhe defines his stand by rejecting Ntombiyethemba, who obviously is his parents' choice, by clinging to Lungile, his own choice. The discrimination against Lungile by his parents led to Ntombiyethemba's abandonment by her husband. Ntombiyethemba is not the target here but she cannot avoid being hurt. Cham (in Jones & Palmer, 1987:92) perceives the recurrence of the theme of abandonment as a predominant female condition in the socio-cultural settings of many African literary works. They comment as follows:

Abandonment is not the result of a single act though it may be a unilateral act, nor is it to be confused with divorce or repudiation even though it may share with the latter certain causal factors. Abandonment is a social disease. It is the cumulative result of a process that could be referred to as the gradual opening and enlargement of the emotional/ sexual circle that originally binds two partners (a husband and a wife) to introduce and accommodate a third partner (a second wife) in a manner so devious and deceptive that a new process is set in motion. This new process itself culminates in a state of mind and body that forces the first female partner to re-evaluate the whole relationship by either reluctantly accepting or categorically rejecting the enlarged circle.

Bhekokwakhe resorts to counteracting his father's actions by abandoning Ntombiyethemba because his parents refuse to acknowledge Lungile as his second wife. To further nullify his father's authority over himself he proceeds to pay the bride price for Lungile.

Cele does not want to acknowledge that he contributed a great deal to Ntombiyethemba's abandonment by Bhekokwakhe. Cele would never move away from the belief that his son would have abandoned his wife even if he had married a woman of his choice. Cele's comment still shows mistrust of any girl that he does not know:

"Kungabe kunjani-ke ukuba yintombana yasendle ayithatha lapho ayithatha khona aqiqashele yena ithandwa nguye?" (Gcumisa:116)

("How would it be if this was a girl from the veld that he chose for himself because he loved her?")



Cele does not trust his son. He thinks that Bhekokwakhe would have abandoned his wife even if Bhekokwakhe had chosen her. His statement implicitly conveys the fact that he will never accept a girl he does not know. The word *intombana*, a little girl, is a derogatory diminutive which indicates that Cele could not have had any respect for such a girl. He also refers to the home of the unknown girl as *endle*, the veld. This term is also derogatory and shows that Cele will never compromise his wishes. Seemingly, the choice of a marriage partner as far as Cele and MaXimba are concerned is limited to the girls that their family know, not any outsiders who might bring bad habits into the family.

Ntombiyethemba becomes the victim of circumstances because she is caught in a web. She is the one who has to contend with this reality and challenge. Ntombiyethemba does not challenge her situation. She does not entertain any alternatives because she knows that she is dependent on Cele for her marriage to survive. She submits to her husband's family even when she recognizes her own suffering. She reasons herself into believing that she should not direct her anger to Bhekokwakhe's parents but rather to her husband, who never courted her. In her turmoil and indecision, she reaffirms her purpose in life by recommitting herself to her parents-in-law. Regardless of how Bhekokwakhe has despised her, she believes that, whichever way things go, Bhekokwakhe is her lawful husband. Situations like these reveal the pain that women experience at the hands of men. The primary reality of Ntombiyethemba is a reality of rejection and abandonment. More importantly, Ntombiyethemba's situation calls for the need to resolve and avoid this ill by allowing children to choose their own marriage partners.

In Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi first preference is given to Zulumacansi rather than to Potoloji. This discrimination is based on the fact that Zulumacansi is a wealthier and a much braver man than Potoloji, who is poor and also a coward. Zulumacansi's wealth and bravery has earned him a prestigious position in the community of Buthunqe. He has numerous herds of cattle, which makes Manamuza hopeful that he will realize his goal of self-enrichment. Besides the number of cattle he will acquire if Zulumacansi marries Bajwayele, this will also earn him high status in his community:

Angayithandi lento uManamuza ngoba iso wayeselibekile kuZulumacansi, esebona ukuthi uma ethathe intombi yakhe uBajwayele, lokho kuyolikhweza phezulu kabi

igama lakhe eButhunqe (Gcumisa:16).

(Manamuza was not happy about that because he has already earmarked Zulumacansi: if he marries his daughter Bajwayele, this will place his name in a very high position at Buthunqe).

Although Manamuza is a greedy man who is mostly concerned with self-enrichment and a prestigious position for himself, he has good intentions in wanting Zulumacansi to marry his daughter. His daughter will never go hungry if Zulumacansi marries her. If Bajwayele marries Potolozzi, Manamuza cannot be sure whether he will achieve these things. One of the reasons adduced by Manamuza to support his dislike for Potolozzi is that he is a coward:

“UPotolozzi sekukaningi ebukela uyise bemshaya phambi kwabantu basiphule isicoco ekhanda. Athule nje uPotolozzi; athi esuka abe ethi akuhanjwe. Ngimthandiswa yilokho lomfana uZulumacansi. Uma uhamba naye usuke wazi ukuthi uhamba nendoda uqobo lwayo”(Ngubane:48).

(“Many a time Potolozzi has been unable to protect his father when he was beaten before other people until they destroyed his traditional head gear. Potolozzi would just keep quiet; and would suggest that they leave. There is a reason why I like Zulumacansi. If you are walking with him you know that you walk with a real man”).

Manamuza criticises Potolozzi for his cowardice. It is true that there is no man who would like his daughter to be married to a man who cannot even protect his own father. Bravery is an African virtue. It is a traditional as well as a human norm that a man must protect his family. Manamuza does not want to take the risk with his daughter. Manamuza’s good intentions towards Bajwayele are, however, not appreciated because Bajwayele continuously rejected Zulumacansi and eventually fled her matrimonial home.

Wealth has been identified as one aspect that bestows prestige on an individual. It was important to most, if not all, traditional African men to own large herds of cattle. Khumalo is no exception. In *Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami*, Khumalo offers his daughter to Mbandlanyika because his father is able to give him the sixteen herds of cattle. Magwagwa, Ntombana’s boyfriend, does not have the required amount of cattle to give as Ntombana’s bride price. However, he is prepared to go and work in the diamond mines in order to be able to afford these cattle:

“Uma ungivumela,” kwaqhubeka uMagwagwa esewubona umehluko kuNtombana,

“ngizohamba ngilibangise eDayimane ukuyofuna izinkomo zikayihlo, ngibuye ngizokulobola ube ngumfazi wami”(Mkize:41).

(“If you agree with me,” Magwagwa continued, “ I will go to Kimberley to work for your father’s cattle, I will come back to pay the bride price and you will be my wife”).

Khumalo can not wait for Magwagwa to go and work for a number of years before he can marry his daughter. In those days as indicated by the other novelists, it was not easy for a man to resist the temptation of cattle, and, besides, a man’s status and position in his society was determined by the number of cattle he had in his kraal.

All the men as presented by these novelists practised a certain degree of discrimination against the individuals whom they did not want their daughters to marry. In some instances discrimination was solely in favour of the child, as in Nomusa, Bajwayele and Bhekokwakhe’s cases. In some cases the fathers wanted to benefit from the choices they made for their daughters. The rich discriminated against the poor, which confirms the existence of different social classes of people in African society.

4.3.5 Theme of protest

The theme of protest encompasses the rebellious responses of characters against sexual oppression. It consists of the negative assertions against forced and forbidden love. It specifically focuses on the disapproval of forced or forbidden love by both young men and women. In other words it is anti-authoritarian, and speaks against the unjust coercive actions committed by any adult against a young person who cannot defend himself or herself. It indicates that young people desire to create a society where women can live a full, self-determined life. They defy the life-denying ethos of patriarchy and demand a new and different order founded on freedom and love. The novelists are expressing angry feelings about injustice and are engaged in raising women’s political awareness of their oppression by men. They are discontented about the culture of forced and forbidden love as they see it occurring in their communities. Ntuli (1984:133) comments on the writer’s role in writing about society’s problems:

Throughout the ages writers have been found to express their displeasure about certain conditions or practices. There is always an argument as to the degree to which an artist should involve himself with the problems of society.

The question whether an artist should, or should not, intrude into the life of other people in his society is also raised by Egudu (1978:1) who says:

The question whether the literary artist should or should not be concerned in his works with what is happening in his society has through the ages been the issue over which artists and critics have argued and disagreed.

According to the above scholar, protest literature expresses dissatisfaction about the order of things.

Literary artists are part of a particular society and their works automatically mirror what takes place in various communities. Literary works, then, are the means through which many societies come to know the plagues in their communities. It is a primary function of any literary artist to open the eyes of society to the good and the evil that exist among its inhabitants.

Daymond (1984:35) in Manyaka (1995:164) highlights that any form of protest is against a distorted order of doing things. Gray attests that:

... protest at this state of affairs is not a gesture, but a system of belief, a quite and tenacious one, which is situated at the point where the way things are diverged into the way they could be or could have been. An act of memory in a society which has lost an international dynamic of renewal can be allied to an act of provocation.

Protest is seen as a means of returning things that are in disarray to their normal order. It is bound to occur in a society where the order of doing things has become too rigid, or where power is vested in one sector of the society. It is conceived of as a response to the unreasonable adherence to tradition found in patriarchy. Any society needs to be dynamic so that it is in line with changing times.

A discussion of protest requires an analysis of the statuses and roles of the people who comprise a family unit. Status and roles are two of the most important aspects of interpersonal relations involved in a social organisation. Status can be defined as an individual's position within a family structure (Odetola, 1983:4). For example, in a family unit an individual can hold the position of a grandfather, grandmother, husband, father, mother, daughter or son some simultaneously. Every status has a set of behaviour patterns or norms specifying the expected performances of the individual in the variety of positions already listed. As a result of the limited time available to the individual and the many roles he plays, often conflict rises in the performance of these roles.

As evidenced in the novels, the young people's protest against the parental choice of a marriage

partner culminated in today's rejection of the practice. The traditional heroes and heroines in the novels refuse to assert a masculine authority and parental control suffers a serious setback here. Among the AmaZulu and any other African nation, the vital core of society is the maintenance of families in proper relationship. The exercise of familial virtues, the fulfilment of duties towards elders, wives and children which ensures the smooth working of the family and lineage group as an economic and cooperative unit, is of great importance. In these novels we come across a number of young women and a young man who protest against an unjustified forced love. Each novel presents a war of values and principles between the old, traditional patriarchal sector and modern youth people.

The enforcement of forced and forbidden love disturbs the behaviour patterns of the children and the social relations between the parents and their children. The issue of forced or forbidden love begins to take on the characteristics of a power struggle in which both sides, male as well as female, invoke the canons of indigenous traditions, as well as adopted non-indigenous values, to justify their actions. The power struggle, then, is to be seen not so much in terms of victory or defeat, since it is the kind of struggle that yields a no-win situation, but is to be looked at from the perspective of the impact of the experience on the individual and of the latter's ability to examine, actualize and utilize the transactive capabilities of such an experience of struggle. Protest defines the nature, the intensity, the parameters and the outcome of this power struggle. The young represented by the new generation, refuse to follow the old and traditional way of doing things. Many of their protest actions exhibit anger and militancy.

In Kungavuka AbaNguni Nomusa respects the authority of her parents but she finds herself in a predicament that forces her to protest against her father's wishes. Her father physically punishes her because he believes that she gives her money to Thamsanqa, whom her father assumes is her boyfriend. Gumede does not enquire into the matter before punishing Nomusa. The mere fact that his daughter can not produce a savings book when he demands it is proof enough that she is using her money to buy Thamsanqa cigarettes. She protests against her father by falling in love with the very same unwanted, young man. Kubheka describes the events as they take place in Nomusa's mind and writes:

Umuntu olungile nguye impela lona ongafunwa muntu, ebe engenasici (Kubheka :81).

(The suitable person is the very one who is not wanted, while there is nothing wrong with him).

Nomusa will fall in love with Thamsanqa so as to hurt her parents. Kubheka also indicates that children tend to deviate purposely, to commit the very offence they were punished for. Nomusa further objects to her father's actions and falls in love with Thamsanqa because she can not convince her parents otherwise:

Uma kunjalo kusho ukuthi naye wakoNomusa akangabe esayizila inyama, kodwa kufanele ayidle, khona eyothi ethola izimpama, eluswa nangamaphoyisa angomaNkosi abe ngempela edinga ukweluswa (Kubheka:102).

(If it means that she must not abstain from eating the meat, but must eat it, so that when she receives a slapping, and supervision by MaNkosi who now acts like a police officer she will really be in need of the supervision).

The above extract indicates the anger which made Nomusa more determined to love Thamsanqa despite her father's warnings. MaNkosi as much as she respects her husband she also protests against forbidden love. She tries to persuade Gumede to understand that Nomusa has the right to make her own choice about her future husband:

“Uma wena wazikhethela mina angiboni ukuthi uNomusa akufanele ngani yena azikhethele. Mzukulwana wangigculisa ekutheni uNomusa akufanele ngani azikhethele umuntu azokwakha naye umuzi ngiyozama ngawo wonke amandla ukukulekelela ekuvimbeleni uNomusa ukuya lapho efuna ukuya khona” (Kubheka:247).

(“If you chose me I do not see why Nomusa should not make a choice of her own. The day you give me a satisfactory reason why Nomusa should not make her own choice of the person she will build a home with, I will help you with all my strength to curb her from going to where she wants to go”).

MaNkosi supports Nomusa because she had the opportunity to marry the man she loved. MaNkosi was his choice and he should, according to MaNkosi allow Nomusa enjoy to her own freedom of choice.

In Kungenxa Kabani Bhekokwakhe's protests and his arrogant behaviour are based on the brutal imposition of marriage by his father. He is impelled to marry Ntombiyethemba solely because she is his father's choice. Bhekokwakhe's protest is a reaction to his father's obstinacy and refusal to recognise Lungile as the woman that he wants to marry. To counteract his father's authority

Bhekokwakhe takes Lungile along with him to his home, fully aware that his family will not accept her. When Cele questions him about Lungile Bhekokwakhe replies him arrogantly to him:

“Lona engifika naye umakoti wami. Lona omshoyo owakho” (Gcumisa:149).

(“This one that I have brought along with is my bride. The one you are referring to is yours”).

Bhekokwakhe further rejects Ntombiyethemba because he does not love her. Not even Bongiwe, who is closer to her brother, could persuade him to accept and love Ntombiyethemba. The strong notion of rejection is caused by the fact that his father does not want to regard his wishes too. Bhekokwakhe stands firm on his decision and gives Bongiwe the same response he has given to his parents:

“UMaSikhakhane lowo omushoyo, akuyena owami. Ungokababa” (Gcumisa:151).

(“The MaSikhakhane you are talking about is not mine. She is father’s”).

Bhekokwakhe cannot love Ntombiyethemba because he aligns her with a source of oppression, that is, his father. No one can dissuade him from loving Lungile instead of Ntombiyethemba. It is a common belief that a mother is usually the one who can reach the innermost part of her child’s heart but, this is not obvious with Bhekokwakhe. Like most mothers she would like to raise her son’s children by Ntombiyethemba before she dies:

Bhekokwakhe replies to his mother’s plea with the contempt it deserves. He gives his mother the same harsh response as the ones he has given to his father and sister:

“Mhlawumbe lona enimalayo nimala njena nguyena obezokugonisa ingane yami”(Gcumisa:153).

(“Maybe the one you are rejecting could be the one who would afford you the opportunity to put my child on your lap”).

Bhekokwakhe’s protest culminates when he eventually pays the bride price for Lungile.

KaMemunce in Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi strongly protests against forced love because it has turned men against their children. Unscrupulous men like Manamuza use *ilobolo* to enrich themselves. In their

argument with her husband about Bajwayele's marriage to Zulumacansi she strongly points out that *ilobolo* should be abolished. She believes that the commercialisation of *ilobolo* has caused many young people to bear a number of children out of wedlock:

Abafana sebeyasaba ukushada ngoba ilibolo liyasinda. Yikho lokhu lifa ngezingane ezitholelwa emakhaya (Ngubane:51).

(Young men are afraid to get married because the bride price is very high. This is the reason why it is dying out and the reason why children are born out of wedlock).

KaMemunce protests against the high price of *ilobolo* and the many men like Manamuza who have turned it into business. Msimang (1975:265) explains that *ilobolo* initially had no negative intentions:

Ilobolo liyindlela yokuthi izandla ziyagezana. Okwesibili liyindlela yokubonga ukukhuliselwa intombi ibe ngumuntu ogcwele lona oseyokwakha umuzi kobani Njengoba kuqala ilobolo lalingelona inani elinqunyiwe, umkhwenyana ebekhekha okusemandleni ekhombisa uthando lwakhe.

(The bride price is a way of showing appreciation. Secondly it is a way of thanking the parents for the girl who is fully grown up and can start a home of her own somewhere. As the bride price was not associated to a specific amount, the groom would give what he could afford to show his love).

The bride price, according to the above explanation, was not exorbitant. This indicates that it did not equal the value of the maiden because a person cannot be bought. Due to greediness and the fact that, traditionally, women were excluded from the bride price negotiations, men abused this right. Such men seem to have forgotten the real essence and importance of this custom. KaMemunce criticises men for charging too many herds of cattle in the name of culture. This demonstrates the corruption that led to the collapse of this beautiful custom.

Bajwayele is a radical like her mother. Zulumacansi tries in vain to induce her to love him but fails. It becomes evident that no amount of persuasion by Zulumacansi will divert her mind from her decision. After her return from Benoni she tells Zulumacansi that no one will force her to love or marry someone she has never loved. She objects to Manamuza's forcing her to marry Zulumacansi:

"Ngiyakuzwa lokhu okushiwo ngubaba. Kepha-ke nabaseMayezeni bafuna ukuza ekhaya nabo. Basho njalo" (Ngubane:57).

("I do understand what father is saying. But the people of Mayezeni also want to come home. They said so").

Bajwayele protests against marrying Zulumacansi. Instead she informs her father that Polotozi's family is also prepared to pay the bride price. The relations between Bajwayele and her father deteriorate to an unhealthy state. The pressure that Manamuza and Zulumacansi exerted on Bajwayele leads her to flee her home and she never comes back.

MaZungu in Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami feels pity for Ntombana and supports her in her protest against marrying a one eye jack. Like many other women she abhors the practice of selling children under the guise of *ilobolo*:

"Uyihlo mntanami," kwasho unina, "ufana nomuntu owabulawa ngezinkomo. Nangu esekuthengisa kuNdlovu ngoba efuna izinkomo ezizogcwalisa isibaya sakhe" (Mkize:22).

("Your father, my child," said her mother, "he is like a person who has been bewitched about cattle. Here he is selling you to Ndlovu because he wants the cattle that will fill his kraal").

The relationship between Ntombana and her father becomes so spoiled that she replies to him without showing any respect. She looks him straight in the eye and tells that she would rather choose death than marry Mbandlanyika:

"Angithandi ukuba ngikukhohlise ngoba ngenziwa yilemvubu yakho, ngithi kuwe ngizokwenza into engazi kahle ukuthi ngeke ngize ngiyenze nanini. Sala nje usungikhipha umphefumulo ngoba yikho engikubona kungcono kunokuba ngingagana indlobho. UMbandlanyika ngiyamzonda!" (Mkize: 48-49)

("I do not like to lie to you because of your sjambok, and tell you that I will do something that I know very well I will never be able to do at any given moment. You can kill me because I think that is better than to marry a one eye jack. I hate Mbandlanyika!")

Ntombana totally rejects Mbandlanyika, but her father eventually drives her personally to Ndlovu's home. The young people's objection to their parents instruction indicates the rate at which the family relationship deteriorates.

As in the other cases of forced love the marriage between Ntombana and Mbandlanyika does not last for ever. It fails and Ntombana ends up married to her original boyfriend, Magwagwa.

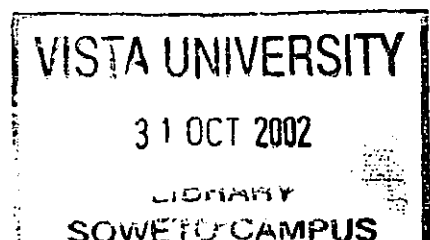
4.3.6 Theme of freedom

The theme of protest discussed above indicates clearly the dissatisfaction of the youth, particularly women, with patriarchal control, which imposes strict measures on the choice of a marriage partner. Young people themselves are in conflict with their parents who want to confine their behaviour within fixed behavioural parameters. The theme of freedom therefore touches on this culture conflict. The youth perceive life differently from the old generation. It has been demonstrated that the youth characters in the selected novels yearn for the freedom of choice. They want to do things their own way and this puts them at loggerheads with their parents who want to maintain the old order. The youth confirm the idea that people cannot be free if there are obstacles placed in the way of the realisation of their freedom.

Kelleher (1964:17) gives two definitions of freedom. He refers to the first definition as an old one, which explains freedom as "an absence of restraint." This definition draws attention to the fact that the concept of freedom cannot exist except in relation to power. On the other hand restraint itself is inconceivable without the power to restrain. This perfectly describes the situation between the youth and their parents. Culturally, parents have the power to place certain restraining orders on their children. This power should not be viewed negatively. Parents do this because they still think that their youth cannot choose between what is right and what is wrong. Parents restraining orders in most instances, are intended positively. The concept of freedom as absence of restraint is not real because these days it only exists as an idea. Even as an idea it is still linked to power.

The youth's yearning for freedom is purposive, aimed at breaking the shackles of parental control. It indicates that they want the power to do what they desire and that this power is freedom. Kelleher (1964:19) explains freedom in his second definition as:

the "power in man to do what he likes so far as his powers can reach."



This definition stresses that freedom has limitations. It is limited the point where one's power can reach, and not beyond. Complete freedom does not exist therefore, no person can have complete freedom. Although freedom is a fundamental fact of human existence it can only be applied to a certain degree.

This theme focuses more emphatically on the particular dilemma of women, as well as youth, in a rapidly changing society. Westernization, with its emphasis on the freedom of the individual, presents a clear obstacle for African culture. The changes that Westernization effects are accompanied by conflict between the new ideals and the old allegiance. Maybe we should ask ourselves as to what happens when two generations overlap each other, with neither one prepared for a compromise? How can freedom and authority be brought into harmony? The answer to these questions lies in the fact that society should grant all its members the opportunity to make individual choices about their lives. Society must provide for a person's exercise of freedom. In order to be truly free a person must have the power to form independent judgements.

Given the historically established and culturally sanctioned sexism of African society, there is no possibility of a compromise, or even truce, between modern youth and patriarchy. The selected novels explore the difficulties of the transition from the old and traditional to the new and modern way of life, and they seem to suggest a solution to the difficulties encountered during the period of transition. The writers it would appear, are therefore suggesting a meaningful compromise between the traditional customs and the modern values with their demand for the freedom of the individual.

The militancy of the youth in these novels arises from the institutionalized sexism of contemporary African life. The novelists to convey the observation that if a person's feelings are the basic experience, then freedom is the fundamental fact of human existence. In Kungavuka AbaNguni the bone of contention between Nomusa and Gumede is precisely this freedom of choice. Gumede prohibits her from marrying Thamsanqa. It is not only Nomusa who realises that her sense of freedom is curbed on purpose. Her mother, MaNkosi, warns Gumede against the dangers that his actions are old fashioned and therefore they will fail:

“Ukufuna nokungafuni kwami akungeni lapha ngoba nawe uyazi ukuthi indaba efana nalena oyikhulumayo yehlula uCetshwayo eseyiphoqelela ngomkhonto. Indaba yakonhliziyo ingumzwangedwa” (Kubheka:231).

“It does not matter how I feel about this because you also know that a matter like the one you are talking about overcame Cetshwayo when he enforced it with a spear. The matter of the heart is only felt by the one who experiences it”).

MaNkosi tells Gumede directly that Nomusa must be given the freedom to decide about her love affairs. Her statement, however, contains traces of Western influence. The white man arrived in Natal during the time of king Cetshwayo and abolished all the practices of forced and forbidden love. The freedom of choice concerning the choice of a marital partner was emphasised by Sir Theophilus Shepstone when he arrived in Natal. The old man, Muziwempi Gumede, who is Themba Gumede’s father, also advises him that forbidding Nomusa to marry a man of her choice is a matter that is out of his hands:

“Ngithi uyingane nje ndodana ngoba naku ngibona uzihlupha ngento ongenakuyithini. Ayikho ezandleni zakho lento ozikhathaza ngayo” (Kubheka :235).

“I say you are a baby, my son, because I can see that you worry yourself about something that you cannot do anything about. You worry yourself about something which is not in your hands”).

It is amazing that Muziwempi, as old as he is, acknowledges the fact that Themba must stay away from his child’s affairs because there is nothing he can do to change the situation. He discourages his son from interfering in Nomusa’s affairs. The old man believes that Nomusa should be allowed to deal with matters of her heart on her own.

Cele in Kungenxa Kabani desires to cut off Bhekokwakhe’s freedom. He views the latter’s working at Empangeni as a disadvantage because the distance does not afford him enough control over his son’s movements. If Bhekokwakhe works closer to Cele’s home his freedom of movement will be curtailed. As a teacher, Bhekokwakhe has the right to work where he wants to but his father does not recognize that right. He has paid for his son’s education and this makes him think that he has the right to decide on his work place. In order to give effect to his decision he goes to the Chief of the area and to the police, to request them to look for his son:

“Njengoba ngisho nje uma kungenzeki lutho ngiyoye ngishaye eNkosini. Nxa iNkosi ingathumeli amaphoyisa ukuba amlande afike naye qathatha lapha, ngiyothi iMantshi ayithumele amaphoyisa kaHulumeni amlande, athi nxa emfica amgaxe ozankosi ...” (Gcumisa:105).

("I am saying if nothing happens I will personally go to the Chief. If the Chief does not send the police to fetch him and come here with him, I will tell the Magistrate to send the police of the Government to fetch him, and they will put hand cuffs on him ...").

Gumede is very shortsighted. He does not realise that his power is limited only to his homestead. It does not occur to him that he has no right to instruct the Chief and the Magistrate to send police to look for Bhekokwakhe. This indicates that the society in which Cele lives imposes strict laws on children concerning the respect they should pay to their parents. It must have been a very autocratic patriarchal society. Such a society, through its institutions and laws, not only minimises opportunities for individual fulfilment but also provides restraints on the individual in order to protect the freedom of the group. If Cele can retrieve Bhekokwakhe from his hiding place this would not only save Ntombiyethemba but the whole family, in Cele's opinion.

Ntombiyethemba's right to love the man of her choice is curtailed the day she agrees with Cele that she will marry Bhekokwakhe. In this case both the rights of Bhekokwakhe and Ntombiyethemba are interfered with. Their freedom to experience the things they need to as young people, are ended by Cele's selfish dreams. Bhekokwakhe wants to experience the freedom of choosing his wife on his own:

"...engikubona kulukhuni satshe kulenkulumo kababa ukuba ngithathe intombi engingazithandelanga yona mina," kusho uBhekokwakhe (Gcumisa:5).

("... what I find difficult in what father has said is the fact that I should marry a girl that I did no court on my own," said Bhekokwakhe).

Bhekokwakhe wishes to achieve his freedom by rejecting Ntombiyethemba. His response to his parents indicates that he is yearning for the freedom of choice. It also indicates that a person cannot just be told to love someone but that love should come from within. Besides the fact that Bhekokwakhe does not love Ntombiyethemba, he also sees her illiteracy as another factor that further separates them. Ntombiyethemba is less educated than Bhekokwakhe and because education is one of the prominent agents of Westernization, Bhekokwakhe does not think that as an educated man he could live comfortably with an illiterate woman:

"Ukuthatha intombazane engafundile noma efunde kancane kakhulu kunami kuyoba uhlupho olukhulu uma sesihleli ndawonye nayo ngoba ngeke siqondane kahle" (Gcumisa: 29).

("To marry an illiterate girl or one that is less qualified than myself is going to be a big problem when we have settled together because we will never understand one another well").

Bhekokwakhe holds different views from his father. To his traditional parents education is not a factor that should prevent him from marrying Ntombiyethemba. The young people and the parents do not subscribe to the same philosophy of life.

Bajwayele in Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi also longs for freedom of choice. She disagrees with her father in being forced to marry Zulumacansi. Let us capture her telling to Zulumacansi that no one has the power to make a person love somebody else:

"Kodwa engikwazi ngokungangabazi ukuthi akukho noyedwa onamandla okuba inhliziyo yami ayithandise lokho engakuthandi. Yiyona yodwa vo into engeyomuntu emhlabeni-inhliziyo yokuthanda" (Ngubane:169).

("But what I know and have no doubt about is that there is no one who has the power to make my heart love what it does not love. That is the only thing that belongs to a person in this world-the heart to love").

The above passage expresses a fundamental truth about human life. Nobody can successfully win someone's heart for another person. Not even Manamuza can succeed in this. Bajwayele perceives this as the only gift that has been given to each individual. She stresses the fact that the gift of love is personal. It is not transferable. When any person interferes in the love affairs of other people conflict is bound to occur because each person lives by feelings which are unique.

KaMemunce is an old woman who is not afraid to speak the truth. She is not afraid of the fact that Manamuza might beat her for this:

"Phela, yise kaDumezweni naye uBajwayele akuseyona ingane. Naye unenhliziyiyo. Uma ubucu bungalingani entanyeni, wena ubufaka ngenkani, buyoqgashuka" (Ngubane:57).

("You know, father of Dumezweni, Bajwayele is no longer a child. She also has a heart. If she does not love the person that you force her to love, the love will not last forever, it will die").

KaMemunce wants her husband to realise that although he might be successful in forcing Bajwayele into marrying Zulumacansi, the marriage will only last for a short time because it is not based on a

solid foundation. The foundation here is the heart, where all love starts. KaMemunce says: *naye unenhliziy*, which means that Bajwayele is capable of choosing between what she likes and what she does not. Manamuza is only interested in enriching himself by a large number of cattle. He does not care about his daughter's feelings. There is conflict of interest between the father and his daughter.

Ntombana in *Inhliziy* *Ingugo Wami* like all the other assertive heroines, wants to marry her own chosen man, Magwagwa. She tells her mother that she would rather die, like the maidens of the *Ingcugce* regiment who rejected forced love and died for it:

“Mama,” kwasho uNtombana enyipha, “ izintombi zeNgcugce nazo zafa zifela ukubuswa yizinhliziy zazo kwezothando, nami ngiyabona ukuthi kuzoya lapho uma ubaba ephikelela nalendaba yakhe” (Mkize:32).

(“Mother,” said Ntombana with a frown, “the maidens of the *Ingcugce* died for the freedom of the heart when it comes to love I can see that I am also heading towards that direction if father pursues this issue”).

Ntombana chooses death rather than marry the man chosen by her father. She is aware that she has to respect her father's authority by accepting his proposal. Like other young women she is also influenced by Western ways. The reference to the incident of the *Ingcugce* takes us back to the time of King Cetshwayo. The maidens of this regiment rejected the King's word because they relied on the fact that Sir Theophilus Shepstone had issued a banning order concerning forced love. This was liberation for the maidens, who had suffered severe patriarchal oppression. It is not surprising therefore, to find many of these heroines referring to this incident. It shows that a new political idea or movement always has social consequences. In the real world it means a change in the power relations between the youth and their parents.

It is evident from the novels themselves that the issue of forced and forbidden love impinges on the freedom of the individual, especially the one who is forced to enter into such a marriage. The theme of freedom attempts to reconcile the conflict between the individual and authority in a more positive, less contradictory way. It persuades those who still cling to power that freedom can only be applied within certain limits. The writers attempt to harmonize the opposite demands of the individual and traditional forms of authority. Conflict is bound to occur because it becomes apparent a person's liberty is another person's restraint. There is conflict between the demands of the youth's emotional

drives and the dictates of their reason. This means that if children are given more liberty to make their own decisions concerning their marital partners, a number of restraints are then placed on patriarchy. In order to understand the idea of freedom one has to take into account several interrelated ideas: the primacy of the feelings in the life of the individual, the isolation of the individual, the significance of an individual's creative imagination, the conflict between the individual and authority, the processes of change in life, and the idea of democracy which encourages the idea that a person is a free creative spirit.

4.3.7 Love initiated through the use of medicinal charms does not succeed

This theme is related to the forced love and arranged marriages we have been discussing. It has been observed from the novels that those who perpetuate forced love and arranged marriages use other methods to attain their goals. We must remember that the two young people who are forced to love and marry each other are initially not in love. Love, then, is initiated by the use of medicinal charms, which appears to be the only aid at their disposal. Today this is perceived as evil and traditional, but it is a Zulu custom and we cannot claim that it is no longer in use. There are people who strongly believe that traditional medicinal charms (*umuthi wentando*) do initiate love that has not previously existed between two individuals. Three of the selected novelists demonstrate that forced love is linked to the use of medicinal charms.

In Kungenxa Kabani Cele wants Bhekokwakhe to love Ntombiyethemba because he desires him to marry her. Bhekokwakhe's blatant refusal makes Cele realise that the only possible way to soften him to love Ntombiyethemba is to resolve to use medicinal charms, which will help to develop the love between the two. Bhekokwakhe does initially feel love for Ntombiyethemba after he has taken the medicine to cleanse himself.

The medicine that Cele gave to Bhekokwakhe was in fact not for the cleansing of the stomach but was intended to create love. Cele is a daring father. He tries all he can to imbue Bhekokwakhe with love for Ntombiyethemba. The medicine does affect Bhekokwakhe. He had initially planned to pay Lungile a visit, but as the day progresses he feels that there is no need to do that. He changes his mind about seeing Lungile. Surprisingly, he goes to Mbekambazo, to visit Ntombiyethemba at her home:

Ekuthambameni kwelanga uBhekokwakhe wazizwa efikelwa uthanjwana

lukaNtombiyethemba ayengalwazi ukuthi luvelaphi. Enzenjani? Aye kwaNdlovu entombini yakhe uLungile? Amane abuyele Empangeni? OwaseMbekambazo umcabango wona awenze njani? (Gcumisa:50)

(Towards sunset Bhekokwakhe felt some love for Ntombiyethemba and he did not know where it came from. What should he do? Should he go to the Ndlovu home to see Lungile? Should he go back to Empangeni? What should he do about the idea of going to Mbekambazo?)

The effects of the love-charms are visible in Bhekokwakhe's indecisive actions. The above passage portrays him in a state of confusion. He acknowledges the fact that he does not know the source of the love he feels. Msimang (1975:324) describes this type of love-charm as *umaguqu* (the one that causes change). He explains *umaguqu*:

Kuthiwa indenda ngokukhipha izindenda, kuthiwe umaguqu ngokuguqula izinto.

(It is called a slimy saliva, because it is a changer because it changes things).

The love-charms that Cele gave to Bhekokwakhe have started to change the way he felt about Ntombiyethemba, and he is torn apart. He is not sure whether he should proceed with his initial plan to visit Lungile or go back to Empangeni, but eventually he goes to Ntombiyethemba's home. The writer describes the happiness of the bride's parents as follows:

NoSikhakhane kwamjabulisa kakhulu ukubona umkhwenyana wakwakhe egcekeni kwakhe. UMaNzuza yena wamane wehluleka nje ukuzibamba wamane waziphonsa elawini khona ngayizolo (Gcumisa:55).

(Sikhakhane was very happy to see his groom at his home. MaNzuza could not control herself and she threw herself in to Ntombiyethemba's room the day of Bhekokwakhe's arrival).

The happiness expressed by Ntombiyethemba's parents is not for the same reasons. Sikhakhane is innocent and is happy for his child because he also knows that Bhekokwakhe did not court his daughter. He might also have been worried by the fact that the groom never visited his daughter after the payment of the bride price. MaNzuza's overexcitement is caused by the amazement that her witchdoctor's medicinal charms are working according to plan. Bhekokwakhe felt that he was not his usual self anymore after he drank the medicine given to him by his father. He did not visit Lungile until he went back to Empangeni.

Shortly after his visit to his home Bhekokwakhe fell sick. He suffered from terrible chest pains that medical doctors could not heal. At this time Bhekokwakhe had not started drinking liquor, so he became very suspicious about his illness. Mzimela advised him to seek help from the fortunetellers or witchdoctors. He consulted various people and they all told him that the medicine that he was given to cleanse his stomach with, was intended to create love between him and Ntombiyethemba and not to kill him. Fortunately the help he received cured him. After receiving a number of treatments for his illness the love that Bhekokwakhe felt for Ntombiyethemba started fading and it eventually died:

Uthanjwana olwase lwakheke isigubhukana ngoNtombiyethemba kuBhekokwakhe lwamane lwadamba nje. Waphinde wanyamalala futhi akaze alubhada kwelakubo (Gcumisa:60).

(The love that had been created in a very short space of time for Ntombiyethemba in Bhekokwakhe faded. He again stayed away from home and never set his foot there).

Bhekokwakhe deserted his home because of the discovery that his father had used love medicine. This conversely changed his heart completely towards Ntombiyethemba and made him more determined to love and to marry Lungile.

In Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi Ngubane also conveys the same observation that love created by the use of love-charms does not last. When Zulumacansi heard the news that Manamuza had returned with Bajwayele from Benoni, he could not sleep properly for the whole night. He experienced bad dreams about her. These dreams drove him to use a love-charm medicine to win Bajwayele. He also believed that it was Potolozzi's, Bajwayele's boyfriend's, witchcraft which made Bajwayele leave him. He woke up in the dead of night, and took out his medicine to fight against Potolozzi's love-charms. Ngubane describes his actions:

Amxine amaphupho kuze kuthi phakathi kwamabili avuke, anikele emigodleni yakhe yemithi. Abase elikhulu iwobhu lomlilo, abeke udengezi kulo, asike kulenyamazane, ancinze kulensizi, nakuleya, akugaye konke, akuphonse odengezini (Ngubane:158).

(The bad dreams troubled him until he woke up at midnight, and took the bags that contained his medicines. He made a big fire, put the potsherd on it, cut a piece of skin from a dead buck, took little portions from different medicines, ground all these together, and put them in the potsherd).

These attempts are aimed at creating love between Bajwayele and himself. He strongly believes in the power of these medicines and is convinced that they will work. Let us observe Zulumacansi during one of his performances that night:

“Mina mntanethu! Mina Bajwayele! Kawuthambi unani? Nakhu lapho sengikhona.”
 “Sengifikile Bajwayele! Vuma engikushoyo kuwe. Woza ekhaya”(Ngubane:160).

(“Take this my dear! Take, Bajwayele! Why don’t you conform? Here I am.”
 “I have arrived Bajwayele! Accept what I am saying to you. Come home”).

The following day Zulumacansi drives the cattle for the outstanding bride price to Bajwayele’s home and comes back with her the same day. This time he believes that his medicine will stop Bajwayele from rejecting him but, to everybody’s surprise Bajwayele disappears during the night of the very day she was brought back to Zulumacansi’s home. He expresses his regret to Manamuza about the amount of money he has spent on buying the love-charms in Durban:

“Wo, yeka imithi yami engangiyikhiphela imali eyesabekayo eBhiyafu, eThekwini.
 Ngikhohliswa zinyanga”(Ngubane:182).

(“Oh, all my medicine which I bought with a lot of money at Bhiyafu, in Durban. The witchdoctors led me astray”).

Zulumacansi’s medicine could not help him achieve his goal.

In Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami Khumalo, Ntombana’s father, faces strong resistance from his daughter to marrying Mbandlanyika. Ndlovu, Mbandlanyika’s father, informs Khumalo that he intends to take his son to Gobidolo, a well known witchdoctor who will provide them with love-charms:

UNdlovu usethi ukuze leyongozi igwemeke kalula uzothatha umfana wakhe amuse enyangeni enkulu uGobidolo ukuba ayomhlanzisa ngovuma kanye nobulawu obumhlophe, ukuze bayahlangana nje usesisuse sonke isidina angabe unaso njengoba nangu ebonakala eyisishimane esingaqonywa-ntombi. Washo-ke uNdlovu ukuthi uma uGobidolo esemsebenzile umfana wakhe zonke izithikamezo ziyogudluka, uthando lungene shi kusuka nje phansi (Mkize:54).

(Ndlovu wants to avoid any disappointment by taking his son to a well known witchdoctor called Gobidolo so that he could cleanse him with love-charms medicine, so that when they meet his son will be cleansed of all the bad omens, if he has any,

because he seems to be rejected by girls. Ndlovu stated that when Gobidolo has cleansed his son all the stumbling-blocks will vanish, love will start off in a very strong manner).

We should not forget that the story takes place in a traditional setting. The milieu itself condones the use of medicinal charms as a custom. Fathers in these novels encourage such charms as an aid to the solution of their children's problems. Msimang (1975: 324) explains the use of *uvuma* (the "yes" love-charm):

Lobu ubulawu obumhlophe obukhonzwe kakhulu izinsizwa ezeshelayo. Zisuke zinegunya lokuthi intombi izozivuma njengegama lobulawu.

(This medicinal love-charm is white and is dearly loved by young men who are still looking for love. They hope that the young woman will love them, just like the name of the love-charm.)

Mbandlanyika consulted Gobidolo and was given the love-charms that would be of assistance to him. Gobidolo assured him that these medicinal charms would make Ntombana love him and reject Magwagwa:

"Uma uke wambamba ngalomuthi wami mfana," kwasho uGobidolo ecwijise umlomo, "uyobona into yamehlo. Uyobona ngamehlo ayo nje ukuthi ayokuthambela kanjani. Kwayona uqobo iyothamba ibe yimifino. Uyokwenza konke othanda ukukwenza kuyo. Lomuthi wami igoba-nhliziyo. Inhliziyo yayo iyothambela ngakuwe. Uma isiqomile isoka layo elidala liyonuka njengeqaqa mfana" (Mkize:57).

("If you touch her with this medicine my son," said Gobidolo with his twisted mouth, "you will see wonders. You will notice by the look of her eyes how soft she will become. She will also be as soft as green vegetables. You will do as you please with her. This medicine is called the softener of the heart. Her heart will be soft towards you. If she already has a boyfriend he will smell like a polecat, my son").

The unexpected happened. The love charm medicines did not perform the expected miracles on Ntombana, who rejected Mbandlanyika throughout. She did not even permit him to touch her. She became enraged and insulted him. Mbandlanyika became very angry when Ntombana called him a one eye jack (*indlobho*) and strikes her. Gobidolo on the other hand put the blame on Mbandlanyika, who was not supposed to hit the girl.

Gcumisa, Ngubane and Mkize have tried to warn us that this could not work in the olden days and it therefore cannot work wonders now, though it may still be practised now by some individuals who

believe in the power of medicinal charms. All three novelists have exposed the fact that love between two people should come from within the two individuals. It should not be forced by using medicinal love charms because these do not perform the expected miracles and if they do the effect for a very short time.

4.3.8 The obstinate die in obstinacy

This is one of the prominent themes that the novelists highlight. In this theme we look closely at the culture of respect. The novelists point out that a person who does not respect his/her parents ends up in difficulties. Put differently, this means that when one abandons one's hillock, any hillock that one climbs thereafter will crumble. In the novels being studied this warning applies to both the young and the old. We concur with Ntuli (1984:133) that some literature may at times prescribe moral codes of conduct for society. Literature may be purely didactic, aiming at reprimanding or sermonising. There are two proverbs in IsiZulu that emphasise the above theme. These are: *Umvundla ziyowunqanda phambili*; which means that they [dogs] will cut off the hare ahead. This expression is used of people who think that they can get away with the things they do, only to find themselves in a situation from which they cannot extricate themselves (Nyembezi, 1990:60). The second proverb is a well known one *Isala kutshelwa sibona ngomopho*; which means that the foolhardy learn by the flow of blood. This proverb is used of stubborn and obstinate people who will not listen to advice, and then find themselves in great difficulties. It means that the hard rocks of life will draw blood from them, and it is only then that they will realize the folly of their obstinacy (Nyembezi, 1990:60). The two proverbs influence much of the form and substance of these novels, and succinctly capture the essence of the tragedies that occur in Kungavuka AbaNguni, Kungenxa Kabani and Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi.

In Kungavuka AbaNguni, Gumede showed no respect for his father on the day the Khumalo family came to pay the bride price for Nomusa. It is customary that he should have given his father a free hand to handle the *ilobolo* proceedings. Instead, Themba Gumede handled everything on his own and disregarded his father and his elder brothers. He ignored the advice that his father gave him. The old man became so angry at the disrespect shown by Themba that he is unable to hide his feelings. To express his dissatisfaction he says:

“Soke sibone-ke ukuthi njengoba uThemba lona engimzalayo, amathumbu ami uqobo, evusa abaphansi ngowakhe umlomo ukuthi uNomusa umntanami uyophelelaphi” Kubheka:261).

(“We shall see then, what will happen to Nomusa as Themba , my own son, has called the ancestors).

It is apparent from the above perspective that, according to the IsiZulu culture, Themba should have allowed his father as well as his brothers to take care of the proceedings of the day. He was supposed to co-operate with and to communicate his wishes to them. Instead he undermined them in front of other people. The old man’s words “*Soke sibone-ke*” (we shall see), signal that something bad will happen either to Nomusa or her father.

Themba Gumede remains adamant and does not pay heed to his father’s advice. He swears, by involving his ancestors names, that he will never allow Nomusa to get married to Thamsanqa:

“Phakathwayo kungavuka abaNguni bahambe emabaleni kunokuba ingane yami ingaya kwaKhumalo. Ngiyaphela lapho kangisenalo eledlula lelo” (Kubheka:262).

(“Phakathwayo, the abaNguni could be seen walking on the ground rather than seeing my child married to the Khumalo family. I have spoken and I do not have anything else to say”).

Gumede is very stubborn. He does not feel pity for his daughter, who obviously loves the man who wants to marry her. While the feud is still going on between the two families, Thamsanqa arrives with the message that Nomusa was hit by a bus. The tragedy that strikes Nomusa could be linked to her father’s annoying of the ancestors. Gumede has abandoned his culture of respect and therefore Nomusa’s tragedy is the punishment for his actions. Gumede has indicated throughout the story that he loved his daughter dearly and her tragedy must have affected him a great deal. Nomusa was paralysed from the waist downwards. This meant that her father’s wish became a reality because few men would marry a paraplegic and she would not be able to bear children for the rest of her life. Shortly after the arrival of the tragic news, Gumede reminded his son that he has annoyed the ancestors and they are awake and they have responded to his wish, that Thamsanqa will never marry Nomusa. He said: “*Nabo-ke abaNguni bakho ndodana sebevukule.*” (“There are your abaNguni my son, they have been resurrected.”) This means that Gumede’s will has been done. It also warns that one should not involve the name of the ancestors for nothing. In IsiZulu the ancestors are also called *izithutha*, fools. If you call their name and make a wish they will give you what you have asked for. Gumede has forbidden Nomusa to marry Thamsanqa and his ancestors have given him exactly what he has asked for. Gumede’s stubbornness and disrespect cost him his daughter’s health.

Cele in Kungenxa Kabani adheres to the tradition that a father has the sole right to choose a wife for a son. Bhekokwakhe, on the other hand, does not wish to acknowledge this tradition. A contributing factor to Bhekokwakhe's refusal could be the fact that he is educated and does not subscribe to the same philosophy of life as his father. Bhekokwakhe refuses to honour his father's offer from the onset, though it is traditionally expected that as a child he should show respect for his father's wishes. What Cele wanted to do for his son was not new, it was tradition. Msimang (1975:251) explains this tradition by saying:

Kufana nalapho abazali bethanda intombi ethile babemgqogqa umfana ukuba ayiqomise ayithathe kepha bengeke bamphoqa. Kwakuvamile nokho ukuthi umfana ehluleke ukujivaza abazali bakhe, bese ezibophela kuleyo ntombi noma ebengayithandisisi.

(It is like when the parents loved a particular girl, they would urge the boy to court her, to marry her, but they would not force him. It was usual that the boy would not disappoint his parents; he would then commit himself to that girl even if he did not love her).

Msimang's explanation stresses that the parents would not force their son to marry the girl they loved if he did not want to. It is also made clear that, due to the respect the boy had for his parents, most young men would not turn down the wishes of their parents. Bhekokwakhe is a modern young man who wants to pursue his own aspirations. He maintains that he does not want his father to choose a wife for him:

"Engikubona kulukhuni yiwona nje umqondo wokuba ngiganwe ngingakahlosi, ngiganwe yintombi yokuqashelwa" (Gcumisa:4).

("What I find difficult is the idea that I should get married when it is not my intention, and marry a chosen girl").

Cele is a very traditional, conservative man who still believes in the IsiZulu saying that *Inyoni ishayelwa abakhulu*; i.e; a bird is caught for the elderly. In African tradition a bride is not married for her husband's sake even if it is he who paid the bride-price. This refers to the point raised by MaXimba that the bride is for the whole family. She is coming to relieve the old woman of her daily chores and to take care of the family as a whole. Bhekokwakhe continues to defy his father's suggestion but his sister, Bongiwe, holds a different opinion from him. She views Bhekokwakhe's

refusal as a sign of disrespect to their father. Her response to Bhekokwakhe reveals that she does not encourage him to defy their father:

“Kodwa uthi ziyoke zikulungele izinto uma wedelela izwi likababa, Bhekokwakhe?” kubuza uBongiwe (Gcumisa:12).

(“But do you think that things will be fine if you despise father’s word Bhekokwakhe?” asked Bongiwe).

Bongiwe’s warning takes us back to the proverbs we cited at the beginning of this section, that children who do not respect their parents end up regretting their obstinacy later in life. The feud between Bhekokwakhe and his father turns into a tug of war. They are both stubborn. Neither of the two is prepared for a compromise, though Bhekokwakhe does try to strike a compromise with his father. He suggests that although he is not yet prepared to get married, if it happens that he does consider the issue of marriage he would like to marry his girlfriend, Lungile. Cele turns a deaf ear and refuses vehemently:

“Umlungu angathunga isicoco ngike ngavuma lokho kulona kababa umuzi. EzaKwaDlaphanyeke izinkomo ziya eMbekambazo. Kaziyi eNjengabantu,” sekusho uCele ethanda ukufudumala (Gcumisa:26).

(“A white man can sew a heading if I could permit that in my father’s homestead. The cattle of KwaDlaphanyeke are getting to Mbekambazo. They are not going to Njengabantu,” said Cele, starting to become angry).

Cele cannot see himself compromising with his son’s request. The tug of war continues until Cele sends people to pay the bride price for Ntombiyethemba. Bhekokwakhe does respect his father for a short moment because he does attend his arranged wedding. After realising that his father rejects Lungile and does not even want to consider her as his second wife Bhekokwakhe retaliates by rejecting and eventually abandoning her with his parents. He rejects her until her dying day. Bongiwe’s words become real at the end. Things never go right for Bhekokwakhe. After he has paid the bride price for Lungile they do not live long. The fight that broke out between Ntombiyethemba and Lungile left the two women dead and Bhekokwakhe a paraplegic. As in Themba and Nomusa Gumede’s story, Cele experiences pain because this was not his intention. He wanted to secure a good wife for his son. On the other hand we could speculate that this tragedy could have been avoided if Bhekokwakhe had respected his father’s wish. Bhekokwakhe’s case is a real example of the proverb which says the foolhardy learn by the flow of blood.

Manamuza is in the same position as Cele. In Manamuza's case it is a daughter who refuses to honour her father's command. Manamuza bases his argument for forced marriage on the fact that it is tradition that a father should choose a man for his daughter:

"Lisiko lesizwe, mntakaMemunce. Isiko lisiko" (Ngubane:56).

("It is the custom of the nation, the child of Memunce. Tradition is tradition").

Manamuza, like most fathers, wants his word to be regarded as final. He is also as hard as a rock. He does not consider the views of his wife because she opposes forced marriage. He pushes his will against all odds:

"Nami futhi ngifuna imgane. Uma kungeyami izolalela umthetho wami" (Ngubane:52).

("I also want her to marry him. If she is my child she will respect my authority").

The wishes of the child are not important. Manamuza eventually drives Bajwayele to Zulumacansi's home who becomes happy to have Bajwayele as a wife although he knows that she does not love him. He also believes in his power as a man. He is a traditional man who thinks that if he loves Bajwayele she should love him too:

"Sengikhulumile noyihlo, ngamnika izinkomo zonke zakhe, ngaqeda ukulobola. Usungowami manje. Ungumkami. Ngiyakuthatha manje siye ekhaya" (Ngubane:168).

("I have talked with your father, and I gave him all his cattle, I have paid all the bride-price. You are mine now. You are my wife. I am taking you home now").

Zulumacansi does not seem to understand that love is reciprocal. No matter how hard Bajwayele tries to convince him that she does not love him he never believes what she says. The marriage does not last because Bajwayele flees her matrimonial home and is never found. Both Manamuza and Zulumacansi learn the hard way that a woman cannot be forced to love a person she does not love. Manamuza himself attests to this when he says:

"... uBajwayele ubalekile kasimazi lapho eye khona. Ukwehlulile konke ukuhlakanipha kwethu singamadoda" (Ngubane:181).

("... Bajwayele fled away and we do not know where she is. She has destroyed all our cleverness as men").

Manamuza and Zulumacansi are defeated at the end. Parental authority, as indicated by the stories, suffers greatly because none of the parents in the novels have won the battle of obstinacy and of oppression. The three novelists have successfully illustrated that the obstinate die in obstinacy. They have proven beyond doubt that any person, whether a child or an adult, who does not respect the wishes of others ends up in difficulties.

4.4 Conclusion

By and large, the novels are stories about how individuals treat one another in a family unit and how communities react to changing conditions. Some themes are those of gender equality and power struggles, others indicate the dilemmas of modernization. The novels divide themselves readily into the particular stages of women's lives: they deal with how female children become women; what marriage means for women; where women's work fits into their lives. A life cycle approach to gender role questions emerges from the stories and is employed to organize the situation. Some themes have shown that "all women" cannot be grouped into a single category. One must look at each woman's, or set of women's place in the life cycle and social structure.

The novels also reveal how culture develops and curbs the freedom of an individual. Leopold Senghor, quoted by Cham (in Jones & Palmer, 1987: 100) argues that culture is the bedrock of development. She further clarifies culture on the basis of how Ngugi perceives it:

Culture, says Ngugi wa Thiong'o, is much more than just folklore. It encompasses the entire spectrum of relations and activities in any given society. Consequently, any movement in or of society must have its feet firmly rooted in cultural grounds if it is to be of any lasting and meaningful value to the welfare of individuals and society at large. And a healthy culture in Ngugi's terms, is a culture of equality, a culture free from all forms of exploitation and, above all, culture rooted in the true traditions of the people.

Ngugi's definition of culture states clearly that culture affects the relations among the individuals in any society. It has been indicated that traditional men have misused the culture of forced and forbidden

love to such an extent that this led to the disturbance of the culture of respect which forms the backbone of a healthy society. Ngugi seems to suggest that culture should not be onesided. It should not favour a certain section of society but, it should promote the welfare of all individuals.

The above discussion has illustrated how men have used culture to benefit themselves at the expense of women and children. Men have used culture through the guise of *ilobolo* to exploit other men. Basing our argument on the selected novels we can say that African culture does not encourage the equality of the sexes. Men are superior to women. The ultimate aim of womanism is the unity of all blacks everywhere under the enlightened control of men and women.

The novels have also exposed the influence of Westernization on the youth by showing how they rebelled against the form of oppression which denied them the freedom of choice in marriage. Patriarchy has also been influenced by modernization. This is reflected in the way men used their children as economic commodities through which they could enrich themselves.



CHAPTER 5

A CROSS-CULTURAL SURVEY OF FORCED AND FORBIDDEN LOVE.

5.1 Introduction

The complexity of the concept of culture is remarkable. It became a noun of inner process, specialized to its presumed agencies in intellectual life and the arts. It became also a noun of general process, specialized to its presumed configurations in whole ways of life. It played a crucial role in definitions of the arts and the humanities from the first sense. It played an equally crucial role in definitions of the human sciences and the social sciences, in the second sense. Each tendency is ready to deny any proper use of the concept to the other, in spite of many attempts at reconciliation.

Raymond Williams (in Davis & Schleifer, 1991:36)

The core of this chapter is to indicate the manifestation of forced and forbidden love customs in various other African literatures. Literary examples will be drawn from a randomly selected sample of African languages. Examples will be drawn from IsiSwati, IsiXhosa, Sepedi, TshiVenda, a Senegalese novel, So Long a Letter, by Mariama Bâ and a Nigerian novel, One is Enough, by Flora Nwapa. Reference will also be made to two IsiZulu dramas and two short stories to show that it is not only Zulu novelists who have made statements in this regard.

Prior to the discussion of the cross-cultural existence of the customs of forced and forbidden love from the selected African literatures, this chapter starts off by discussing the forms of courtship involved in forced and arranged marriages, and then moves on to discuss forms of traditional marriages which are related to forced and forbidden love. The aim is to indicate the parental control of the whole marriage process and the fact that forced and arranged marriages were a traditional practice.

Culture, as Williams (1991) sees it, encompasses an individual's inner world and a society of individuals conceived as a whole. It describes the ways in which societies make sense of the common experience of their members. Culture, then, falls within the domain of ideas, and it describes social practices as a people's whole way of living. The practice of forced, arranged, and preferential

marriages, and of forbidding a young person to marry the person of his or her choice, was a way of life that once was, and still is, practised by various societies. Although there is more self-selection of spouses than in the past, a marriage agreement cannot be sealed without the involvement of parents, who still play a significant role in the whole process. Hay and Stichter (1995:82) concur that: "even in situations where women and men meet on their own, the consent of parents and other kin is usually required." They further argue that sometimes intermediaries are sought to find suitable spouses and inquire into the family's reputation. It is also said that today in cities like Nairobi, a man may turn to an urban friend from a different rural area, rather than a relative, to perform such services. Mbiti (1969:136) gives a broader explanation of parental involvement:

A fairly widespread practice is the one in which the parents and relatives of a young man approach the parents of a particular girl and start marriage negotiations. If either the boy or the young man very strongly rejects the prospective marriage partner, then the negotiations are broken down; although **there are cases where force or pressure is applied to get the reluctant young person to marry the partner chosen by the parents and relatives.** The normal practice, however, is for the parents to make the choice with the full consent of their son or daughter. (Emphasis mine)

The literary works discussed in the preceding chapters have illustrated that in practice, parents, as people in authority, did not break down the negotiations when children refused to succumb into marrying the marriage partners their parents had chosen for them. As a result young men and women were enforced into forced and arranged marriages.

It is also true that sometimes both patterns coexist, where an earlier courtship by the young man himself is followed by an arranged marriage. Today young men and women are free to choose their own spouses. The normal procedure in most societies is that young people themselves make their own choices and afterwards inform their parents about it. Africans in general live a communal way of life. Being members of communal and stratified societies Africans tend to be regarded not as individuals but as members of a series of collectives such as family, clan and tribe. It is therefore, important that since the individual exists only because the corporate group exists, other members of that corporate community become involved in the marriage of the individual. Then the parents and relatives begin the betrothal and marriage negotiations. It has been observed that in forced, arranged, and preferential marriages the normal pattern is reversed. It is the parents and the relatives who initiate and sometimes even complete the whole process of marriage arrangement without the involvement of the envisaged spouses.

The controversy around the rejection of the marriage partner chosen by parents has created a rift among some African literary researchers and those African writers who wrote about the themes under discussion. Literature that studies the clash of cultures is viewed as a case of Western influence, where the African writer is seen as having been influenced by the West. For example, Makhambeni (1988:30), who also wonders whether it is right to blame every change in our society on Westernization, says:

On the other hand, it is difficult to ignore this influence and the changes occurring in the African societies. The writers have been greatly influenced by Western culture. This is shown by the stories they produced, which are obviously against traditional practices. Most stories advocate the abolition of a practice which has been previously accepted without any criticism.

Mafela's opinions (1999:117) in the article titled, "The first Venda novel writers and the clash of cultures", are closely aligned with the above view. He also strongly believes that the early Vhavenda writers were indoctrinated by Christian education regarding literary writing. He points out that the Bantu Education Act of 1953 also limited African writers in their choice of themes. As a result, writers selected themes that would be acceptable to the authorities. The themes of forced and forbidden love are therefore seen as the result of Western influence.

The above opinions suggest that writers who have written literature about a clash of cultures were in fact conforming to the historical changes of the times. These views argue that writers wanted to show their acceptance of Western culture by writing literature that despised their own traditional cultures. We would like to view these suggestions as only partly true because, if they are totally authentic, it would mean that African tradition was then extremely oppressive. It would also mean that African people would not have changed their traditional oppressive ways of doing things if it had not been for Western influence. We would like to believe that even in those days there were men and women who were not staunch traditionalists. Even in traditional times there were people who were not in favour of forced marriages or any culture that undermined the personal choices of the individuals. We acknowledge the fact that the voluminous emergence of the literature that indicates the clash of cultures, or the eradication of certain traditional practices, raised a large number of questions. The emergence of a literature of this nature could be ascribed to the breaking of silence about certain cultural issues and customs that were previously accepted without any criticism. Miller's statement is relevant in this regard when he points out that:

The dictionary “says”; the author “talks” about a subject; books are written to break “silence.” When a text's meaning is revealed, we insist even more on metaphors of orality, as if communication itself were intrinsically oral and aural: a text that moves me “speaks to me”(1990:247).

There are various ways in which one can examine the above statement. Authors write about any subject of their choice. It is only after reading the contents of the subject that the reader is able to attach meaning to what he has read. Readers therefore, react differently to textual material. A text that speaks to the reader will evoke a response of some kind from him. The metaphorical meaning obtained from the literature that treats the themes of forced and forbidden love is perceived from a womanistic perspective in this study. A close study of the themes of forced and forbidden love discourages the traditional way of viewing a woman as a nonentity. Women are to be perceived as talented human beings even more so than men. They have imagination, determination, drive, and other capacities the same as, if not more than men.

5.2 Forms of courtship in forced and forbidden marriages.

The practice of forced, arranged, preferential and forbidden marriages does not provide a young man with an opportunity to practise the verbal repertoire involved in courtship. The young man or woman who experiences forced or forbidden love is deprived of this remarkable opportunity experienced by other young people of his or her age. Courtship should be a very interesting time that any young man or woman looks forward to as they are growing up. It feels nice for a young woman to be courted. It is a positive sign of womanhood. It restores to a female person the pride of being wanted and of being important. In his article titled: “Out of Africa: African Women’s Rights in the Cultural Context,” Msimang (1994:131) acknowledges that the most treasured freedom by young women is unrestricted love. He puts it well when he says:

The most harboured freedom by teenage girls (*amatshitshi*) and maidens (*amaqhikiza*) is a right to give their heart to a sweetheart of their own choice. This goes hand in hand with the obligation to behave oneself properly and to safeguard one’s virginity until marriage.

Msimang’s comment touches on a very important issue of human rights. It also takes us back to the question of the freedom of choice that every individual must enjoy. Above all, this comment, emphasises that a young woman in particular had and even today has, the right to choose the man

she loves among the many suitors who approach her. The freedom of choice is more important in this regard because a young woman would traditionally preserve her virginity for the man who would marry her. Could we think of a situation where a young woman has to lose her virginity over a man whom she has been forced to marry?

Forced marriages are marked by intense parental involvement. In Kungenxa Kabani Cele, the initiator of the marriage, directly informs Bhekokwakhe that he has already courted the girl he wants him to marry:

“Manje Bhekokwakhe nentombi engifisa ibe umalokazana walapha KwaDlaphanyeke sengikuqashela yona. Nanxa ingakalimisi ngesihloko, yona isivumile, isiyehlulekile” (Gcumisa:2).

(“Now Bhekokwakhe, I have already courted the young woman I wish to be the bride of KwaDlaphanyeke. Although she has not given a direct reply, she has agreed, she has been overpowered”).

Cele removes the opportunity from Bhekokwakhe to court Ntombiyethemba on his own. If he, as the head of the family, loves the girl Bhekokwakhe must do the same. He is going to take care of all the wedding responsibilities, hence the payment of the bride price as well as the setting of the wedding date is done by Cele himself. Bhekokwakhe is just there to carry out his father’s instructions and to see to it that his father’s will is realized. It is also Cele who tells Bhekokwakhe about the wedding date:

“Encwadini obuzobhalelwa yona bengizokwazisa ukuthi udwendwe lwakho seluseduze. Ngithe kusebele ongumukhwe wakho akugagcwe mhla zingamashumi amabili kulenyanga ezokwethwesa” (Gcumisa:70).

(“In the letter that was going to be written to you I was going to inform you that your wedding will take place shortly. I told your father-in-law that the wedding should take place on the twentieth of the following month”).

Parental control is strong in forced and arranged marriages. It is therefore not surprising that the father and the son end up in a bitter relationship. The power of the father, as seen in this case, has no limits.

Among the Batoro, marriage negotiations are initiated and arranged by parents. Normally there are no rites performed to mark the courtship period. Mbiti (1969:137-138) explains that among this nation marriage arrangements often start when two men meet at a beer drinking party. One will say to the other: "I have given you a wife or husband," to which the other replies by falling down and giving thanks. Then a formal introduction of the subject is made. The two men go home and inform their children; and a few days later, the boy's parents visit those of the girl, taking with them at least two calabashes of beer. On arrival, the girl's parents give them coffee berries and light a pipe which the boy's father puffs four times. The four parents engage in a long conversation about various topics until finally, the boy's father makes a formal request. He says: "I have come to be born in this house, to be a son, to be a servant if you like, to take the cattle to the river to drink, to make the cattle shed, to buy you clothes, to help alleviate your needs. I am prepared to do these things and many more, if you give me a wife for my son!" As a rule this request is accepted, and then the two sides fix the presents to be given to the girl's family, which is about three to four cows or the equivalent in money. As soon as the agreed presents have been given, the date for marriage is fixed.

The courtship process in forced and arranged marriages is in contrast with a normal courtship where a young man would court a young woman on his own. The young man does not have an opportunity to court the woman he is going to marry for himself. This means that the young man who finds himself in an arranged marriage will only get a chance to court a woman on his own if he marries a second wife. Courtship, popularly known as *ukuqomisa* or *ukweshela*, in IsiZulu is every young man's human and traditional right. It was traditionally, and still is, practised by men.

A young man, an *insizwa*, would court any girl he wants to marry. He would then, according to custom, utter some words which show his appreciation and affection for a particular young woman. Courtship according to Bates (1990:22) means:

Wooing, and it implies an affective and emotional commitment between two people who intend to legitimize their relationship in marriage.

Courtship, according to Bates, is not an easy thing. It is intimate because it involves the emotions of two people and because it might end in marriage. Nyembezi & Nxumalo (1966:111) explain two types of IsiZulu traditional forms of courtship: *ukukhuzela* (to shout at someone) and *ukushaya inyoka endleleni* (to choose one maiden that you may love among many). *Ukukhuzela* is explained as:

Kwakulisiko lakwaZulu ukuba kuthi lapho behlangana nentombi bakhuzele. Eqinisweni ukukhuzela kwakungenye indlela yokweshela.

(It was a custom in KwaZulu that when they [men] met a young woman they would shout expressions of endearment at her. In reality shouting expressions of endearment was another type of courtship).

It was an IsiZulu custom that when a man or young man met a young woman or a maiden, he would utter words of courtship as a sign of appreciation to her. This was one way of courtship. Maphumulo (1993:41) explains this verbal form of courtship as follows:

Verbal forms of courtship refer to the spoken forms of courtship. They are connected with words and their use. Courtship concerns itself with the actual words in which love is expressed. It is a verbal repertoire which is usually regulated by the speech discourse during the courtship situation.

Courtship taught young men how to phrase their words before they could approach the earmarked woman. In other words this process broadened their scope of vocabulary because they had to select words that would capture the heart of the woman. Courtship enabled a young man to put his diplomatic skills into practice.

The second type of courtship, *ukushaya inyoka endleleni*, was usually performed in a group form. When a group of young men met a group of young women, they would request each of them to choose a young man she would fall in love with, as if it were a real courtship. This type of courtship is explained as:

Kwakuthi lapho izinsizwa zihlangana nezintombi bese zima isicheme sezibingelela ezintombini maqede zizicele ukuba zishaye inyoka endleleni, (ukushaya inyoka endleleni kusho ukukhetha insizwa eyodwa kweziningi okwakungaba yiyona owawungayiqoka ukuba wawunokuqoma kuzo (Nyembezi & Nxumalo, 1966:111).

(When young men met young women they would stand in a semicircle and greet the young women and request that each of them chooses for herself a young man (to beat the snake in the road, means to choose one young man among many; the one whom a young woman would love if it were real courtship).

This type of courtship was regarded as a form of game. No young man or woman would take it seriously. Although it was done in a playful manner it simply tells us that it was every young man's right to court a young woman on his own and also every young woman's right to fall in love with a man.

5.3 IsiZulu forms of marriages related to forced, arranged, preferential and forbidden love

Marriage is an important event in the life of any person. Since men and women marry into existing families and communities, considerations governing marriage involve more than two individuals. Mbiti (1969:136) believes that, since the individual exists only because the corporate group exists, it is vital that in this most important contract of life, other members of that corporate community must get involved in the marriage of the individual. There are other forms of marriage in which the individual does not have much choice. Among these, one can mention the levirate, sororate, marriage by elopement, and marriage by capture. The practice of these marriages more often than not leads to forced and forbidden love which results in forced, arranged and preferential marriages. The argument put forward in support of these customary marriages is that they are part of a culture that is imposed on a woman or a man for a particular reason. We believe that the practice of these customary marriages has contributed a great deal to the customs of forced and forbidden love.

5.3.1 Levirate marriage (Isiko lokungena)

Odetola (1983:33-34) explains a leviratic marriage:

This is the rule according to which a man may, or must, marry the widow of his elder brother or other kinsman. In a true levirate, exemplified by the customs of the Hebrews, Swazi, Nuer, Tswana, Zulu and other peoples, when a man dies and his wife has not passed the age of child bearing, it is the duty of the man's brother to cohabit with the widow in order to raise children which will be counted, not as his but as children of the deceased.

Basing our argument on the above explanation, the levirate marriage is perceived as one of those customs that perpetuated the occurrence of forced and arranged marriages because the widow had no right to object marrying her husband's brother. In other words a widow was inherited like goods, and this denigrated the position of a woman to that of an object which moved from the hands of one man to the other without her consent. Odetola (1983:33) further adds that: "Traditionally, the woman had no choice but to observe the custom." According to this custom, when a man dies his wife will be inherited by his brother. The widow, then, becomes the legal wife of the man inheriting her. The beneficial part of this custom is that the children are raised by the member of the same family as the deceased father. Although the children already borne by the widow become a bonafide property of the dead man's younger brother, who inherits the widow, the children born of a leviratic union were fully regarded as the children of the deceased father, not of the biological father. The younger brother is simply a surrogate parent.

If the woman wants to re-marry outside the deceased husband's family, the family of the deceased husband takes responsibility for the bride price. Krige (1950:156) says: "If she is young and re-marries, the *lobola* received for her was accounted for to the house she leaves; otherwise the deceased husband's brother may 'raise seed' to him by the widow." Today the custom is declining rapidly with increasing urbanisation in Africa. It is no longer strictly adhered to.

5.3.2 Sororate marriage (Isiko lokuvusa)

Malan (1985:41) describes the sororate custom as follows:

Sororal polygyny is commonly encountered, as a younger sister of the wife is usually married in order to serve as a subordinate co-wife to her elder sister. Should the elder sister be barren, her younger sister is without any further *lobola* payment given as *inhlanti* to bear children on her behalf. *Inhlanti* is derived from *hlanta* (to wash), as the younger sister "washes away the shame of her elder sister."

Sororate marriage curbed the dream of a young woman, who found herself in this situation, to be able to love the man of her choice. In the case of a barren wife, the husband had the right to reclaim the bride price, but in order to avoid this a younger sister was sent to bear children on behalf of the elder sister. Among the AmaZulu and EmaSwati the custom of sending a younger

girl with the bride as her *inhlanzi/inhlanti* or *insila*, avoided the reclaiming of *ilobolo*. In other instances a young girl accompanied the elder sister irrespective of whether she was barren or not. Krige (1950:156) explains that this girl had no particular position in her sister's house and "her children belonged to the hut of the bride she accompanied and even if the bride was not barren, she will never have a hut of her own, nor a distinct status in the kraal." As an *inhlanti* it seems as if she enjoyed a status lower than to that of her sister.

The sororate customary marriage undermines the human rights of the younger girl who accompanies the elder sister. It reduces her status to that of a slave to her elder sister. It protects the elder sister, and the husband, who is not required to pay the second bride price. The family safeguards its own position by saving itself from the embarrassment of having to return the bride payment if it happens that the elder sister is barren.

5.3.3 Girl abduction (Isiko lokuthwala intombi)

Girl abduction, in simple terms, is the unlawful capture of a girl by a man with the intention of marrying her. It is one of the oldest IsiZulu customs, where a young woman was abducted by a young man with the help of his relatives or friends. In a *Saturday Star*, of July 11 1998, a Staff Reporter article titled, "Wedding customs have their roots in ancient times," gives an explanation of the culture of girl abduction. The article also explains why the woman stands on the left side of a groom on the wedding day. According to this article this universally known practice can be traced back from the custom of bride abduction. The article is based on Diane Ackerman's book, The Natural History of Love, wherein she explains the origins of the best man, the honeymoon, the wedding, the ring, the cake, the stag party, and even why the bride stands on the left side of the man. In this article the culture of girl abduction is explained as follows:

The first marriages were by capture. The man would kidnap the woman and take her away from her tribe with the help of a warrior friend-his best man-who would help him fight the suitors and prevent her family from finding them. The groom and the bride would go into hiding during the honeymoon, and by the time the bride's family found them, the bride would be pregnant. When the groom fought off other warriors who also wanted his bride, he would hold on to her with his left hand while fending them off with his sword in his right hand-which is why the bride stands on the left and the groom on the right (*Saturday Star*, 11 July 1998:09). (Emphasis mine)

There are valid reasons for this custom. According to Ackerman's explanation, bride abduction occurred when a man wanted to marry a woman who had many suitors. In order to marry her, the suitor would abduct her, and she would only be found when she was already pregnant. When this has happened it would be difficult for the other suitors to marry her.

Buchi Emecheta in her novel The Bride Price (quoted in Hay & Stichter, 1995: 85), concurs with Ackerman's views when she explains that the woman was taken into the man's house, held down by his friends and family, and forced into sexual relations. After these actions the woman was not left with much choice but to accept the marriage. Other men would be reluctant to marry a woman who had been abducted by another man. The following reasons put forward by Nyembezi and Nxumalo (1966:115), cast more light on this custom:

Lokhu kwakuvame ukuba kwenziwe uma kulukhuni ukuba umuntu agcage nentombi ayithandayo ngendlela efanele. Mhlawumbe kwakungavimba abakubo kantombazane benqikaza ukuyiganisa intombi yabo. ... Mhlawumbe uyise wentombazane njalo uyiganisa lapho ibingathandi khona.

(This was done when it was difficult for a person to marry a young woman whom he loved in a proper manner. At times it was the family of the young woman that obstructed her when they had doubts about the marriage of their child. ... It might happen that the father of the young women wanted her to be married to a man she did not love).

The above explanation stresses two important things about bride abduction. A woman would be abducted if she repeatedly refused a particular man or if she refused a man chosen for her by her parents. In the first case the abduction is done by a man whom the girl did not want to marry, but who loved her very much. The unwanted suitor forces the woman to love him no matter what. In the latter case the woman is abducted by a man who is in love with her when her parents force her to marry a man she does not love. In this instance the abduction is a form of revenge against the girl's parents. The abduction custom further indicates the conflict between personal desires and traditional practice.

After the girl was abducted the family of the abductor, in accordance with custom, would send a message to inform the girl's parents about the whereabouts of their daughter. The required herds of cattle would then be sent to the girl's family. This custom is also found among the Luo

of Nigeria. The Luo term (Hay & Stichter, 1995:85) for such abductions is translated by English speakers as the “ambush marriage,” a category that also includes elopements occurring with the woman’s consent. Both are strategies to bring about the desired marriages.

5.3.4 The elopement custom (Isiko lokubalekela/Ukudla izinkomo)

The final custom is the elopement of the bride. In this custom it is the woman who initiates the marriage. Reasons for the elopement are similar to those found in bride abduction. The young woman may elope in an attempt to escape forced love by her parents or may be instructed by her father, who does not have enough cattle to pay the bride price for his son, to elope to her known boyfriend’s home. In this case the girl will elope to her boyfriend’s home, after which the boyfriend will send the required cattle to her home. Nyembezi & Nxumalo (1966:114) explain this:

Noma-ke umuntu eyisoka layo intombazane yayinokwenza ukuthi imbalekele. Isizathu esasinokwenza lokhu kwakungaba mhlawumbe kusho uyise wentombazane, ufuna izinkomo nce alobolele umfana osebike ukuthi ikhona intombi aseiyibonile, usecele ukugcagca, kodwa zibe zingenele izinkomo.

(At times a young woman would elope to a person who was her boyfriend. The reason was that it was her father who instructed her because one of his sons has approached him saying that he wanted to get married but the cattle were not sufficient).

Again we notice that the value of a girl lies in her being used to acquire cattle to pay the bride price on her brother’s behalf. This culture is also known as *ukudla izinkomo* in IsiZulu because the intention is the acquiring of cattle for the girl’s family. Nyembezi & Nxumalo (1966:114) further explain that:

Intombazane yayinokuya kunoma yimuphi umuntu endaweni, inqobo nje uma enezinkomo. Iya iphelekezelwa ngezinye izintombi, zifike zisho-ke ukuthi zikhala noma zima ngobani.

(The young woman could go to any person in her vicinity, as long as that person had plenty of cattle. She would be accompanied by other young women, and when they arrived at that man’s home they would name the chosen man).

Explanation of symbols

Male Δ

Female \circ

Preferential marriages are concluded with girls belonging to the clan of a man's paternal grandmother, or either of his maternal grandparents. The first and the most preferred marriage is with a girl from the clan of the man's father's mother (A1 and B4). This marriage revives and preserves the house of the husband's paternal grandmother. It extends the tradition of *ilobolo* exchange that was established between clan A and B. The second type of marriage is between C4 and D5. This one revives the house of the husband's maternal grandmother and grandfather. It re-unites the alternate generations. The third and the last type involves a union with a girl belonging to the clan of the man's maternal grandfather. This marriage needs further clarification. This girl (D5 in Fig 3) has the same clan membership as the mother of A1. By virtue of the fact that D4 is brother of D2, the union between A1 and D5 may be termed a maternal cross-cousin marriage.

There are two forbidden marriages according to this patrilocal system. The first one is the union with a girl from the patrilineal grandfather's clan because of the rule of exogamy. The second is the marriage with the daughter of a full maternal uncle, on the grounds that it verges on incest. A1 could therefore, not marry D7, although it is a theoretically preferential marriage. To conclude this section one can cite a siSwati proverb in support of such marriages, which says: *Inhlanyelo icelwa esininini*. This proverb literally means that: if a person does not have good seeds for plantation he/she turns to relatives for help. In this particular case, it means that a man or woman in a siSwati culture has the right to ask his/her relative to bear him/her children. In the case of the EmaSwati, it seems that preferential marriages activate the relationship with the paternal or the maternal grandparents. Such marriages strengthen the intimacy of the kinship relations that exist between the child and his/her grandparents.

The leviratic marriage disregarded the freedom of choice for a woman, because she was forced to cohabit with the brother of her deceased husband. The situation of a young woman who was forced to accompany her elder sister, or to bear children on her sister's behalf in the sororate marriage, was even worse than in the first case. The young woman was given no chance to marry

a man of her choice. Men were rarely victims of levirate or sororate customs because they enjoyed double gains. If a man's wife was barren, or died before bearing him children, he would be given an additional wife to bear children for him. The sororate custom provided him with a second wife irrespective of the fact that he had a fertile wife. The brother of the deceased acquired a second wife for whom he was not obliged to pay another bride-price. Refusal to comply with these cultures on the part of a woman led to ostracisation by society. We can appreciate bride abduction and elopement where it was done in favour of the young woman but not where the young woman was simply used to bring more cattle into her home.

5.4 Forced and forbidden love as a cross-cultural trend in language literatures

Themes of forced and forbidden love exhibit a particular culture which is existent in various communities. The selection of marriage partners for young people who are about to marry, by parents or by other elderly family members is an old tradition. In precolonial African states and chiefdoms, rulers and other members of the elite received wives from subordinate chiefs and commoners, and patron-client ties were established or cemented by giving a daughter or sister in marriage (Hay & Stichter, 1995:83).

Among the AmaZulu the idea of choosing a marriage partner for a girl or a woman was introduced by king Shaka. The warriors were kept in celibacy until they were in the 40's before they were given permission to marry. The king would instruct them to marry girls from a particular girl's regiment (Msimang:1994:131). The word of the king was law. No one, let alone girls, could oppose the king. It is important to note that the culture of choosing a marriage partner for girls not only affected commoners, even women from royal families suffered under this dictum. Msimang (1994:122) stresses that:

The lives of the princesses were somewhat restricted in that they were discouraged from marrying commoners. They were expected to marry kings, princes and other dignitaries but since these men were outnumbered by royal women, many of royal women grew up to be old spinsters despite the institution of polygamy which allows males to marry as many wives as possible.



Msimang further points out that it was King Mpande who decreed that the Zulu princesses could marry any man of their choice, and if he happened to be a commoner, the title of prince would be bestowed on him on the day of the wedding.

5.4.1 Examples from IsiZulu drama

A number of IsiZulu dramatists have expressed their concerns about forced and forbidden love. Ngenzeni, by L.L.J. Mncwango, appeared as early as 1959. Blose, Uqomisa Mina Nje Uqomisa Iliba was written in 1960. Recently in 1992, another drama, Ngiwafunge Amabomvu, by L. Molefe, treating similar issues appeared. Although the object of this study is the presentation of the themes of forced and forbidden love by IsiZulu novelists, it is also important to highlight the fact that IsiZulu dramatists have also contributed a great deal to these themes. For illustration purposes we will confine the discussion to Mncwango's and Blose's dramas and two short stories by N. S. Ntuli.

5.4.1.1 Ngenzeni

Mncwango's drama Ngenzeni is about king Menziwa who has chosen to marry Zenzile and Zenzisile, who are twins. The title Ngenzeni means "what have I done". The title of the book is related to Zenzile, the aggressive twin who does not want to get married to the King. The origin of this question could be ascribed to two reasons. The first is that Zenzile asks herself this question because, according to her, the King could have chosen girls other than her and her twin sister. The second is that she already has a man that she loves. Zenzile strongly objects to the marriage. Her main reason is that she is in love with Hilwayo, a man she has chosen on her own. This drama reflects the power that the King has over his subjects. Zenzile is not happy about the fact that she is forced to marry the King, despite the fact that she already has a man that she loves. The sad part is that even Hilwayo is also the subject of the King, and is expected to show his obedience to him by sacrificing his beloved one. Zenzile refuses to marry the king despite the consequences that might result from her actions. She confesses to her twin sister that she is not prepared to yield to the will of the King:

Zenzile: “Uma ngigana umuntu engiziqokele yena ngingavinjwa yini ukuthi ngibe ngumdlunkulu kuye. Lo engiziqokele yena uyinkosi enhliziyweni yami ...”(Mncwango:7).

“If I get married to a person whom I have chosen on my own, what could prevent me from being a queen to him. The one I have chosen on my own is a king in my heart ...”).

Zenzile believes in loving a man she has chosen on her own. Hilwayo is a king in her heart because she truly loves him. She totally rejects forced love. On the other hand Zenzisile believes that as a child she must uphold her traditional customs. Unlike Zenzile, Zenzisile succumbs to the word of her parents and of the King. She accepts whatever is said to her as a way of life:

Zenzisile: “Inkosi isilikhiphile elokuthi ifuna ukuba siyoba ngumdlunkulu wayo, nobaba, ngokuhlonipha izwi leSilo, usevumile. Pho wena uyini uma uthi ungase uphikise izwi labadala? ... Inkosi ayiphikiswa futhi ayinqunyelwa” (Mncwango:7).

(“The king has issued an order that he wants us to be his wives, father has agreed because he respects the word of the King, Who do you think you are if you think you can oppose the word of the elders? ... No one opposes and decides for the King”).

This story is set in a time when the word of the King was law. No one was above the King’s word; not even Mthembu, the father of the twins, could forbid him from marrying both girls if he wanted to. All people are his subjects, so Zenzile and Zenzisile had no say in their marriage. They had to conform to the norms and values of their society. Hilwayo on the other hand would rather die than lose Zenzile to the king:

Hilwayo: “Ukufa sengivele ngizinikele kukho” (Mncwango:64).
 (“I have given myself to death”).

The pressure experienced by the lovers from the King and from the society in general aggravates the situation, because instead of succumbing to the traditional practice Zenzile and Hilwayo become more aggressive and are determined to violate his order. Both Zenzile and Hilwayo decide to flee to KwaZulu and become refugees there under king Shaka. King Shaka accepts them, gives them shelter and cattle and allows them to live as citizens of his land.

5.4.1.2 Uqomisa Mina Nje Uqomisa Iliba

The practice of forcing girls of a particular regiment to marry old warriors in KwaZulu continued until king Cetshwayo's time. Uqomisa mina nje uqomisa iliba, by M. A. Blose (1960), is another popular drama that deals with the themes under discussion. Uqomisa Mina Nje Uqomisa Iliba means, "If you court me you are courting death". This drama is about the most horrible and inhumane killings of young women who belonged to the *Ingcugce* girls' regiment. This incident took place during king Cetshwayo's reign. These girls were ordered to marry old warriors from the *uDlokwe* and *iNdlondlo* male regiments. These warriors were not only too old for the girls, but they were also crippled and maimed by war. The king's order fell on deaf ears because the girls rejected his word from the onset. This humiliation was unheard of in those days.

Disobeying the king's word was death. Hence, the girls' refusal resulted in the brutal killings of all the girls who belonged to the *Ingcugce* regiment. This book was set in at the time when Sir Theophilus Shepstone of the British colonial office had already arrived in KwaZulu. Some scholars would argue that the behaviour of the *Ingcugce* girls was encouraged by the fact that the white man and his laws despised the traditional customs of the Zulu nation. That possibility cannot be ruled out. In this case though the influence of Western culture is not the source of the girls' aggressiveness. This is evident in the following comment by Zamandulo:

Zamandulo: "Ukungalingani kwalo phela akusiyo into engiyifuniselayo. Ngingagana uCelebantwini besengithi ngiganeni nje lapho?" (Blose: 18)

("I am sure of the fact that I do not love him. If I get married to Celebantwini what would I be getting married to?")

The above comment by Zamandulo reveals that these girls did not defy the word of the king because of Western civilization. For example, Zamandulo states explicitly that there is no doubt that they do not love these men: "*ukungalingani kwalo phela akusiyo into engiyifuniselayo.*" The *Ingcugce* regiment vows to defy the long standing tradition of forced love. Though the rejection of the warriors could be based on other reasons such as the age gap between the girls and the warriors, the main reason was that the girls did not love these men.

Some of the girls already had fiancé's when the king passed the decree. Nontombi, the heroine of the drama, was in love with her fiancé' Maqanda. The title of the play is based on the love affair between Nontombi and Maqanda. It is Nontombi who tells Maqanda that if he courts her he is courting death. Nontombi's father, Ngqengelele, forces his daughter to give up Maqanda for Mfelandawonye, a very old warrior. Maqanda and Nontombi flee their homes to seek refuge on the white man's land on the other side of KwaZulu. Other youth in the story approve of their action. Tholakele says:

“Uthando lolu lungumanqoba. Alwazi mthetho namasiko. Ukugana umuntu ungamfuni ngempela kufiswa ubani? Ube ngabuye enzeni uNontombi uma abakubo bemphoqa ukuba agane uMfelandawonye engamfuni ngempela?” (Blose:41)

(“Love conquers all. It does not know any laws nor any custom. Who wishes to marry a person whom you do not want? What else could Nontombi have done if her parents forced her to marry Mfelandawonye if she really did not love him?”)

Tholakele's words confirm that love conquers everything. Love does not know culture. This was true in Nontombi and Maqanda's case. They fled their homes, but unfortunately they were caught before they reached their destination. The title of the play is realised at the end of the story. Nontombi's courtship became a real death for Maqanda, who was fiercely killed by Ngqengelele, Nontombi's father. After seeing her beloved dying Nontombi ran into the nearest river and drowned herself.

5.4.2 IsiZulu short stories

5.4.2.1 Buyel' ekhaya

The short story “Buyel' Ekhaya” exemplifies forbidden love which is based on religion. MaZungu and her husband Ngema forbid their son, Bongani, to marry Nomagoli because she is not a Christian. This is a case of an endogamous marriage. Odetola (1983:35) explains that an endogamous marriage could be based on religion:

It is used here to refer to the selection of a mate similar to the individual in that they are both members of the same broad social grouping and influenced by the same general norms. One may want to marry somebody who is similar to oneself in such areas as ethnic background, religion, and general social and economic status. (Emphasis mine)

Bongani's family are Christians. Nomagoli is not a Christian and she does not even go to church. Ngema and his wife refer to such people as *amaqaba* (heathens). The problem starts when Bongani informs his mother that he would like to marry Nomagoli. MaZungu had hoped that Bongani would marry a girl from another place because she regards the girls in their neighbourhood as uncivilised and they are therefore not suitable for her son. The following dialogue expresses her disappointment:

"Musa ukubheda wena Bongani. Ziphi izintombi lapha, ngoba kugcwele amabhinca odwa nje? Sengiyabona dade sekuqhamuka uhele lwezintombi zithwele umbondo" (Nxumalo:26).

("Do not talk rubbish, Bongani. Are there any young women here, because this place is full of raw heathens? I can imagine a group of young women coming with their traditional food stuffs that are prepared for the groom").

It is evident that MaZungu despises the girls from her village because they are still traditional. She also despises people who are still following traditional customs. Ngema's attitude also changes immediately when he learns that Bongani wants to marry Nomagoli from the Gumede family, who also live at eNqoleni. Out of anger Ngema chases his son out of his house. He cannot accept a heathen in his home:

"Uthi uphila kahle ekhanda Bongani?" NguNgema embukisisa ngokunye manje uBongani.

("Are you thinking properly Bongani?" Ngema looked at Bongani in an unusual manner).

"Ngiphila saka baba, futhi angisale senginitshela nje ukuthi mina sengimkhethile ngamkhetha uNomagoli. Ngimkhethe ngoba ngimthanda. Anginandaba ukuthi nithini nina" (Nxumalo:29).

("I am well father, let me inform you again that I have carefully chosen Nomagoli. I have chosen her because I love her. I do not care what you think about her").

Bongani wants to marry Nomagoli because she loves her, but his father also discriminates against people who are not Christians and even thinks that his son is insane because he wants to marry a heathen. As a result Bongani stops going to church and leaves his home as a result of his parents' refusal to accept the woman he loves. The title of this story, "Buyel' Ekhaya," is based

on Bongani's rejection of his home, his parents and of the church. The story has a happy ending because Nomagoli's family are converted to Christianity and Bongani and Nomagoli end up having a big wedding where the couple and even the priest were wearing their colourful traditional attire. Ngema and his wife nearly lost their son through their selfish thinking that a Christian should marry another Christian. It is not easy for them to realize that God uses Christians to convert people who do not believe in Him.

5.4.2.2 Amabheka

The title of this story, "Amabheka," means "the bride price." The story is about Ntetha, the father of Nomvula, who has arranged for his daughter to be married to a man whom he has chosen. Ntetha has already accepted the bride price payment for Nomvula from another man. The problem arises when Nomvula discovers that she is pregnant with Sifiso's child. The fact of the matter is that she has never been in love with the man who has given the bride price payment to her father. He is married and has many wives. Ntetha wants Nomvula to leave the father of her child for a polygamous marriage. He has used all the *lobola* payment and he now forces his daughter to get married to this man because he is unable to pay him back. Nomvula explains the situation to Sifiso:

"Sengizame ngezindlela eziningi ukumvimba ubaba angaqhubeki nokulobolisa, kodwa akasafuni ukuzwa lutho. Ungethembisa nenhlamvu. Nasekhaya sebangiphendukele nje. Ikakhulukazi ngoba sebeyamukela nemali yelobolo, baze bayona" (Mhlongo & Ntuli: 60).

("I have tried several ways to prevent my father from proceeding with the payment of the bride price, but he does not want to hear anything. He promised to shoot me. At home they are indifferent to me. The serious problem is that they have accepted the bride price payment, and they have wasted it").

The man who has paid the bride price wants his money back because he has learnt that Nomvula has been impregnated by Sifiso. Ntetha has misused the money and decides to repay him by giving him Nomvula, irrespective of her condition:

"Wena Nomvula, sengizovuka kusasa ngikuse khona lapha ungafuni ukuyogana khona. Ngiyabona sengathi uzoba namaqhinga amaningi" (Mhlongo & Ntuli: 64).

("You Nomvula, tomorrow I will wake up and take you to the matrimonial home which you do not want. I can see that you will have many plans").

Ntetha is determined to accompany Nomvula in her present condition to give her as a wife to this other man. He does not care about the fact that Nomvula and Sifiso must take care of their child together as husband and wife. Sifiso cannot marry Nomvula and decides to elope with her. Ntetha caught them while they were trying to escape but they eventually succeeded in escaping, and Sifiso managed to pay the bride price for Nomvula, which will be used to repay the man whom Ntetha owes.

5.4.3 Examples from siSwati drama

5.4.3.1 Umjingi Udliwa Yinhlitiyo

This is a short siSwati drama written by a woman, Sijabulile Nsibandze. The plot is about Sebentile Sibandze and Mshiyeni Fakudze. Mshiyeni is a middle aged man and is married to Sebentile's elder sister. The problem is that Mshiyeni and his wife have tried all they could to conceive a child but they have failed. Even the well known witchdoctors have failed to help them. To solve the problem of childlessness, Mshiyeni decides without consulting his wife to marry Sebentile, the younger sister of his wife, as his second wife. The proverb we referred to earlier on: *inhlanyelo icelwa esininini*, is put into practice. Sebentile is forced to marry Mshiyeni so that she will be an *inhlanti* to her sister. Superstitious beliefs still play a major role in this drama: Mshiyeni's mother finds a snake in the bundle of wood and Fakudze, Mshiyeni's father, associates it with the childlessness of LaSibandze. Fakudze says that the family witchdoctor, Sikhondze, told him that the snake indicates the anger of the ancestors about the barrenness of their bride. Superstition is used to support the wishes of the in-laws. The snake that came out of the bundle of wood is believed to represent the ancestors. Mshiyeni tells his sister that he loves Sebentile and he wants her to come and rescue her sister.

Sebentile's parents accept Mshiyeni's proposal because this is a common tradition among the EmaSwati. Sibandze, Sebentile's father, is very happy because of the herds of cattle he is going to acquire for himself. He offers his daughter to Mshiyeni without consulting her. He tells

Mshiyeni's family that he wants eleven herds of cattle for his daughter. Mkhulunyelwa courts Sebentile after he has sent the people to her home. He faces rejection because Sebentile tells him that she does not love him at all. Sebentile tells Mshiyeni that it does not mean that, because her sister loves him, she loves him too. The old EmaSwati women, like Sebentile's mother, approve the practice of sororal polygyny. The following dialogue between LaMasuku and Sebentile reveals the different opinions of the youth and the old women:

LaMasuku: "Ukutsandzile. Ufuna uyoba yinhlanti yadzadzewenu."

("He loves you. He wants you to step into your sister's place").

Sebentile: "Hawu make, mine ngiye kuFakudze? Kantsi umuntu uyamikiswa yini endvodzeni angayitsandzi?"

("Oh mother, I should get married to Fakudze? Is a person forced to marry a man she does not love?")

LaMasuku: "Ngelisiko lesiSwati intfombatana iyendziswa mntfwanami."

("In the siSwati custom a girl is forced into marriage my child").

Sebentile: "Hhayi make, mine ngingeke ngiyikhone lentfo yekuhlohlobetelwa." (Nsibandze:27)

("No mother, I will not tolerate this thing of being forced").

Sebentile does not want to be forced to be an *inhlanti* for her sister. To her, it does not matter that this is a siSwati custom. To defy the marriage arrangements made by her parents on her behalf she falls in love with Lusekwane. The title of the book, Umjingi Udliwa Yinhlitiyo, relates to Mshiyeni's rejection by Sebentile. The title means that "it is difficult to force a person to eat the soft porridge that he/she does not want." In this context it actually means that no one can force a person to love someone that he or she does not love. Mshiyeni fights with Lusekwane and leaves him for dead because he thinks that, by killing him, Sebentile would have no option but to agree to be his second wife. The arranged marriage fails because Sebentile refuses to marry her sister's husband and she ends up married to Lusekwane.

5.4.4 An example from IsiXhosa drama

Even among the Xhosa who did not favour marriage between relatives, there was still a belief in choosing marriage partners for their sons and daughters. Tamsanqa, a Xhosa playwright, has written a moving tragedy, Buzani Kubawo, in which he demonstrates the negative consequences of choosing a marriage partner for a child. In this story Gugulethu is forced by his father to marry Thobeka though he is deeply in love with Nomampondomise. It is Gugulethu's mother who comes up with this idea after she has seen Thobeka at a wedding. Magaba, Gugulethu's mother, tells her daughter, Nozipho, that it is her wish to see Thobeka as her son's bride one day.

UMagaba: “Kanti ukuba bekuthetha mna bekungekho ntombi yimbi ibiya kuthathwa nguGugulethu ngaphandle koThobeka. Koko ke andinakunceda, abantwana esibazeleyo abasiva, abafuni kwenza nto ithethwa ngabazali, bafuna ukwenza into ephambi kweengqondo zabo. Yaphela laa ntb yakudala ebethi umfana abonelwe ngabazali umfazi, eve yena selexelelwa intombi ema kayizeke. Ithi ukuba yintombi ive sekusithiwa 'Ntombi yiya kwazibaningeshe, sikwendisela khona ngemvisiswano yabazali,' kungagqitywa nayo” (Tamsanqa:5).

(“If I had to talk no other young woman would be married to Gugulethu except Thobeka. There is nothing I can do to help; our children do not listen to us, they do not want to do anything suggested by the parents, they want to do what they want. The custom of choosing a wife for a son is outdated, when he would be informed that he must marry a particular young woman. If it were a young woman she would be informed about the home into which she should be married, she would be informed that she was being married to that home because of the relationship between the parents, she was not considered when the final decision was made”).

This was just a conversation between the mother and her daughter but it highlights a very important factor about the theme of the story is that today's youth does not respect the will of their parents. Magaba's speech indicates her nostalgia for the bygone culture of choosing a marriage partner for a child. It also indicates the generation gap that exists between the old and the new generation. Eventually Gugulethu is called and told by his father that he must now get married. Gugulethu wants to choose his own wife and his views are contradictory to those of his father:

UZwilakhe: "Bayephi oyise? Yeyoyise."

("Where are the fathers? She belongs to the fathers").

Gugulethu: "Noko bobawo le ndawo yokubona bendicela ukuba niyiyeke kum, ningade nixambulisane ngayo kakhulu."

("Well fathers I think you should leave the issue of selection to me, you do not have to argue a lot about it").

UNyaniso: "Wazini wena ngomfazi? Uyayazi iimpawu ezifunekayo emfazini, ...?" (Tamsanqa:31)

("What do you know about a woman? Do you know the qualities that you should look for in a woman, ...?")

The above dialogue between Gugulethu and the old men reveals that his list of qualities for a wife contrasts with those of the old men. These men think that Gugulethu cannot choose a wife for himself because he does not know what a woman is. Gugulethu has a girlfriend but cannot marry her because of the pressure from his parents. He eventually yields and marries Thobeka, very much against his will. Nomampondomise finds out about this marriage and believes that Gugulethu is deceiving her, and she commits suicide. Gugulethu deserts his home and wife. Thobeka falls in love with another man and a number of children are born. Zwilakhe wants Gugulethu's and Thobeka's marriage to succeed against all odds and sends these children and Thobeka to his son. Gugulethu kills his wife and the children by butchering them with an axe. The title of the drama: Buzani Kubawo, represents the words uttered by Gugulethu after he has killed Thobeka and her children. It means that whoever wanted to know about these killings should ask Zwilakhe because all the sorrowful events that occurred were caused by him. It is evident in this example that patriarchal power was exercised over both sexes. Zwilakhe forbids Gugulethu to marry Nomampondomise and on the other hand forces him to marry Thobeka, his choice. On the other hand, Nomampondomise is also forbidden to marry Gugulethu.

5.4.5 Examples from Sepedi drama

The Bapedi and the emaSwati have aspects of their cross-cousin marriages in common. Firstly, in the Sesotho tradition the girl was obliged to marry her cousin and the parents had to choose

her marriage partner for her. There was a strong belief that by marrying within the family the girl would lead her marriage life among relatives who would be sympathetic towards her in times of trouble. Secondly, the bride price would revolve around relatives and not pass on to strangers. Even in the cultures where a girl had to marry her relative, the right to choose her beloved one was curtailed. Girls and boys were forbidden to marry people of other national groups. This can be cited as one of the reasons that gave rise to the cultural segregation which existed among the various African groups. The baSotho people then cannot be excluded from the people who practised the custom of forced, arranged, preferential or forbidden marriages. The two Sepedi dramas, Mahlodi, written by J.S.Mminele, and Šaka La Pelo Ga Le Tlale by M.S.Serudu, bear testimony to this fact.

5.4.5.1 Mahlodi

This drama is about a woman called Mahlodi who was married to Sepheu the son of Morabane and Phadime. Sepheu and Mahlodi were still young when Sepheu died in a car accident. At the time of his death Sepheu was a born again Christian, hence he was buried in a Christian way. Before his death he had told his wife that her faith should be very strong because he knew that there would be conflict between their Sepedi culture and their Christian values.

After a year, according to the Sepedi custom, a cleansing ritual for the widow is carried out and thereafter a decision is taken about her future. The family elders converged and Potlaki, the elder of the kraal, took the calabash with beer and gave it to Lepadime, Sepheu's younger brother. This meant that if Lepadime drank the beer, he accepted Mahlodi as his wife. Lepadime did abide by the custom and drank the beer. He accepted Mahlodi as his wife, but Mahlodi refused to be handed over to Lepadime according to this custom because of her Christian values. Lepadime also had a family of his own at that time.

Mahlodi's action angered Morabane and Phadime and the other members of the family. According to custom Lepadime's rejection was a very humiliating experience. From that day onwards Mahlodi, was treated badly by her in-laws, particularly Morabane, her mother-in-law. She was insulted, they deprived her of food, and at one stage she spent a night outside in rainy, cold weather. Her in-laws even burnt all her clothes. Consequently, she sought refuge in a Christian

community. She was later hired by an old age home. As time progressed her in-laws were also converted to Christianity and after a long struggle allowed her to marry another man.

5.4.5.2 Šaka La Pelo Ga Le Tlale

This drama is about forced love. Mmakoma, the heroine of the story, was forced to marry Thapudi, the son of Mabele, because the Mabele family was very rich. Mmakoma refused to marry Thapudi because she had her own boyfriend, Matsobane. Mmakoma and Matsobane's relationship was disturbed by the long standing feud between their families. Whenever these families met there would be a fight. However, the families finally arranged the wedding ceremony for Thapudi and Mmakoma and Matsobane had to go into hiding because the families wanted to kill him. She vowed that she would never get married to Thapudi and that she would rather kill herself than marry a man she did not love. Mmakoma refused to marry Thapudi despite his riches. The proverb: *Šaka la pelo ga le tlale* attests to this. In this context the proverb means that money cannot buy love. Mmakoma vanished during the wedding ceremony and drowned herself in a nearby river. Thapudi and Matsobane blamed one another for Mmakoma's death and fought. They also fell into the river and drowned. Hence three people died because of forced love.

5.4.6 Examples from TshiVenda drama

In the Tshivenda and the other African traditional cultures, marriage is a contract between two families, i.e the family of the woman and the family of the man. Stayt (1931:144) has written about the marriage among the Venda people. He states that:

A great deal of bargaining generally takes place between contracting parties, and sometimes a father will give his daughter to a friend on the promise that the lobola will be paid at a future date. Sometimes a man betroths a child or even unborn babe, to a man from whom he has borrowed cattle.

The action of the father in the above quotation emphasises the role of the parents in the marriage arrangement. The two individuals who are directly involved in a marriage are not considered important. Among the Venda people too, pre-arranged marriages between parents are accepted by the youth without demur. The most influential factor is that parents play a dominant role in the lives of their children. Parents want to secure a satisfactory wife for their son, and will as a result

prefer to marry him to the daughter of some close relative or neighbour, with whose conduct and reputation they are well acquainted. On the other hand, the parents of the wife must see to it that their daughter is married to a responsible man, who will be able to provide her with basic needs. The theme of forced marriage is revealed in Elelwani, Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha, Musandiwa na khotsi Vho-Lwalaga, Asi ene and Tsha ri vhone. In this study, Elelwani and Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha will be used for illustration purposes.

5.4.6.1 Elelwani

In Elelwani, Elelwani's father, Mabada, pre-arranges the marriage between Elelwani and an old man, Ratshihule, a chief of about 60 years old. Mabada does not take into consideration the age gap between Elelwani and chief Ratshihule because he wishes to secure a marriage for his daughter with the chief. When Elelwani is told about the pre-arranged marriage she refuses. Instead she prefers to look for a partner of her own choice. Mabada goes to the extent of threatening his daughter with death if she continues to refuse to abide by his rules, as he abides by the Tshivenda traditional culture which gives a parent the right to choose a husband for his daughter. Elelwani, on the other hand, represents the youth who have been influenced by the Western way of life; who believe that they have freedom of choice. Elelwani, at long last, acts according to her parents' wishes by marrying Ratshihule. However, her heart is with Vele, her boyfriend, who has resettled in Mianzwi. Whenever she meets people from Mianzwi, she asks about the whereabouts of Vele. Vele tricks Ratshihule into evicting Elelwani. He places a bad omen in front of the chief's hut, and is called to come and point out the witch. He points out Elelwani as a witch and she is evicted immediately. A short period after her eviction she marries Vele, the man of her choice. At the end of the narrative, the will of the lovers triumphs over the Tshivenda culture.

5.4.6.2 Vhavenda Vho-Matshivha

In this narrative it is not a daughter who is given a man, but a son who is given a woman by the father. Matshivha clashes with his son because of a forced marriage. Matshivha has chosen a woman for his son and he has paid the necessary bride price. Thilivhali though has a woman of his own choice, whom he wants to marry as soon as he can. However, he does not refuse to marry the woman chosen by his father, but would like to marry a woman of his choice first. His situation

becomes complicated because he does not have the money to pay the bride price, so he asks his father to come to his rescue, but Matshivha refuses to help his son because he does not trust him.

He fears that Thilivhali might not marry the woman he has chosen for him. Hence, Thilivhali is unable to marry the woman of his choice. He therefore decides to marry no one, not even the chosen woman. Thilivhali leaves his home and migrates to the urban areas and does not come back until after the death of his father. The point here is that he never married the woman who was chosen by his father. Again, the father bases his argument on the traditional belief that parents have the right to choose women on behalf of their sons. Although Thilivhali respects his parents and their beliefs, he feels he should also be given a chance to make his own independent decisions.

5.4.7 An example from Senegalese Literature

It is interesting to observe that other African groups north of the Limpopo, such as the Nigerians and Senegalese people, also practised the culture of forced and forbidden love. In the novels: So Long a Letter, by Mariama Bâ and One is Enough by Flora Nwapa it is African women writers who present the experiences of women's oppression by men, by older women and by the Islamic religion. In each case the oppression is caused by the mother-in-law. In other words these cultures reveal a woman-on-woman oppression. Hay and Stichter (1995:77) comment as follows in connection with the authority of the mother-in-law:

In other societies as well, the mother's influence has important implications. Among the Coniagui of Guinea, mothers sometimes arrange marriages. Even when this does not occur, the mother's consent is needed. Luo wives often blame a husband's decision to take an additional wife on his mother's influence.

The following novels indicate the power and authority the mother-in-law exercises over her son's wife as well as her son's love life. So Long a Letter is a novel written by Mariama Ba, a Senegalese woman, about the suppression of women. The novel is written in the form of a letter by Ramatoulaye to her friend Aissatou. The story is about Ramatoulaye's marital life. In the letter she recounts the marital-misfortunes she experienced while she was still married to Modou. In her narration Ramatoulaye tells of Aissatou's marital life. She tells how Aissatou's marriage to Mawdo Bâ was brought to an end by her mother-in-law, Aunty Nabou. Aunty Nabou never liked her son's wife, Aissatou, a goldsmith's daughter. Mawdo's mother, a princess, strongly believed

that humble birth would always show in a person's bearing. Aunty Nabou's rejection of Aissatou is based on endogamous reasons. She claimed that she could not recognise herself in the sons of a goldsmith's daughter.

To wreak revenge on Aissatou, Aunty Nabou brought young Nabou, her namesake and her brother's daughter, to be Mawdo's youngest wife. Ramatoulaye recalls Aunty Nabou's words to her son: "My brother Farba has given you young Nabou to be your wife, to thank me for the worthy way in which I have brought her up. I will never get over it if you don't take her as your wife. Shame kills faster than disease" (Bâ, 1981:30). Mawdo did not want to see his mother die of shame, so he complied with his mother's wish, who had already prepared a wedding night for him and young Nabou. From then on Aissatou no longer counted, and could not bear the pain. She took a one way journey with her four sons, leaving behind Mawdo with his young wife and mother.

Ramatoulaye was not exempted from experiencing some disappointment from her husband, Modou. Her husband decided to marry his daughter's best friend, Binetou. The marriage was not a result of Binetou's decision. It is clear from Daba's speech that Binetou was coerced by her mother to marry Modou. Daba tells her mother how Binetou did not want to marry the man in question. She says: "Mum! Binetou is heartbroken. She is going to marry her sugar-daddy. Her mother cried so much. She begged her daughter to give her a happy end, in a proper house, as the man has promised them. So she accepted" (Bâ, 1981:36). In this case Binetou never had the slightest chance to decide whom to marry. She had to rescue her mother who saw the opportunity for a rags-to-riches situation by Binetou's marriage to Modou. Binetou, like young Nabou, had to succumb to the will of her mother. She could not escape forced marriage. The writer concludes concisely: "Binetou, like many others, was a lamb slaughtered on the altar of affluence" (Bâ, 1981:39).

5.4.8 An example from Nigerian Literature

Women suffer from a number of misfortunes that are beyond human control. Barrenness is one of them. One is enough, a novel written by a Nigerian woman, Flora Nwapa, narrates the story of a rich, barren woman, Amaḳa who was driven out of her marriage by her mother-in-law simply because she was infertile. In African culture, a woman was, and still, is considered useless if she

is declared barren. Amaka could not fall pregnant after six years of marriage to her husband, Obiora. Obiora's mother, who was against the marriage in the first place, was sick and tired of waiting. A conversation between Amaka and her mother-in-law signifies her resentment of her daughter-in-law. She says to Amaka:

Whether you hear or not, **it will end today** when I finish with you. The hold you have on my son will end today. Do you hear me. I have waited for six years, and I cannot wait even one day more. ... If my son heard me, if he had listened to me, his house would be full of children by now (Nwapa, 1981:13) (Emphasis mine).

It is Obiora's mother who broke the news to Amaka that Obiora had two sons by another woman, who was coming with her two sons to live with them in the same house. On learning about the truth from her husband Amaka had no option but to leave her matrimonial home.

The two novels indicate how the matriarchal power exercised by older women oppresses younger women, all in the name of forced and forbidden love. In these examples matriarchal power is exercised over both sexes. Young Nabou had her choice of a marriage partner cut shot by Auntie Nabou, who forced Aissatou out of her marriage by compelling the young girl to marry her son. Her son had no option but to marry the young girl. Young Binetou had to rescue her mother from poverty by marrying Modou. Binetou's mother enforced the marriage, thus preventing Ramatoulaye from having her husband only to herself. Amaka's marriage to Obiora was ended by her vicious mother-in-law, who forced her son to marry a wife who would bear him children. It has been observed in the given examples that most cases of forced love or marriage end up in a tragic manner. Besides causing family disintegration, the problem of selecting marriage partners for young people, and forbidding them to love certain individuals, is a widespread plague that has caused the a number of misunderstandings among the youth and their parents.

5.5 Conclusion

One may not quickly judge the parents who choose marriage partners for their children as being insensitive to the feelings of their children. They seem to be pursuing a universal wish that all parents have for their children, which is to see their children married to ideal spouses. The culture of forced, arranged, preferential and forbidden marriages became a tradition impossible to question

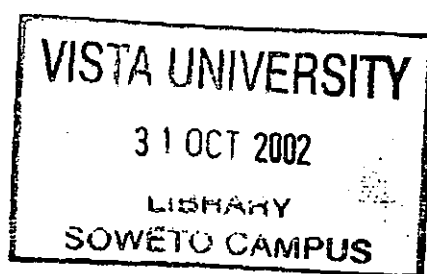
in the olden days. The setting in which the events took place promoted the practice because in those days men believed in filling their kraals with cattle. There are views (Stichter & Hay 1995:84) that some women are particularly desirous of a marriage that has been arranged, especially if the arrangement followed a prior courtship and understanding. Sometimes women accept the legitimacy of arranged marriages because they are believed to provide a built-in solution to problems of mate selection. Some women trust their parents, guardians, or marriage intermediaries to look after their interests.

There are, however, good reasons behind the choice of marriage partners by parents. The main reason cited in support of this culture is that the parents who initiate or forbid the marriage have the interest of their children at heart. To put it in Hay's and Stichter's terms: "such individuals are concerned with the future well-being of their nieces and nephews" (1995:82). In many cases the primary beneficiaries of arranged marriages are the couple themselves and their children, who will acquire two sets of kinsmen to whom they can turn for assistance. In this case both the in-laws and maternal and paternal relatives can be called upon for particular types of help, economic help in emergencies and support or refuge in disputes. It is the couple and their offspring, rather than the parents, who generally receive such aid. The leviratic (*isiko lokungena*) and the sororate customs (*isiko lokuvusa*), preferential, and arranged marriages prevented problems of abandoned children.

A number of stories referred to in this chapter, though, highlight the rejection of forced and arranged marriages. The importance of true love as a solid base for a successful, happy marriage in contrast with the hazardous results of forced love is also highlighted. There is sufficient evidence that sometimes women agree to unwanted marriages because of family pressure. It has also been realised that when people try to change a tradition that has been practised for centuries such efforts amount to a revolution. The youth who were forced into arranged marriages rebelled against this long standing tradition. Their rebelliousness represents the difference in opinions between them and the traditional old people. A number of cases have indicated that Western influence played a major role in this.

The traditional African man has been affected by the consequences of these customs. The rejection of the chosen partner affected the father's dignity because his word was no longer regarded as law in the home.

The levirate and sororate customs provided security for an African woman as well as the African child, but there is also ample evidence that the abuse of African customs has oppressed African women and children. Traditional African culture did not allow women and children to take part in the decision making of the family. The above literary examples, ranging from IsiZulu to Senegalese, reveal that men and older women abused culture to achieve their own goals. The views of the youth who were forced into arranged marriages were less important. This is true even today. There are a number of children who have left their homes because of parents who meddle in their love affairs. Women and children were robbed of their human rights in decision making and in important matters such as marriage. The inequality that prevails in a family unit between a husband and a wife is partly traceable from traditional practices like these. The gender roles which subsume the gender stereotypes prevalent in society today have a lot to do with our traditional past. Forced and forbidden love practices demanded that women play a submissive role. Women had to respect the customs dictated to them by patriarchy and by older women who enjoyed a position of authority in the family. This is the reason for us to believe that the low status that women experience today is partly based on the cultures under scrutiny in this study.



CHAPTER 6

'THE CANNON BEFORE THE CANON': A CONCLUDING REMARK

6.1 Introduction

"... there is a cry everywhere, everywhere in the world, a woman's cry is being uttered. The cry may be different, but there is a certain unity."

(Mariama Bâ in Jones & Palmer, 1987:89)

The "cry" in the quotation above alludes to the nature and the many concealed and un-expressed experiences and conditions in which women find themselves not only in their small communities but in the whole world. The title, "the cannon before the canon," refers to two significant factors in this study. Firstly, "the cannon before the canon" points to the exclusion of women writers from the process of literary creation. It also touches on the political and historical fact of colonialism which points to literacy and literature coming to Africa behind a gun barrel, "**the cannon before the canon.**" The works of African male writers at the time when writing was in its initial stages were viewed and evaluated in terms of Western standards. What is of significance is that after colonial education established the literary arts in general, a few African women were able to publish their writings, but African male writers designed their own literary canon that looked down upon African women's writings.

The canon used in the evaluation of women's literary work was designed and developed by men and therefore promoted men's literary works above those of women. According to Goodman (1996:ix) the literary canon is "the body of writings generally recognized as 'great' by some authority." An example here is the Great Tradition developed as the standard for great English literature. The process of choosing great texts for inclusion in the literary canon involves a set of assumptions about what makes literature great. Most literature textbooks, as indicated in chapter one, were until very recently focussed primarily or exclusively on men's writing. In so doing, men's writing was positioned as the norm presented, as if it were literature which was somehow representative of all great writing. The exclusion of African women writers from the literary canon is associated with a gun barrel because it indicates the eradication of women's literary creativity.

In this way African male writers too, loaded their own cannon which enforced their canon to discourage women from writing. The downgrading of literary works by female writers was based on the grounds of their gender. Davies and Fido (in Owomoyela, 1993: 312) confirm that:

Beyond the personal, women still have relatively less access to publishers than men do. Many African women speak of manuscripts that are ignored for years by male editors and reviewers.

The exclusion of women from sites of literary production silenced them and denied them the opportunity to speak for themselves.

Secondly, "the cannon before the canon" refers to the marginalisation of women from important decision-making processes in society. It has been illustrated in the discussion of the customs of forced and forbidden love that, in general, customary practices are patriarchal and consequently discriminatory as they keep women in a status of perpetual minority. Customary practices have rarely, if ever, afforded women equal decision-making powers within the marriage and in society in general. Goodman (1996:153) refers to this as multiple jeopardy: marginalization by gender, race and class. She puts this point in this manner:

Women of colour were long excluded from higher education, from learning and teaching about creative writing, by a double or even triple oppression: race, class and gender.

Literature is viewed by women as a means of speaking up and of gaining an equal voice with men. The exclusion of women from the literary canon and from important decision-making processes is consistent with a society where men are the primary decision-makers. The argument that has been propounded by this thesis is that women are part of the larger society and therefore cannot be left out of the literary canon and excluded from making important decisions about important issues in society and family. The male-focussed lens on life provides us with an unbalanced reflection of society.

6.2 Looking back

This thesis dealt with gender; but focussed primarily on women. It particularly centred around the four selected IsiZulu novels and on analysing how gender roles and social inequalities were perpetuated by the themes of forced and forbidden love. The employment of the womanistic theory not only arouses a sympathetic response towards African women and African women writers but also provokes a hostile reaction from other critics, because womanist criticism has been among the main opposition of the traditional male-dominated canon. Among other things womanist criticism seeks to promote all women and expose the ills committed against them because it encourages the reading of literature with "gender on the agenda." This is a process of reading with a concern for the gender issues that affect the writing and reading of texts. This study has taken the view that reading with "gender on the agenda" is a vital part of the reading and studying of literature and cultural representations. This type of reading encourages the reader to see aspects of texts and the contexts of their creation and reception which we might not otherwise notice. It has enabled us to analyse the gender dynamics that were gleaned from the study of texts in a particular context. The evaluation of the themes of forced and forbidden love has indicated that today we may find value in some stories. An analysis of these themes further recommends that each generation should re-evaluate its position in relation to history and the ideas of the previous generations.

Chapter one has outlined the aim of this study, which was to indicate that the cultures of forced and forbidden love have to a great extent contributed to the current subordinate position that women experience today. To highlight the abilities of African women, the contributions of well known African women rulers such as Princess Mkabayi kaJama, Queen Gwamile Labotsibeni Mdluli, Queen Modjadji, and Queen Manthatisi were mentioned. A literature review indicated the research that has been carried out on feminism and women issues. The scope of this study, as well as an explanation of the key concepts, were also dealt with in this preliminary chapter.

The three literary theories (womanism, onomastics and psychoanalysis) which were employed in the analysis of the novels are discussed in chapter two. This eclectic analytical framework has indicated that reading and studying literature today is a very rich and multi-layered enterprise. Womanism has been identified as a black women's liberal movement that is not only concerned

with the black sexual power tussle between the sexes, but also promotes the celebration of black roots and the ideals of black life. By employing womanism we have taken the view that gender is an important area of study, one which adds to the study of literature by offering a number of ways of evaluating literary worth. Womanism is a politics in that it takes into account a recognition of the historical and cultural subordination of women and a resolve to do something about it. It has been illustrated through the literary works of womanists like Alice Walker, and Barbara Christian that womanism has always incorporated a concern for ideas and consciousness raising, while also acting in the public sphere to improve the situation of women's lives. In the field of literature, womanist criticism has been very influential. It has pointed out the historical silences of women authors not included in the canon. It has fired the canon in order to shake up static views about women's creative work and domestic roles, thus enabling women's literature to be published.

The use of onomastics and psychoanalysis in this thesis indicated that the study of literature is a process with a connection to us, as readers and as people. The classification of names by Suzman indicated that names have a referential value. This means that names point outward from the individual toward various social or cultural circumstances. They can point to people that are important in the child's life, the circumstances surrounding the birth of the child, the social and financial position of the family and institutions relevant to the namer's state of mind. Hence names such as *Nomusa*, in Kubheka (1973), and *Lungile*, in Gcumisa (1987), were classified as emotion-related names that point to the mother's situation during her pregnancy. It has also been illustrated that some names of male characters indicate masculine power. Names such as Bhekokwakhe in Gcumisa (1987), Zulumacansi in Ngubane (1985) and Mbandlanyika in Mkize (1966) were identified as belonging to this category.

Psychoanalysis offered a tool for the analysis of the behaviour of the characters. Like people, characters are placed in particular cultures, in particular places and periods, with prejudices and desires of their own. Carl Jung's theory of personality which touches on the ego, the unconscious, and the collective unconscious was discussed. The structural psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan is also taken into consideration. Lacan's theory rests on the assumption that the unconscious is structured like a language. His view is that the text itself is a linguistic structure with its own psyche. The psyche of the text, or rather the psyche of the characters in the text, is taken to be related to the psyche of the people that are represented by the characters in the text. Psychoanalysis therefore has helped us to evaluate and analyse the behaviour of the characters in

the selected texts.

Chapter three outlines gender stereotypes and inequality between the sexes by analysing the relationship between male and female characters. This, we must state, has been the main concern of the study. The womanistic criticism of the novels was aimed at seeking to understand the literary representation of women, the historical evidence of their oppression within these literary texts, and how the writers consciously or unconsciously transpose that evidence into their texts. Literature can be defined as the many forms of cultural representation in which gender relations are routinely depicted. So, it has been indicated that gender can be read in sexual stereotypes and in power relations between the characters. In Kubheka's and Gcumisa's novels women are depicted as nonentities, the subordinate housewife and the underdog. Most women in these two novels, play minor roles. Kubheka, in Kungavuka AbaNguni, portrays woman as an undecisive, with lack of confidence and self-esteem. His main concern is to reveal the marginal position of women in society, by allocating to his female characters roles that bind them to the home and children. MaNkosi, MaCele, the minister's wife and the other church women are all seen to be concerned with the issue of the chastity of the girls. Only men, in Kubheka's novel, are associated with serious life issues such as *ilobolo*. This is made clear by his exclusion of women from Nomusa's *lobola* proceedings.

Female characters in Gcumisa are depicted as caricatures who are just there to carry out the objectives of the writer. All the women in his work, such as MaXimba, MaNzuza, Ntombiyethemba and Bongiwe and Lungile appear as pillars of strength for men. It is interesting to note that a character like MaNzuza in Gcumisa is used by a man, Cele, to achieve his own goal. On the other hand, Ntombiyethemba's passive nature further helps Cele to achieve his aim of forced love. Female characters in Gcumisa's novel portray a number of female stereotypes such as: woman as a witch, single educated women as snatchers of other women's husbands, woman as a sex object and producer of children, and women being dependent on men for their survival. Gcumisa, however, is distinct from his colleagues in his presentation of forced love. It is normally a girl who is coerced to marry a man, but Gcumisa deviates from the usual pattern because in his novel it is a man that is forced to marry a woman he does not love.

Mkize, in Inhliziyo Ingugo Wami, and Ngubane, in Uvalo Lwezinhlonzi, present us with women

of a different calibre. Although these writers also portray some popular female stereotypes they do not portray the female as accepting her lot. They present us with life-like characters who do not conceal their true self in order to conform to the norms of society. They portray women as strong people who are courageous enough to challenge the laws of patriarchy. The women in these novels defy the oppressive cultural norms by putting their personal interests above that of society. Bajwayele in Ngubane (1985) and Ntombana in Mkize (1966), are not as passive as Ntombiyethemba and Nomusa. They engage in rebellious actions to fight the unjust laws of patriarchy that prevent them from marrying the men they love. Bajwayele deserted her own home and never returned. Ntombana violated the cultural norms in a way that was never previously imagined in the history of the AmaZulu. The smearing of children's faeces on her body, going half naked outside the kraal of her-in-laws and calling all her-in-laws by their real names showed her strong commitment to her personal freedom. Both Bajwayele and Ntombana have been endowed with astonishing beauty by their creators. Their portrayal as roses befits their actions: a rose has a nice scent but it also pricks one's flesh painfully.

Mkize and Ngubane also indicated that it was not only young women who protested against forced and forbidden love, but that some old women also discouraged it. Both KaMemunce in Ngubane (1985) and MaBhengu in Mkize (1966), rejected the cultures of forced and forbidden love. They supported their daughters in the struggle to free themselves from the oppressive custom of forced love. They both advocated female emancipation above cultural submission which oppresses the woman. KaMemunce is presented as a very domineering woman who resisted her son-in-law, Zulumacansi, who has attacked her husband. She stood firm against forced love and challenged her husband openly on this matter. MaBhengu was first presented as being supportive of her husband on the issue of forced love but soon changed her mind after she learnt that Mbandlanyika was very ugly, and that he was also a very rude and a fierce-tempered man. After that she plotted with her daughter to sabotage Khumalo's wish of getting Ntombana to marry Mbandlanyika. Although MaBhengu conveys the stereotype of woman as a hag, she changed her attitude for a good reason, that of saving her daughter from marrying a man she did not love. Both mothers made a contribution to the culture of non-conformity on the part of their children.

The stereotypes discussed reveal men's general attitude towards women. The woman as a nurturer, a rose, flower, the wicked witch, and the wise hag are all the stuff of the romance and

fairytale stereotypes that until recently were among the main female models we came across in literature. Literary texts can both reinforce gender stereotypes and create newer, more liberating representations of gender. Literature should instill a positive sense of feminine identity by portraying women who are self-actualising, and whose identities do not depend on men. An exploration of female nature agreeable to womanists requires new psychological, anthropological and sociological methods, free of sexist bias, as well as new ways of presenting female characters.

Attention is also drawn to the relationship that exists between the names of characters and gender roles. Besides being a cultural practice it has been discovered that writers use names with a different purpose. Names of characters determine the sexual roles of men and women. Names in other words thrust power on their bearers. Bhekokwakhe, for example, did not conform to the instructions of his father. His name refers to a self-centred person who only wants to do what suits him best. Zulumacansi is a conservative man and this is supported by his aggressive way of forcing Bajwayele to love him even after he realised that she would never love him. Mbandlanyika has the power to fight his way through by using brutal force when necessary. He smashed Ntombana's face several times when she rejected him.

Psychoanalysis looked at the various actions exhibited by the characters that are affected by the customs of forced and forbidden love. It revealed the effects of these terrifying repressions by analysing the deviant behaviours of the characters. Most of the characters who found themselves in a forced or forbidden love situation rebelled against the oppressive instructions of their parents, except Ntombiyethemba. Although Nomusa did not show rebelliousness in a violent manner, the act of falling in love with Thamsanqa, whom her father hated so much, demonstrated defiance of her father's wish. Bajwayele and Ntombana represent the epitome of rebelliousness. They are the true rebellious heroines. Psychoanalysis suggests that there is a link between a specific behaviour of a character and his or her environment. These characters had to suppress their love for their chosen lovers, to fulfil the wishes of their parents. Conflict then, is bound to occur between the id, which drives the characters to fight for the realisation of their desires, and the superego which represents the parental restrictions. Bajwayele deserted her home and Ntombana humiliated his father by insulting the elders of the Ndlovu kraal. Bhekokwakhe abandoned Ntombiyethemba immediately after the wedding and paid the bride price for Lungile to defy the custom of forced love. The psychotic disorders suffered by the characters because of forced and forbidden love

have been discussed. Bhekokwakhe's indulgence in liquor is one example of a personality disorder.

In chapter four we explored the themes of forced and forbidden love by revealing other secondary themes inherent in them. This section exposes various issues exhibited by the themes of forced and forbidden love. It has always been our understanding that writers write literature for a specific purpose. Among these themes we discovered the following ideas: forced love/marriage does not prosper; forbidden love yields catastrophic results; theme of oppression; submissiveness; child marriage; discrimination; protest; freedom; love initiated through the use of medicinal charms does not succeed; the obstinate die in obstinacy. This chapter indicates that when we study literature and gender we do not simply mean literary analysis of texts with regard to the sex or sexuality of the characters, but the wider study of literary texts as they are written, read and interpreted within cultures by men and women.

Chapter five demonstrates that the cultures of forced, arranged, preferential marriages and forbidden love are cross-cultural practices. It indicated that these traditional customs were not only practised by the AmaZulu but by other African cultural groups such as the: EmaSwati, AmaXhosa, baPedi, baVenda, as well as groups in Senegal and Nigeria among others. The cross-cultural representation of the themes under study reiterates the fact that when we read with concern for identifying assumptions and stereotypes about gender, we learn about society as well as about literature. The traditional customs of forced and forbidden love transcend racial and national barriers. They affect women and men in various communities. Martha Driver quoted in "The Medieval Woman": *An Illuminated Calendar* (June, 1994) states that:

Marriage in the Middle Ages was usually arranged for the political, economic, and/or social advancement of the family. ... Vittoria Colonna (1492-1597), Marchesa of Pescara, the famous religious poet, heiress, and inspiration and friend of Michelangelo, was betrothed at age four to Fernando Francisco de Avalos, who was also four; the marriage did not actually take place, however, until both were 18. Though arranged, their union became a love match celebrated in sonnets written by Vittoria after Fernando's death in 1525.

6.3 Concluding remarks

The bias observed in the portrayal of women characters calls on women writers to stand up to

write about their own lives. Womanists do recognize the obvious physical differences between men and women. Register (in Donovan, 1989:14) quotes Firestone who adds that:

The sex role system divides human experience; men and women live in these different halves of reality; and culture reflects this. Thus a novel that is true to "female experience" and one that is true to "male experience" will not only differ in style but also in subject matter.

These differing experiences between men and women result in differing perceptions about life that cannot help but affect literary tastes. Few male authors, even those who are very sympathetic to women, have succeeded in portraying women with whom female readers can identify. Womanist criticism recommends that there is a need for female readers to see their own experiences mirrored in literature. To counterbalance the use of women as sex objects in contemporary literature, womanist criticism seeks subjective descriptions of female sexuality. Women must express their own ideas about woman in African society, and thus correct or compliment the one-sidedness of certain perspectives.

The one-sided presentation of patriarchal culture enforces the continuation of an all male tradition. Women are not free if they always speak with the blessing of men because if this happens, then their voices are not the voices of women, because they do not express the nature of women. Women themselves should say that they exist, they are human beings, and that they have a right to liberty, respect and dignity. Literature should, in accordance with the goals of womanism which is to serve all people, male and female, avoid the promotion of one sex over the other. Lauretta Ngcobo, a South African writer in Britain, emphasises the importance of literature for all the sexes when she comments that:

Literature is a crucial part of that culture because literature is the embodiment of heritage: In it is coded the compressed **experience of the whole society, its beliefs, its progress and its values**; in short the universal truth.(Humm, 1994:204) (Emphasis mine)

Womanist criticism should encourage an art true to women's experience and not filtered through a male perspective or constricted to fit male standards because literature consists of the values of society. Womanist criticism, in particular, views gender as an important issue between the sexes and it therefore invites a reappraisal of literature and culture from the ground up. As the body of Black women's writing grows, the importance of teaching it as part of the academic curriculum,

part of the newly developing alternative canon, also increases. Goodman (1996:ix) supports this idea as follows:

In recent years, academic institutions have witnessed just this shift, which may be referred to as a 'firing canon': a re-evaluation of the standards by which authors and texts have been singled out and 'canonized' followed by an active search for other authors and texts for inclusion.

Literary art must help people understand what female experience is, what it is like to be a woman, what a woman thinks, and how it operates. It must tell the world what it feels like to be us. A literary work should provide role-models, instill a positive sense of feminine identity by portraying women who are self-actualising, whose identities are not dependent on men. Schipper (in Jones, & Palmer 1987:46) quotes Mariama Bâ who strongly feels that:

The woman writer in Africa has a special task. She has to present the position of women in Africa in all its aspects. There is still so much injustice. In spite of the fact that for a decade the United Nations have paid special attention to woman's problems, in spite of beautiful speeches and praiseworthy intentions, women continue to be discriminated. In the family, in the institutions, in society, in the street, in political organisations, discriminations reigns supreme. The woman is heavily burdened by mores and customs, in combination with mistaken and egoistic interpretations of different religions ...

Bâ continues to state that like men, women must use literature as a non-violent but effective weapon. We strongly concur with her when she further recommends that within African literature, room must be made for women, a room in which women will fight for their rights with all their might. Women are estranged from their own experience and unable to perceive its shape and authenticity, in part because they do not see it mirrored and given resonance by literature. An exploration of female nature agreeable to womanists requires new psychological, anthropological and sociological methods, free of sexist bias, as well as a new literary criticism.

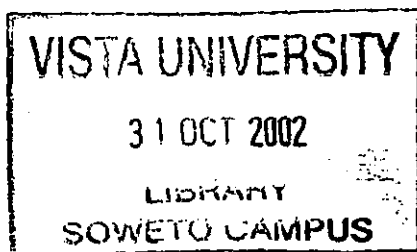
Jones and Palmer (1987:55) state that scholars in the field of African literature rarely discuss womanist concerns. Womanists often emphasize that they are not simply seeking more room for women in the present social order. They want a new social order founded on humanistic values, some of which are traditionally female and respected in contemporary society. This stresses how important image studies are in literature. It highlights the importance of the introduction of courses in Women's Studies where the concern is with the representation, rights and status of

women, and courses in Gender Studies where the concern is with the representation, rights and status of women and men. Let us visit a quotation by Chinua Achebe (in Irele, 1995:84) on the unequal power relations between the West and Africa which lends itself suitable for the analysis of the unequal power relations between men and women:

Look at Africa as a continent of people ... And listen to them. We have done a lot of listening ourselves. **This is the situation where you have a strong person and a weak person. The weak person does all the listening, and up to a point the strong person even forgets that the weak person may have something to say.** Because he is there, a kind of fixture, you simply talk to him. A British governor of Southern Rhodesia once said the partnership between the whites and the blacks is the partnership of the horse and its rider. He wasn't trying to be funny, he thought so. Now, that's what we want the West [men] to get rid of-thinking of Africa [women] as the horse rather than as the man [human being] So it is important that we develop the ability to listen to the weak. **Not only in Africa, but in your own society, the strong must listen to the weak [women].** (Emphasis mine)

In accordance with the above quotation let us appeal to Africa, the world at large and especially to patriarchy to view and recognise women as part of this world. Man, as a strong person, is reminded to listen to the weak, the woman, because neither would exist if one of them did not exist. The woman should not be associated with a horse that is expected to always take instructions from its master. Men and women co-exist and therefore a sound understanding of one another is indispensable. Let us conclude by using Miller's statement:

There is hope, therefore that the ranks [of African women's writing] will increase, thus raising the volume of the literary voice of the African woman. Again, "voice" is the rhetorical tool of unity, homogenization and empowerment ...(1990:253)



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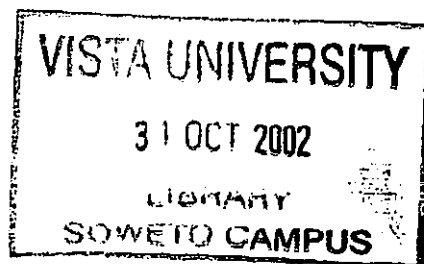
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APPENDIX

"The Medieval Woman"

(An Illuminated Calendar, June 1994)



M

arriage in the Middle Ages was usually arranged for the political, economic,

and/or social advancement of the family. According to Gratian's Decretals, a standard legal work, no betrothals could be contracted before the age of seven, but it was not uncommon to find engagements occurring earlier, particularly in aristocratic circles.

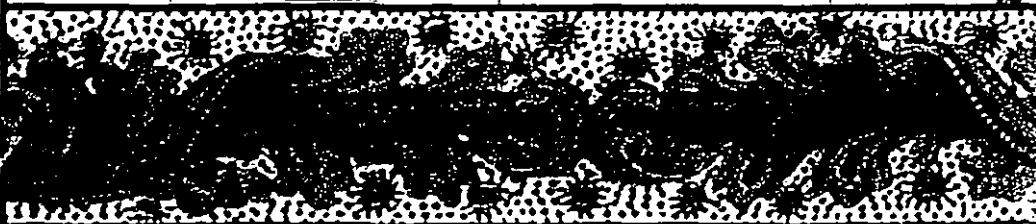
Vittoria Colonna (1492-1547), Marchioness of Pescara, the famous religious poet, heiress, and inspiration and friend of Michelangelo, was betrothed at age four to Fernando Francisco de Avalos, who was also four; the marriage did not actually take place, however, until both were 18. Though arranged, their union became a love match celebrated in sonnets written by Vittoria after Fernando's death in 1525.

Before the Council of Trent (1545-65), couples could legally marry without a church ceremony; in canon law, the consent of two parties to consider themselves married was a valid contract, with or without a priest. Lovemaking confirmed the pledge given between a man and a woman at the time of betrothal, transforming their engagement into legitimate marriage.

Medieval marriages were customarily performed at the church door, after which the couple might opt to enter the church for a nuptial mass. After the wedding feast, which relatives and often the entire village attended, the newlyweds were brought to bed before their family and friends.

JUNE

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|--------------|--------|---------|--|----------|--------|
| | | |  | 1 | 2 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| Father's Day | | | | | St. |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |



Getting There Zohra Ebrahim

Changing our mindset



Early last month, we celebrated National Women's Day. This holiday commemorates the march by thousands of South African women to protest against the injustices of the Pass Law. More than 40 years later, their heirs are a crucial part of a new democratic order, a country with a constitution which has, as its cornerstone, a respect for human dignity.

In the first three years of democracy, South African women have achieved many goals: significant representation at most levels of government, the gender commission, the women's budget and an office for the status of women.

While these achievements are laudable, the everyday life of most South African women tells a different story. Most women who work are employed as domestic workers, cleaners, rural farmworkers, teachers and nurses or in clerical/administrative posts. While these are valuable positions, they reflect a particular mindset of women as workers. This mindset, formed by the male nation, starts in the home and is taken to the workplace. It purports that women are caregivers and helpers of men only.

There is much to do before meaningful numbers of South African women enjoy true equality with their male counterparts. South African business has been male-dominated for years, therefore, this landscape has always been geared to their needs. And, although the number of black women executives is growing, there is still no leader from our ranks of a Johannesburg Stock Exchange listed company.

The corporate world is designed around men. Few South African companies have creche facilities for children, for instance. But the picture in South Africa is not so

negative. There are positive signs that the workplace is adapting to acknowledge the contribution women make.

Professions like law, medicine and education already have a good distribution of women, although the power relations in governing bodies do not always reflect this. Black women are making inroads into technical areas too - from the mines to the elevator industry. But, like other pioneering women, these techies also face ingrained prejudices. It is encouraging to learn that, in the

There is much to do before meaningful numbers of South African women enjoy true equality with their male counterparts.

United States, the number of women University graduates exceeds that of men. If this trend is followed here in South Africa, as is likely, it augurs well for the improved employment of women in the workplace.

But we must be careful not to see this debate solely in the context of the polarisation of work opportunities between men and women. It must also reflect the rapidly changing nature of work itself. Judged against career paths decades ago, few men or women today embark on a lifetime career in one job and with a single company.

Advancing technology, changing lifestyles and trends in traditional family creation are affecting careers for both men and women. Women are marrying

and starting their families later. This gives them time to finish their education and establish themselves in the work arena. They may then have children and return to employment as mothers.

The employment environment they rejoin is one in which boundaries between businesses and vocations are no longer clear, where skills are bought as needed and people do not take life jobs with one corporation, but increasingly tend to migrate from job to job and project, often working from home.

We have, as with so much else in our country, a unique opportunity to bring about the greater empowerment of women. We must accomplish this, not just in terms of the basic rights as enshrined in the constitution, which call for equality and equity, but also in light of the special qualities women possess. They bring to the workplace incredible stamina, communication skills and unwavering commitment to goals. The holistic contribution women can make is of immeasurable value.

South African management skills are declining in the global context. If we are to position our country more competitively, internationally, we must include, in the workplace, the entire spectrum of our employment capability. Affirmative action strategies must not only incorporate the previously disadvantaged, but must address gender imbalances too. In this task the women of South Africa will thrive. ■

■ Zohra Ebrahim is currently the first black woman president of the Institute of Personnel Management, the largest professional Human Resources body in South Africa. She is also Chairman (Designate) of NewHco.

"Gender equality: There's still a long way to go for women in South Africa"

(Sowetan, Thursday, July 30, 1998)

Gender equality: There's still a long way to go for women in South Africa

BY ZOHRA KHAN

In 1997, the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) held a series of information and evaluation workshops to assess the position of women in various sectors of South African society.

This resulted in a report launched on 9 August that analysed current initiatives for the advancement of gender equality.

The report assisted the CGE with one of its main functions: to monitor and evaluate initiatives for gender equality at all levels.

This exercise was repeated in 1997/98 at provincial level. This article highlights some of the key findings of those reports.

KwaZulu-Natal

The KwaZulu-Natal Information and Evaluation workshop was held last November.

KZN is one of the four provinces prioritised by the CGE. The others are Northern Province, Northern Cape and Eastern Cape.

In KZN, political violence and high levels of crime have a direct impact on the living conditions of women, most of whom are poor and live in rural areas.

The province has the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS, which has a direct impact on women's health.

Mpumalanga

The Mpumalanga Information and Evaluation workshop was held in

June 1998.

Limited access to land and credit facilities, high levels of unemployment, cultural stereotypes, and customary and tribal laws were cited as the main reasons for lack of women's participation in the economic and social development of the province.

The effects of customary law on the social status of women ensure that they are further marginalised.

Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape Information and Evaluation Workshop was held in April 1998.

The Eastern Cape is one of the poorest provinces, and is extensively rural. Tradition and cultural practices were cited as the dominant forms of oppression against women.

The gendered division of labour ensures that women are over-represented among the poor.

Free State

The Free State Information and Evaluation workshop was held in June 1998.

Although a number of institutions in the Free State are actively promoting gender equality, one of the most important issues highlighted in the workshop is that women are not represented at local government level.

This is a result of various factors, such as the lack of education and training, social and cultural bias

against women, as well as traditional and cultural practices that confine women to the domestic sphere.

Owing to male migration patterns, large numbers of homes in the province are female-headed. Domestic violence and maintenance problems plague most women.

Gauteng

The Gauteng Information and Evaluation workshop was held in June 1998.

Gauteng is a highly industrialised province. Tradition and customary law, high levels of violence against women, linked to issues of poverty and HIV, are the main factors that contribute to the subordinate roles of women in the province.

At a theoretical level, the Government has committed itself and done much for the elimination of gender-based discrimination. Yet at a practical level, much more still needs to be done.

One of the functions of the Commission on Gender Equality is to identify and provide a platform for previously marginalised people to express their concerns in a non-threatening environment.

■ Reports from the Western Cape, Northern Cape, North West and Northern Province are in the process of being compiled.

Zohra Khan is Secretary to the CGE commissioners.

"When children are raised in sex-role stereotyped ways" (City Press, July 18, 1999)

When children are raised in sex-role stereotyped ways

I VISITED a friend a few weeks ago and look along my two sons. A seemingly minor incident involving our children set me thinking about how we condition these little people to fit into the sex-role stereotypes we adults have.

My friend's daughter was playing with my boys. She was digging, pushing, building, breaking, pulling, laughing, shouting and jumping. Mommy was not comfortable with her "tom boy" behaviour. She intoned: "Girls don't behave that way sweetie."

Her remark got me thinking. The systematic and all-pervasive denial of freedom and self-expression to women and girls is everywhere. It pervades culture, education, history, economics and the home. It shows itself in the ill-treatment of a girl by a township boy; the socialisation of girls into being passive and boys into being active; the representation of history as having been made exclusively by men; and in the economic imbalances between men and women.

It goes very deep and has often resulted in women giving up in despair in their fight for emancipation.

But that need not be so, especially when the social agency for our own oppression is at times lurking within ourselves.

Our painful sensitivity to female oppression must continue to exist until we eventually eliminate it.

But that struggle is not going to be easy - a fact women must acknowledge so that they can brace themselves for a drawn-out battle.

It is a struggle that will require us to understand and question the organisation of culture and the functioning of society and how these are used to perpetuate our oppression.

It is a hazardous affair, for it can draw disparagement and ridicule from the custodians of knowledge and social critique in a patriarchal society. It can also draw ridicule from some women who regard women's leaders and the feminist cause as "leftist gender politics" (City Press, July 1, page 19).

But it is an exercise we must engage in if we want to loosen the male grip on us. After all, this, the questioning of culture and the introduction of social criticism is one of the strategies that was used by the liberation movement to challenge



racism. I submit that for women to achieve total emancipation, we have to challenge and eliminate sex-role stereotyping.

Sex-role stereotyping is the socialisation of role differentiation based on sex. It is a process that is subtle in and of itself, for it manifests most often in covert, unarticulated ways.

It begins before the birth of the child when the twinkle in the eye of ten registers hope for a male child. How often have parents been disappointed at a baby girl? The ascribing of value begins before birth. When born, the child is immediately clothed in pink or blue - sym-

bolic representations and, as such, informative. The children feel the stranger that he/she is looking at a boy or girl. The appropriate comments follow: "Isn't she a cute pretty little boy?" "Isn't he a clever and active little boy?" There and then the stereotypes have been set. He is expected to be clever and active. She is expected just to be cute and pretty.

And then we get surprised when our girls get babyish and dependent when around boys. That is what we have taught them: what flirting means: just remain cute and pretty.

Although young girls at school do as well if not better academically than boys, they learn rather quickly that social acceptance for a girl is not related to her intelligence. They'd be playing with boys and we would either encourage them not to or pretend they are less capable. Think about that. Girls have to pretend they can't perform to impress boys. Boys have to perform well to impress girls. Stultus have shown that parents raise their children in accord with these stereotypes. Boys are encouraged to be aggressive, competitive and independent; girls are rewarded for being passive and dependent.

After infancy, sex-role stereotyping becomes more sharply defined, children's toys reflect the sex-role conditioning; doctor kits and cars for boys and nurse kits and "little home-maker" sets for girls.

I hear some say that it is what the kids prefer. Can it be that boys and girls naturally gravitate to separate kinds of toys and activities? Doubtful. Preference grows out of conditioning. Boys will indeed prefer cars and girls dolls, since these are the toys given to them.

Children's books reinforce the stereotypes.

In an essay on the subject, one critic reported the findings of her survey of children's literature. "I found an almost incredible conspiracy of conditioning. Boys' achievement is encouraged; girls' achievement is brought up to express themselves; girls to please. The general image of the female ranges from dull to degrading to invisible." The question that we all have to ask is: to what extent are we as mothers responsible for this sex-role stereotyping? Are we going to raise our girls without reflecting on what we may be socialising them to be?

Wedding customs have their roots in ancient times

STAFF REPORTER

In a diverse democracy like South Africa's, where we have two national anthems, 11 official languages and a multitude of cultures, it should come as no surprise that there are many different ways of tying the knot.

While the basic principle is generally the same - a union between a man and a woman - many of the rituals and customs differ. Ever wondered why we do certain things at Western-style weddings? In her book *The Natural History of Love*, Diane Ackerman explains the origins of the best man, the honeymoon, the wedding, the ring, the cake, the stag party, and even why the bride stands on the left.

The first marriages were by capture, she says. The man would kidnap the woman and take her away from her tribe with the help of a warrior friend - his best man - who would help him to fight off other suitors and prevent her family from finding them. The groom and his bride would go into hiding during the honeymoon, and by the time the bride's family found them, the bride would be pregnant.

When the groom fought off other warriors who also wanted his bride, he would hold on to her with his left hand while fending them off with his sword in his right hand - which is why the bride stands on the left and the groom on the right. Or so says Ackerman.

Exchanged for cash

Although the above was common, marriage by purchase was preferred. Usually the bride would be bartered for land, social status or political alliances, but sometimes she was exchanged for cash. The Anglo-Saxon word "wedd", meaning to gamble or wager, implied that the groom would vow to marry the woman, but it also meant the money or barter the groom paid to the bride's father.

Lifting of the veil was done in arranged marriages, where the groom's family rarely let him see the bride. Because if he didn't like her looks, he might reject her.

The expression "tie the knot" comes from Roman times when the bride wore a girdle that was tied in knots which the groom had the fun of untying. It is unknown when wedding rings were first worn, but they were probably made of a strong metal that wouldn't break easily - which would have been a very bad omen.

The ancient Romans believed that the vein in the third finger ran directly to the heart and thus joined the couple's hearts and destinies. Diamond engagement rings were first given by medieval Italians, who believed that diamonds were created from the flames of love.

