

## A gendered discourse analysis of Clement Magwaza's Istambo Sami song text

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### ABSTRACT

This paper analyses Clement Magwaza's *Istambo Sami* song text as a discourse through which one can understand the gendered Ndebele/ Kalanga society. Deploying textual reading of Magwaza's song text, this article argues that this song is useful in understanding and analysing the articulation of gendered power dimensions, gender hegemony, objectification of women and cultural practices that anchor relationships and growth in the Zimbabwean Ndebele/ Kalanga society. Further, this account contends that Magwaza's music as a cultured 'way speaking' provides a particular way of conceptualizing interactions that are compatible with the socio-cultural perspectives of the Ndebele/ Kalanga community. As such, we attest, through this article, that the examination of Magwaza's song text as a discourse provides us an opportunity to understand and appreciate discursive ideological meanings and operation of power, specifically at local gendered relationships. Through analysing Magwaza's *Istambo Sami* [My Lollipop/ My sweetheart] song text, we seek to expose nuanced gendered discourses articulated in and through the song.

### KEYWORDS

Magwaza; Istambo sami; discourse; ideology; power; gender

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## INTRODUCTION

This account textually analyses Clement Magwaza's Istambo sami song text as a discourse through which one can understand gendered relations within a rural Ndebele/ Kalanga geopolity. Deploying Michel Foucault's (1979; 1977; 1996) concepts of discourse and (disciplinary) subjectivity and Louis Althusser's (1970) concept of interpellation, we argue that the song text is useful in understanding and analyzing gendered power dimensions and hegemony, objectification of women and cultural practices that anchor relationships and growth in the rural Ndebele/ Kalanga society. Popular music has been viewed by many feminists to be a major contributor to coercive sexual assault towards women given the high presence and glorification of violence, control and objectification of women's sexuality and bodies, sexual desire, and a site for the expression and consolidation of toxic masculinities (Kufakurinani, Nyakudya & Chinouriri, 2017; Boateng 2016; Chiweshe & Bhatasara 2013; Chari 2008). Popular music is framed as a Foucauldian discourse: as a way of speaking, constituting a network of rules establishing what is meaningful (Foucault, 1972). Magwaza's *Istambo sami* song text is therefore considered in this paper as an important particular way of "conceptualizing interactions that are compatible" (Rogers, 2011, p. 1) with the Ndebele/Kalanga socio-cultural perspectives. Further, the textual analysis of Magwaza's Istambo sami lyrics provide us an opportunity to understand and appreciate discursive ideological meanings and operation of power at local gendered relationships. This brings into focus Foucault's concept of subjectivity. Subjectivity is the "relationship of the self to itself and that their relationship is composed of and formed by a variety of possible activities" (McGushin 2011, p. 129; Foucault 1996).

Edward McGushin (2011, p. 128) observes that subjectivity is the real basis of the self as both agent and object: "Each of those very common pieces of advice – be true to yourself, express yourself, or discover yourself – refers to ways of forming a relationship of the self to itself. When I express myself, I am both self who is *doing* the expressing and the self who is *being* expressed. Myself as an expressive agent is related to myself as object expressed through the very activity of self-expression" (emphasis in the original text).

As such, this Foucauldian subjectivity is not a fixed standing being but it is brought into existence through relational activity (Foucault, 1996). It is the relationship of the self to itself and that their relationship is composed of and formed by a variety of possible activities (Foucault, 1979). Yet, Foucault writes about the self, in this study, we engage how this 'self' (Magwaza) projects expectations to the 'other' (woman) so that their relationship is 'normalised'. We thus deploy the concept of disciplinary subjectivity as an analytical lens of the textual lyrics of the case study song. Disciplinary subjectivity is the way institutions "focus attention on me as an object of both control and knowledge" (McGushin, 2011, p. 133) in line with Foucault's (1979, p. 170) observation that the "chief function of disciplinary power is to 'train'" and "'make' individuals.": "it is the specific techniques of a power that regards individuals as objects and as instruments of its excuse." In the context of the foregoing argument, we engage Magwaza's song text as a conduit of Ndebele/ Kalanga cultural institution and how this institution expresses the different and varied levels of gendered control on the woman. This process of disciplinary subjectivity results in the "normalisation" (Foucault 1979, pp. 177-84) process which produces a "calculable man" who is "highly disciplined" and very "docile" (Foucault 1979, p. 193). This process characterises Louis Althusser's (1970)

concept of interpellation, which describes the way an individual is addressed by an authoritative voice in a certain situation constituting her or him as a subject. In this paper, we read Magwaza's interpolated messages (lyrics) to his wife (woman) and highlight what kind of (disciplined) subjectivities are created in the process. In the words of Foucault (2002, p. 30) we seek too, through a textual reading of Magwaza's song text, "...discover beyond the statements themselves the intention of the speaking subject, his conscious activity, what he meant, or again the unconscious activity that took place, despite himself, in what he said or in the almost imperceptible fracture of his actual words".

In other words, we ask: What can be felt, thought and experienced from within various subject positions expressed through Magwaza's lyrical content? What can be said and done by the subjects positioned within these songs? How do the subject's experiences position the speaker within the moral order of the Ndebele/Kalanga society? What kinds of discourses do these constructions resonate within the larger Zimbabwean context?

The answers to these questions lie in the critical examination of the manner language is used and choice of words in Magwaza's lyrics and the underlying (oft unsaid) influences. Wodak and Meyer (2009) view language as a tool of domination and social power as it can be used to legitimize or challenge power structures through the articulation or inference of power and ideology. Holmberg (2007) observes that through the discourse of language, identities and knowledge about the world, the subject is constituted and constructed. The subject, Magwaza, is considered an active agent that selects from this constituted and constructed world material that he sings about. The combination of the active agent (Magwaza) and resource (language) allows for the examination of social power abuse, dominance and inequality as enacted, and reproduced through his song text. We are able to do this in line with David Coplan's (1985, p. 5) view that (music) performance, just like any other cultural form "emerges as an aspect of social actions and resonates with emotion and meaning among members of communities inscribed in social ideology and practice".

## METHODOLOGY

While some Ndebele/ Kalanga musicians, such as Ndolwane Super Sounds, Ndux Junior and Batshele Brothers, Chase Skuza and Tornado Brothers, have tackled gendered relationship of the rural Ndebele/ Kalanga folk (Dhlamini, 2017), Magwaza is the natural choice for this study because he has remained consistently producing and singing from rural Matabeleland. Ndolwane Super Sounds, before its split and demise, produced and created music from the Johannesburg metropolis with most of their songs dealing with challenges faced by diasporic husbands on the one hand and women who remain in Zimbabwe, on the other hand. The same applies to Ndux Junior and Batshele Brothers. Chase Skuza and Tornado Brothers relocated to Bulawayo; the second biggest city in Zimbabwe. This is, however, not to say that their voices are no longer authentic and relevant to the subject under study. Authenticity is a problematic concept especially so with mediated discursive modes such as music. However, the fact that Magwaza, who has worked with most of these musicians before, has remained and consistently produces and sings from a located Ndebele/ Kalanga rural geographic space, drawing his material from the everyday experiences of his people makes him the natural choice for this study. This locatedness in the space which he sings from and about, implicates him in the discursive practices that create the different gendered subjectivities which this paper

endeavours to grapple with. Furthermore, the song *Istambo Sami* chosen from Magwaza's collection is the only song that engages with gendered relational discourses which this paper grapples with as well.

## **MUSIC AND GENDER ISSUES IN THE ZIMBABWEAN GEOPOLITY: A BRIEF REVIEW**

The interface between music and gendered discourses is always characterized by social, political, racial and economic contestation. This contestation is largely mediated by religious-cultural factors constructing public spaces, representation models in masculine terms and domestication of women (Kufakurinani, Nyakudya, & Chinouriri, 2017; Sibanda 2020). Ushewedu Kufakurinani, Munyaradzi Nyakudya and Bridget Chinouriri (2017), Chiweshe and Bhatasara (2013) and Samuel Boateng (2016) bemoan the domestication of women which prescribes them to the private space. Chiweshe and Bhatasara (2013, p. 162) highlight the patriarchal characterisation of women as household keepers in most songs where marrying a wife is celebrated as a way of ensuring order and happiness in a man's domestic space while Kufakurinani, Nyakudya and Chinouriri (2017, p. 86) position music as a vehicle that normalises this domestication of women by painting their image as domestic queens. In both these cases, the woman is expected to become a 'kitchen and bedroom queen'.

In their examination of misogynistic representations and messaging in popular Zimbabwean urban grooves songs, Chiweshe and Bhatasara (2013, p. 167) arrive at the conclusion that musicians "celebrate and valorise hegemonic masculinities whilst women are highly feminised, objectified and commoditised." They submit that most Zimbabwean singers: "[...] create and recreate meanings about sexuality and women's bodies and positions thereby promoting heterosexuality and justifying patriarchal ideas and practices.[...] Female singers may offer an alternative discourse on female sexual freedom through their music but they are also constrained by the context within which they operate and, ultimately, they too reinforce male domination and female subordination through their songs" (Chiweshe & Bhatasara, 2013, p. 167).

The same observation is raised by Tendai Chari (2008, p. 102) who notes that "[m]ale produced urban grooves music not only circumscribes women in positions of subordination but also sanitises violence as a means of hegemonic control." He further submits that the "lyrical content of male-produced 'urban grooves' music celebrates negative stereotypes of women, violence against women, the commodification of women, and other negative representations which undermine the empowerment of women in society" (Chari, 2008, p. 102). It is within this gendered discourse of representation that music as a mode of speaking or writing or act of communication expresses particular attitudes that define relations between men and women.

Irikidzayi Manase (2012) examines music as a vehicle through which male hegemony and toxic masculinities are celebrated. In other terms, Manase surveys the processes through which music is used as a gendered disciplining mechanism in Zimbabwe. He submits that female sexuality policing, which forms a huge part of the patriarchal discourse on sexuality, is instituted and consolidated through cultural practices such as lobola (bride wealth/ bride price). Through this ceremony, a married woman has her sexual and productive rights moved or transferred from her father to her husband (Chiweshe, 2012). This is also complicated by the fact

that during the lobola ceremony, women have no or little say, except impressing their would-be in-laws with well-cooked dishes. Discussing the same subject of the representation of women in music, Rekopantswe Mate (2012) submits that in most song-stories women are discussed in a context of neo-patrilineal identities as potential wives. The fatal effect of this is that males who have access to resources can assert control over women and affirm their masculinity in both long-term and short-term relationships (Mate, 2012). These political and cultural codes and conventions circumscribed by the dominant male gender group, such as the lobola system, stifle female subjectiveness (Nyambi, 2014, p. 2). Manase arrives at the same conclusion as Chari and, Chiweshe and Bhatasara, that most urban grooves (we would add Zimdancehall) musicians glorify violence and valorise female sexuality by presenting male characters as street fighters with well-built physique. In extending Manase's conclusive remarks, we aim to highlight that the representative modes used in successive Zimbabwean music genres, such as Tshibilika socially constitute, reveal and condition women as objects and subjects of this violent and toxic discourse.

Women have been represented in derogatory modes in songs emerging especially within the African postcolonial urbanity. This derogatory representation of women invoke objectification and borders nihilism. Mate (2012, p. 124) observes that terms such as gero (girl), chimoko/ jimbisi (whore), bhebhi (babe) and chi-danger (a small dangerous escapade) are used to objectify women especially if used in juxtaposition with the affirmative and positivist names given to men. This objectification of women not only muzzles their agency, but also concretises the idea of woman's domesticity (Chiwese, 2012; Chiweshe, & Bhatasara, 2013).

Music could also be seen as ideological in the Zimbabwean context. It may be ideological in the sense that it offers opportunities for the construction of resistance identities to the hegemony of certain cultural norms and values (Chaya, 2016). Critiquing the role of feminist literary texts in representing the urban crisis in Zimbabwe, Nyambi (2014, p. 2) is of the view that the portrayal of women as especially vulnerable to crises in urban settings puts under the spotlight the immorality and injustice of traditions, codes conventions that have 'cultured' women into gendered subalternity, consequently and indirectly hinting at the imperative (and mutual benefits) of social transformation towards a gender-inclusive society.

As Nyambi observes of this critical role literary texts should play, music also can be used to challenge patriarchy; a system that underpins the subjugation, vilification, derogation and disciplining of women. Watkins (2000) cited in Vasco Chaya (2016, p. 6) characterises patriarchy as a "political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence".

It is this violence that women across all professions have mobilised, individually and collaboratively, to challenge and seek redress. Agnella Vhiriri (2014) and Nkululeko Sibanda (2020) identify Edith Katiji and Sandra Ndebele as innovative 'game changers' because of their unwillingness to accept a 'victim status' by creating their own musical styles and genres. Gqola (2013, p. 3) characterizes game changers as "a breed of innovators who create something new, but shift the reference point on a certain or in a field". Sibanda (2020) submits that Katiji's mastery control of the bass guitar, an instrument largely played or operated by



males, allows her to step out into the world as a controller, self-definer and self-namer, especially when she goes on to create a tune/ style which she aptly names Utonga (new dawn). Viriri (2014, p. 43) observes that Katiji's bold act of playing a musical instrument, especially the bass guitar, makes her stand firm and rise above the patriarchal circumstances; a confirmation of Raewyn Connell's (2002, p. 10) observation that in this instance women and men are considered not as "opposite sexes but different sexes who have fundamentally much more in common than they have differences." Moser (1993, p. 63) conclusively captures Vhiriri and Sibanda's sentiments when she aptly declares that women must be 'brought into' the developmental process through access to employment and the marketplace.

Sibanda (2020) further submits that Ndebele and Katiji have endeared themselves to the feminist struggle by not only challenging and positioning themselves as game changers in the music industry but have closed the gap by creating platforms for other talented women and men to come to their level. This addresses Nkealah's predicament of a lack of "improvements in the human condition." Ndebele and Katiji's transformative work affirm and confirm a recognition of an "African woman who identifies herself as a feminist, recognises her potential as a human being - not necessarily a female human being - and is proud of the areas in which she excels, be it at home front or in the workplace" (Nkealah, 2006, p. 135). By maintaining their personal names as a fixture in their stage names Ndebele and Katiji exemplify that Zimbabwean women musicians can excel both as wives and professionals. This destroys the private-public continuum which has been exploited by patriarchy to marginalise and subjugate women.

Writing on another wavelength, Nozizwe Dlamini (2017) examines Kalanga music as a medium of protest. Dlamini highlights that because Kalanga musicians such as Chase Skuza, Ndolwane, Ndux Junior and Batshela Sounds and Tornado Brothers, by extension in this study Magwaza, sing from and about Matabeleland, their music is always read against the grain by the dominant Shona group. Yet, these musicians express socio-political injustices and malpractices taking place within their everyday spaces of work and living, creating discursive spaces for reflection. Dlamini concludes that, if received with a critical and appreciative perspective, Kalanga music has potential of contributing to national cohesion and national growth through constructively critiquing the political, social and economic state of Zimbabwe.

## **BACKGROUND: WHO IS CLEMENT MAGWAZA?**

Clement Ncube, aka Magwaza, is a Zimbabwean Tshibilika/ rhumba musician born at Empandeni in Plumtree. Magwaza started his musical career in 1999 drawing his inspiration from pioneers of Zimbabwe rhumba/ Tshibilika music such as Khumbulani Skuza, Ndolwane Super Sounds and Madalaboy. In 2000, he worked with the Khaya Sounds band, which he left for Madalaboy and latter Ndolwane Super Sounds. In 2006, he decided to go solo and formed his band Magwaza and Macrey Super Sounds. In his solo career, Magwaza has produced seven albums; Nansi indaba [The Story], Isineke [Great Care], UBhelinda [Belinda], TakeTake, Uyala ugoro [My grandmother has refused], Umpalakazi [November], Istambo sami [My love] and Bathi asoyami [They say she is not mine]. These albums speak to the ordinary man's everyday challenges and struggles. The Tshibilika music genre is a fusion of different genres from Africa such as rhumba, benga, kanindo and soukous genres from East and Central Africa (Pfukwa, 2010). These genres were mixed with Zimbabwean indigenous genres such as masiganda, jiti and

mhande (Pfukwa, 2010). Makwenda (2005) observes that Tshibilika music logically resemble the character of a rabbit in folktales; wise, fast and cunning. The character of a rabbit reflects immense imagination and artistry captured by the arrangement of the sound, drums and vocals (Makwenda, 2005).

The song *Istambo Sami*, sung in a mixture of first and third voice narration, tells a story of a patriarchy and matriarchy who prepare and strengthen their grandchildren for marriage through different kinds of advises. In this song the narrator, probably an uncle in the context of Ndebele/ Kalanga ethnic groups, relates scenarios where a grandfather and grandmother share their cultural experiences concerning the demands and responsibilities of a marriage with their nephew and/or niece. The grandfather advises his grandson that he needs a potful of sex-enhancing herbs (imbiza) underneath his bed so that he is able to satisfy his wife. He further advises his grandson that he must make sure that he always comes home early so that his marriage can be strengthened by giving attention to his wife. The grandfather's voice adopts a strongly patriarchal stand view when he (grandfather) advises his grandson to buy goodies for his wife to keep her happy. The grandmother, adopting a submissive voice, advises her granddaughter to submit to her husband, do all the household chores and never give up on her marriage even when the situation is difficult.

## **DISCIPLINED SUBJECTS: GENDER, POWER AND DISCOURSE IN ISTAMBO SAMI**

As observed earlier, dominant groups in the society are able to use music to re-enact social constructions regarding gender behaviours and roles and maintain tradition. This perpetuation of the (hegemonic and often toxic) social order, invokes Foucault's (1994) application of productive, ubiquitous and relational discourses of power. To Foucault (1990, p. 93) power is "produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another." This means that social relations can be a site of power manifestations and exercise as it is "immanent in kinds of relationships" (Foucault, 1990, p. 94) such as, but not limited to economic, knowledge and sexual. Power, therefore emerges and is strategically exercised in all these kinds of relationships and interactions. In gender-based relationships especially in patrilineal societies, the manifestation and negotiation of power dynamics is hegemonic and toxic because it adheres to gendered perspectives constituted by patriarchy. This usually results in disciplined women subjectivities as their identities are erased from the public space and relegated to the domestic private space- specifically the kitchen and bedroom.

In the music domain, Ellen Koskoff (1987) provides a useful structure of understanding (and examining) the inter-play of power dynamics and gender in and through music. She submits that music may reinforce the established gender divisions or maintain the established order so that more important values in society are upheld; or it may contest the established order but it is unable to change the gender hierarchy or it can serve as a platform for gender equality and empowerment (Koskoff, 1987). This speaks to an overt Marxist hegemonic dominance which perpetuates ideological cultural values; which Foucault (1977, p. 100) frames as a discourse that is not subservient to power or raised against it but "can be both an instrument and effect of power, but a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for opposing strategy." Consequently, the Foucauldian power is discursive; "its prohibitions are tied together with what one can say as much as what one can do" (Foucault 1977, p. 84). This freedom of

choosing what one can say and do, as it shall be seen in the analysis that follows, manifests as an articulation of power hinged, in the case of Zimbabwe and Third world countries, on patrilineal authority.

In the song *Istambo Sami*, Magwaza adopts a dual role of a grandfather and grandmother, experienced stockholders of Ndebele/ Kalanga culture regarding marriage. Singing in third person narrative, he advises a young man to enhance and express his masculinity and strength in sexual encounters through using traditional sex-enhancing herbs (imbiza). This imbiza, the young man is advised that it must always be kept under the bed. In this song, the hegemonic toxic masculinity that engender the dominance of man at all costs in the space which has been largely demarcated and domesticated for the woman perpetuates the emergence of disciplined women subjectivities. The need for the man to express his masculinity and strength in sexual encounters, and if he is not able, to turn to the use of sex-enhancing herbs is part of the process of affirming the subjugated sexuality of the woman. In line with Chiweshe's (2012) observation of the transference of the sexual and productive rights during lobola from the father to the husband, this advice given to the young man to consolidate patriarchal dominance even in the bedroom, negates women's sexual agency.

Magwaza introduces his song by annotating;

Nansi istambo sami madoda

[Here comes my sweetheart]

Umthande njengoba lawe uzithanda

[Love her the way you love yourself]

Nansi istambo sami madoda

[Here comes my sweetheart]

Nansi indaba ukhulu ulaya umntanomntanakhe ongumfana uthi

[Here is the gist of the story. Grandfather is advising his grandson]

Ngaphansi kombheda lapho olala khona kufuneka isgubhu

[You must have a bottle of traditional herbs underneath your bed]

Ungahlali 2days ungekho ekhaya umfazi uyahamba

[You must not be away from home for more than 2 days, your wife will leave you]

Umfazi ufuna inonovithi yonke amatshukela, orice ama roll on emzini wakhe

[Your wife needs all the nice things such as sugar, rice, roll-ons]

Ugogo ulaya umntanomntakhe oyinkazana

[Grandmother is advising her granddaughter]

Ukuze umuzi uqine ungajiki emendweni

[You must not run away from problems in your marriage]

Indoda iyaguqelwa ,iyawatshelwa

[You must submit to your husband; kneel and wash for him]



The first person narration in the introductory first lines reflects an institutionalised patriarchal structure of the social fabric. Magwaza's representative language which equates his wife to a stambo objectifies his wife as a cheap and owned 'product'. The word Istambo is a colloquial term for a very cheap sweet known as a lollipop. This metaphorical representation of his wife as a very cheap buyable item reinforces patriarchal concepts that objectify women as only responsible for satisfying the needs of their husbands. Just like sweets, Magwaza represents women not as partners in the marriage, but a want; wanted for their sweetness which quenches the man's sexual desires. This general objectification dismantles the women's agency and exposes them to abuse, ill-treatment as they are represented as 'objects' that survive to attend to the wants of their male counterparts.

These images created and presented in *Istambo Sami* emanate from the Ndebele/Kalanga community Magwaza comes from. wa Thiong'o (1983, p. 75) observes that "Literature provides us with images of the world in which we live. Through these images, it shapes and reshapes our consciousness to look at the world in a certain way. Our propensity to action or inaction or to a certain kind of action or inaction can be profoundly affected by the way we look at the world".

Magwaza draws his material from the patriarchal Ndebele/ Kalanga community from a cultural revivalist perspective. These are perspectives that have been sponsored by groups such as the Kalanga Cultural Society which seek to revive, maintain and sustain the patriarchal relations within the Ndebele/ Kalanga society. To achieve this, they would draw inspiration from the experience and knowledge from the cultural gatekeepers and stockholders such the elderly hinged on wise sayings such as indlela ibuzwa kwabaphambili (Advice is best given by those that have experience). Thus, in this instance, the paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother are presented as key informants of an experienced perspective to marriage life.

Yet, this perspective lays bare the different levels, culture is used as a discourse and ideological weapon to suppress women in the society. Tuan Van Dijk (1989) postulates that discourses have a very important role in society, since they convey ideologies in a persuasive manner. The use of the third voice narration, which draws its relevance from the experience of the grandmother and grandfather, emerges as a persuasive strategy, especially to the inexperienced young people. Secondly, the use of the grandmother's voice to hide patriarchy and hegemony by affirming and supporting practices that suppress the self-expression and confidence of young women. Thirdly, the narrative moves from the positive to the (negative) concealed hegemonic ideology. For example, when the grandmother advises her daughter, she says: "Ukuze umuzi uqine ungajiki emendweni (You must not run away from problems in your marriage); Indoda iyaguqelwa, iyawatshelwa (You must submit to your husband; kneel and wash for him)." These lyrics speak positively about what the granddaughter needs to strengthen her marriage. The grandmother demands that her granddaughter must be an active agent in her marriage, positively influencing and strengthening it. The second line, however, takes away the agency from the granddaughter by making her a submissive character who must kneel and do all the chores to keep the husband 'happy'. This happiness is thus, not determined and/ or measured by the woman as it is very relative. UNIFEM (2005) observes that these kinds of scenarios present women as 'objects' in subservient positions in relation to their husbands and other males; making them undervalued, disrespected and prone to abuse by their male counterparts.

The invocation of a capitalist-consumerist characterisation of women within the marriage institution highlights a materialist power discourse at play. For instance, Magwaza sings:

Ungahlali 2days ungekho ekhaya umfazi uyahamba

[You must not be away from home for more than 2 days, your wife will leave you]

Umfazi ufuna inonovithi yonke amatshukela, orice ama roll on emzini wakhe

[Your wife needs all the nice things such as sugar, rice, roll-ons]

Magwaza characterises women as housekeepers and men as providers, an image that is familiar in much of the songs emerging from the urban centres in Zimbabwe (Chari, 2008; Mate, 2012; Chiweshe, 2012). The basing of the marriage institution on a patriarchal perspective that foregrounds the ability of the man to provide not only basic commodities but also luxuries, affirms his masculinity in both long-term and short-term relationships (Mate, 2012). This capitalist consumerist anchoring of gendered relationships could be the basis for the emergence of derogatory referral terms such as *chi-danger*, *gero* and *chimoko*.

Throughout the first part of the song that has been engaged so far, the active agents (grandparents) are focussing their energies on controlling and determining the kind of life of the object (woman) and to a lesser extent the men. In the Foucauldian terminology, the grandparents are disciplining the woman within the marriage institution. Discipline is a “form of power that carefully watches, examines, records and measures” (McGushin, 2011, p. 133) and we would extend, in this context (hegemonically) advises. This advice seeks to “shape”, “give form” and help the woman to “form an idea” of who she is in this marriage set-up, and “how she is supposed to feel things and do things” (McGushin, 2011, p. 133). As it has been demonstrated in the analysis above, the disciplinary advice is presented in such a manner that, if taken, the marriage will reach full productive potential as the happiness of the husband would translate to the happiness of the whole family. McGushin (2011, p. 133) is of the view that this normalisation process regulates the behaviour of the woman and structures her time and behaviour so that she is just similar to every other ordinary woman. This kind of disciplined subjectivity is possible because it is presented in such a way that make the woman believe it makes her “more productive, it trains me and develops my capabilities for living, making it very hard to resist since it seems to be on my side, it provides me with resources to live my life” (McGushin, 2011, p. 133). The ideological couching of the disciplinary tactics in the materialism provided by the man as a means of keeping the woman happy and within the marriage institution in Magwaza’s song creates disciplined women subjectivities.

## **SINGING AGAINST THE GRAIN: DISCONTINUITIES IN THE PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM**

Foucault’s discourse of power is not overtly negative, rather it provides for the effective challenging of dominant relations. Diana Taylor (2011, p. 5) submits that: “‘effective’ navigation of power relations involves critically analysing our present conditions in order to identify norms and practices that reinforce the status quo to the point where prevailing modes of thought and existence come to be seen as given, as what must be done”.

This process involves thinking and acting in ways that challenge and prescribe a new social order. In the song *Istambo Sami*, Magwaza also sings against the grain. Sung from a highly patriarchal and hegemonic position, Magwaza advises men to publicly express their affection by being romantic and faithful to one partner. This oppositional reading of masculinity discards the patriarchal concepts that encourage and allow men to have more than one partner and not publicly express their affection to their partners. Magwaza sings:

Sondela eduze kwakhe kodwa eduzekwakhe

[Come closer to your loved one]

Kuzebabone lababantu ukuthi uyamthanda umntakaMoyo

[So that the world can see that you really love Moyo's daughter]

Watshiya abazali bakhe esondela kuwe

[She left her parents so that she can stay and be closer to you]

Watshiya izihlobo zakhe esondela kuwe

[She left her relatives so that she can stay and be closer to you]

Watshiya osisi labobhudi bakhe esondela kuwe

[She left her sisters and brothers to stay and be closer to you]

Through these lyrics, Magwaza calls out men to openly and publicly express their affection to their spouses reciprocatively. Wodak and Meyer (2009, p. 6) observe that such critical discourse perspectives are hinged on social structures and their understanding should be read within the social fields that constitute them. The prevailing Ndebele/ Kalanga social structure largely demands women to publicly express the affection to their husbands while men are 'allowed' to have multiple relationships or even wives. Magwaza challenges this hegemonic tradition and calls on his male counterparts to reverse this culture of dominance by expressively showing their affection to their wives. The reversal of gendered identities and roles reverses what Kendall and Tannen (2015, p. 643) characterise as "coherent web of gender-related patterns" which position "masculinity (man) as active and femininity (woman) as passive" (Talbot, 2010, p. 93). To borrow from Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2013, p. 36), Magwaza's approach to Ndebele/ Kalanga social practice contributes to "changing the meaning of male and female and thus, to changing the gender order, the social structures that in turn shape gender practices." This song is an inspiring example that can be used to challenge gender stereotyping by granting agency to the woman and exposing the Ndebele/Kalanga moral ideological background that has always favoured their male counterparts. The preconceived ideology of the woman as a domestic passive figure who must not seek to get in direct public contact with her husband is shamefully challenged.

Song texts are powerful representations of popular sentiments spanning norms, values, practices and identities. Nhamo Mhiripipi (2012) observes that "musicians are forced to compose certain lyrics by the nature of the society they live in". Nyambi (2018) characterises this genre of song texts that grapple with various relational forms from the ordinary people's point of view as a people's music. *Istambo Sami* as a people's song text exposes a deep lying fear among men in publicly expressing their affection to their wives or girlfriends. The images created by Magwaza's song text contradict the normative images emerging from song texts from the cities and metropolis.

In *Istambo Sami*, Magwaza chants:

Umphathe kahle ngoba nguye istambo sakho

[Take good care of her because she is your sweetheart]

Iscreen saver sakho kube nguye

[Make her your screen saver]

Lapho ohamba khona ubone isthunzi sakhe

[Where you go you should feel her]

Uzabona zonke izinto zihamba right

[You will see everything in your life going well]

Libathande labo abantu ngoba bayalithanda lingalali lingekho endlini

[You must love your wives because they dearly love you. You must never spend a night away from home]

Ngoba lizazikhumbula izitambo lezo sezihambile

[Because one day, you will remember your sweethearts when they are gone]

In this instance, although Magwaza presents men as the major characters that determine the nurture of relationships they have/ will have with their wives or girlfriends, it is in a positive, loving manner; variedly different from the violent images created by the urban grooves, Zim dancehall and Zim hiphop (Chari, 2008; Mate, 2012). Magwaza advises men to love their wives and/or girlfriends because they (wives and/ girlfriends) love them. This is challenging the compounded patriarchal hegemony through replacing violence, dominance and toughness with love, appreciation and equality; which as Chari (2008) and others engaged earlier observed that these are missing in Zimbabwean produced songs.

While the hegemonic masculine locus keeps raising its head and emerging in the crevices of patriarchal discontinuing identities, the level of objectification and consumerism is moderate compared to other observations highlighted by the likes of Vambe (2000) and Manase (2011). This invokes Foucault's (1979, p. 95) observation and submission that power relations are intentional and subjective. In this instance, Magwaza's intention of advising and encouraging men to use photos or pictures of their wives as screen savers on their phones is not necessarily to objectify them, but so that the woman's photo provides a constant reminder to the man of his lover and the love they have for each other. This act transgresses the domestication of the women because the man takes 'her' into all the domains he interacts in, works, live and interact in – both public and private.

## CONCLUSION

We conclude with a quote from Lidskok (2017, p. 33) who observes that: “[m]usic can serve a political purpose; it can be part of discrimination against and stigmatisation of an ethnic group; as well as facilitating mobilisation and empowerment of a group and raising issues of social injustice and inequality”.

In this article, we have examined the gendered discourses expressed by Magwaza in his song *Istambo Sami*. We observed that the hegemonic patriarchal structures determine the presentation and choices of discourses that run through Magwaza's song. We further observed that while the patriarchal discourse permeates through

the song *Istambo Sami*, if read against the grain, it speaks to a strengthening and positively positioning of women in this hegemonic environment. We further drew and highlighted the implications of the socio-cultural and political strata in the Zimbabwean Ndebele/ Kalanga ethnic space on Magwaza's choice of lyrics and their interpretation.

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