Psychology, Patriarchy and a Politics of Men and Masculinities: Reading Inequality in Three South African Texts

by

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that all sources that I have used have been acknowledged with complete references.

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Abstract

After the 27th of April 1994, South Africa entered an unchartered territory, turning its back on a long history of segregation and of inequalities. With the new democratic government having assumed office, many were right to hope for a better future: better employment opportunities, better education for the previously disadvantaged, better racial integration and equality across racial groups, genders, and sexual preference and/or orientation. However, inequality continues to be invasive in many facets of post-apartheid life. An observation of inequality in the country using the Gini index showed a rise between 1991 and 2001 from 0.68 to 0.77.

Masculinity unlike maleness is ideological rather than biological, therefore it follows that context would naturally play a significant role in informing ideologies that dominate in such environments. It also follows that inequality like other social phenomena influences masculinity as an ideology and a set of practices. This dissertation explores how inequality affects and influences a politics of men and masculinities in South Africa. This is investigated in three South African texts namely *The Smell of Apples* (1995) by Mark Behr, *Ways of Dying* (1995) by Zakes Mda and *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001) by K. Sello Duiker.

These three texts lend themselves to an exploration of inequalities in the country in relation to South African men and masculinities during specific historical and political contexts. The Afrikaner ideology which enforced a militaristic kind of masculinity as the most dominant type through its State/Patriarchy/Hegemonic masculinity pact is discussed in relation to *The Smell of Apples* and how such a pact is shown in the novel to affect boys and men. Following through on this thread is an investigation of black township and informal settlement masculinities as represented in *Ways of Dying*. That chapter focuses on the South African interregnum and how toxic and violent masculinities are subverted in the novel by the self-marginalisation of the protagonist from the construct of masculinity itself. Finally, what follows is a discussion of masculinities in South Africa as represented in the most recent text, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*. The text shows how since the 1994 political transition, it is no longer easy to distinguish between the oppressor and the oppressed. The chapter investigates how, in Duiker's representation of these issues, the ideology of masculinity manifests itself in an environment that assumes equality for all but in which stark inequalities persist.

Keywords:

Masculinity, masculinities, manhood, inequality, South Africa, injustice, power, hierarchy, patriarchy, ideology, Behr, Mda, Duiker

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Chapter One: Introduction

> Masculinity is power. But masculinity is terrifyingly fragile because it does not really exist in the sense we are led to think it exists, that is, as a biological reality—something real that we have inside ourselves. It exists as ideology; it exists as scripted behavior; it exists within "gendered" relationships but in the end it is just a social institution with a tenuous relationship to that with which it is supposed to be synonymous: our maleness, our biological sex. (Kaufman, 7-8)

Engaging with ideas about masculinity involves looking into how those ideas manifest themselves in actions carried out by male subjects. Therefore, this means looking into what Kaufman has described as a tenuous relationship between masculinity and maleness, noting that the former asserts itself in concepts of power. However, it should be noted that for power to exist, it follows that there is one who wields that power and another who succumbs to it. Ultimately, this means that in a politics of men and masculinities, there is a contested space in which men engage each other in a constant struggle for power, of which there will most likely be a measure of inequality. Furthermore, it is also a space where boyhood may be found to be under the oppressive and domineering hand of fatherhood and toxic expressions of manhood(s).

It is imperative to emphasise that being male does not necessarily imply that a male individual has automatically achieved masculinity. Writing about masculinities, Kopano Ratele makes a distinction between masculinity and maleness and argues that "[a]long with the notion of masculinity, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has generally served us well in bringing to attention […] the understanding of manhood (as opposed to maleness) as a *social practice* that manifests in many forms (such that we now speak of masculinities)" [original emphasis] (516-517). Maleness is a biological fact. The possession of the male body is significantly different from masculinity in the sense that the latter is socially constructed and therefore manifests in different ways and forms. These involve an individual man's behaviour towards others and in turn, the behaviour of others towards him.

Influenced by the question "*Inequality of What?*" delivered in a "1988 lecture by Amartya Sen" (Therborn and Aboim, 730), Göran Therborn asserts that "[t]he caravan of financial capitalist inequality is moving on at an unhampered speed. And all other issues of inequality remain, not only in existence but beyond conventional imagination" (Therborn and Aboim, 731). Therefore, for the problem of inequality to be challenged adequately, it is essential that it be addressed in everyday dimensions where it exists but also that it should be explored beyond conventional imagination. To address inequality in a politics of men and masculinities,

it is necessary to explore the two dimensions in which this manifestation occurs: first, it is an external product which influences how men relate to each other, "it is the violence of a society – a hierarchical, authoritarian, sexist, class divided, militarist, racist, impersonal, crazy society – being focused through an individual man" (Kaufman, 28) among other inequalities. The second is an internal process through which the ideology of masculinity as a patriarchal product is used to oversee an unequal distribution of power in the relations between men, thus resulting in different formulations of masculinities.

Defining inequality, Göran Therborn writes that there are three fundamental characteristics which must be in play for inequality to exist. "First […] inequality is always vertical or ranking" where "anything or anyone" is classed as "being higher or lower, better or worse […]"; second, this should not be "just a categorization, but something that violates a moral norm of equality among human beings." And last, "for a difference to be an inequality it must be abolishable […] Thus, inequalities are avoidable, morally unjustified, hierarchical differences" (579-580). This model of inequality is therefore observed in a politics of men and masculinities because the latter is a societal construction which does not exist in a vacuum but within societies which are riddled with inequalities. Furthermore, the construction of masculinity, being informed by patriarchal institutions, means that the construct itself legitimizes inequality from within with its unequal distribution of power, because in employing hierarchy formations it rewards through scripted behaviour and gendered relations men who rank higher and subjugate others.

1.1) Men and Masculinities in the South African Context

When we think of a man, we do not merely invoke an image of the male body. We invoke that image alongside a historical significance that we learn through ideology. Therefore, when we think of a man, we think of a male body attached to a particular conception of masculinity which dominates our imagination at the time in which the thought is invoked. This is because it is inconceivable to think of man devoid of masculinity and this is the result of the naturalisation of the relationship between the male body and the idealised function of that male body. What exists therefore is an arbitrary relation between man and masculinity which becomes naturalised according to context.

Masculinities, unlike maleness, are a set of ideas and an enactment of forms of behaviour that inform particular ideals about manhood in different contexts; additionally, they play important roles in the processes by which men become 'men'. Furthermore "[t]he very notion that there are masculinities rather than a single masculinity acknowledges that there are potentially many ways 'to be a man'" (Dolan, 76). This is because "not all men are the same and they do not all have the same privileges and power" (Morrell, *Men, Masculinities and Gender Politics*, 16). This difference is in turn used in the relations between men to signify certain expressions of masculinities as dominant while others are relegated to submissive positions thus perpetuating inequality, and violence is often adopted to create and maintain these differences

Violence in relation to masculinity is a recurring issue when masculinities are studied, and South African masculinities are no exception to this problem because "masculinity and violence have been yoked together in South African history" (Morrell, *The Times of Change* 12). Additionally, there is no 'typical' South African masculinity today, besides the strong links to violence. Masculinities in South Africa are as variegated as other societal aspects. Like everything else they are affected by culture, tradition, age, sexual preference, history, political atmosphere as well as geographical settings. Since masculinities cannot be inherited, they depend on the above social aspects for their construction and South African history attests to this fact. Many black men during apartheid constructed their identities around finding ways to protest against the then government with the use of military and non-military force. Some men felt the need to go into exile and obtain military education, others stayed behind and formed vigilante groups adopting violence but without any military training. Today, such constructions have been totally eroded given the current political atmosphere. However, the legacy of violence in relation to masculinities in the country stubbornly persists even to this day. This has resulted in a number of campaigns such as *Brothers for Life,* launched in the second half of 2009. The purpose of such campaigns is to mobilise and further encourage non-violent constructions of masculinity and manhood in the country (brothersforlife.org).

These campaigns show that masculinity is indeed not inherited and depends on social behaviour, and as such behaviour can change. This is a social fact because predominant forms of masculinities themselves were either forced formulations that changed depending on context or they were gender constructs that materialised during historical periods. "The volatility of gender change is important for two reasons. In the first instance it shows that masculinity can and does change and that it is therefore not a fixed, essential identity which all men have. Secondly, gender change reveals that men differ – not all have the same masculinity" (Morrell,

The Times of Change 4). Differences in masculinities are sometimes informed by demographic factors such as race. Throughout a 46-year-long history of formalised apartheid in South Africa, racial segregation played a huge role in the way South African masculinities came to be constructed.

Men in South Africa were treated differently by the state using race as the defining principle. For white males, conscription into the military was compulsory from the age of 16. But no such requirement existed for black males. As such racial differences were exacerbated by the fact that there were white military trained men and black men without any formal military training. This was created for the purposes of ensuring that the military was there to defend apartheid rule disguised as a defence against 'terrorism', 'communism' and '*swart gevaar*' (the then perceived threat that the African liberation struggle would express itself in a military force). This indeed played a huge role in the construction of masculinities. In reality however, not all white men bought into this political atmosphere because "[in] 1985, half the men conscripted failed to report for service" (Morrell, *The Time of Change* 31) due in part to the efforts of the ECC (End Conscription Campaign) and many others went into exile to escape conscription.

In response to this pro-government militarisation, some black men sought military education and training themselves and as such, they went into exile to join military wings, most notably the ANC's *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (the Spear of the Nation) and the PAC's *APLA* (Azanian People's Liberation Army). The result of this military education meant that in townships, men who had military education would be referred to as 'comrades' and this would be a term of endearment for most. This is because "[d]uring those days, being a 'comrade' endowed a young man with social respect and status within the community. Being referred to as a 'young lion' and a 'liberator' was an intoxicating and psychologically satiating accolade" (Xaba, 110). In response to the accolade, 'comrades' always carried weapons wherever they went and as such violence became an ideal attached to being a 'comrade' in townships and informal settlements. For those who left the country, exile meant two different things: for black males it meant an acquisition of military training but for white males it meant escaping compulsory conscription.

Observing how social forces affect and influence constructions of masculinities, R. W. Connell in 1987 postulated a concept of hegemonic masculinity. She argued that it was a structural fact at the level of the society but analogous to individual experiences on the ground through which the most dominant form of masculinity is observed. With strong links to patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity allowed men to have power over women and also over other men. Many South

African scholars applied Connell's concept to a South African context, most notably Robert Morrell. He observed that hegemonic masculinity is a cultural ideal and the "form of masculinity which is dominant in society. This is not a question of head-counts, but a 'question of relations of cultural domination'. In addition to oppressing women, hegemonic masculinity silences or subordinates other masculinities, positioning these in relation to itself such that the values expressed by these other masculinities are not those that have currency or legitimacy" (Morrell, *Of Boys and Men* 607-608). Morrell's formulation of hegemonic masculinity is central to this study. Of importance in the above formulation is the insistence on the relations of cultural domination. This is because by such an insistence, Morrell brings context into the frame, meaning therefore that the study and or exploration of masculinities should always be applied to particular contexts.

According to Morrell, "the concept of hegemonic masculinity provides a way of explaining that though a number of masculinities coexist, *a particular version* of masculinity holds sway, bestowing power and privilege on men who espouse it and claim it as their own" [emphasis added] (Morrell, *Of Boys and Men* 608). This is a form of masculinity that is rewarded through social behaviour and interaction by becoming a dominant masculinity. This means that, at a particular time and place, individual men can claim a version of masculinity that is dominant and has power over other masculinities. Because the apartheid government believed in militarism in order to suppress protest, the manner in which militarism was practised was highly patriarchal. This means that in South Africa during that period there was a convergence of patriarchy, the state and hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity was represented in part by the military and its centrality in South African life.

In South Africa today, there are a multiplicity of masculinities due to race, ethnicity, class, as well as time and space. Due to this non-homogeneity, it has become difficult to speak of a hegemonic masculinity and it is preferable to refer to hegemonic masculinities, which are only hegemonic depending on context and background. Due to this fact, the one problem that faced South African scholars was the question: how does the concept of hegemonic masculinity work when there is a broad multiplicity of masculinities in the country and is there any one hegemonic masculinity that particularly exists in South Africa today? Responding to this problem, Robert Morrell traced a lack of homogeneity back to the apartheid years. "He proposed not just one masculinity that was hegemonic, but at least three—a ''white'' masculinity (represented in the political and economic dominance of the white ruling class); an ''African,'' rurally based masculinity that resided in and was perpetuated through indigenous

institutions (such as chiefship, communal land tenure, and customary law) and finally a ''black'' masculinity that had emerged in the context of urbanization and the development of geographically separate and culturally distinct African townships" (Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger, 12).

Morrell offers examples for only two of the three categories he has observed. The first is a white hegemonic masculinity, which he points out was reinforced by political and economic dominance. The other is what he terms the African rurally based hegemonic masculinity represented most especially by chiefdom and land tenure. For the third however – the black masculinity that was found in townships and informal settlements – he does not offer any example. This is because the situation in these contexts was much more complicated. These people had their roots in the rural areas from which they came, but they were faced with new struggles in the outskirts of cities where they resided. As a result, and influenced by the political atmosphere, different centres of hegemonies were observed. On the one hand, community ward councils were formed by the state with the purpose of maintaining order in the settlements and townships. In opposition to these state-sanctioned councils and the state itself, the people of the townships formed their own vigilante groups which opposed the government-sanctioned councils and were constantly in confrontation with the police (these were not exclusively male, but male dominated). They were mimicking the militarism of the military wings and in some cases were led by individuals who received their training from those military wings. In the hostels (exclusively male) were the migrant workers living in close proximity with the township dwellers in the inland provinces. Many of these individuals were members of the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) and were closely governed by a Zulu traditional masculinity which endorsed violence.

The differences in political philosophies between the IFP and the ANC/UDF led to the famously dubbed 'black on black' killings. The violence more or less began in the then Natal province: at "the end of 1985, Zulus from outside Durban attacked Xhosa-speaking Pondo migrants who worked in the sugar industry, killing many and driving the rest out" (Horowitz, 73). In the following year, "the UDF efforts to expand [were] met with armed resistance from Inkatha … [f]rom 1986 through 1989, more than 2,000 were killed in the townships around Pietermaritzburg, which had become the centre of uncontrollable violence" (Horowitz, 72). This violence could not be contained in Natal; it spread to other regions especially the townships and informal settlements of the inland regions. People were killed in Sebokeng,

Boipatong, Katlehong, Vosloorus, Soweto and other inland regions. Describing one of the incidents that took place in Soweto, Gauteng, Adam Ashforth writes:

> Whatever may have happened before dawn, by seven-thirty in the morning a crowd of up to two thousand residents had converged upon Merafe Hostel in the Mapetla district of Soweto, locked in battle with two or three hundred Inkatha members who had retreated to the hostel. For the next four days the hostel was under siege, with young "comrades" vowing to burn it down and "drive the Zulus back to Natal." At first it was surrounded by riot police. But these had a habit of disappearing in the dead of night. Then the fighting would start in earnest. By Monday morning, when a semblance of normality returned to the township, more than seventy people were dead, killed in the vicinity of Merafe and other hostels (Ashforth, 56)

When referring to the supporters of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Ashforth portrays them as warriors whose images are able to invoke fear, anger and hatred in others and further observes that "this figure is unmistakably gendered" (Ashforth, 58). It is therefore without any form of doubt that this violence was gender-specific because, it was "perpetrated by men […] and […] most of the [then] political violence" was "probably directed by young men against young men" (Marks, 125). Violence is therefore employed as a collective tool or an individual action that a man uses in his relations with other men and this is due to "the power-oriented model of social inequality" (Kallen, 4). With the use of this model "[m]en create hierarchies and rankings among themselves according to criteria of 'masculinity'" and at each hierarchy level they "compete with each other, with whatever resources they have, for the differential payoffs that patriarchy allows [them]"; as a result "men in different societies choose different grounds on which to rank each other" (Pleck, 23).

The political atmosphere as observed above carved out masculinities that depended on violence. This is due to the fact that violence (both military and non-military) had been for a very long time legitimised in the historical legacy of both oppression and a struggle for liberation. Therefore, hegemonies in the many South African contexts were always informed by violence, or at the very least, a threat of it. Ergo, hegemonic masculinity in South Africa cannot exist without being informed by violence. Although Connell's conception of hegemonic masculinity initially offered the possibility of its existence free of violence, the South African context is quite different and has always been founded upon a violent kind of hegemonic masculinity. This led to Connell's reformulation of the concept, submitting in 2005 that "it is not surprising that in some contexts, hegemonic masculinity actually does refer to men's engaging in toxic practices—including physical violence—that stabilize gender dominance in a particular setting" (Connell and Messerschmidt, 840). As mentioned above, it is difficult, given the number of hegemonies, to speak of hegemonic masculinity in South Africa; instead

one should speak of hegemonic masculinities (referring to the different types of masculinities which are dominant in different contexts) or hegemonies of masculinity (referring to the different contexts which inform the resulting dominant masculinities).

The most dominant form of hegemonic masculinity in the apartheid era was the state-sanctioned one which was white, militaristic and was also economically dominant. In the current political atmosphere, the state/patriarchy/hegemonic masculinity pact no longer exists. As a result, there is no longer one dominant hegemonic ideal of masculinity sanctioned by the state since the current government does not take an active role in influencing the ideal masculinity. Instead, there are different forms of hegemonic masculinities which are dependent on location, class, culture and more. For instance, at one place, the dominant masculinity might be the one which displays excessive sexual behaviour and at another it might be a violent type which displays no fear of confrontation. Therefore, in South Africa today, there is no one hegemonic masculinity to which all other masculinities subscribe. The multiplicity in masculinities means that there is also multiplicity in hegemonies as well as in hegemonic ideals to which different males subscribe. Having noted this, it is of importance to remark further that despite this multiplicity, "hegemonic constructions of masculinity in South Africa do not yet centrally include the loving and responsible discharge of the fatherhood role" (Morrell and Richter, 40). When engaging hegemonic masculinity, often the discussion centres around toxic iterations of masculinities and harmful constructions of manhood. It is in opposition to this problem that the Brothers for Life campaign, mentioned above, seeks to encourage positive male role models and healthy constructions of masculinities.

Violence has been highlighted as the main problem encapsulating many different forms of masculinities in South Africa since apartheid. In addition to violence, another social problem shared by many men across race, ethnicity, class and geographical background is an overriding heterosexist belief. Men in different contexts use different reasons for this kind of discrimination, including the disparaging of homosexuality as non-African, non-Religious and more. Although the democratic government ended formal discrimination against homosexual, bisexual and transgender peoples in South Africa, Vasu Reddy observes that "not all supported the inclusion of sexual orientation as a form of non-discrimination"; regardless of this fact, "the legal protection of gay people meant that for the first time in this country's history, it was possible to negotiate their sexuality as gay men" (65). This came after the apartheid government which criminalised sexual intercourse between men was voted out of power.

An important question arising from this is how do gay masculinities relate to hegemonic masculinities and how do the latter affect the lived experience of the former? A very simplistic answer would be to use Connell's typology and point out that gay masculinities are marginalised masculinities in relation to a heterosexual but hegemonic ideal in South Africa. However, it should also be observed that gay masculinities do in many instances protest against heterosexual masculinities, not always through direct conflict but through the many ways in which the link between masculinity and violence is criticised. In addition, homosexual masculinities do not tend to claim the dominance that heterosexual masculinities assert over women. Furthermore, it should not be assumed that gay masculinities are themselves without fault. It is possible for a dominant gay masculinity to assert itself over many others, as will be discussed in Chapter Four.

Although the patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact was eroded with the formal ending of apartheid, it is a fact that aspects of it still exist in the country today because South Africa still remains a highly patriarchal society. Even though changes have been taken in the right direction, not nearly enough has been achieved, most especially in terms of individual experience on the ground. And because of the manner in which South African heterosexual masculinities and violence are intertwined, it has become almost impossible for homosexual masculinities to escape heterosexual masculine violence without being harmed physically, psychologically or emotionally. This means that the "continuation and escalation of violence perpetrated against lesbian women and gay men requires attention. However, this has not been forthcoming. Instead, violence and explicit hate speech have become normalised" (Msibi, 51). Elsewhere, it has become legitimised as observed through former President Jacob Zuma's comments of 2007 quoted by the *Sunday Times*. There, Zuma comments "that same-sex marriages were a 'disgrace to the nation and to God,' and that when he was growing up an "ungqingili" (derogatory for gay man) would not have stood in front of him as he would 'knock him out'" (Msibi, 52). Since he was Deputy president then, Zuma's inflammatory comments may be seen as legitimising violence against gay men, considering how he denounces them, calling them a 'disgrace to the nation and to God'.

1.2)   Inequality in South Africa

South Africa has a long history of segregation and the country's inequalities reflect that history, however, "[s]ince the ending of Apartheid" the country "has passed a constitution that […]

forbids discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, race, class, age and creed" (Morrell, *Men, Movements and Gender Transformation* 271). Understandably, these are the grounds upon which inequality is often formulated. Despite this profound political transformation, inequality did not decrease: instead by 2001, the Gini index calculated inequality in South Africa to be 0.77 which meant that inequality in the country was quite extreme. A Gini index is used to measure inequality, and this is how it works: "If we were to distribute R 100 to 100 houses and gave each R 1, we would have perfect equality and the Gini index would be 0. Instead, if one house had the full R 100 and the remainder of the houses had nothing, then the Gini index would be 1, reflecting maximum inequality. The overall Gini index of inequality in South Africa rose from 0.68 in 1991 to 0.77 in 2001" (Durrheim, Mtose and Brown, 16-17). This trend suggests that South Africa's index is dangerously close to maximum inequality.

Responding to Michael Messner's formulation that "the only thing that makes 'men of color' a distinct group is the central role they play as the racialized 'other' in the social construction of 'white masculinity'" (97), Robert Morrell observes that Messner's assertion posits race "as a fluid identity without a specific relation to a material base and without a particular historical location" (*Men, Movements and Gender Transformation,* 276). In contrast, when one considers the South African context, "race has a specific history and an ongoing correlation with class powerlessness that reflects the colonial past and the period of apartheid" (Morrell, *Men, Movements and Gender Transformation* 276). This is because in South Africa race as a social category cannot be used only to formulate grounds for discrimination. Elsewhere, race becomes intertwined with other social aspects to reflect inequalities in income, health and education. Most white South Africans are found on the side of privilege followed closely by Indian South Africans and most coloured and black South Africans are found on the other extreme. These inequalities are also linked with other social aspects such as violence, crime, mortality rate, unemployment and so forth, where we observe that coloured and black South Africans are most vulnerable.

As can be seen above, race politics in the country's history were undeniably intertwined with class hierarchy, education and economic inequalities. Furthermore, spatial inequality was another aspect involved in this dynamic. What constitutes spatial inequality is unfair distribution of wealth and resources between different social and communal areas: for instance, unfair and unequal development between rural and urban areas. Furthermore, in urban areas, bias exists in relation to townships and cities. These biases can be observed in issues such as

public expenditure, service delivery, and other social indicators. The importance of spatial inequality is in the way it exposes "significant regional disparities in average incomes, the incidence and depth of poverty, health indicators, education status, and other correlates of living standards and human development" (Shorrocks, xxi). In addition to race inequalities and the legacies of apartheid, spatial inequality continues to shape the South African landscape today given that it is "a dimension of overall inequality, but … has added significance when […] regional divisions align with political and ethnic tensions to undermine social and political stability" (Kanbur and Venables, 3).

This complex entanglement of race and other social structures was the result of the actions of the apartheid state, because it sought deliberately to help the white population by all means necessary. This meant a continuous disenfranchisement of other population groups, especially the black population which occupied the last rank of the social hierarchy. Moreover, under strict laws the black population was barred from certain cities and urban spaces unless it was to work there. For this, one needed documentation to be present in the city for the duration of one's working hours. Should one thus be found in these spaces outside the specified time that was given, one would be arrested on the spot. The most significant contributing factor to spatial inequality is the way in which notable development is restricted to urban spaces. As a result of unfair development, industries became located in urban spaces, therefore employment opportunities became localised there and contributed significantly to migrant labour as these industries became the pull factors of immigration and rural migration. What ensued because of this spatial bias were adverse effects on the nuclear black families. Fathers were separated from their families, mothers were forced to become single parents and most children were left without father figures. Elsewhere, both parents moved to urban spaces for employment, and grandparents had to step in and assume parenting responsibilities.

Although the racial laws were officially eradicated in 1994, the current government has done little to try and reverse the spatial inequalities of the country's formative years. These geospatial inequalities still exist today, and this is due to the fact that fewer resources are focused on townships and even fewer on rural development while the bulk is focused on and distributed in the cities and suburbs. Ergo, the rural migration that was observed in the past is recognizable even to this day. Durrheim, Mtose and Brown lament this stubborn resistance to change:

> […] transformation in South Africa has been profound and yet it seems as though
> many things have barely changed at all […] old patterns of inequality and segregation

persist and new patterns have emerged that continue to be structured around race […] old hierarchies reach into the present as the racial underclass (and much of the working class) remains insecure, exploited and under-resourced. (21)

Old patterns indeed are recognizable today, and this is mostly true of racial and spatial inequalities since these were interlinked during apartheid. The same can also be said of the education sector and illiteracy. By the late 1990s blacks made up "92 percent, coloureds 6 percent, Indians 1 percent, and whites 0.2 percent of South African adults who [had] no education at all", furthermore "most of the uneducated Africans" were "found in the more rural and poorer provinces" (Lever and Wilmot, 43) due to racial and spatial inequality. Today, the metros according to Stats South Africa boast the lowest number of people without education. This is because they have the highest number of people with post-secondary education as opposed to rural areas. Additionally, "[w]hites have 3,678 times greater odds of high levels of education than black [South Africans]" (Lehohla, xiii).

Although South African history is dominated by racial segregation, the reality of its politics is more complicated than conflict solely between the black and the white populations. During the apartheid years, South Africa had four identified race groups: whites, Indians, coloureds and blacks as defined by the then government. As opposed to the black population, the coloured and Indian populations were allowed "symbolic participation" in the "Tricameral Parliament" (Giliomee, 183) of the late 1980s. Therefore, they were recognized by the state as legitimate citizens but inferior to whites. Furthermore, the white population of the country as the ruling class citizens of the state both economically and politically was not an homogenous entity.

The population was divided into Afrikaans and English-speakers with the state in favour of the former and working towards realising the needs and desires of the former more than those of the latter. This division in the white population meant that with their control of the state Afrikaners "enjoyed vast opportunities […] To mention just one indicator of the economic advance: Afrikaners in white collar occupations (as distinct from those in blue collar or agricultural occupations) rose from 29 percent in 1946 to 65 percent in 1977" (Giliomee, 167). This means that, although the state was progressively for the white population, it went even further in securing much more privilege for the Afrikaans-speaking white population. This bias was also pursued through pro-government indoctrination in which warped ideology and propagandistic versions of history dominated the discourse: "in a study of history textbooks in use in secondary schools in 1980 and 1981, the following were two of the twelve 'master symbols' which appeared repeatedly: 'The Afrikaner has a special relationship with God', and 'South Africa rightly belongs to the Afrikaner'" (Giliomee, 181).

Others, such as Piet Meyer, who at one stage was chairman of the Afrikaner Broederbond, took this pro-Afrikaner stance by the government even further by advocating for cultural and ideological colonization of the English-speaking white population. There existed an ideal in which the English-speaking white population would be subsumed by the "undiluted Afrikaner hegemony and the 'Afrikanerization' of the English-speaker" (Giliomee, 171). The goal in Meyer's terms was that the latter would "integrate his ideals and lifestyle with those of the Afrikaner, that he [would] adopt Afrikaner history as his own and that he will accept Afrikaans as his national language" (Giliomee, 171). As observed here and above, the Afrikaans-speaking white population claimed a hegemonic position in relation to the English-speaking white population. Moreover, this claim was legitimized by a propagandistic proclamation to both country and God which aimed to marginalise the English-speaking whites. As such, the desire as seen in Meyer's terms was a total ideological domination of the English-speaking population; however, this was an ideal not supported by all members of the Afrikaans-speaking population. This difference in political ideals thus led to a break of the Afrikaans-speaking population into two ideologically advanced populations. One was the *verkramptes* and the other the *verligtes*. The latter held opposing views to the former who believed that "Afrikaners could only maintain themselves as a group through isolating themselves by maintaining the borders of their race, culture, religion, morals and language. To be Afrikaner, someone had to subscribe to a Calvinist and conservative world view" (Giliomee, 171). For this ideological camp, Afrikanerdom could be achieved by the English-speaking white population if they subscribed to the above-mentioned aims.

These aims of cultural and ideological colonization, like all Afrikaner-inclined indoctrination, became ineffective after 1994 after the Apartheid government was voted out and replaced by a democratic government. The African National Congress government after winning the elections that year was then faced with new and much more complicated issues which they had to address. This was foreseen by Francis Meli in 1988 and he wrote that: "Destroying separation is relatively very easy. We take over and away with the racial laws. But how do we destroy inequality? […] this must affect […] culture […] economy […] interest, needs, aspirations and levels of development, education and skills – in fact everything. So once we destroy apartheid, there is still inequality" (74). No longer was race the sole problem: instead, in trying to address previous inequalities, the new government contributed to the rising inequalities in the country with new economic policies such as the BEE initiative for example. Although this programme was meant to eradicate past inequalities through the economic

empowerment of the previously underprivileged population groups, it created the new black elite. Therefore, it contributed significantly to new inequalities within the black population. The result therefore of affirmative action is that, even though it is a positive initiative, economic inequality today "within groups is now more extreme than inequality between groups. In fact, the highest level of inequality is within the black African population" (Durrheim, Mtose and Brown, 17). This means that even though there is de-racialisation in the country's elite and higher classes, the underclass is still dominated by the black population. That is amongst the reasons why crime and violence are more prevalent in poor black communities.

With the political atmosphere in the country having changed since 1994, it is no longer easy in the modern South Africa to separate neatly the oppressor and the oppressed. However, certain recurring patterns can still be observed such as poverty: "poverty and race correlate closely in South Africa with 61 percent of blacks being poor" (Bhana, 205) by the late 1990s. Furthermore, there is also exclusion: "disenfranchised populations face social and spatial exclusion. Whether defined by income status, social class, gender, race, ethnicity, occupation, or age, these populations face differential access to particular spaces, alongside other forms of inequality and discrimination" (Smiley and Koti, vi).

1.3) Inequalities and Men and Masculinities in South Africa

1.3.1) Inequalities as external social products that influence and affect men and masculinities

As I have noted above men do not exist in a vacuum, their masculinities are products of their social backgrounds, and as such they are affected and influenced by the many inequalities that dominate their communities. During the apartheid period, racial discrimination had adverse effects in the way men came to perceive themselves. Apartheid disenfranchised men, because, from various black South African cultural and traditional perspectives, it was the duty of the man to provide economically for his family, but because of exploitation and relegation to the underclass, it became difficult to achieve this aim. Furthermore, many men as a result of poverty could not get married because they did not have money or family wealth to afford lobola and bride wealth. Therefore, when "black men resisted class and race oppression, they were also, simultaneously, defending their masculinity"; this is because "[c]lass and race oppression had a specific gender impact on […] men: it emasculated them. They were called

'boys,' treated as subordinates, denied respect" (Morrell, *Men, Movements and Gender Transformation* 283). At the same time, black men had already been enjoying the unfair privilege they had been receiving from their patriarchal relations with women, as heads of homesteads and as authority figures in their respective communities. Therefore, not only did racial inequalities and discrimination erode their statuses as 'men' but they were also reduced to 'boys' and to economic inadequacy which compromised the status they enjoyed as authority figures in their own communities. As a result, they were forced into migrant labour so that they could be able to pay lobola and those already with families had to provide economic security for them.

What also contributed greatly to migrant labour were spatial inequalities as discussed above: because industries were located in the cities, black men migrated from significantly underdeveloped rural areas and headed to cities in search of employment. However, since racial laws were instituted which prohibited blacks from living in the cities, at the very same time that industries and mines were in need of cheap labour, hostels were built to accommodate this working class at the outskirts of the cities. These hostels were built alongside the peri-urban township spaces (such as Soweto, Sebokeng and Sharpeville) that were occupied by black people. The townships themselves were created by the government after the forced removals of black populations from suburbs such as Sophiatown – renamed Triomf after forced removals and later returned to its original name in the early 2000s.

Because of agitation, many young men in these townships felt that the adults were complicit in the black population's oppression because they observed the strict laws of apartheid. In turn, they opposed their elders in the townships and sought an action-oriented struggle against the government. Therefore, many went to join military wings in exile, most notably *Umkhonto we Sizwe* and the *Azanian People's Liberation Army*. After their military training, they came back as 'comrades' and took a number of the youth under their wings. Having acquired the necessary training, 'comrades' re-joined their townships and "took it upon themselves to organise 'defence committees' whose responsibilities included protecting communities from the state and the 'third force' (clandestine forces either armed and controlled by the state or operating with its tacit consent) as well as 'weeding out' state informants" (Xaba 109). In the same way that youthful desire and passion helped the Apartheid state (to a greater degree) to mobilise a great number of youths into military service, as well as being a rite of passage into manhood, a similar kind of image dominated the black population youth.

At the same time that the township dwellers aligned themselves with the ANC, the PAC, the UDM, and AZAPO as political affiliations which they felt represented their needs, the hostel migrants, owing to the fact that most were of Zulu ethnic background, affiliated themselves with the IFP. While the ANC and the PAC had military wings with which most township youth associated themselves, the IFP did not develop a military wing but with the use of a quite violent historical past, they perpetuated violent iterations of Zulu manhood. Furthermore, talk of an independent Zulu Kingdom also dominated the party's canvassing. The ANC, however, opposed the IFP's views that post-elections, KwaZulu Natal should be recognised as an independent Zulu homeland; consequently, the IFP spread rumours among the Zulu ethnic men that the prospective new government had strong aims and ambitions to erode a traditional Zulu manhood. This led to violent confrontations between the IFP and other political parties (most especially the ANC). The violence that transpired was described earlier on in the chapter. To understand how inequality played a part in this violence, one can make reference to spatial inequality as well as the desire for political power. The existence of townships and hostels side by side made it easier for confrontation to occur between men from these two politically and ideologically distinct groups. The inequality that forced these people to migrate from their rural areas and into these peri-urban spaces contributed to the above violent confrontation. Furthermore, the ANC claimed that the IFP was working with the government's clandestine operations to undermine negotiations. It argued that this was the Apartheid government's way of trying to hold on to power. As such, 'comrades' who were members of *Umkhonto we Sizwe* took it upon themselves to arm themselves and the quasi-military groups they formed (the Young Tigers in *Ways of Dying*) and confront the IFP's 'Zulu impi' warriors.

After 1994, a problem thus presented itself. With many young men now dispossessed because 'comrades' were no longer required in the new South African dispensation, most of those who could not be absorbed into the South African National Defence Force fell into the underclass. Unemployed and without education – the consequence of having had to choose between military training and education – they "found ways of using their guns to earn money. Some used their guns to rob banks and others used them in contract murders" (Xaba, 107). With violence having been shaped into a skill, many townships and informal settlements became hosts to unemployed men, skilled in violence, who in turn put their skills on offer for a sizeable amount. According to a Soweto resident, as captured by Jacklyn Cock, "'Ex-combatants are often used as paid assassins. They will kill for a plate of porridge, R200 and a bottle of brandy' […] The interrupted education, lack of marketable skills, training in the means of violence and

(frequent) political disillusion, make ex-combatants potentially lethal" (44). Therefore, without any marketable skills, they put the only skill they learned on offer. This was how they ironically made a living, by turning almost overnight form liberators to cold-blooded 'contract' killers.

Today, most acts of violence in the country are committed by black men in various crimes, as a result South African prisons today have a high number of black and coloured inmates. Explaining the demographic links between violence and South African black masculinity today, Robert Morrell observes that although race is a strong indicator, this "has nothing to do with race per se. Violence is not caused by skin colour but rather is the effect of various historical, social and psychological factors […] colonialism and apartheid […] provided fertile ground for constructions of masculinity that endorsed and legitimised the use of violence in a variety of private and public contexts (*Men, Masculinities and Gender Politics* 18). Among these various contributing factors, it is important to indicate that most violent crimes occur in poor neighbourhoods. Therefore, poverty is definitely one of the contributing factors, even though there is no causal relationship between poverty and aggression. What is common however is that, "although poverty does not cause aggression, it gives rise to conditions that make it more likely. Boys, black boys in particular, are vulnerable to violence" (Bhana, 205) and that is among the reasons why South African prisons today are filled with black men.

Aside from the way violence appears to dominate relations between men within and across ethnic and racial boundaries, the common issue that many men share despite their racial, ethnic and political background is, as indicated earlier, a predominant heterosexual discrimination against gay masculinities. Although the South African constitution prohibits all forms of discrimination even those relating to sexual preference and gender identity, homosexual men are still a marginalised group in the country and denied access to power. In some cases, they have created their own spaces where their behaviour cannot be criticised, however these spaces are themselves marginalising. To take an example: Cape Town boasts "the continent's most developed gay and lesbian scene and eclipses all other South African cities when it comes to the number of gay and lesbian venues (well over 100). It has consistently made it to the top ten of international gay and lesbian travel destinations" (Elder, 48). But because this social group's identity is often rejected by the heterosexual populations in the name of culture and tradition, Cape Town has sought to create a space which is inclusive without paying attention to difference. This has led to an ignorance about how social aspects such as race, ethnicity, cultural traditions and economic means, among others, affect gay men's lived experience. The mistake here is an assumption of homogeneity in gay masculinities across time and space.

Hence many of these businesses have targeted a specific clientele understood to be white and economically successful thus marginalising others who do not fit this criterion. This line of thought is explored in Duiker's novel.

This deliberate effort to "ignore the geography of homosexual lives lived throughout the Cape Town metropolitan areas and their particular spatial histories [and] the massive investment and ultimate visibility granted to 'gay space' in Cape Town" results in a "further marginaliz[ation of] sexual minorities of colour in the South African city" (Elder, 45). These massage parlours and bath houses "are presented as possible nodes on an evolving urban landscape of homomasculine desire. New and particularly catering to a particular class of gay men, expensive by local standards and exclusionary" (Elder, 52). This too will be discussed more fully in relation to Duiker's novel. Despite their inclusive ideals, there are often cracks where racial inequalities emerge given the fact that the South African populations are still racially divided especially when considering the lower and underclasses.

1.3.2) Inequality as an internal process through which the ideology of masculinity oversees an unequal distribution of power in the relations between men

Another form of inequality that may exist among men is a psychological one. This is because many men do not perceive of each other as equals but as competitors. Given this fact, there exists therefore a need for individual men to prove themselves in front of other men so that they can claim a dominant hierarchical status. Other forms of inequalities play a major role in influencing this one. For instance, men who are economically well off may psychologically assume a dominant position. In return, men who are relegated to subordinate positions frequently use violence as a means to escape their inferiority complex; however, some of those men in dominant positions also tend to use violence to supplement their dominance.

The one factor which single-handedly contributed greatly to the intertwining of violence and masculinity from a South African perspective was "the militarization-masculinism nexus" which dominated the apartheid years from different racial aspects (Cock, 50). During the apartheid years, "both white and black youths were socialised into a militarist masculinity which was reinforced by a gender-defined sense of social solidarity [and] a brotherhood of combatants" (Cock, 50). Reading this social phenomenon alongside the ideology of masculinity exposes that what we have in South Africa today is a situation in which violence

has become "regarded as a legitimate solution to conflict and a crucial means of both obtaining and defending power" (Cock, 43). In addition, anxiety also affects men in a quite serious way where they are constantly required to prove to others the legitimacy of their masculinities. This results in the relations between men and their masculinities being fraught and troubled.

This is partly because, although patriarchy rewards men who rank higher, it also oppresses them, though not in the same way it oppresses those who occupy the lower ranks of the hierarchy strata. The hierarchy that exists between men means that those who are viewed as lesser men are oppressed both by the patriarchal system which legitimises their oppression as well as by those who rank higher. However, not only does a patriarchal system oppress the subordinated masculinities, it also oppresses the dominant ones because they suffocate under an ideology which constantly requires of them to participate in acts that continuously prove their dominance, unless they lose that dominance themselves and become the dominated. This therefore means that men are not only male bodies. They are masculinised male bodies, because the former as ideology must constantly be in a synonymous relationship with the latter. And, as we have seen, the ideals of the former are dictated by social contexts and history. In the early 2000s, "a young black man from Soweto insisted […] 'For you to prove your manhood these days, you've got to own a gun'" (Cock, 47). These words reveal a great deal: prove, manhood, and gun. This means that anxiety is linked with masculinity and violence. This ultimately means that, psychologically, there exists a fear of emasculation in many men, thus to preserve masculinity, violence is frequently adopted as a necessary signifier. The amalgamation of these three has become central in shaping the heterosexual masculinities that dominate the South African landscape, and this is not only in relation to black men. For example: "Eugene Terreblanche instructed his followers to 'buy weapons and clean your weapons. The Boer and his gun are inseparable" (Cock, 47). In both cases cited above guns are related to masculinities; additionally, there is an unmistakable attachment to and emphasis on the male body – 'to *prove that you are a man'*, on the one hand, and 'the *Boer and his gun'* on the other.

Many South African heterosexual men believe "that guns 'ought to be the preserve of men'" (Cock, 47) because of the perception that being a "man has always […] been about being able to inflict pain on others and 'take pain yourself'" (Walker, 171). One can already discern the disastrous perception that this belief generates. In addition, what is observed is the conception that violence is understood as a product not only of the male body, but one which proves manhood. That is, violence takes the male body and masculinity and combines them as one. This ideology is therefore undeniably associated with power and authority, for it presupposes

that a man who embraces violence and is in turn not afraid of pain himself is not a weak but a strong man who can occupy a dominant position. As the discussion in the subsequent chapters will show, militarism is naturalised as a rite of passage into manhood in the *Smell of Apples*. In *Ways of Dying*, violence is portrayed as a natural deployment of manhood, whereby those who employ it are men and the ones who do not are "just scared rats" (23). Lastly in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*, hierarchies are naturalised as inevitable conditions of manhood(s), thus perpetuating inequality.

Therefore, the identities of different men are interpreted in many different ways because of the arbitrary relations that exist between the male body and masculinity. This is because this arbitrary relation is informed by context thus negating the idea that men's identities are monolithic across time and space. For Behr's Marnus, manhood depends on achieving and proving militaristic qualities as a way of negotiating his way into manhood; for Duiker's Chris, it is to prove to himself – through the domination and the eventual raping of Tshepo – that he is still a man despite the gang tattoo sign classifying him – within prison ideology – as female. And, for Mda's lamenter who cries "[a]re we men or just scared rats?" (23), manhood is achieved by deploying violence as its preserve. All these different ways in which manhood(s) becomes signified depend on patriarchy because it offers conditions which make hierarchies and an unequal distribution of power the models of structure upon which masculinities become dependent.

Moreover, patriarchy shapes the relationships between men and because of its power-oriented model, it legitimizes the existence of inequality in those relationships. Furthermore, not only does it offer grounds for injustice, but it is also a space where boy children are easily oppressed. Observing this phenomenon, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie asserts that "[w]e do a great disservice to boys in how we raise them. We stifle the humanity of boys. We define masculinity in a *very* narrow way. Masculinity is a hard, small cage, and we put boys inside […]" [original emphasis] (26). Because of this model of upbringing, boys cannot spontaneously be boys, but instead they "are taught to repress their yearnings for love and connection and [instead] build a wall of toughness around themselves to be accepted as men" (Evans and Wallace, 485). This means that the requirements of passages into boyhood and manhood are oppressive, given that along that rite of passage into boyhood, boys have to "[d]on a mask of emotional bravado which leaves them isolated. All their vulnerable, empathetic, caring emotions which they show from birth […] get repressed and pushed down as a result of being teased or shamed" (Evans and

Wallace, 485) since these qualities are perceived as weak and unworthy of being found in a boy.

The results then of such productions of boys and of men are unfeeling, careless and egoistic individuals who are always in competition for power, men who seek to prove other men's lack of significance in order to elevate their own masculine identities and conceive of themselves as superior. Because of the ideology of masculinity, "boys soon learn that aggression is tied to masculinity. To be a man is to be in charge; to be gentle is to be a wimp, somehow less than a man" (Evans and Wallace, 485). The success of patriarchy in formulating this kind of introspection in men and boys lies in a condition of anxiety which is "an inevitable product of patriarchy at the same time as it contributes to the production of patriarchy [because …] [m]asculinity is inherently anxious […] anxiety is not a secondary effect of masculinity […] [but] a necessary and inevitable condition" (Breitenberg, 2-3). This condition plays a crucial role in the relations between masculinity and the male body where the former stands as a signifying consciousness for the latter.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

It is these issues and others concerning South African masculinities and inequalities that this study explores and how they play out in the chosen fictional texts beginning with the earliest, *The Smell of Apples* (1995) by Mark Behr, first published in 1993 in Afrikaans and under the title *Die Reuk van Appels*. This is followed by *Ways of Dying* (1995) by Zakes Mda and then I move on to the most recent, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001) by K. Sello Duiker. The historical linearity of these three texts is of importance because not only do they engage the social context, but they also draw on the historical context and understandings. These three novels allow for a perusal of various forms of masculinities ranging from apartheid 'Afrikaner-nationalist masculinity' in *The Smell of Apples* and its links to power through militaristic masculinity, to the South African interregnum in *Ways of Dying* where a struggle masculinity as well as toxic masculinities are critiqued through the protagonist's deliberate self-marginalization from both the society as well as from the construct of masculinity itself. And lastly, there will be an analysis of the interrogation of post-apartheid masculinities in which rape, queer and homosexual expressions of masculinities are included in the politics of men and masculinities in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*.

Mark Behr's novel *The Smell of Apples* is written in two different time frames, initially narrated from an innocent point of view by the eleven-year-old Marnus with constant interruptions and

commentary by the older Marnus in the middle of a war (the South African Border War). The novel is concerned with ideology, nationalism, boyhood, and militaristic masculinity. It is a stern critique of warped ideology, and it uses Marnus (in formulating a before and after historical analysis) as a reference point. In contrast to *The Smell of Apples*, Zakes Mda's *Ways of Dying* follows the wanderings of Toloki (a professional mourner) who wanders around looking for death and funerals. The narrative is driven by chaos and followed closely by gloom, a sombre atmosphere and a dense representation of violence and death. And finally, K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* follows the story of Tshepo, a university student (he later drops out) who is diagnosed with 'cannabis-induced psychosis' at a Psychiatric Hospital in Cape Town (Valkenberg). Duiker in this text deals mostly with the subjects of trauma and sexuality, following Tshepo from when he is in Valkenberg and has a relationship with Zebron, to his relationship with Chris, and through to his employment at a gay brothel and living his life as a gay man in Cape Town.

Chapter Two: Imposed Manhood: Boyhood, Innocence and Militaristic Masculinity in Mark Behr's *The Smell of Apples* (1995)

> Death brings its own freedom, and it is for the living that the dead should mourn, for in life there is no escape from history (Behr, 198)
>
> We are always coming up with the emphatic facts of history in our private experience and verifying them here. All history becomes subjective […] Each new fact in [Marnus's] private experience flashes a light on what great bodies of men have done, and the crises of his life refer to national crises (Emerson, 278 & 281)

It is 1988 and Lieutenant Marnus Erasmus and his battalion are forced into a downward retreat (while engaged in warfare in Cunene Province in Angola) in an attempt to cross into Namibia. Their attempts are unsuccessful and as a result, they are trapped around the Calueque dam. This entrapment thus makes it possible for an assault to be launched against Lieutenant Marnus Erasmus's battalion. With no hope for a possible breakthrough, death is invoked as the only form of escape and reprieve.

Trapped in this dire situation "*of dust and desperation*" with the "*explosions and thunder of Cuban MiGs, invisibly shattering the blue sky just north* [getting] *closer and closer every day*" [original italics] (12). Lieutenant Marnus Erasmus – forced into a condition of hopelessness – regresses into his memory with a desire to understand himself critically as a consequence of his formative years: "*Perhaps that summer ultimately determined it. Possibly not even the whole summer – just that one week in December*" [original italics] (31). *The Smell of Apples* (1995) therefore tells a narrative in which two time frames are significant to understanding the life of Marnus Erasmus. At the same time, his life reflects the national politics as well as the workings of ideology and indoctrination.

Focussing its narrative on the apartheid years, *The Smell of Apples* "offers an account of the ideological and repressive workings of the apartheid system" (Barnard, 208). It achieves this by not focussing greatly on the oppression across racial lines and instead turns its attention to the ideology of the apartheid system and explores it from within. It does so through exploring an apartheid ideology-inclined Afrikaner family, where the family structure becomes subsumed in the larger context of state politics. Therefore, in telling a narrative which follows the subjective experience of Marnus Erasmus during this time, the novel also invokes national history in that account because this subjective experience cannot be separated from the larger

state politics. As understood in the text, history serves as the foundation upon which one's life is rooted. It represents the national politics that become intertwined with individuality and selfhood, where the larger narrative which includes the state's governance of public affairs is exposed in subjective experience through the patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact. This pact is significant in the workings of ideology, ensuring that male children undergo indoctrination which aims to produce dominant masculinities informed by the hegemonic structure of the state.

This chapter will be divided into two sections, and the second section will further be divided into two parts. In the first section I discuss the ways in which power influences the relations between male children and male adults and how the former are shown to be vulnerable in relation to the latter. Here I point out that age is not only a state or a biological fact but manifests itself as a form of inequality because one can observe in the relations where there are age differences the existence of three characteristics which Göran Therborn points out as fundamental if inequality should exist: "First […] inequality is always vertical or ranking", second, this is not "just a categorization, but something that violates a moral norm of equality among human beings." And third, "for a difference to be an inequality it must be abolishable." (579-580). In the first part of the second section I discuss the way in which Marnus is abused by the ideology of a patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact and how through this pact he is coerced into accepting militaristic masculinity. Because this pact was influenced by the desire to maintain racial inequalities, I discuss in the second part of the second section how this pact functioned. Here I point out that this system, while it sought to oppress black, coloured and Indian populations, it also oppressed white males because they were violently forced into conscription, prison or exile.

2.1)   Oppression, Power and Age-based Inequality

Robert Muponde observes that: "[L]iterary childhoods [when] depicted […] offer sites that constitute and define resistance in a given national history. The imagining of the child and childhood by the adult […] is tied to the history of the nation that inflects it" (3). When considering this assertion with regards to *The Smell of Apples*, it is certainly true that the narrative portrayed is tied to the history of the then Apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, given the context within which the text is written, it is only fair to question if there is any kind of resistance Marnus mounts against this oppressive order. As part of Behr's exploration of the

patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact of the apartheid ideology, he shows how Marnus is successfully recruited and subsequently conscripted into the state's military force. This recruitment is made possible by the way in which *The Smell of Apples* portrays childhood. In the novel childhood is portrayed as a representation of physical and ideological vulnerability due to the inequality based on age differences between the child and the adult.

This childhood vulnerability that the text highlights is unmistakably set against the state's indoctrinating power on the one hand and on the other, fully grown men with their masculine dominance and power. Therefore, the boys whose experiences are depicted grapple with two great forces against which they are powerless. In the text, we are presented with at least three boys whose narratives are of great significance. These three boys are the focaliser Marnus, his best friend and blood-brother Frikkie and to a lesser degree, Little-Neville. When we first meet Little-Neville, "[h]e's completely naked and his arms are tied to the bed with strips of plastic to stop him from scratching the burns. His legs are drawn wide apart so that they won't rub together. Between his thighs, across his bum and all over his back it looks like a big piece of raw liver" (189). The image we are introduced to is the result of an attack by three white men who "took off his clothes and rubbed lard or something all over his back. And then […] they held him up in front of the locomotive furnace" (130-131), as punishment for stealing charcoal. Upon hearing this, Marnus exposes the racial influence behind this attack:

> [W]hat makes it all worse is the fact that it was three white men that did it to him […] Even if Little-Neville did steal charcoal, I still don't think it's right for someone to fry him in front of a locomotive engine. Whether Little-Neville's a Coloured or not, it doesn't matter, you shouldn't do things like that to someone, specially not a child. It must have been the most terrible thing when they picked him up and held him in front of the burning oven. He must have screamed something terrible and I wonder if anyone heard him. (138)

This response, 'whether he is coloured or not', shows how much of an impact race plays in this injustice. What informs this incident are the politics of apartheid in terms of the state-sanctioned inequality. This is because this incident of violence exposes all three characteristics that make up inequality as per Göran Therborn's definition discussed in chapter one. There is class difference observed here and the three white men do not simply fall into a different racial category from the victim, but those categories are also informed by a denial of equality across races.

This therefore means that the engagement between Little-Neville and the three white men cannot be observed outside of the society within which they exist. That is to say, their actions

are greatly informed by their surroundings. Therefore, as argued in the first chapter, the racial aspect that informs these actions should not be viewed separately from the material base. In Apartheid South Africa, economic inequalities had a significant correlation to racial privilege. Blacks and coloureds were lower on the social hierarchy in both racial and economic terms. Therefore, when "Little-Neville and one of his cousins went to the railway yard in Touwsrivier – to steal some charcoal" (130) they did not do so because they were being mischievous as children but because "[t]hey wanted to take it to Doreen's sister" (130). Both Little-Neville and his cousin's actions are informed by specific knowledge about why they were acting thus: they knew that they were going to the railway to steal charcoal and the reason was so that they could give it to Doreen's sister. It is thus arguable that both Little-Neville and his cousin are forced to assume responsibility at a very young age because of the fact that Doreen's sister could not afford to buy charcoal. Therefore, this shows that race in South Africa always had a strong connection to the material base.

This is also seen in an episode where Marnus and Frikkie meet with Chrisjan. The latter begs for change from the two boys; in addition, he is looking for empty bottles so that he can exchange them for a deposit. Since he left the Erasmuses' employ, this appears to be his way of earning a living:

> 'Chrisjan!' I say. 'Don't you know who I am any more?' 'Hasn't the baas got a little loose something—' '*Who am I*!' I shout at him, getting all irritated. I tell Frikkie we should go home. We get up to leave. 'I'm looking for empties, my Crown,' he says, eyeing the half-empty bottle of cream-soda I'm holding in my hand. 'Well, first tell me who I am. *Then* you can have the bottle and go get the deposit for it.' He's almost kneeling now, and Frikkie chips in and says he should behave himself like a Coloured even though he is a Kaffir […] 'So,' I ask, 'are you going to tell me my name?' He pulls his face until it's covered in more wrinkles, and holds out his hand again: 'I am Chrisjan, my Crown.' We burst out laughing, and I put my hands to my sides with the cream-soda bottle resting against my hip: 'Not *your name*, baboon! Tell me what *my* name is, then I'll give you the bottle.' [original emphasis] (164-165)

The exchange between Marnus, Frikkie and Chrisjan further reveals that race is tied to a material base. In addition, we see that the two boys' demeanour towards Chrisjan is devoid of all forms of respect. This is because his age is insignificant when compared to the boys' race. Furthermore, as discussed in the first chapter, and as we observe in the above exchange, race has a specific gender impact on Chrisjan. This effect is that of emasculation. He is a boy in relation to both Frikkie and Marnus – despite their ages confirming the opposite. Moreover, he is treated as a subordinate and denied the respect that is due to him and this is underlined by Marnus and Frikkie's calling him a baboon and kaffir.

Although in his interaction with Chrisjan, Marnus seems to affirm Apartheid's racist ideology through treating the former with a heightened sense of arrogance because of racial discrimination, the manner in which he approaches Little-Neville's victimisation is in direct contrast to the stance he takes with Chrisjan. What explains his position in relation to Little-Neville is the fact that the violence of the situation contradicts the warped ideological teachings he had been receiving. The question he asks: "why did white people do it?" shows how agitated Marnus is because he has been taught that white people are noble. And instead, it is the Xhosas who are a terrible nation because they killed all the Bushmen, followed closely by the Zulus who "so cruelly murdered Boer women and little children" (8). Therefore, in his subjective experience, he does not associate such violence and cruelty with white people until then. His question therefore exposes the extent to which he feels betrayed and has been racially indoctrinated.

In addition, he feels a certain sense of affinity with Little-Neville despite their differences in race. This affinity is confirmed by the fact that he is able to imagine Little-Neville's pain which affords Marnus the ability to empathise with him: "It must be terribly sore to be burned like that. When we're having a braai and just one little burning coal gets under my foot …" (139). What also informs Marnus's position is the closeness in age between himself and Little-Neville; that is why he develops an affinity with the latter and this is the reason why he states that Little-Neville's racial background does not matter, what matters is that such an act of violence is not the type of thing that should be done to a child. By emphasising Little-Neville's age, Marnus highlights a profound sense of vulnerability because of the age difference between Little-Neville and the men who assaulted him. The fact that he was simply picked up highlights his powerlessness in resisting the power that was exerted on him. Therefore, he is turned into a victim who can only observe and cry as he is violated and abused because he lacks the necessary strength to defend himself.

This childhood vulnerability that the text highlights in the face of adult male supremacy appears again in a climactic scene where Frikkie is raped by Johan Erasmus. We are made to recognise Frikkie's vulnerability in contrast to Johan's adult supremacy and strength: "it looks like Frikkie's trying to push himself up against the wall" (175). Against this immovable object that cannot permit his escape, Johan is able to pin him down and thus proceeds to rape him. During this episode, it only takes one hand for Johan to restrain Frikkie: "[h]e uses his one hand to hold himself up on the bed. With the other he keeps the pillow down over Frikkie's head" (177). This thus shows how powerless the latter is against the former. As a result, Johan's hand

serves two purposes: the first is to pin Frikkie down so that his struggles are suppressed if there should be any, and the second with the aid of a pillow is to render him silent by subduing his screams and cries. With both Frikkie and Little-Neville becoming victims, *The Smell of Apples* manages to highlight racially motivated violence at the same time as it exposes an age-based oppression. What is observed here is a situation where one (an adult male) has dominance as well as strength and the other (a boy) is incapable of defending himself against a brutal force of adult male supremacy. Whether race is an issue or not, the oppressive power of male figures is depicted in the text. Therefore, what *The Smell of Apples* offers in this context is a critique of the unjust use of adult male supremacy to oppress and abuse children.

Both Little-Neville and Frikkie are "[m]ale subjects who […] endure oppression in relation to class, race, age and other ideologically determined forms of coercion" (Visagie, 144). It is also important to note that in oppression there is inequality. The former simply cannot exist without the latter. Additionally, the most consistent form of inequality that is observed in oppression is inequality in relation to power and this is the case with both Little-Neville and Frikkie. In the preceding chapter I pointed out that masculinities in South Africa are influenced and affected by social as well as biological determinants such as age and political atmosphere. As seen with Little-Neville and Frikkie, age is a factor that renders them vulnerable to their adult male abusers. The fact that they are children means that power is skewed between themselves and their adult oppressors. Not only do the two boys have no power but they also do not have any sense of how power works. Therefore, on the basis of age alone, the two boys are abused physically as well as psychologically and this is all because of inequality in terms of age.

My argument here is that age is not only a biological fact with regards to the abuse of the two boys but a notable form of inequality. This is because according to the definition of inequality that I employ in the first chapter, there is a vertical ranking observed and most importantly this violates a moral norm of equality on the level of humanity. Lastly, it is observable that the types of violence that the boys experience could have been avoided. As such, not only is age a biological fact but a form of inequality because it is on the basis of age that the two boys are abused by their adult male counterparts. The form of masculinity that is represented here appears to be overbearing and highly burdensome on the boys. This depiction of the relationships between boys and the adult males reveals the vulnerability of the former based on their age as a biological fact in contrast to the male adults thus making age a form of inequality that makes possible their abuse.

Although there is a form of vulnerability as seen above in the relationship between the boys and the adult males as a result of age differences, Marnus does, however, manage to mount severe criticism against the adult as the oppressor. This is because Marnus "is a secondary [victim] of trauma" because of his "proximity to [the] scenes of violence" (Rajiva, 84). He is quite resolute and makes it clear where he stands on both matters. In the episode where Frikkie is being raped, Marnus is unaware that it is his own father raping Frikkie in the room below his, a room into which he is spying. He is immediately shocked by what he sees: "I want to choke […] I know what the General is doing to Frikkie" (175). This shock then leads to his desire for active resistance against the perceived culprit: "I *must* go and call Dad! […] I must get up and go and call Dad to come and help Frikkie. Now I don't care if Dad finds out about the holes in the floor" [original emphasis] (175). He does not even seem to care whether his father learns that he has been spying on their visitor. This is because he seems to value intervention against what he just witnessed much more than he appears to value his own safety or avoidance of some possible punishment for his misdemeanour. Additionally, he maturely conveys an empathic perception with regards to Little-Neville as stated above. And when his mother downplays the thought of screaming, he responds: "But Mum, he *would* have screamed. It must be terribly sore to be burned like that" [original emphasis] (139). Both his resolute criticism and empathy put him squarely on the side of the victims. His criticism further highlights childhood vulnerability as noted above in two ways: first, it shows that both Little-Neville and Frikkie are incapable of defending themselves; secondly, it also shows that he (as the observer and witness) is also powerless, therefore unable to help the two boys most especially Frikkie whom he witnesses being abused, despite the realisation that help is needed.

After his firm criticism of the violence against Little-Neville and witnessing Frikkie's rape and failing to help him, Marnus begins his revolt, first against his family and then against a masculinity to which he is expected to subscribe. Because individual experience here also underscores national politics, by revolting against this masculinity and his family, he is revolting against the patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact. This revolt that Marnus begins, like his criticism, further highlights the vulnerability of children in relation to adult males. It does so because, as argued above, it exposes age as a form of inequality as opposed to its being only a biological fact. This is due to the fact that at this point Marnus does what he failed to do earlier during the rape of Frikkie: he takes an active position to confront and oppose his father's masculinity. However, because of the fact that he is a child, he is simply picked up

by his father's one hand and with the other beaten into submission. All this begins when he is ordered to open his father's bag for Mister Smith's gifts:

> 'Gifts!' Mum cries. 'Who are they from, Marnus?' 'From the General, Mum.' 'Mister Smith, you mean, my boy!' I walk back into the bathroom. 'Are you coming, Marnus?' Dad says from under the shower. 'I'm almost finished.' 'I'd rather go and have a bath, Dad.' I answer, and pick up my clothes from the floor. Dad puts his head around the curtain and asks: 'Since when do you bath when you can have a shower?' […] While I'm sitting in the hot bath looking at the scabs on my knees, I think about everything that's happened in the last few days. Everything changed since the General came to our house. Nothing is the same any more. (193)

Immediately after Marnus drops the presents on the bed, and his mother asks from whom they came, he answers 'from the General', after which his mother corrects him by reverting to the General's alias. At this significant point in time, Marnus's use of the correct identification and his abandonment of the alias serve as an important point of departure to mark his revolt. This is because by so doing he first rids himself of the deception he has been made to adopt. After shedding himself of this deception, he goes back to the bathroom but refuses to jump into the shower with his father. His refusal to join his father comes immediately after he has refused to continue to use an alias he was made to adopt. Therefore, his refusal to join his father is not an innocent refusal, but an act of refusing any close contact between himself and his father. What makes this clear are the thoughts he has while sitting in the bathtub and his realisation that things have changed due to the knowledge he has gained since the General visited them.

After Marnus is called out of the bathroom, he goes to the bedroom where the family opens their presents together, first his mother, Leonore, followed by his sister, Ilse. He adds that "When Dad says I can open mine now; I say he can open his first" (194). Later:

> Dad says it's my turn to open my gift. I pick up the little packet. It doesn't feel heavy. I don't want to open it. I don't want anything from the General and I hate Dad […] I pull at the Sellotape and the paper slowly comes undone beneath my hand. Inside the paper are two rectangular objects. I can't make out what they are, at first. Dad leans across and looks into the packet: 'They're epaulettes. They must be his epaulettes […]' I don't want to touch them. (194-195)

Here, Marnus tries to assert himself by trying to oppose his father and through undermining his authority. This act is quite deliberate as he notes that he hates his father and he does not want anything from the General. However, he does not manage to prevail as he is forced into submission by the whole family and he finally opens the gift. It is then suggested almost immediately that he should change into a camouflage suit in order for him to have his epaulettes fixed on his shoulders. After initially refusing, he is subdued into changing into the suit and his father calls for him so that he can fit his epaulettes. Unlike in the previous episode where he

suffocates under his father's authority and finally gives in, here he becomes firm and bluntly refuses to allow the insignia to be fixed on his shoulders.

Bystrom reads Marnus in this episode as "[b]etraying the extent to which his father and the General have become fused and confused in his mind", as a result, he "tries to reject his father by rejecting the parting gift that the General left him" (5). The text, however, reveals sentiments that oppose Bystrom's assertion because when Marnus makes this point, he is quite clear and certain in his rejection of both men: "I don't want anything from the General and I hate Dad" (194). When Marnus makes this point, he follows it with his own evidence: "I know now that it wasn't Ilse's reflection in the mirror last night, and I knew all along that it wasn't a dream" (194). This is the reason why he does not want anything from the General because he has observed in him the same qualities that have made him hate his own father. Like his own father's predatory masculinity, which Marnus witnessed when he raped Frikkie, the General is also sexually immoral, and he took advantage of the Erasmus family's hospitality and exploited it. Therefore, in his rejection of both individuals, he is purposefully protesting against their dominant state-sanctioned masculinities.

In view of this fact, for Marnus, both men have the same qualities: they are both exploitative and sexually immoral, that is why he does not confuse them but rejects what they stand for. When he says that he does not want anything from the General, and that he hates his father, he also says that everything has changed. This change represents a shift in his mind: the two military figures that he once admired as a result of their militaristic masculinity have proven themselves to be quite undeserving of his admiration. Therefore, when he rejects the epaulettes – even though his father says that "it's a great honour when a General gives someone his epaulettes" and that he "must have really impressed Mister Smith for him to give […] [Marnus] such a special gift" (195) – he symbolically rejects the militaristic masculinity that the two men represent. This is why he does not confuse the two but observes that everything has changed because in what he has experienced, the honour that was attached to this masculinity has swiftly disappeared and become insignificant:

> I move forward a few paces, but come to a standstill. I stare at the pistol in his hands. 'Come closer, my boy' he says, picking up the epaulettes from the bed next to him, 'so that Dad can fit them for you.' I shake my head. He frowns and says again: 'Come, let's fit them on now, Marnus.' But I stay where I am, in the middle of the floor. I can't move […] I shake my head without taking my eyes from him […] I'm scared of him. He speaks again, but I can't hear what he's saying. There is a silence all around me (195-196)

In an earlier episode where Frikkie was raped by Johan, Marnus witnessed the abusive tendencies in his father's character. That is why he confesses he is afraid of him. Furthermore, before this confession, Marnus stares at the pistol in his father's hands: this is an important observation because it underscores Johan's inclination to violence. And despite the fact that at this precise moment Marnus is scared of his father for the two reasons given above, he still refuses to yield, instead, he stands firm. This is made possible by the fact that he is protesting against his father's dominance with total silence. In that silence he is triumphant, because he manages to shut his father out and by such an action, he ignores his wrath. Therefore, when observing these actions of protest and the two cases of trauma and the roles that Marnus plays in both, either as a commenter on Little-Neville's traumatic experience or as an observer and a willing actor against Frikkie's victimiser, we see that he manages to mount "a severe critique against an oppressive adult authority" (Muponde, 107) that is founded on the grounds of inequality. Ergo, through a close analysis of his character, we may read him as a figure that tries to resist a state-sanctioned militaristic masculinity. It is significant that not only are the three boys abused by adult males, but in addition these adult males have links to state-sanctioned militaristic masculinity. Because conscription was compulsory for all white males as pointed out in the first chapter, it is apparent that Little-Neville's abusers also have links to that state-sanctioned militaristic masculinity.

While Marnus tries some form of resistance in his revolt, he is beaten into submission, and coerced into accepting the very same militaristic masculinity that he was trying to revolt against. This further exposes the power behind this dominant masculinity as a power that gains its strength and benefits from inequality. After he is beaten into submission Marnus observes: "Dad […] picks up the epaulettes and fastens them on the shoulders of my camouflage suit […] In my room I don't feel like taking off my camouflage suit, and I stand looking at myself in the mirror for a long time. I get into bed, camouflage suit and all" (197-198). What one gathers from all this is that Marnus initially opposes ideological conversion after he has witnessed the horrors of the masculinity he is being trained to assume. And instead of acknowledging this masculinity and recognising it in himself, he rejects it. But because of the inequality upon which the relationship between the child and the adult male is grounded, as depicted in the novel, he is beaten into acceptance.

What the text makes evident with Marnus' narrative is the oppressive nature of state-sanctioned masculinity, which uses violence to force individuals back into toeing the line. And, as already indicated, for white males this included conscription into the military. This injustice

highlighted by both violence and the threat of it shows that even though the child's (or an individual's) desire is to resist, the adult (or state) holds significant power. As a result, the former possesses little to no strength to solidify his revolt and is thus rendered incapable of resistance. Militarism and militaristic masculinity as seen in the above discussion dominate the relations between male children and their adult male counterparts. This exposes militarism as one of the dominant problems of apartheid South Africa because as seen above, children were either oppressed by the military figures or by the ideology of the patriarchy/state/militaristic masculinity pact which necessitated a reproduction of militaristic masculinity as a hegemonic ideal. This idealisation of militaristic masculinity as the hegemonic ideal is discussed below.

2.2) Patriarchy/State/Hegemonic Masculinity Pact: Imposed Masculinity due to Racial Inequalities

As I have pointed out in the first chapter, during the course of apartheid a law was passed in 1967 which made conscription into the military compulsory for all white South African males from the age of sixteen. It was then that the ruling government further enforced a patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact. With this pact, militaristic masculinity became a form of masculinity that had hegemony and was subsequently dominant. For this ideal to be successful, conscription was not enough. Ideological indoctrination became a very significant tool in ensuring that more white males would be willing to get conscripted and later serve in the military for two years. As such, education institutions as well as museums were designed in such a way that propaganda about a state-sanctioned hegemonic masculinity could be easily passed down to children. Marnus observes this when he and Frikkie visited the museum: "[t]here is […] *the most wonderful* collection of old uniforms from all our country's wars" [emphasis added] (8-9). Here, militarism is given significance and the idea of militaristic masculinity is heavily idealised.

In the narrative, it is easy to observe that the romanticisation of the military figure as the ideal has already rooted in Marnus's mind. This can be seen in the way in which significance is given to his father's occupation: "[b]ecause of Dad's important work, him and Mum have to go to lots of Dinners and all kinds of official functions" (14); "[t]he old fishermen call Dad *mister* and I wonder what they would think if they knew that he's really a general" [original emphasis] (50). We see here the pride and admiration with which Marnus regards his father and he further pay close attention to how his stature is regarded by the society at large. However, not only is

this admiration directed towards Johan because of the father-figure role he plays in Marnus's early life, it is also his militaristic masculinity that is admired. This can be seen in the way Marnus regards anything or anyone with links to the military, and this is a form of admiration that can also be seen in Frikkie. When the General arrives at the Erasmus home, Marnus "initially views" him "with fascination and the kind of hero worship he extends to his own father" (Bystrom, 5), and Frikkie "hardly believes that he's in the same house as such an important general" (81).

Because the two boys are in awe of the general, they decide to spy on him after Marnus informs Frikkie of the scar he saw on the general's back: "we take turns to look down into the guest-room. On the floor beneath us, the General is standing staring out of the window […] 'Can you see his muscles?' Frikkie whispers […] 'Did you see those arms?' […] 'Ja' I answer" (99-100). Their perception of him expresses a representation of an ideal masculine image with its roots deeply anchored within a masculinist archetype and with a fascinating whiff of danger. At this point, the General becomes a living representation of their idealised notions of a militaristic masculine figure, because not only does his uniform confirm his militaristic masculinity but his body also represents this ideal through his big arms. Furthermore, there is also a sense that he has seen battle because of the scar that runs across his back. Upon seeing the scar, Frikkie asks, "How do you think he got it?" and Marnus responds: "it must be from the war in Chile" (99). It is important to observe here that the scar is seen as a badge of honour instead of an injury and Frikkie's question attests to this.

In addition, there is also a romanticised and passionate idealism with which the military is regarded. This is due to the efforts of the education system as an indoctrinating apparatus. Eventually, Marnus accepts this ideological indoctrination and claims in his essay that "[a]*fter three hundred years we have one of the strongest armies in the world*" [original italics] (160). His perception is further emphasised by his father who tells him that "[w]e can't say what's going to happen in Mozambique and Angola. If they go, the only thing that can save South Africa is our Defence Force" (69-70). However, having noted this, Johan ensures that there is hierarchy in the way the defence force is structured, giving dominance to the army and de-emphasising other structures: "Dad also said the navy isn't all that important […] It's on the army's shoulders that the biggest task rests and it's the army that will keep the terrorists out" (72). Johan purposefully undermines the navy by emptying it of all significance when he states that it is not important and emphasises the army's function. This directly influences Marnus's choice: "Frikkie and I have decided to join the army when the war comes. The army is better

than the air force or the navy where all the poofters go" (71). In addition to the indoctrinating function of the society, Johan further underscores the army as the most dominant force and thus influences Marnus's choice to join the army instead of the other forces.

Here, an image of hegemonic masculinity is idealised and given significance and in addition, Marnus is ideologically influenced so that he accepts this hegemonic masculinity and sees himself through it. Having thus made his choice to join the army – because it is presented as the hegemonic masculine ideal – and that choice itself being informed by the fact that other manifestations of military masculinities such as the navy and the air force are presented as less significant, Marnus thus seeks to prove through scripted behaviour the legitimacy of his own manifestation of masculinity. This is because he has come to learn that others are illegitimate manifestations because they are for 'poofters', therefore he has to prove that he is no poofter and his own developing masculinity is indeed legitimate. This scripted behaviour has been planted in him through rituals such as swimming on Friday afternoons with Johan in the cold winter waters of the Muizenberg beach: "The water's so icy in winter that I almost lose my breath, but Dad says we're bulls who can't be scared off by a bit of cold water" (50). This ritual emphasises the need to withstand discomfort for one to prove that one is a 'bull', thus proving a legitimate masculinity. The problem with this perception is that it gives the impression that for one's masculinity to be deemed legitimate, there must be a violence against the self that must be overcome.

In the first chapter, I pointed out that there are two manifestations of inequality with regards to the politics of men and masculinities: the first is inequalities as external social products which in turn affects men in relation to race, class, gender, sexual preference and more. The second is inequality as an internal product which legitimises an unequal distribution of power in the politics of men and masculinities. It is the second form of inequality that dominates Marnus's mind because he is involved in the dynamics of power within a politics of men and masculinities. He has been taught that hegemonic manifestations of state-sanctioned masculinities are not equal and that the most dominant is the army. Therefore, he is trapped in a situation where he has to prove that he is worthy of this kind of masculine manifestation and be able to withstand pain at all costs while proving himself.

This kind of ideological oppression is seen in a disturbing scene where Marnus and Frikkie are fishing (an early preparation for tiger-fishing). What one observes is the struggle, stress and physical abuse that Marnus inflicts on himself because he wants to prove to the General and

most especially to his father the legitimacy of his developing masculinity. But because the fish that has taken the bait is "a big sand-shark" (97) Marnus struggles to reel it in and he confesses that he is scared of losing it. It should be noted, however, that there is absolutely no reason for Marnus to feel scared because this is only supposed to be a recreational exercise. But despite this fact he does feel anxious. His emotions are therefore not necessarily about the fish itself, but they are a result of being afraid that he is not strong enough and may be deemed to display an illegitimate masculinity. This follows because it has been ingrained in him that he is a 'bull', therefore he must prove that he is able to fight and ultimately beat the shark, despite the discomfort and pain he is in:

> My shoulders are burning from the tension of my arms trying to keep the rod straight […] I can feel my back go tight like knots. I don't know how long I'll be able to keep it up […] My arms can't take it much longer and I swap hands, reeling with the left hand and holding the rod in the right. Soon my other arm is worn out too. I call to Frikkie to come and help. The water is around our waists. With him holding me from behind, we slowly make our way backwards up on the beach […] 'Well, give me a try,' he says. 'No, it's my fish. I know what I'm doing.' But before I know it, I'm back in the sea with waves breaking around my waist. Frikkie shouts from the beach: 'You're going to fuckin' drown and lose the fuckin' fish on top of it […] 'Leave me alone, Frikkie!' I scream at him, even though I know I won't be able to bring it in by myself. (92)

Even though Marnus is fatigued, and under a lot of stress and in pain, there is only one particular help that he requires, and that is for Frikkie to help pull him out of the sea but giving the rod to Frikkie is out of the question. He admits himself that he cannot bring in the fish alone, yet he is unable to accept the help. By accepting Frikkie's help, in his mind, he will be accepting defeat, that is, he will be accepting that he is not strong enough.

Therefore, because he has been taught that he is a 'bull' who cannot be scared off by discomfort, he abuses and punishes himself so that he can prove the bullishness that is expected from him. This violence that Marnus inflicts on himself is explained in chapter one. There I pointed out that according to Michael Kaufman, men's violence should be understood as a triad of violence which plays a significant role in the construction of masculinity. This means that "violence by men against women is only one corner" of this triad spoken of in the first chapter and the "other two corners are violence against other men and violence against oneself" (Kaufman, 28). The latter form of violence is often observed through self-persecution and putting oneself through perverse degrees of pain in the attempt to prove a hard and pain-resistant kind of masculinity as we see with Marnus and this is aided by an intense form of anxiety. As previously discussed, because masculinities are socially constructed, they are made

up of a structure of ideas which exist within given contexts. As such, the material actions of males are often affected by a perceived "failure to fulfill masculine ideals (socially and economically constructed)" (Reid and Walker, 10) that are found dominating those contexts within which those males are members. Marnus's behaviour as seen above falls under the category of violence against the self, because he self-persecutes, due to the fact that he is anxious that he will not be able to bring in the fish. Additionally, he is also afraid to ask for help because he does not want to share the fish. He therefore is stuck in a hopeless situation because he admits that he cannot bring in the fish alone, but at the same time, he does not want any help.

What is also observed here is the intense degree of anxiety that is in him, and this anxiety is a product of the patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact of the Apartheid government. As argued in the first chapter, it ensures the reproduction of this pact through a reproduction of hegemonic ideals of masculinities which Marnus is imbibing. That is why he feels that it must be him and not Frikkie who must bring in the fish: "My arms are tired again and my back is aching all over. I feel like breaking the line on purpose, because I don't want Frikkie to bring in this fish" (94). Here he is competing with Frikkie, and this is by means of proving to himself that he is strong enough to reel in and ultimately bring in the fish. Although Frikkie is not aware of this competition, Marnus competes because of the anxiety he has developed. This is an anxiety that has been cemented by his father calling him a 'little bull'. What exacerbates Marnus' situation is that at the point when he is thinking of breaking the line, his father and the General approach, and even though he gets temporary respite, through being newly re-energised by the thought of his father and the General watching him, we observe the fatal temporality of that newly acquired energy. The energy he gathers can only hold his body's surrender to a crushing fatigue at bay for a little while. Furthermore, and on top of being re-energised, he is imprisoned by the anxiety which requires from him to prove himself in front of his father and the General who are perceived as idealised representations of a form of masculinity to which he himself must subscribe through a portrayal of scripted behaviour.

It is in view of this last observation that he cannot allow Frikkie to take the rod because he must prove himself. It is through this ideology that he becomes a victim of his own anxiety. The anxiety that he suffers from is a result of a perception that he may be unable to prove the potency of his male body and show the legitimacy of his masculinity. His father's presence does not actually help him, instead it makes things worse for him because without his father

there, he had the option of breaking the line. But now that his father is there, he is left with only one alternative, and that is to bring in the fish at whatever cost:

> 'Come out of the water, Marnus,' Dad calls from the beach. But I can't move, and the rod bends down into the water […] 'Level the rod!' Dad calls, and I drop the tip, trying to hold it level to the water. By now I'm so tired I won't be able to lift it again. My arms and back are numb, and the burning in the muscles is gone. Both my arms are shaking and there is nothing I can do about it. 'How long have you been fighting it?' Dad calls. I turn and answer that it must be almost an hour […] 'He's been fighting it for almost an hour,' Dad says to the General […] 'Don't let him play you like that, Marnus – use your reel'. (95)

After learning that Marnus has been fighting the shark for about an hour, Johan's response, '[d]on't let him play you like that' reveals that for him this is a spectacle, a show of bravado, of skill and of signification. For Johan, it is at this point that Marnus must signify his potential for a type of masculinity they expect from him and show his bullish character. In this statement, 'don't let *him* play you like that' [emphasis added], the shark is unmistakably ascribed a male gender to highlight further that this is a contest of masculinities, to show how important it is for Marnus to win the contest. While Johan shows pride, by yelling to the General: 'He's been fighting it for almost an hour,' Marnus appears to be crushed, because the requirements for negotiating a masculinity expected from him are impossible to achieve. That is why he thinks to himself: "Now I wish they hadn't come" (95). This change in mind and desire does not, however, spare him from the burden of legitimation: he is still required by his father to give legitimacy to a masculinity he must assume, therefore he is left with no choice but to continue despite his pain. Furthermore, his anxiety turns into fear as his father's presence makes it even harder for him to let go or even break the line on purpose:

> I'm so scared of losing the fish, or of not being strong enough to bring it in. I'm back up to my waist into the sea. Dad shouts at me to get out. But still I can't move, my arms and legs feel like dead weight. Dad's voice, now in Afrikaans, reaches me across the water: 'Get yourself and that fish on to this beach, Marnus! *Hoor jy my*?' I can hear the anger in his voice, but there's nothing I can do. Each time I try to reel in, it pulls me in deeper. I can't ask Frikkie to help any more, but my arms can't hold much longer. [original emphasis] (95-96)

Even though he is tired, he realises that his father's presence bars him from asking for help from Frikkie, which means that this is his own battle and he must see it through alone. Furthermore, as much as it is important for Marnus to be safe, it appears that it is also important for him to bring in the fish. When Johan reminds Marnus to get out of the water: 'get yourself and that fish on to this beach, Marnus! *Hoor jy my*? [Do you hear me]', it appears that it is important that he not only get out of the water and move on to the beach but bring the fish

along with him. Moreover, this changes from concern to an order and it is attested to by both the 'hoor my jy?' at the end of Johan's statement as well as the anger that Marnus detects in his father's voice:

> 'I can't go on any more, Dad,' I say, without turning around. I'm scared I'm going to start crying. '*What did you say*? Dad shouts […] 'Pull yourself together, Marnus! Stand up straight!' […] By now I see there's a lot of line on the reel, but my wrist can't turn anymore […] All my muscles are dead and I stand as still as a pillar of salt. Everything starts to look hazy […] Suddenly Dad is next to me in the water. He puts his hand on my shoulder. 'Marnus, pull yourself together now, and bring in that fish.' I can't look at him but I can hear he's angry […] Tears start streaming down my face and I can't stop them. [emphasis added] (96)

It appears as though the lack of both sympathy and empathy from Johan makes him not see the abuse and pain his son is experiencing. On the contrary, however, this lack of sympathy and of empathy cannot be attributed to a lack of awareness that his son is in pain, but a purposeful ignorance of that pain because even when Marnus informs him that he cannot take it any longer, Johan's response forces him to continue, regardless of his son's desire to stop. This is because, as Johan previously taught him, Marnus should not be put off by pain because he is a bull. Instead, he should embrace that pain and become one with it. Additionally, when Marnus asks for help, Johan refuses with a mocking response but later feels disappointed when Marnus fails to reel in the shark:

> 'Help me, Dad,' I ask, even though I can see the line disappear, just behind the breakers […] 'Move back,' Dad says. 'Move on to the beach and stop being a crybaby. Mister Smith and Frikkie are watching you.' I bite my lip and try to stop the tears, but I can't […] Where is this fish? Please let me get this fish, please. I start praying, feeling my shoulders bend even further forward […] For a split second the line goes slack, and the next moment the baited hook flies through the sky. The shark disappears beneath the waves […] 'He beat you,' Dad says. For the first time since he came and stood with me in the water, I look up at him. But he turns and walks away. (97-98)

Concerning ideology, Althusser writes that "[it] 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among individuals" (118). What is therefore observed in *The Smell of Apples* is that Marnus and Frikkie are among the subjects recruited for a militaristic type of masculinity. Moreover, Althusser adds that "[w]hat is represented in ideology is therefore not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live" (111). In the above episodes we see that since Johan is himself a subject of militaristic masculinity, thus an ideological subject of the patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact, everything that he sees is perceived through that indoctrinated eye. Therefore, instead of seeing the real conditions (at that precise moment at the beach) of Marnus's immediate existence, that is, his pain, stress, and, fatigue, he perceives

instead the relation between Marnus's male body and a masculinity he is expected to signify. It is because of this imaginary distortion that he turns a blind eye towards his son's suffering and instead reminds him that Frikkie and the General are watching. What is given significance here is not the male body, but the masculinity that is in a relationship with that body.

This is made even clearer when Marnus communicates his condition: 'I can't go on anymore', and his father responding with an angry '[w]hat did you say?' This shows that Johan is largely indifferent to Marnus's situation and emotional state. Furthermore, when Marnus pleads: 'Help me, Dad,' what his father sees are not the material actions of his son, that is, a tired boy, who has been wrestling a sand-shark for about an hour or more, thus in need of his father's help. Instead, Johan perceives these actions (the battle with a shark) as a representation of that imaginary relationship between his son's male body and the masculinity he is supposed to signify. In essence, what Johan is perceiving is his son failing to signify his potential militaristic masculinity. Hence, he responds: '[m]ove back […] and stop being a crybaby'. For Johan, a 'crybaby' is important in this context because it represents that which signifies effeminacy and does not express a particular kind of masculinity that is required. There is a discrepancy as well as an injustice here because Marnus is only eleven years old but is expected to behave in a way that goes beyond what his boyhood potential can achieve.

In addition, after Marnus fails to bring in the shark successfully, Johan is not proud that his son had battled a sand-shark for over an hour; instead, he walks away. This behaviour shows the displeasure in Johan and disappointment caused by what he perceives as Marnus's failure to fulfil his expectations of him. As indicated above, what dominates Johan's mind is the imaginary relationship between Marnus's male body and the masculinity to which he is supposed to subscribe. This imaginary relationship thus weighs much more than the material actions of Marnus at the point in which he is under immense pressure, experiencing discomfort and pain. This is a result of the fact that "men represent their real conditions of existence to themselves in an imaginary form" (Althusser, 110). Because of Johan's indoctrinated perception, this imaginary form, that is an imagined masculinity, is heightened and given much more significance in relation to the male body. In the end Marnus becomes a victim of a form of inequality. This is because the apartheid government, which is supposed to be in favour of him given the racial privilege he is getting from the system, oppresses him at the very same time through the patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact.

In his analysis of the violence of indoctrination, Mervyn McMurtry observes that initiation into manhood as observed in *The Smell of Apples* "involves not only enduring pain without complaint, but also indoctrination in the cultural and social obligations of [that] manhood" (102). In other words, what one observes in the text is not a natural transition from boys to men, but a forceful conversion and a violent recruitment of boys to militaristic masculinity, leaving no space for manifestations of other forms of masculinities. For the purposes of this recruitment, ideology has to take on a particularly significant role and boy children are subjected to it. It is therefore not surprising that Marnus and Frikkie decide to join the defence force as they would be conscripted anyway; the only difference is that through indoctrination, they are taught to admire the army over the navy and the air force as the most dominant type of the state-sanctioned hegemonic masculinity. This admiration for and fascination with the army, therefore, expose the fact that they have come to perceive themselves as subjects of this manifestation of masculinity. This shows that through interpellation, militaristic masculinity has become the only type of masculinity that they have come to know. This is because the patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact of the apartheid government left little space for other forms of masculine manifestations which did not have links to the military.

The fact that Marnus is a child means that he is oppressed by the patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact of the apartheid system. This is because in fear that the liberation struggle might manifest in military violence, the Afrikaner state coerced all white males into conscription. Boys such as Marnus, therefore, were targeted at a very young age through ideological indoctrination to ensure that they imbibed all ideas about a state-sanctioned militaristic masculinity without paying close attention to the fact that they were children. Therefore, the racial inequality of the then apartheid regime did not negatively affect only the black, Indian and coloured citizens as per the then social/racial classification. Because of the racial inequalities white males were forced into conscription and boys were oppressed by a forceful conversion and a violent recruitment into the state-sanctioned hegemonic masculinity.

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When reading *The Smell of Apples*, the reader is invited to analyse the text as a representation of a historical past imbedded in private and subjective experience, but at the same time influenced by the public facts and institutions. The purpose therefore of this invitation is for one to try like Lieutenant Marnus Erasmus to 'muster' all the significant events that take place

in his childhood. These are the events that force him to make a choice of first accepting a militaristic masculinity and later permanently joining the army even though he has served the two years of conscription, a period which was extended from nine months. At this point, it is quite clear that "the italicised narrative of the adult Marnus suggests" – despite his childhood resistance – that he "has become the consequence of his own childhood" (Medalie, 513).

However, this consequence of his childhood that he has become is a result of oppression and violence. It is through violence that he is made to accept militarism, and this is seen in an episode discussed above where he refuses to allow the military insignia to be fixed on his shoulders. When his father picks him up with one hand and with the other beats him, he is beaten into submission and coerced into militaristic masculinity. This means that he is dominated by his father and the apartheid hegemonic system that demands a certain identity from him. But because he has seen the violence of this patriarchy/state/hegemonic masculinity pact, he no longer follows its teachings blindly. He is now aware that the system is oppressive: that is why while in the bush, he asks a black section leader: "*[w]hy are you here? […] I'm asking you why you are here – in Angola? I stopped myself from asking why he is fighting his own freedom*" [original italics] (119). Now that Marnus is no longer an innocent child, this question reveals his understanding of the political situation of his government and the conditions under which he is fighting. What makes him stop short of asking the black section leader why is it that he is fighting against his own freedom is because he has observed that there is a duality in the way in which his government functions. But most importantly, he has realised that there is a necessary freedom that is due to the black population. In a contradictory manner, this 'freedom' that he perceives is represented as a 'communist terror' and '*swart gevaar*' [black danger] by his government. Therefore, the duality that he sees is portrayed as something intended to protect the wellbeing of the white population, but this comes at the cost of the oppression of other populations most especially the black population.

This duality, however, goes even deeper because it also affected the white population. With the aim to protect the wellbeing of the white population against a perceived threat of '*swart gevaar*', white males were coerced into the military. Therefore, the apartheid government held a double-edged sword because while it oppressed other populations on the one side, it violently forced white males into a hegemonic masculinity on the other and as pointed out in the first chapter, any wish to refuse or deny conscription was met with a severe punishment: "*we don't have a choice, we have to come, whether we want to or not. If we don't, we go to jail for six years*" [original italics] (83). Since Marnus has, therefore, realised this duality and has also

observed the violence that was used against him and other white males in order to have them conscripted, it is thus fair to question why is it that he is in the bush, permanently serving the government he has come to understand as violent?

Concerning this choice, the reader is given a bit of insight coming in the form of Leonore's letter: "*When you were here during December, I asked you so nicely not to go back to the bush, but you wouldn't listen to me. I'm asking for the last time: come home, please, this place is grey and empty without you*" [original italics] (136). This piece of information reveals that Marnus has served his compulsory two-year service but decided to return to the bush, thus choosing permanent service. Furthermore, he observes: "*Slowly, with the years, I began taking notice of the changed attitudes – even before Quito. For more and more of the good ones, the option of permanently joining up no longer seemed viable; for more, a compulsion to leave the country*" [original italics] (28). The fact that he observes that 'the good ones' wanted nothing to do with permanently joining up means that he is aware of the country's political atmosphere and the fact that others are forced to leave the country further highlights the oppressive nature of the government. But his own choice to join the service permanently even though he is aware of the violence of the state is even more contradicted by his own response to the black section leader who tells Marnus that he is there in Angola "*[t]o make war, Captain. We are not like the Cubans who take women to fight. It's men that must make war*" [original italics] (120). In response Marnus says: "*God knows […] eventually you blacks could end up being the same as the bloody whites*" [original italics] (120).

It is clear here that Marnus is unimpressed with the black section leader's rationale for being involved in the Border War and he equates his response to one he received earlier from a white conscript from Durban who told him that he did not have a choice, therefore for him to avoid jailtime he had to do his two-year service. Responding, Marnus tells him: "*you had a choice – like me – and you made the easier one*" [original italics] (83). Therefore, when he says that some of the blacks could end up being the same as the 'bloody whites', he is referring to the fact that they could end up as the oppressors themselves because they allow themselves to be the tools of the oppressive government through the easy choices that he believes they are making. For him, those blacks who have chosen to serve in the army are taking an easier choice because the difficult one would be to fight against the oppressive government. In the same way, he also believes that most whites who get conscripted to avoid jailtime as well as those who go into exile to avoid conscription are all taking an easier route as opposed to a difficult one.

Therefore, to understand Marnus's own choice, against those choices he deems easier ones, it is imperative to visit Willem Steenkamp's observations about the South African Bush War:

> Be it ever so humble, the old saying goes, there's no place like home. As far as the border soldier was concerned, 'home' had a multitude of meanings […] the requirements of the construction depended on the time of the year. And finally, there was the most basic home of all, a shallow trench in a suitable clump of bushes – a group of which was dignified in official dispatches with the appellation of 'temporary base'. Whatever his circumstances, he made the most of it; so he ate and drank and slept as well as he could and enjoyed the small civilised amenities like a clean pair of socks or a letter from home. (251)

Unlike the picture painted above by Steenkamp, the image of Lieutenant Marnus Erasmus that we encounter in *The Smell of Apples* is of one who is displaced in the bush. Despite the fact that he is a nervous lieutenant who runs without giving orders to his men when the enemy approaches, he chooses permanent employment:

> *Just before first light they're around us. Their shots strike into the branches around us. They must have been aware of our position for quite some time – because with the first shots comes the droning of approaching gunships. There's no time to pick up the radio. Instinctively I grab only the small webbing and my rifle. Thank God we sleep with our ammo-pouches secured to our bodies. I start running […] By noon I must find water, even though I know I shouldn't stop […] I look and listen while I try to hold my breath.* [original italics] (117-119)

> *My heart pounds into my ears and the lame feeling of fear wraps itself around my legs like a warm hand. I start running.* [original italics] (136)

Despite the fact that they are in the middle of a war, and Marnus is the Lieutenant whom everyone should rightly look up to for orders, his instincts are to run first and then contemplate giving orders only when it is safe: "*The Black section leader comes over and asks whether I have any instructions. No, I answer, let every man sleep until he wakes. He lies on his back next to me on the grass. 'Lieutenant? he asks. 'Yes?' 'Why did you keep on running, Lieutenant? Didn't you hear me calling?"* [original italics] (178). It is clear from the above episode that Marnus does not belong in the bush. As quoted above, Willem Steenkamp observes that despite the challenges one faces in life 'there is no place like home'. That is to say, there is no place closer to one's heart than one's home. In contrast to this, for Marnus, home remains a place of deception, of abuse and of coercion, a familial space that has been infected by the higher state politics. As such, he is trapped in a liminal space between the bush and the home, and to make things worse, he rejects the idea of exile as an easy way out.

In view of these facts, it is suggested that Marnus does not permanently join the army because of the need to emulate his father but to mimic him because he finds that in mimicry, there is resistance. Bhabha's description of mimicry is relevant here: "mimicry represents an *ironic*

compromise" [original emphasis] (Bhabha, 235). Although Marnus still serves the oppressive state, mimicry allows him the chance to escape the claustrophobic space of both family and country. Most importantly, in escaping the home for the battlefield where he does not seem to belong, he finds an opportunity to resist because "in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference" (Bhabha, 235). This can be seen in the fact that Marnus Erasmus is a lieutenant, yet he is nervous and is the first one to run at the sight of trouble as observed in the textual evidence given above. Therefore, his mimicry serves as mockery of both his country and his father. Talking about his choice he says: "*[B]y now, I know full-well that you cannot satisfactorily understand an event unless you have a picture of everything that accompanies it: the arrival of the visitor cannot be divorced from what preceded his coming. To understand my own choice, I need to muster as much of the detail as possible*" [original italics] (31). Here it is fair to argue that Lieutenant Marnus Erasmus is talking directly to the reader: that is, for the reader to understand him as a lieutenant serving an oppressive state, he or she will need first to understand and muster the history that has led him to this point.

Because it was compulsory for all white males from the age of sixteen to get conscripted, Marnus was going to be conscripted either way. However, the arrival of the General and the subsequent events played a significant role in determining what kind of a conscript he would become and why he would choose permanent service. He confesses this in a comment quoted earlier: "*Perhaps that summer ultimately determined it. Possibly not even the whole summer – just that one week in December*" [original italics] (31). This week in question is the week in which the General visited the Erasmus family and because Marnus was fascinated by him, the decision to spy on him exposed the horrors that were hidden in his family, thus also reflecting the larger state politics.

The arrival of the General was significant because his arrival helped expose the hidden truths and owing to the fact that Marnus was in awe of the General, his spying on him helped the boy notice the duality in his father and later in the state:

> I'm carrying my suitcase down the stairs as Dad comes in through the front door […] I watch Dad walking down the passage in his uniform. In one hand he has his briefcase, and in the other the sports bag he uses for civilian clothes. He stops when he sees me standing on the bottom step. For a while we stare at each other. Then he asks: 'Don't I get a kiss tonight?' I put the suitcase down in the passage, and walk over to him […] When I get to him I stop and look up into his face […] He stares down at me, and I look down at the floor. He quickly bends forward and kisses me […] I keep looking at the floor. (191-192)

In this scene there exists a heightened sense of observation in Marnus. He no longer simply looks at his father but criticises every detail about him and observes the duality in him with a keen sense. The military clothes juxtaposed with civilian clothes here symbolise this duality that he has witnessed in him: the loving father on the one hand and the preying child molester on the other. His hands are also observed with a keen sense because one might be involved in an act of violence while the other could act in a different manner as was the case with his treatment of Frikkie. Furthermore, we observe that on his way down, when he sees his father, he stops at the bottom step. This momentary halt is quite revealing in a sense that he no longer recognises the 'father figure' his father is supposed to represent. This informs his behaviour and we can recognise what this halt represents, because in approaching his father, his head and eyes are focused on the floor, exposing therefore a sense of disappointment and a non-recognition of his father. Having thus observed the duality in his father (who to some extent represents the larger state politics), and the violence used against him when he tries to revolt, he finds another manner of resistance through adopting this state power yet using it in an illegitimate way through mockery.

2.3) Conclusion

After an attack has been launched in the form of bombs dropped on them and facing an inevitable death after being hit, Lieutenant Marnus Erasmus remarks: "*I am dumb. I feel Dad's face against my chest and my arms around his head, and I feel safe. But now it is a different safety. Death brings its own freedom, and it is for the living that the dead should mourn, for in life there is no escape from history*" [original italics] (198). It is significant to observe that when invoking the thought of his father's head against his chest and his arms around it, Marnus juxtaposes the violence that he has just suffered – the cause of his impending death – with the violence of his earlier years in the hands of his father. However, by noting that this embrace is different from the earlier one, he suggests that his father's earlier embrace was deceptive. It was a false safety that was used to lure and subject him to an even greater violence of indoctrination. Therefore, the most immediate violence that he has just suffered has liberated him from the indoctrination of his government because through this kind of death, he now gains freedom from the burden of a repressive history.

Chapter Three: Writing the Interregnum: Violence and Criticism in Zakes Mda's *Ways of Dying* (1995)

Despite racial inequalities that dominated South Africa prior to the 1994 elections, the period between the late 1980s and the early 1990s exposed the fact that South African politics were much more complex than a simplistic approach which assumed that race politics were the only fundamental issue which needed attention. Theories globally postulated that Africans were united across racial lines against the common oppressor. The South African context however revealed facts that opposed this assertion, most especially the South African interregnum discussed below. In South Africa, as suggested earlier, ideas about black manhood have always been tied to tradition and culture; as such, these were in many contexts the grounds upon which inequalities existed that influenced how men developed relationships with each other. Zakes Mda's *Ways of Dying*, set during the years of the interregnum, tells a narrative which explores black township and peri-urban masculinities.

The novel follows the wanderings of a professional mourner and is a text in which two opposites are contrasted. On the one hand, it tells the story of a compassionate and caring professional mourner, yet, on the other, it is a text in which chaos drives the narrative, followed closely by gloom and a dense representation of death, where at least eighty-five people die in the narrative. Of interest however is that only four people die in a somewhat 'peaceful' manner because their deaths are not directly related to violence, while the rest results from violence. From the ways with which violence is shown to drive the narrative, the representation of violence in this manner speaks directly to the title of the text. In relation to the perpetrators of that violence, men and their masculinities are prominently represented in Mda's novel. In its representations of masculinities, *Ways of Dying* depicts toxic masculinities and contrasts them with Toloki's compassionate one. The use of a compassionate kind of masculinity functions in a way that undermines violence as a potent signifier of masculinity. Additionally, the deliberate crafting of a masculinity which allows itself to be vulnerable and compassionate also serves to criticise the ideology of masculinity which constructs men as unfeeling and hard.

In this chapter, I divide the argument in four sections. In the first section I will be discussing the fact that violence in the novel is used as a legitimising consciousness to prove the potency of masculinity. Additionally, I discuss how social inequalities that existed during the South African interregnum as well as patriarchy and the unfair distribution of power in the politics of men and masculinities affected and gave legitimacy to that use of violence by men against other

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men. Therefore, I point out in this section that the use of violence by men is sometimes informed by inequalities that exist in the communities and societies within which those men are members. In the second section I discuss how race and ethnicity were used to perpetuate grand ideas of supremacy over others who are not members of a particular race and/or ethnic group. Furthermore, I show that the theory that Africans have always been united against the common enemy across racial lines was unfounded since ethnicity played a very big role in the political violence that dominated the South African interregnum.

Since the discussion in the second section is based on group dynamics, I continue with this trajectory into the third section. However, there I discuss the collective masculinities that are found in the text as well as collective but juvenile manhood. I point out in this section that those collective identities of masculinity came into existence because of the influence of social inequalities that dominated the politics of the time. For example, Battalion 77 as portrayed in the novel was the government's military force used to try and suppress a perceived military struggle thought to be soon initiated by the liberation movements. But when the armed struggle was suspended due to a declared amnesty, many still felt oppressed by collectives such as Battalion 77 and as such created collective masculinities of juveniles and formed groups such as the Young Tigers. The initial basis of such a collective was to protect the township and settlement dwellers from the state as well as from ethnic groups that terrorised the townships. However, since all these collectives are founded upon the basis of adopting violence, in the fourth section I discuss how the character of Toloki is purposefully crafted to critique all forms of toxic and harmful manifestations of masculinity by being a living representation of difference. The manner in which his masculinity is portrayed and crafted opposes the idea that sees men adopt harmful masculinities in response to inequalities that dominate their different histories.

3.1)   The Use of Violence as a Legitimising Consciousness for Masculinity

The narrative told in *Ways of Dying* is based on the South African interregnum that I introduced in the first chapter. The interregnum in South Africa was a period between the late 1980s and the early 1990s, introduced and sustained by the peace talks during that time which promised a transition from apartheid to democracy. Making sense of this period, and referring specifically to the South African context, Mark Swilling, quoting Gramsci, observed at the time that "[t]he interregnum consists of a social stalemate where 'the old is dying and the new cannot

be born'. The organisations and movements that represent the interests of the oppressed majority do not possess the organisational capacity, political power or coercive strength to overthrow the state. Nor does the state have the ideological and political resources required to re-establish its dominance without coercion" (421). Without the authority of the state, law and order were among the functions of the state that became eroded. Using these politics as the contextual background against which the narrative is based, *Ways of Dying* tells a story where chaos, violence and death are densely represented and where at least twenty descriptions of deaths and twelve funerals are observed in the 212-page novel. The narrative is also and at the same time intertwined with a historic account where significant events that took place during the South African interregnum are (re)told. Among these historical accounts are the once dubbed 'black on black violence' which culminated in the shooting of dozens of men at Shell House in Johannesburg (the then ANC headquarters). At the centre of this novel is the way in which masculinities are represented and this speaks directly to the chaos and violence portrayed in the text. Furthermore, these representations cannot be separated from the inequalities that persisted during that time, which I will be discussing below.

By way of beginning, Mda pens his first sentence; "There are many ways of dying!" (7) It is these 'many ways' of death that are of interest, and Mda spends the rest of the narrative depicting and describing them, some in passing while others in gruesome detail. These 'many ways' of death that are the concern of the text are in direct conversation with the violence within the text:

> Funerals were held only on Saturday or Sunday mornings those days, because death was not prevalent then as it is at present. Today, as you know, there are funerals every day (145)

> 'The son had died a normal death. Perhaps I should say an abnormal death, because he died peacefully of natural illness in his sleep. Normal deaths are those deaths that we have become accustomed to, deaths that happen every day. They are deaths of the gun, and the knife, and torture and gore …' (157)

Furthermore, these deaths and the various forms of violence observed in the novel are portrayed as arising from different types of inequalities and influenced by them. The relationship, therefore, between death and violence of which the inevitable result is 'violent deaths', as portrayed in the text, exposes to a great degree the part that masculinity plays both as a concept and ideology when influenced by both patriarchy and inequality. Faced with the very same problems regarding masculinity, Kenway and Fitzclarence have observed that "[v]iolent offenders … are overwhelmingly male … [and that] men … are at far greater risk of becoming

victims of all forms of violence … except for the categories of sexual violence and domestic violence" (118). Though their observations were based on a report on Australia, the same can also be said of the South African context because as mentioned in the first chapter "masculinity and violence have been yoked together in South African history" (Morrell, *The Times of Change* 12) and this is due to the fact that "[v]iolence is regarded as the legitimate solution … [and] a crucial means of both obtaining and defending power" (Cock, 43) in the country.

The way manhood is represented in the text gains its meaning from the pairing of masculinity with violence. This is expressed thus: "They have killed a lot of our people, and all we do is sit here and keep on talking peace. Are we men or just scared rats?" (23). This comment comes from a man attending a funeral of Vutha 'the Second' (Noria's second son). What makes this lament complicated is the fact that it expresses the violence directed against the self at the same time as it is a cry for masculine legitimation. This according to the lamenter means that to be a man requires among other things, the ability to resist violence with equal or greater force of violence as a means of protection. Accordingly, what is voiced is an ideology that leans towards and supports violent iterations of masculinities. Violent masculinity is employed here to mean masculine identities that actively adopt violence "as an ideal way of gaining and maintaining status and resources" (Bhana, 209) as well as a protective means to resist the violence of others.

The masculinity that is legitimised by the above lament and throughout the text depends on violence and on grotesque violence in certain instances. Violence in the novel is a potent signifier of masculinity because it is used as a means to solidify the myth of violent masculinity as a way to prove the potency of one's manhood. This is not to say that all men in the text are violent in a brutal, vicious or savage manner. I will demonstrate later in this chapter that Toloki eschews all forms of violence. However, those who employ it, as seen above, do not use it in the same way nor do they have the same rationalisation for employing it. There are men who are grossly violent (such as the migrant workers, the vigilante groups and the white man who works at a milling company- all discussed below) and there are others who employ violence in subtle ways like Shadrack and Nefolovhodwe. While some men employ it against others, they also are on the receiving end of another form of violence from other men. A very good example of this paradox is Shadrack. He owns a taxi and uses it as public transport for business. One day while on the job, he is beaten and assaulted by three white police officers. They then take him to a mortuary and order him to have sex with a dead woman's corpse. After he refuses they further assault him. When they have had their fill, they drive him back to where they picked him up and leave him for dead but only "after thanking him profusely for the good time

he had given them" (142). While on the one hand Shadrack suffered an injustice at the hands of the white police officers, on the other he is a provocateur in relation to Toloki. When Toloki and Noria visit him at the hospital, "Toloki cannot help noticing that not once does Shadrack look at him. All the time he addresses himself to Noria. It is as if Toloki does not exist" (140). The only difference is that while the violence he endures—the 'death ride' at the hands of the white police officers—is savage in nature, its brutality is crude and explicit. On the other hand, the violence that Toloki suffers at his hands is subtle in the sense that it is unpleasantly harsh and inhumane because it is a source of humiliation.

These two types of violence both result from inequalities. The violence that Shadrack endures is informed by the then political climate of the country. As mentioned earlier, the novel is set during the interregnum, meaning that the new democratic government had not yet come into fruition, therefore the structures of the law that were still in play were those of the Apartheid government. As such, Shadrack becomes a victim of race inequalities because the three white men who assault him believe themselves to be superior and Shadrack to be inferior given the race politics of the then South Africa. Additionally, what also informed this type of violence is the 1965 Police Amendment Act which amended section 6 of Act 7 of 1958. With this Act, police officers were given authority to search persons, premises, vehicles and more without any warrant (www.gov.za). This law therefore increased the arrogance with which the white police officers treated and approached blacks. As such, in addition to race inequalities, the police officers used the authority the government gave them – which itself was a law influenced by race inequalities – in an illegitimate way so that they could get their way with Shadrack. The other type of violence, the one that Toloki suffers at the hands of Shadrack, is influenced by economic inequality. This is because the unfair distribution of wealth – that I discussed in the first chapter as spatial inequality – between urban areas where large numbers of the white population of the country resided, and the peri-urban spaces made up of the townships and settlements where most of the black population was based (a fact that is observed even to this day). Since Toloki and Shadrack reside in an economically disadvantaged location, Shadrack's taxi is therefore used for transport purposes and is his means of making a living. Influenced by this fact, and even though his income is still inadequate to afford him a proper home elsewhere, Shadrack uses it to elevate himself above Toloki and claims superiority over him due to their differences in income.

Writing about the subject of justice, Iris Marion Young notes that "justice means the elimination of institutionalised domination and oppression"; furthermore, "Any aspect of social

organization and practice relevant to domination and oppression is in principle subject to evaluation by ideals of justice" (15). The employment of violence is undertaken for the purposes of power, such that the one who successfully wields it gains domination over those against whom his violence is directed. Therefore, it follows that justice depends in part on the absence of violence since violence is used for the purposes of domination and oppression. From the two scenarios that I discuss above, it is notable that Young's definition of justice (and the lack thereof) encompasses both. On the one hand, Shadrack falls victim to the three white men because of institutionalised domination and oppression; on the other, Toloki becomes Shadrack's victim because of social organisation and practices that are relevant to domination and oppression. As such justice is tied to inequality because the perpetuation of inequality becomes – as I have pointed out in the first chapter – the violation of justice. Therefore, in the absence of violence there exists a possibility for the eradication of needless deaths, harm, insult, and, humiliation. Additionally, justice also depends on the might of the law against those who perpetuate violence, commit atrocities and cause needless deaths. However, it does not depend only on the eradication of physical manifestations of violence and threat but is also dependent upon fair treatment of others and just behaviour, because it is when these are absent that injustice occurs. But most importantly, as seen above, injustice does not occur until there is inequality influencing it. This form of injustice that is based on unjust and unfair treatment may be observed in Shadrack's conduct towards Toloki. And it is observable that economic differences between the two play a significant role in the way Shadrack treats Toloki.

The relationship between the two is characterised by the scorn with which Shadrack regards Toloki, and this is evidenced by a short dialogue between Shadrack and Noria: "What do you see in him, Noria?' 'In who?' 'In Toloki. *He has nothing to offer you* […] He stinks!" [emphasis added] (144). Shadrack's observation that Toloki has nothing to offer Noria is rooted in the fact that he (Shadrack), is by informal settlement standards successful and economically well off. Therefore, Shadrack uses the economic differences between them to influence and claim dominance over Toloki. Their relationship is riddled with unfair treatment of Toloki by Shadrack; as such, there is an injustice that is observable here because "justice is primarily the virtue of citizenship, of persons deliberating about problems and issues that confront them collectively in their institutions and actions, under conditions without domination or oppression, *with reciprocity and mutual tolerance of difference*" [emphasis added] (Young, 33-34). However, since Shadrack's demeanour towards Toloki is devoid of mutual tolerance of

difference because their relationship is informed by Shadrack's claiming superiority over Toloki by highlighting his economic constraints, injustice characterises their relationship.

From his conversation with Noria, one can observe the way in which Shadrack regards Toloki, namely without all forms of respect. He considers himself to be superior in relation to Toloki. Even though at the end, Shadrack comes to accept the 'partnership' as he calls it between Noria and Toloki – "I cannot spoil things between you two. Yours is a creative partnership" (200) – he, however, still treats Toloki unjustly: "[f]or the first time, he looks directly at Toloki, and smiles. Toloki detects some condescension, but he does not mind" (200). Therefore, although there are elements of truth in his observations with regards to Toloki, they are only used in a biased manner that seeks to gain him favour.

While the injustice that Shadrack imposes on Toloki is somewhat ineffective in a sense that Toloki easily dismisses it, there are other characters in the narrative whose injustices are deeper in degree and more violent than that of Shadrack's towards Toloki (there is, of course, no yardstick for measuring injustice, however, from a morality point of view, it should be fair to point out the different degrees of violence under which people suffer). Such forms of violence are those perpetrated by Jwara and Xesibe. These forms of violence are a result of, but not limited to, the age inequality that I discussed in the second chapter because the adult has authoritative power and intellect which are used against the child who possesses no means to protect himself. In a conversation with his son, Jwara shouts; "Get out of here, you stupid, ugly boy! Can't you see that I am busy?" (33). What makes this injustice more harmful in degree than that of Shadrack's is that, unlike Shadrack to whom Toloki is not related and whom Toloki easily dismisses, Jwara is his father and as such it is impossible to easily dismiss his actions. His actions point to his non-recognition of his own son and Toloki cannot easily dismiss his actions as he does with Shadrack because it is from his father that he should seek affirmation as a child. This is what Nancy Fraser classifies as cultural or symbolic injustice because Toloki "is rendered invisible via the authoritative, representational, communicative, and interpretive practices" of his own father (Fraser, 14). Due to the fact that his father renders him invisible, that is to say, perceives his childhood as not worthy of being carefully nurtured, Toloki becomes neglected and thus abused both psychologically and emotionally.

Another significant event of the same nature is when Toloki draws a picture and subsequently wins a national art competition after which his picture is selected for a calendar and makes an appearance in the April page. When he takes home three calendars, one for each member of his

family, Jwara's response to Toloki is quite agonizing: "'[s]o, now you think you are better? You think you are a creator like me?' 'I want to be like you, father. I want to create from dreams like you.' 'Don't you see, you poor boy, that you are too ugly for that? How can beautiful things come from you?'" (68). To add more violence to this injury, he orders that the calendars should never be seen in his house. This injustice is very deep and grave because it is enacted by the father, one from whom the child should receive and draw his inspiration and above all affirmation. Additionally, since these (inspiration and affirmation) are not only denied, but negated through refutation and ridicule, it then means that Toloki does not only suffer an oppression of non-recognition from his father but also misrecognition. This injury from his father causes him the most grievous harm because, "Nonrecognition or misrecognition […] can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, reduced mode of being. Beyond simple lack of respect, it can inflict a grievous wound, saddling people with crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy but a vital human need" (Fraser, 15). By refusing his son any form of recognition while alive, Jwara denies him that vital human need quoted above.

Nonrecognition and misrecognition are not Jwara's only crimes against Toloki: at other instances he takes his acts of injustice even further because his abuse of Toloki manifests in physical beating. At such times, "Jwara became morose, and moody, and irritable. He would lose his temper for no reason at all, and slap Toloki" (102). The worst of these abuses presented itself shortly before Toloki decided to run away from home. On that day, "Jwara kicked him in the stomach. [After which] he fell down, vomiting blood. Jwara [then] kicked him again and again" (103). This violence Toloki experiences at his father's hands is much worse than that suffered by him at the hands of Shadrack. Additionally, at the moment in which his father becomes physically violent, one observes, like in the previous chapter—and as will also be seen in the next—that the fact that renders him vulnerable and unable to defend himself against his father's physical abuse is his age. Which means that the age that renders him vulnerable has manifested as a form of inequality. Other forms of violence enacted by male parents in *Ways of Dying* that are worse than Shadrack's treatment of Toloki are those of Xesibe and Nefolobhodwe. The latter neglects his wife and nine children in an unnamed rural area while he accumulates wealth in the city. And the former starves his grandson (Vutha) when his mother (Noria) is at work. These are shocking forms of violence and acts of injustice by male parents in the text.

Another important issue in relation to how violence is portrayed in *Ways of Dying* is the fact that as opposed to the above kinds of violence, the most heinous and grotesque forms of violence and causes of death are carried out by non-fully developed characters such as the mayor – a leader of one of the vigilante groups – or anonymous characters. The fact that the most grotesque crimes are committed by those who cannot be named or are not fully developed as characters has a lot to say about masculinity. Since the perpetrators of these crimes are anonymous, this then has nothing to say about the personal identities of those individuals who enact those kinds of violence but questions and critiques the identity of masculinity. This is because it is made clear in the text that those who perform those deplorable crimes are overwhelmingly men. Their personal identities are not revealed but their gender is. We observe this in the migrant workers: "You know, long before the bloody tribal chief contrived to use hostel dwellers from our ethnic group to do the dirty work for *him*, we, the township residents alienated ourselves from *these brothers*" [emphasis added] (56). In this observation regarding both the chief and the hostel dwellers, there is an unmistakeable description of gender which classifies them as male, thus portraying them as a masculine collective.

This ultimately means that as represented in the text, with the exception of Toloki, masculinity and violence are to some degree inseparable as much as they are yoked together as previously mentioned because "violence […] [remains] bound up with male identity in many cultural contexts in contemporary South Africa" (Cock, 47). In view of this fact, it is therefore fair to consider that for most men, as represented in *Ways of Dying*, violence is an integral part of their masculinities. Having noted this, "it is critical to examine the ways in which violence is legitimated within constructions of masculinity" (Morrell & Ouzgane, 14). Such an example is seen through the migrant workers, the train violence and Battalion 77. While violence is a deployment for certain forms of toxic masculinities discussed above, the manner in which it (violence) is adopted requires deliberate actions in order to be achieved as a signifying consciousness for these forms of masculinities. As I have previously discussed in the first chapter, masculinity cannot be an inactive presence in men, but is linked to the meaning of men's actions. This means that it is a signifier of ideas of manhood and for it to serve this signifying consciousness, it must play "an active role, in determining the effects by which the signifiable appears to succumb to its mark, becoming through that passion the signified" (Lacan, 578). This means that because masculinity takes on an active role in responding to the anxiety of patriarchy thus providing legitimacy, it becomes a signifier. And the male body, in turn, becomes the signified when the active role of the signifier (masculinity) is achieved. For

some men, this active role is achieved through the employment of violence, hence they develop toxic masculinities. Therefore, masculinity is always active in a sense that men are 'men' because of what they do instead of what they simply are, that is male bodies. As I pointed out in the first chapter, masculinity is a social construction which is different from the biological fact – that being the male body – however, since it is inconceivable to imagine men as male bodies devoid of masculinity, it is imperative to understand the role of social construction in fusing together masculinity and maleness in one. Therefore, in that construction social inequalities always play a particularly significant role because they feed into the patriarchal ideology of masculinity which emphasises power thus maintaining those inequalities. As a result, given the social aspects which have historically influenced constructions of masculinities in South Africa and how men related to each other, violence frequently became the most important tool in providing legitimacy to some men as opposed to others.

To further explain this point: Lacan (578) writes that "[t]he signifier is a necessary [condition] to any articulation of the analytical phenomenon, insofar as it is opposed to that of the signified". However, noting that the signifier is necessary as far as the signified is concerned does not mean that men are inherently violent. Instead, it means that the relation between masculinity and man is a 'myth' in so far as it is constituted as needing potent signifiers. This only means that masculinity is an empty construct that needs to be filled with meaning (in this case violence). This, in turn, confirms the mythic concept of masculinity and its role in manhood because "everything can be myth provided it is conveyed by discourse" (Barthes, 107). Manhood as portrayed in Mda's text is this myth because it is able to "pass from a closed, silent existence to an oral state" (Barthes 107) as shown in the novel.

This process of moving from a closed existence and into an oral state is observed in the narrative through two instances. The first is the one quoted above by the lamenter at Vutha the Second's funeral and the second is observed through a discussion of the violent migrant workers and how their leader often arouses their thirst for blood: "[t]he tribal chief who has formed them into armies that harass innocent residents merely uses ethnicity as an excuse for his own hunger for power […] They are often fired up at rallies by his lyrical praise, and panegyrics, of their superiority as a group" (55). Through that lament, as well as the chief's lyrical praise, the two men arbitrarily endow masculinity with specific but violent meaning, that is to say they give contexts from which manhood must necessarily be perceived. This is so because the lament is at the same time an argument that men, or at least those who consider themselves men, should not sit around and cry peace. Instead, they should force peace by

resisting the violence enacted on them by those who think of themselves as naturally superior (the tribal chief and his followers) through responding with an equal force of violence otherwise they are mere rats waiting for their slaughter. These dynamics of claiming superiority as one of the problematic factors that link inequality and masculinity are discussed below.

3.2) Race, Ethnicity and Supremacy in the South African Interregnum

> Despite […] ethnic [or racial] differences between coexisting populations […] relations of dominance and subordination do not develop until one population imposes its will on another (Kallen, 3)

The period between the late 1980s and the early 1990s was a very important stage in South African history for it marked the movement towards a transition from an apartheid South Africa to a democratic one. The question of racial oppression, having been the focus of the country's politics for a very long time, became much more urgent during this time. On the global stage "[p]opulist theories offered the view that gender was relatively unimportant in the context of race oppression and therefore […] Africans were united across gender lines" (Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger, 19). This observation was incorrect especially with regards to the South African context. Masculinity in the country has always been a contested space regardless of background or commonality. The inequalities that are observed only exacerbate the already existing competition for power between men based on the categories of race, nationality, ethnic background and age. Furthermore, discrimination has always existed along these grounds.

Aside from discrimination based on spatial inequalities such as the urban/rural divide that I explain in the first chapter, race and ethnicity have been, throughout South African history, the two categories most used for the purposes of discrimination, oppression and violent confrontation. While ethnicity is observed as a clear driving force of violence between the migrant workers and the people of the townships and settlements as represented in *Ways of Dying*, it should also be observed that it is through socio-political conditions that these people came into co-existence. The townships came into existence through forced removals of the black population from urban spaces. The migrant workers on the other hand were accommodated in the hostels that were built around and within these townships. As a result, ethnicity was used by political figures to perpetuate their political agenda. The migrant workers' response to this ethnic divide was also influenced by the discrimination they

themselves suffered at the hands of the township dwellers. In a conversation between Toloki, Noria and Shadrack, the latter explains these facts: "we, the township residents alienated ourselves from these brothers. We despised them, and said they were country bumpkins. We said they were uncivilised and unused to the ways of the city, and we did not want to associate with them" (56).

As noted in the first chapter, masculinities do not exist in a vacuum and they are in turn affected by social inequalities as well as forms of discrimination. This form of discrimination, as seen in the comment quoted above, affected the relations between men from the township and those from the rural areas. Attesting to Shadrack's above remarks, Noria adds: "indeed we call them amagoduka, those whose roots are in the rural areas and who return there after their contracts in the city are finished. It was not unusual for a hostel inmate to go for a drink in the township, or to see a girlfriend, only to come back with a stab wound, or as a corpse, for the sole reason that he was a country bumpkin" (56). This disrespect and scorn frequently led to a situation where men ended up in a bloody confrontation with each other. As such, it is important to ask: why is it that in a social atmosphere where inequalities persist, must men end up in a bloody confrontation? I suggest that this is the case because social inequalities only seem to affirm and consolidate the ideology of masculinity that I discussed in the first chapter and which perpetuates an unequal distribution of power between men. Therefore, the link between inequality and patriarchy is one of corroboration because the two only seem to heighten and intensify each other thus increasing the competition and struggles between men.

During the South African interregnum, there was a lack of the maintenance of law and order because of the long transition from apartheid to democracy. Around this time, the country was in "a social stalemate presided over by a defensive state constantly seeking to regain the initiative by liberating itself from the last remaining constitutional and political constraints on arbitrary power" (Swilling, 422). Due to this stalemate, there was no stern governance which meant that law and order broke down. Because of this political situation in which justice could not be immediately called upon, it became easier for men to participate in violent acts to help them claim dominance while undermining others. One of these as represented in the novel is the raids at the settlements by the migrant workers, who are ardent followers of the tribal chief: "[i]n a recent massacre in the settlement, which was carried out by some of the tribal chief's followers from the hostel, assisted by Battalion 77 of the armed forces of the government, as many as fifty-two people died" (168). Because of the erosion of justice due to the ineffectiveness of the state's imposition of law and order, it becomes easier for men in the

police department to use their state power in illegitimate ways to victimise and inflict harm on black citizens. However, as is seen above, race was not a primary cause of conflict, ethnicity was. But through racial bias, the police did not see a need to interfere in a situation in which black people were killing each other; instead, they assisted the culprits in their raids.

While *Ways of Dying* is set during the South African interregnum, it also interrogates masculinities during this time. There are many ways in which the text shows that masculinities are affected by social politics, and due to the politics of the time, racial issues played a major part in relation to domination and subordination. In recalling this historical past, it is also useful to invoke Fanon's observation that "[t]here is a fact: white men consider themselves superior to black men" (3). This assertion by Fanon is prominently represented in *Ways of Dying*. When narrating one of his many episodes of grotesque violence and ultimate death, Mda introduces Toloki – on his way to the city to seek love and fortune – to a nameless labourer, with whom a short friendship develops before the labourer's untimely death:

> Toloki heard how his friend was burnt to death in a deadly game he played with a white colleague. During their lunch break this white colleague sent him to fetch a gallon of petrol from the mill's petrol depot. When he came back with the petrol he found a black labourer, who was known as the white man's crony, on the floor, struggling to free himself from his white friend who had his knee on his chest. The crony later said, 'I do not know exactly how it happened, but I remember kicking the container and the man was doused with petrol all over.' As he was trying to clean his face with a piece of cloth, the white man jokingly said that he was going to burn him. He then struck a match and threw it at him. The crony continued, 'The fire was so big that I was frightened. I went around screaming for help. But by the time they put out the flames and took him to hospital, it was too late. He was badly burnt.' The crony insisted that his white friend was playing. He had played such *fire tricks* on other workers before, including on him only the previous month. [emphasis added] (64-65)

This death is squarely rooted within the politics of race. It derives its meaning from the relations of dominance and of subordination. The white male worker described here believes himself to be superior to the black workers because of his skin colour. What confirms this fact is the evidence that this is not an isolated incident, but one of many, hence the crony points out that he had played such fire tricks on other workers before, including on him. The injustice in these racially influenced politics also reveals the part that is played by masculinities and their ideology. Pointing out this problem, Ratele argues that "[m]asculinities are … created at both social and psychological levels" (*Analysing Males in Africa* 517). This means that the ideology of masculinities directs the actions of men at the same time as it dominates their minds, which means that at the same time that the apartheid social context assumed the supremacy of white South Africans over their black counterparts, ideologies of masculinities were influenced by

this ideal and in turn it legitimised a masculine culture that encouraged violence across racial groups.

Furthermore, the employment of violence in this case is regarded as a legitimate way of maintaining supremacy. This means that a man who considers himself to be superior (here legitimised by race) employs violence to prove that superiority. At the same time, this violence also serves to maintain his position and to strike fear in the hearts of those who might take it in their heads to challenge him. An interrogation of the relationship between the white man and the crony confirms Fanon's other assertion that "the negro enslaved by his inferiority, the white man enslaved by his superiority alike behave in accordance with a neurotic orientation" (42-43). The white man because of his anxiety is trapped in a continuous loop that requires of him to prove constantly (through his savage actions) his superiority. The black man (his crony) on the other hand because of his inferiority complex and an anxiety driven by it, is himself caught in a continuous loop that gives legitimation to the white man's actions, presenting them as faultless. However, a closer inspection of this relationship reveals another matter altogether, one that is based on socioeconomic conditions. Not only is the crony enslaved by his inferiority complex as Fanon would suggest, but he is also trapped within a malaise of his socioeconomic constraints.

It is therefore arguable that in a situation where there is a weak to a non-existing system of law and order, the crony realises that his ability to earn a living depends on his feigning ignorance of these atrocities and subsequently turning a blind eye to their mortal terrors thus further confirming the assertion made in the first chapter that race in South Africa always has a material base. This is seen in the following statement: "the crony was adamant that the white colleague was merely laughing because it was a game. To him the flames were a joke. When the man screamed and ran around in pain, he thought he was dancing" (65). There is ambiguity in this statement, for it has two meanings, and both help illuminate the crony's position. On the one hand, the statement condemns the white man's actions for it laments the fact that he derives pleasure from victimising and terrorising the black labourers and turns their pain into a laughing matter. On the other hand, it appears to protect the white man because it waters down his crimes to a game thus removing all intent to cause grievous bodily harm and intent to kill. That is why in the above quoted excerpt, the crony explains this behaviour as the white man's 'fire tricks'. These two meanings illuminate the crony's position: he occupies a liminal space he must own in order to survive both physically and socioeconomically, given the politics of

the time. As such, it becomes necessary for him to respond with a statement that subtly undermines the white man's actions while making it possible for him to keep his job.

In the hands of the country's stalemate that is represented in *Ways of Dying* in the form of an interregnum, racism and racial oppression appear to flourish in the text as the violence between men increases. Mda's text goes even further in exploring this matter because it represents the agents of law and order at the forefront of racial oppression. Another event is presented in the text in the form of an accused black worker who suffers at the hands of the police officers. The officers torture him, trying to force him to confess to a crime committed at his workplace. This is the man whose job Toloki had acquired. When he asked about the man he had replaced, Toloki is told that the man was accused of stealing maize and subsequently reported to the police who in turn tortured him:

> His problems, Toloki was told, began one morning when he reported for duty at the milling company. The foreman ordered him to go to the manager's office, where he found policemen waiting for him. They took him away to the interrogation chambers at the police station. There they stripped him naked, and asked him to confess. But he did not know what to confess, so they beat him up […] The man denied any knowledge of stolen bags of maize, and his interrogators got angry and punched his testicles. Then they tied him to a chair and attached wires to his fingers and neck. They connected these to the electricity outlet on the wall, and the man screamed in agony and lost control of his bowels […] Although he was not charged with any crime, the mill refused to take him back. He lost his job and his manhood. (62)

The narrative emphasises the link between race and the disappearance of legitimate law and order and further connects these issues to questions of masculinity. This account is disturbing to Toloki and when he asks whether the man who has been tortured can get any form of justice, the answer he receives is unsatisfactory: "So is there nothing he can do now? Can't he go to the law?" (63) asks Toloki. "Whose law? [responds the man with whom Toloki is speaking] Was I not telling you that it was the law that rendered him manless?" (63). The suggestion that there is nothing the man could do regarding his assault is undermined by Shadrack who hired private lawyers to argue his case against the police officers who assaulted him. Shadrack therefore remains as an example of the slim hope that there might be something that could be done against the agents of the law who perpetuate racial oppression. However, having noted this, another problem presents itself, which is that, if one hopes to do something about the law agents that victimise one, one must have economic means to be able to hire private counsel as Shadrack intends. Though there is something this man whose job Toloki had acquired could attempt, his poverty denies him any agency to act and as a result, he becomes one of the silent

and nameless victims of both racial oppression and economic inequality all made possible by the socioeconomic inequalities of the time as well as living in the South African interregnum.

As suggested earlier, the state of the interregnum as well as socioeconomic conditions cannot be separated from these politics of men and masculinities. We observe how the two guide the earlier mentioned ethnocentrism, and ethnic discrimination. The people of the settlement as well as the followers of the tribal chief find themselves living side by side due to socio-political as well as socioeconomic inequalities. Because of the forced removals of the black populations from urban spaces, the government, as noted above, created peri-urban spaces between the cities and rural areas which the removed masses were forced to occupy. In turn, due to poor economic conditions in the rural areas because of spatial inequalities, most men joined the migrant labour system and moved to hostels. These hostels were created for the sole purpose of accommodating these men because theirs was a cheap labour the system intended to exploit. These social conditions as well as the way in which the tribal chief manipulated them opened room for confrontation and this is affirmed by the narrator of the text: "[t]hey came to the city to work for their children, but the tribal chief armed them, and sent them out to harass the local residents" (23).

However, it should also be noted that, since the people of the settlements and townships viewed the migrant workers with scorn and condescension, "[i]t was easy for the tribal chief to use them against […] [the settlement and township dwellers], for they were already bitter about the scorn that [the others] were showing them" (56) observed Shadrack while in a conversation with both Noria and Toloki. The novel reveals that looking at this problem solely as an ethnic issue would be to dismiss the larger political narrative which influenced the violence in the first place because, Shadrack continues: "[t]he tribal chief who has formed [the migrants] into armies that harass innocent residents merely uses ethnicity as an excuse for his own hunger for power" (55). This is evidenced by the fact that Shadrack's son (one of the settlement residents) was killed by the migrant workers despite the fact that he is from the same ethnic background as the migrants.

The tribal chief referred to in *Ways of Dying* is Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who established the IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) in 1975. As discussed previously, the 'black on black violence' as it was popularly termed, was in fact perpetuated by different political philosophies between the ANC/UDM and the IFP. This violence did not end in the townships: ultimately, it culminated in the gunning down of dozens of men (mainly IFP supporters) at Shell House, the

then ANC headquarters in pre-election 1994 (www.dailymaverick.co.za). In *Ways of Dying*, this all began when the tribal chief:

> [C]oncocted a non-existent threat to his people, telling them that they are at risk from other ethnic groups in the country […] he thinks he will reach a position of national importance by exploiting ethnicity, and by telling people of his ethnic group that if they don't fight they will be overwhelmed by other groups which are bent on dominating them, or even exterminating them. Their very existence is at stake he teaches them […] Some members of his ethnic group, especially those from the rural areas who still believe in the tribal authority of chiefs, follow him ardently, and have taken up arms whenever he has called upon them to do so. They are often fired up at rallies by his lyrical praise, and panegyrics, of their superiority as a group ordained by the gods; a chosen people with a history of greatness in warfare and conquest. They have internalised the version of their own identity that depicts them as having inherent aggression. (55)

In the above quotation, the claim of ethnic superiority ordained by the gods is the same rhetoric that was used in apartheid's claim to authority as was observed in the discussion of *The Smell of Apples* in the previous chapter. It should be noted, therefore, that there is a contradiction in the way in which the tribal chief aims to gain political significance. Because he believes in an ethnic claim to superiority which was ordained by the gods, it follows then that there should not exist any fear of being culturally overwhelmed by other ethnic groups. However, his followers are unaware of this contradiction and that is part of the reason why they follow him ardently. He therefore uses this contradiction effectively: first, he creates an anxiety in his followers, and second, by praising their superiority he legitimises the use of violence as a means to rid themselves of the anxiety of cultural domination. As used here, cultural domination means "[t]o be subjected to the ideas and patterns of interpretation and communication that are hostile and oppressive to one's culture because they are overwhelming since they are associated with another culture that is foreign to that of the subject" (Fraser, 14).

In order to provoke his followers to take up arms against the supporters of the ANC/UDM for him to signify his political position, the tribal chief as observed in the novel uses the idea of cultural domination. As a result, his provocation creates in his followers an idealised masculinity whose function was that "[w]hen they attack the residents of the squatter camps and townships, or commuters in the trains, they see themselves in the image of great warriors of the past, of whom they are descendants" (55-56). This idea of 'their identity' being overwhelmed blurs the lines between ethnic identities and masculinist ideals. In this way, the tribal chief advances his agenda, eliciting a violent reaction from his male followers. "[A]t a psychological level, manliness […] [is] confirmed within […] [this] group through acts of collective violence against other men" (Waetjen & Maré 199). While the violence observed

here is that which is carried out through collective actions, it is informed and motivated by ethnic ideals and grand ideas of superiority and the need to protect and preserve an ethnically-inspired manhood against a perceived threat. Ultimately these aims are achieved through collective violence which only functions to highlight a collective form of masculinity under which these migrants are subsumed due to shared beliefs about an ideal form of traditional Zulu manhood they are trying to preserve.

3.3) Collective Masculinities and Juvenile Manhood

In Mda's representations of masculinity, violence remains the foremost signifying consciousness that men subscribe to. As mentioned earlier, the most gruesome forms of violence are perpetuated by anonymous men and non-fully formed characters. However, it is also important to note that these atrocities are, more often than not, done by people acting in groups or as a collective, rather than as individuals. Violence is grotesquely carried out in most instances in the narrative by pairs or more: the three white men under whose brutality Shadrack suffers, the taxi associations that fight over routes, migrant workers from the hostel, the ten men who were terrorising the community for a long time and were eventually killed by the villagers in a mass rage, gangsters who rape and kill their victims, the two sons who killed their patriarchal father, Batallion 77 of the government which helped carry out massacres in the townships and settlements and most importantly, the Young Tigers who wrongfully accused Noria's son, Vutha the Second, of being a 'sell-out' and subsequently set him alight.

Collective identities of masculinity are shown to heighten and at other times encourage violence and savagery. The three collective masculinities that are of concern here are the migrant workers from the hostel who are aligned with the tribal chief, the vigilante groups, and lastly the Young Tigers. These groups relish the domination and power that they possess over individual persons. Their members are identified by the ideals held in those collectives. Being a Young Tiger for example meant that one owed one's allegiance to a popularised and envied collective masculinity as I pointed out in the first chapter. Membership of such a collective meant that one was a foot soldier of a perceived and hoped-for revolution; this was a signifying consciousness of this group's identity. By becoming a member of such masculinist groups during the apartheid years as well as during the interregnum, one's social position was elevated because as noted in the first chapter, "being a 'comrade' endowed a young man with social

respect and status within his community. Being referred to as a 'young lion' and a 'liberator' was an intoxicating and psychologically satiating accolade" (Xaba, 110).

Although the Young Tigers are not an exclusively male group, they are predominantly male: "a *group of young men* […] approach him. They are the Young Tigers who patrol the streets at night, like a neighbourhood watch, protecting the people from the attacks of the migrants from the hostels, and from the police and the army […] [Toloki] is shaking with fear, for he has heard what these boys, and sometimes girls, are capable of" [emphasis added] (117-118). Since they are tasked with protecting the people of the settlement, theirs is a violent struggle with an equally violent purpose, and because of that purpose, they automatically find themselves at loggerheads with the migrant workers, the government's army and police forces, as well as the vigilante groups. The vigilante groups as depicted in the novel were formed by the state government after forced removals. They were given authority by the state to maintain social order within the community, however the power they had over individual persons of the township and settlements made them an oppressive structure for they used that power to support their own greed. In view of this fact, they occupied a liminal space between the white oppressive government and the black oppressed masses and they made this liminal space their tool for economic gain through emulating the oppressor who gave them that power.

The nature of the relationship between the vigilante groups and the government is also the same as that between the hostel migrant workers and the government because the migrant workers often get assistance from the government's Battalion 77 when they go out to massacre the people of the settlement. These two collective masculine institutions both have ties to the oppressive government and as such, the Young Tigers find themselves having to oppose them all:

> It is strange how things don't change in these shanty towns or squatter camps or informal settlements or whatever you choose to call them. The same vigilante groups exist today, protecting the residents the same way they did eighteen or so years ago, when Toloki still had his shack. The situation is even more complicated these days, what with the tribal chief wreaking havoc with his hostel-dwelling migrants. But today people are strongly united. None of these groups are ever able to gain any lasting foothold in the settlements and in the townships. People fight back. (147)

The fact that the people are fighting back reveals that both the vigilante groups and the migrant workers are oppressive, even though one group (the migrant workers) is brutal and forthright in the way in which they employ violence, while the other (the vigilantes) employs violence in a pseudo-pacific manner. Since the vigilante group members were unemployed members of the settlements and the townships who were recruited by the government to maintain order, they

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used their allegiance to that government to demand that the residents pay them a weekly protection fee. Because of the authority that was given to them by the oppressive government, these vigilante groups terrorised the people of the settlement: "[t]he shacks of those who refused to pay would mysteriously catch fire in the middle of the night" (146). For these vigilante groups, "[v]iolence is not only the means to maintain control over [the settlement dwellers] but a mere threat of violence […] [is] sufficient to ensure compliance" (Bhana, 208). This meant that for fear of losing their shelter and belongings, the people of these settlements made sure to comply and not to miss any payments.

Because of the oppressive nature of these different organisations (the vigilante groups, the migrant workers and the state's army and police who were a visible presence in the townships and settlements) the Young Tigers were formed for the purposes of opposing such forms of oppressive institutions. As I have discussed in the first chapter, structures such as the Young Tigers were led by individuals who underwent military training in exile. After secretly getting back into the country, they sought to oppose all oppressive structures, most especially, the government's police forces, pro-government vigilante groups, as well as the migrant workers. This therefore disproves the theories mentioned earlier which argued that the African masses were united across racial lines, thus united against one enemy. To make matters even more complicated, the Young Tigers saw a lack of counter intuitive strategies from the settlement's elderly men as a sign of complicity with their victimisation. The chief concern of their agenda, therefore, was opposition against the government and all related forms of oppression. This agenda of theirs became an "opposition [that] assumed a posture which was anti-authority"; this became so "because many older African people (especially men) were perceived to be complicit with [that oppression]" (Xaba, 109), since all they did was to "cloud their heads with pettiness and vain pride. They [sat] all day and dispense[d] wide ranging philosophies on how things should be" (175) and did nothing about the state of their continuing and forever increasing victimisation. In view of these facts, the Young Tigers who are "usually made up of youths […] in their late teens and early twenties" (181) took it upon themselves actively to oppose the vigilante groups, the migrant workers, as well as all forms of the government's militancy since they perceived adults as doing nothing. Hence, not only were the Young Tigers anti-authority but they usurped authority from the elders and went against all other forms of authority, either legitimate or illegitimate.

It should also be observed that the success of the Young Tigers as a group is based on the ideology which necessitated exclusion. This exclusionary measure is one in which their

motives and ideals are signified most especially in direct opposition to authority. Through excluding members of the community (adults) who automatically wield normative authority, the Young Tigers acted without fear of authority. The group therefore functioned in a manner in which theirs was a contested space on the grounds of age as an exclusionary measure hence their name: The Young Tigers. By this automatic exclusion of authority wielding members of the community or enforcers of normative authority, the Young Tigers, thus, stood outside of authority and as such could not be subjected to it. Hence, they were able to wield power misguidedly because there was no authority to which they were subjected. As a result, what they created was what Xaba termed a struggle masculinity. According to Xaba, this is "the type of masculinity which became dominant among young, urban [and peri-urban] Africans during the days of the struggle against apartheid […] [I]t [was] a socially constructed, collective gender identity" (Xaba, 108) with the purpose of directly confronting on the one hand the state's institutions such as the army and the police forces and on the other hand, vigilante groups and the 'impi's' of the migrant workers.

Through creating this struggle masculinity, the Young Tigers created a juvenile manhood that usurped power from the elders of the community through exclusion, for, as suggested above, they believed that those elders were either complicit or showed powerlessness in the face of the state's militaristic masculinity. Their struggle masculinity thus became a form of masculinity they viewed as equipped with enough force to negate state violence. Additionally, inequalities which dominated at the time such as poverty, spatial inequality, inadequate and oppressive education structures for the black population and many more which still persist to this day as discussed in the first chapter influenced the creation of such juvenile masculinities: "[n]umerous factors conspired to produce 'struggle masculinity'. The upbringing of youth in poor households of impoverished and poorly serviced townships, coupled with the relations they had with state institutions, engendered opposition to the state. [Furthermore] [t]he apparently symbiotic relationship between capitalism and apartheid produced antipathy to capitalism" (Xaba, 110).

The Young Tigers' main objective was to protect the people of the townships and settlements who were suffocating under the oppressive hand of different forms of violence. It was on the grounds of resistance that their 'struggle masculinity' was created. After the migrant workers (assisted by Battalion 77 of the government's armed forces) raided the township killing at least 52 people, a Young Tiger speaks at the mass funeral: "[w]e cannot just sit and fold our arms while they continue to kill us. The people must now defend themselves. Those who were in the

armed wing of the political movement, who came back home when amnesty was declared and the armed struggle was suspended, must help our communities to form defence units. Our people shall not die in vain. Every death shall be avenged" (184). However, because of immaturity and the lack of mature reasoning capacity, the power they possessed intoxicated them to a point where they were unable to tell the difference between protecting and harming. In Xaba's observations, they:

> initially began by participating in 'defence communities' which protected the communities from the vigilantes and the state […] the nature of their battles against the state coupled with methods they employed in fighting progressively isolated them […] they began turning against the communities for whose defence they had prepared to lose their lives […] (Xaba, 108)

This result was unavoidable because they were intoxicated by the overwhelming power they wielded with little to no experience of how to channel that power into leadership. Arguably this may have been because of the grounds of exclusion upon which the groups were established (that which emphasised youth), thus immaturity. The result therefore was that the immense power they had, quickly became misdirected and it turned upon those it was initially set to protect. This is evidenced by the death of Noria's son Vutha the Second, who was burnt to death by the Young Tigers, after they accused him of being a sell-out. The nurse at his funeral and Noria's informing Toloki about how her son met his untimely death attests to these facts respectively: "[t]his our little brother was killed by those who are fighting to free us" (7), "[y]ou see, they say they are fighting for freedom, yet they are no different from the tribal chief and his followers. They commit atrocities as well" (178).

Struggle masculinity as seen in the evidence given above quickly became a two-edged sword, for while the collective was fighting to protect the people of the settlement, they themselves inflicted harm on the very same people. After killing Vutha the Second and his friend, they even went a step further by torching and setting alight Noria's shack and no authority existed to hold them accountable because they had stripped their elders of that authority. Furthermore, their collective identity permitted for such an injustice to occur. This is partly because responsibility is always displaced, deferred and never truly accounted for:

> 'Who killed your son Noria?' 'The Young Tigers.' 'And they burned down your shack?' 'No one knows who burnt my shack down. It must be the same people who killed my son. Maybe to intimidate me […] to keep me quiet […] or to silence me forever.' 'Keep you quiet? Is it a secret then, that the Young Tigers are responsible? Don't the people know?' Noria explains that the people know very well. (178)

While the Young Tigers' rise to prominence and power was because they viewed the older members of the settlement to be complicit, ironically, owing to the power that the Young Tigers

wield, they also force the settlement's members to be complicit. This is because they want them to agree to the fact that the Young Tigers possesses power and therefore should not be questioned in their use of it. Thus, when they torch Noria's shack, it is a threat of violence that is given as warning to Noria and all other members of the community that they (Young Tigers) will respond with violence should anyone deem it necessary to question or oppose the manner in which they make use of their authority and power. This is because the collective power which they wielded was similar to that of the state's army and police forces, the vigilante groups and the migrant workers. It is a power of a collective, a group or an institution which dominates individuals and is able to annihilate any individual struggle with swift and violent force; hence they are able to invoke fear in others and therefore, unconsciously enforce complicity, that is, compelling those violated to turn a blind eye to their own victimisation.

As I have mentioned above, because of the collective nature of the Young Tigers as a power structure, no particular individual can take responsibility for his or her actions. Their actions are seen and made sense of in terms of the imaginary relationship the individual has with the collective. As a result, those actions are stripped away from the individual actors who act them out and are attributed to a group—an imaginary entity with no material existence. This should however not be the case because among other things, it is one of the many ways to perpetuate injustice. Furthermore, no group (an imaginary entity) can act on its own. Actions are always a result of individual persons either acting alone, but with the complicity of others or a plurality of individual persons' actions with the same idea in mind. The injustice here lies in grievous individual acts being attributed to a group, thus rendering the actor or violator non-existing: "[b]ut one strange thing was that none […] could say who was actually responsible for the atrocity. They just said it was the Young Tigers. *Who in particular*? Just the Young Tigers. Who had given the instruction […] to light the fire? The Young Tigers. *Who among the Young Tigers*? Just the Young Tigers" [Emphasis added] (190-191). The gravity of the injustice of a collective masculinity is seen in the difficulty experienced by individuals who are unable to live freely under its dominance. Furthermore, the fact that it is almost impossible for individuals to take responsibility for their actions while in the group makes it even worse. It suffocates individuals who are at the receiving end of that power and renders them hopeless. Criticising such harmful and collective identities of masculinity becomes almost impossible since they possess enough power to force others into complicity because of their threat of violence. However, in contrast to this, Toloki finds a unique way of criticising these forms of

harmful masculinities without calling undue attention to himself. This form of critique is discussed in the section below.

3.4) Exile, Marginalisation, and The Embodiment of Compassion as a Mode of Criticism

In the first chapter, I pointed out that gay men are among the most vocal protestors against toxic iterations of masculinities since they position themselves, in most instances, in contrast to heterosexual ideals of masculinity that often manifest themselves in violence. Discussing the foundations of this problem, Kopano Ratele observes that "the common thing among the stuff of masculinity is a claim to authority that puts men at the top of the [social] hierarchy" (*Male Sexualities and Masculinities*, 414). However, according to Marius Crous, this claim to authority is often adopted by "heterosexual men" in order to "impose certain definitions and set certain boundaries and use power" (21) to maintain hierarchies and imbalances, thus giving legitimacy to hegemonic masculinity as a basis for heterosexual masculinity. Ratele further adds that "[t]he ruling masculinity in South Africa, as in other parts of the world, has as some of its constituent elements assertive heterosexuality" (*Ruling Masculinity and Sexuality*, 51). These are amongst the elements observed in the masculinities portrayed in *Ways of Dying*. The portrayal of violence in the narrative is associated with heterosexual masculinities and its need for signification.

As mentioned above, the novel contains many instances of violence and depicts at least twenty descriptions of death and twelve funerals. Among these, at least eighty-five people die at the hands of violent and assertive masculinities and masculine collectives. As I have discussed in the first chapter and above, since men do not exist in a vacuum, their masculinities are affected by different types of inequalities. This can be seen in the manner in which masculinities are portrayed in the novel, especially with regards to Battalion 77, the hostel dwellers and the vigilante groups. This portrayal confirms the notion that "heterosexual masculinity, is a form of masculinity, supported by political power, and is able to aggressively reassert its ascendancy over other forms" (Ratele, *Ruling Masculinity and Sexuality* 59). This is in part due to the apartheid law which criminalised homosexuality. Therefore, heterosexuality was the only form of sexual preference that was recognised and deemed legitimate by the state. However, Mda turns this on its head by presenting the protagonist (Toloki) as a heterosexual man whose mind

is not dominated by heterosexual assertiveness, aggression, authority and the imposition of definitions that set boundaries and assert power.

Unlike Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (discussed in the next chapter) where a homosexual or queer masculine ideal is used to negate toxic heterosexual masculinities, Mda's *Ways of Dying* challenges the heterosexual ideal by presenting a protagonist who is heterosexual yet distinctly different from other men in the narrative. When we first meet Toloki, it is at Vutha the Second's funeral, and we observe that the men at the funeral are filled with anger, including the Nurse: "the Nurse shouts at us. Pain is etched in his voice, and rage has mapped his face […] the Nurse's indiscretion has become so loud that it is beginning to swallow his words of anger" (7). Toloki is the only heterosexual male who shows compassion towards the bereaved mother (Noria): "he sees her, the mother of the boy. She is a convulsion of sobs […] She lifts her eyes appealing to the feuding crowd […] He must approach and speak with her" (8-9). While other men are caught up in this unnecessary feud, Toloki directs his attentions towards Noria, and empathises with her.

Toloki's character is found within the midst of violent masculinities, yet, as suggested above, his is a masculinity that is quite different from all the others observed in the text. He is a well-crafted embodiment of a masculinity that is founded upon the basis of criticising stereotypical and harmful masculinities. The masculinist ideal as portrayed in the text requires that men be hard, non-feeling, authoritarian, militaristic and insensitive, however Toloki embodies qualities that defy all of the above-mentioned characteristics. In opposition to these stereotypes, he shows compassion. Additionally, he is also open to engagement without feeling a need to assert himself. Moreover, his vocation (as a professional mourner) requires that he cry and show emotion in public: "he sits very conspicuously on the mound that will ultimately fill the grave […] and weeps softly for the dead" (16). All these are characteristics that negate all stereotypic ideals of heterosexual masculinity as presented in the narrative. What all this means is that Toloki represents a figure of resistance against the second dimension of inequality, one which I pointed out in the first chapter as an internal process through which the ideology of masculinity oversees an unequal distribution of power in the relations between men. This is due to the fact that his is a persona that undermines this ideology which perpetuates inequality among male individuals through emphasising hierarchies and by maintaining hegemonic ideals of masculinity as well as competition among men. In contrast, Toloki undermines the internal process through which the ideology of masculinity as a patriarchal product oversees an unequal distribution of power in the relations between men.

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Although his character is purposefully crafted to criticise violent and stereotypic iterations of masculinity, this does not just happen without influence. His history is influenced by the contextual background from which he came. His long history of marginalisation, abuse, disrespect, misrecognition and nonrecognition has also played a role in the person he has now become. These are the elements of what Göran Therborn describes as existential inequality. He explains that, "Existential inequality means denial of equal recognition and respect and is a potent source of humiliations" (580). Therefore, as a result of the existential inequality that he has experienced throughout his upbringing and in his adult life, Toloki chooses a self-imposed exile in order to resist abuse and to protect himself. Additionally, other forms of masculinities play a significant role in determining the masculinity that he embodies because the expression of his maleness automatically becomes different from those others from whom he isolates himself: "[h]e was going to establish his home in one of the quayside waiting rooms and eschew forever the company of men" (147). As a result, he finds sanctuary in a condition that opposes stereotypic masculinities and leads him to only one alternative, which is to embody that difference.

In his relationship with his father discussed in the first section above, Toloki does not get any form of recognition and his artwork is never praised nor does he get affirmation for it. After his picture had been nominated to be included in a calendar, his father is angered by this achievement: "Jwara was so angry that he decreed that the disastrous calendar must never be seen in his house again" (68). In opposition to this lack of acknowledgement, Toloki develops a persona which encourages creativity in children even when that ingenuity is used as a mockery of himself: "[a]ll the time the children sing and dance outside. At one stage they sing the song that they composed about Toloki yesterday. Noria angrily tells them that it is naughty of them to sing rude songs about adults. Toloki says 'Let them sing, Noria. Never stifle the creativity of children.' […]" (69). Toloki's encouragement of the children's song is in direct opposition to his father's non-recognition of his own artform, even though the children's song is created to mock him. By ignoring the negative aspect of the song, and admiring instead its creative and imaginative detail, Toloki refuses to admonish the children because in that reprimand there is a trace of his father, whom he chooses to oppose. Therefore, the many types of masculinities he met with in his past played a significant role in informing the persona he now portrays to others.

Toloki's masculinity is inconsistent with all the other masculinities presented in the narrative. While other masculinities – influenced by different types of inequalities as discussed in the

above sections – inflict pain, harm and death, he embodies that pain: "[a]t the cemetery Toloki sits on one of the five mounds, and groans, and wails" (108). Moreover, he seeks to offer compassion and mourns the many deaths caused by those other masculinities: "I am a […] man with a vocation. I mourn for the dead. I cannot stop mourning, Noria. Death continues every day. Death becomes me, it is a part of me" (115). He embodies a masculinity that criticises those other masculinities, by being different. This means that the overwhelming number of stereotypic masculinities are mythic constructions because he has managed to overcome such myths and not become one of those many masculine types. While other men are influenced by an anxiety which requires that they prove themselves as legitimate men like the lamenter who cried, "[a]re we men or just scared rats" (23) at Vutha the Second's funeral, he on the other hand allows himself to be vulnerable: "he sits on the mound and shares his sorrow with the world" (17).

When analysing Toloki's role in the text, Chielozona Eze writes that "in this respect […] his role as Professional Mourner is deeply symbolic; it is a sign of finitude and of the absurdity of violence" (95). Eze recognizes Toloki's opposing stance, and by noting the absurdity of violence, he highlights at the same time as he reveals the non-conformist nature of Toloki's masculinity, the shallow-mindedness of stereotypic masculinities because they adhere to an ideology that is limited in terms of emotional intelligence, integrity and the pursuit of equality. Furthermore, he adds that "Toloki's dramatization of sorrow is […] designed to provoke a chain of mimesis (he wants others to imitate his sympathetic gestures)" (Eze, 95). Therefore, his role does not only serve to offer criticisms, it is also active in a sense that it invites others to share in its experiences and in its pain, because whenever he mourns he adds an aura of sadness to which others can relate. It is apparent that Toloki represents the notion that despite the inequalities that characterise and influence the relations between men and masculinities, males can still try to live without conflict if they eschew all forms of violence and not allow themselves to be affected in a negative way by social inequalities.

The role Toloki plays in the text puts him at loggerheads with those masculinities his role criticises, and he responds not with confrontation but with avoidance. That is why he reminds himself to not get involved in quarrels after he confronted a wedding procession which blockaded their return home after Vutha the Second's funeral: "[h]e must keep his priorities straight, however. The work of the Professional Mourner was to mourn, and not to intervene […] It would lower the dignity of the profession to be involved in human quarrels" (24). Furthermore, it is his belief that because of his vocation "[i]t is imperative that he does his

utmost to stay alive" (96) so that he can continue in his calling and most importantly critiquing toxic iterations of masculinities. Unlike many others, he realises that confrontation might lead to violence and that may result in either party's death. Therefore, he eschews all arrogance and adopts a rationalistic point of view which requires that he avoids violence by all means necessary.

3.5) Conclusion

Because men's lives are influenced by the societies within which they exist, social inequalities and injustices play a significant role in shaping constructions of masculinities that are observed at a particular time in history. The violence that Toloki suffers from his homestead coupled with the many types of violence that he witnessed on his way to the city, and also when he was already residing there, influenced the type of man he would become. But most importantly it should be pointed out that the initial idea that influenced his masculinity was economic in nature: he observed that Nefolovhodwe enriched himself and made a living out of death by designing coffins and caskets, therefore he developed the concept of a professional mourner for the purpose of making a living, but later changed the concept into a votary. As such, economic inequalities played a role in influencing his masculinity because they helped him come up with the concept and this gave him a certain dignity as a man and a person. In addition, the argument above shows that the theory that Africans were united across racial lines against the common enemy was unfounded especially when considering the effects of different types of inequalities that influenced constructions of masculinities in South African history. It shows that generalisations about race and the formation of masculinities are problematic and specific contexts need to be taken into account.

Chapter Four: Investigating Hegemony: Hierarchy and Order Formations in K. Sello Duiker's *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* (2001)

> [T]he structure of patriarchy is found in the unequal distribution of power that makes oppression possible, in patterns of […] dominance in every facet of every human life, from everyday conversation to global politics. By its nature, patriarchy puts issues of power, dominance, and control at the centre of human existence, not only in relationships between men and women, but among men as they compete and struggle to gain status, maintain control, and protect themselves from what other men might do to them (Johnson, 338).

In the first chapter, I pointed out that there are two dimensions through which inequality manifests itself and subsequently affects men and how they relate to each other. The first is when inequality is an external product and affects a politics of men and masculinities, such as economic inequality or racial inequality (as seen in the two preceding chapters). For this chapter, the focus is on the second dimension of inequality, one which I discussed as an internal process through which the ideology of masculinity oversees an unequal distribution of power in the relations between men. It is however important to note that the first dimension of inequality as I discussed in the first chapter will also be relevant here. This is due to the fact that external factors – such as education, gangsterism, race and economic means – also affect the politics of men and masculinities, however, those external factors are used – as I will show – as ways to validate and legitimise the unequal distribution of power that will be observed in my discussion below.

This is because *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* deals mostly with the subject of power, where power is negotiated in the relationships between and among men. The psychology of masculinity and how power affects men in the novel are seen in the way in which hierarchies are presented as inevitable products that manifest in the relationships between men. This investigation is significant because of the fact that "[i]nequalities are produced by specific mechanisms, of which distanciation, exclusion, hierarchization, and exploitation are the most important" (Therborn, 579). Therefore, investigating hierarchies in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* means exploring specific mechanisms of inequality portrayed in the narrative in the politics of men and masculinity in South Africa today because "inequalities are avoidable, morally unjustified, hierarchical differences" (Therborn, 580)

This line of investigation will be explored in the narrative through the three significant periods in Tshepo's life. These periods are presented in the text as relationships between two or more

male characters. The first is a three-dimensional relationship between Tshepo, Papa (his father) and Zebron. The second is a relationship between Tshepo and Chris – this relationship culminates in Virgil and Brendan working together with Chris. And the last is the 'brotherhood' relationship observed between Tshepo and his colleagues at their massage parlour named Steamy Windows.

In the first section, I will discuss the three-man relationship between, Tshepo, Papa and Zebron. Here I will show how the dynamics of power function in this three-man relationship where the establishment of the relationship between the oppressor/oppressed or dominator/subordinate expresses how inequality is inherently found in the dynamics of power. In the second section, I will discuss the relationship between Tshepo and Chris as they struggle to prove themselves to each other, especially Chris. Here I will argue that, because of Chris's history, he swiftly employs two of his friends and turns the two-way struggle between himself and Tshepo into a four-man relationship which only functions to work in his favour.

In the third section, I use Connell's typology of masculinities to explain how inequality and the dynamics of power ensure that four different types of men result from the two relationships that I will be discussing in the first and second sections. Lastly, I discuss in the last section the Steamy Windows brotherhood. Here I will show first how the men of the brotherhood seek to liberate themselves from the ideology of patriarchy which perpetuates inequality amongst men. Secondly, I will show that despite their urge to liberate themselves, they also fall victim to external factors of inequality such as race issues, and that they ultimately end up creating a form of hegemony among themselves.

4.1) Oppression and Beyond: Investigating the Dynamics of Power in a Three-Man Relationship

When Tshepo is seventeen and staying with both his parents, five men gain access to their house and the bedroom the three had locked themselves in. From there, they manage to overpower Papa, take him into the door-less bathroom and tie him onto a chair. They then proceed to rape both Tshepo and his mother after which they take the latter outside and with two gunshots they kill her and leave her lifeless body in the car. After they have left, Tshepo observes his father's vulnerability and sorrow while still tied to the chair in the bathroom: "He couldn't look at me. He started crying" (97). The brutality of the event and the trauma that Tshepo suffers after being raped and subsequently witnessing his mother being raped and killed

lead to his being committed to Sterkfontein psychiatric hospital (shortly after his mother's death) and later Tara psychiatric hospital.

Six years later, (now a University student at Rhodes) Tshepo has a violent episode, the result of which is that he is taken to Valkenberg psychiatric hospital, where he is committed for "cannabis induced psychosis" (3). While in the institution, he develops a friendship with another patient named Zebron. When we first meet Zebron, he already knows that Tshepo has a fear of razors (xyrophobia) and subsequently drops a bare razor blade into a magazine while Tshepo is reading it. This provocation sends Tshepo into a wild frenzy, and as a result, he is restrained and taken into isolation. On his return, Zebron lets him know that he is not the only one who has become his victim. He taunts all newcomers as a way of sending a message to them: "Don't fuck with me and I won't fuck with you. That's all I [am] saying" (30). Here, Zebron goes to the trouble of establishing a relationship which sees him claim dominance over Tshepo. However, we later learn that this seemingly two-way relationship is in fact a three-man relationship completed by Papa (Tshepo's father). As suggested by the quotation from Johnson that I used above, it is observable that due to the structure of patriarchy, the triangular relationship between these three men is informed by an unequal distribution of power and it sees Tshepo at the bottom, Papa at the apex and Zebron skewed below Papa yet above Tshepo.

In the first chapter, I quoted Michael Kaufman who observes that "[m]asculinity is power" (7) and then I discussed the extent to which power and masculinity are linked by pointing to the fact that in a politics of men and masculinity there is almost always a hegemonic structure that is observed because for power to exist it requires at least two individuals to be involved: one to wield that power and another to succumb to it. As seen above, Zebron's action of claiming dominance over Tshepo exposes this fact. Moreover, the relationship that I have just described which sees Papa at the top of the three-person relationship between himself, Zebron and Tshepo also emphasises this point. Additionally, a hegemonic structure is also seen in the details of their relationship. When Papa comes to visit Tshepo at Valkenberg, and the latter asks if the former had been keeping tabs on him, he responds: "I've been speaking to your doctors. But Zebron has also been helpful. He didn't have a choice" (189). In addition, he also lets Tshepo know why Zebron did not have a choice but to help: "That night when your mother died, he was there, you just don't remember" (189). This revelation therefore confirms Tshepo's suspicions that his father was the mastermind behind the attack and his mother's death.

When he comments that Zebron did not have a choice but to be helpful, he exposes the fact that the vulnerability and the sorrow that he expressed on the night of their attack were an act. Because, unlike the weak and vulnerable man that he portrayed himself to be, he was in fact a powerful man hiding that power behind feigned vulnerability. Ultimately, Tshepo's "debilitating fear of men" (115) that has resulted from the trauma he suffered is a condition whose seed was sown by his own father. The fact that he orchestrated the whole incident means that "[t]he establishment of [a] relationship of domination and subordination [between himself and Tshepo is] organized on the basis of age" (DeJong & Love, 535). This is because Tshepo – unbeknown to him – suffers an injustice that was planned and orchestrated by his own father, thus formulating a relationship in which Tshepo is oppressed by his own father who offered him as a sacrificial lamb. There is already a power disparity between parents and their children, however this is exaggerated in Tshepo and Papa's relationship because the power that is wielded by Papa over Tshepo far exceeds the power disparity that usually exists between parents and their children. Therefore, their relationship is marked by injustice and inequality because in their relationship, Papa uses his power to violate Tshepo's human rights and dignity. Here, their relationship echoes the same sentiments as those observed in the two previous chapters where age manifests as a form of inequality.

On the other hand, a comparison between Papa and Zebron reveals that although Zebron notoriously has links to a gang lifestyle: "Zebron sulks in a corner alone […] he commands the kind of respect reserved for gang leaders in prison" (19), Papa is "a big Mafia boss" (98). This means that he has more connections, more economic stability and thus more power to wield, that is why he is able to get Zebron to fulfil his wishes for him. The inequality between them is therefore rooted in status, power as well as the unspoken threat of violence should Zebron fail to follow Papa's commands. This is supported by the fact that Zebron did not have a choice but to follow Papa's orders.

On his visit to Valkenberg, shortly after revealing to Tshepo of Zebron's involvement in their attack and that the latter does not have a choice but to help whenever Papa requires, he (Papa) puts the following question to Tshepo: "Did you ever stop to wonder why your little friend is here" (189)? When considering this question in relation to the statement that Zebron did not have a choice but follow his orders, we realise that he is in Valkenberg on Papa's instruction. As a result, in a conversation with Tshepo, Zebron equates the condition of being a patient in a psychiatric institution to that of being an inmate in prison: "You mustn't let people get to you like that […] you're an inmate now" (154). This reference best works to illuminate his own

condition rather than Tshepo's, because unlike Tshepo who has been committed to Valkenberg for legitimate reasons, he is in the institution because he is following Papa's orders. His condition is that of being an inmate because he is trapped inside the institution on his boss's will.

Unlike Tshepo and Papa's relationship, where their dominator/subordinate relationship clearly assumes the roles of the oppressor and the oppressed, the dominator/subordinate relationship between Papa and Zebron is much more complicated. This is partly because both men are found on the oppressor side. However, this does not imply that Zebron is not oppressed, but unlike Tshepo, Zebron is delighted by the power that Papa possesses because that power rubs off on him, and in Papa's absence, he inherits it. This is in direct opposition to Tshepo who cannot inherit that power in Papa's absence but remains oppressed in all possible ways in his relationship with his father. In making sense of these politics – especially the relationship between Zebron and Papa – Foucault's views on the links between power, desire and knowledge are pertinent:

> [P]ower would be a fragile thing if its only function were to repress, if it worked only through the mode of censorship, exclusion, blockage and repression, in the manner of a great Superego, exercising itself only in a negative way. If, on the contrary, power is strong this is because, as we are beginning to realise, it produces effects at the level of desire-and also at the level of knowledge. Far from preventing knowledge, power produces it. (Foucault, 59)

The loyalty, therefore, that leads Zebron to give up his own freedom because of Papa's wishes shows how power is much subtler than the obvious oppressor/oppressed dynamic. The ideology within which both these men find themselves produces the kind of response in which Zebron's desire is to please Papa and see through his wishes without overt force or obvious oppression being directed towards him. However, having noted the power that Papa has, there is also an undeniable and unspoken threat that opposing his wishes or refusing to fulfil them might lead to harm. Although there might be a desire in Zebron to please Papa and see through his wishes, there is also an unspoken threat in the fact that failure to see to it that his wishes are fulfilled may result in violence.

It is through this dynamic that an injustice is observed enacted on Zebron. This is that his freedoms do not seem to be under his own control. He becomes confined in Valkenberg not on his own will nor through the state's intervention, but through Papa's say so. Furthermore, he is himself unaware of this injustice because of the obscure relationship between himself and Papa and the fact that he admires this power. Although he confesses that he "most despise[s] being

a mental patient" (61), he undertakes his duty with the best of his ability because his admiration for Papa's power coupled with that unspoken threat of violence weighs much more than his hatred of a mental institution. This is suggested by the way he conducts himself in Papa's presence: "It is after ten. He's punctual, I say to myself and sit up properly. Themba lets him in and he walks up to us" [emphasis added] (187). As seen in this quotation, Zebron assumes the posture of an attentive foot soldier towards his commander.

In addition to the two relationships between Tshepo and Papa, and Zebron and Papa, there is also a relationship which completes this triad, and that is the one I pointed to earlier which is between Tshepo and Zebron. In their first encounter in Valkenberg (mentioned above), when Zebron drops a razor blade on the magazine knowing how Tshepo will react because of his fear of razors, Zebron establishes a relationship which is marked by a power disparity. By such an act, he lets Tshepo know who is 'the boss'.

The establishment of a power disparity where Zebron sees through his claim to dominance can be seen manifesting itself in their relations with one another: Zebron is both aggressive and assertive, and his aggression often erupts even in situations where it is uncalled for while Tshepo is on the receiving end of that aggression. While helping Tshepo to secure a move to Ward Two – where there are fewer restrictions and patients are often allowed to take walks outside the institution – Tshepo asks why Zebron is helping him and the latter responds "[d]on't piss me off with questions like that. If you don't need my help then just voetsek. I don't have time for this shit" (153). Zebron responds aggressively even though he is unprovoked, and with that aggression he continues to assert himself. Within this triangular relationship, there are three relationships between dominator(s) and subordinate(s) that are observed. The interconnectedness of these three individuals and their relations to each other expose how their masculinities work in relation to each other and the injustices that lie within. Much like the relationship between Papa and Zebron, the one between Tshepo and Zebron is based on the dominator/subordinate dynamic; on top of this it is also like Papa and Tshepo's relationship, for it also has those oppressor/oppressed qualities. These dynamics between the three men expose once more the fact that power is an establisher of inequality

4.2) Constructing Manhood through Hierarchy and a Fear of Emasculation

Immediately after Tshepo is released from Valkenberg psychiatric hospital he meets Chris – just released from Pollsmoor prison – with whom he shares a flat. Because of their histories,

they share a negative social identity. In this case, Tshepo assumes an identity of a mental institution patient and Chris assumes that of a prisoner and/or criminal. These identities that are fiercely intertwined with their respective pasts and present histories inform the type of relationship that develops between the two. From the outset, Chris claims a dominant position over Tshepo, and this happens when they choose their bedrooms; "Chris takes the bigger room without a door while I [Tshepo] settle for the smaller one leading into the bathroom" (197). Note that Chris takes while Tshepo settles for. This therefore means that both of them assume their positions in this relationship without struggle. Without any spoken communication, by taking the bigger room Chris claims dominance for he takes an active role. On the other hand, by 'settling for' a smaller room, Tshepo automatically regresses into a subordinate and submissive position. This form of arrangement is a direct result of the second dimension of inequality that I spoke of above: inequality as an internal process through which the ideology of masculinity oversees an unequal distribution of power.

However, these positions that they have acquired in relation to each other are swiftly disturbed by material inequality. As I noted in the above introduction, the second dimension of inequality that lays the foundation to their relationship is hereby influenced by aspects of the first dimension: inequalities as external social products that influences how men relate to each other. That is to say, factors of inequality that are external to the ideology of masculinity such as material inequality in this case influence and swiftly challenge the direction into which their relationship is heading. According to Göran Therborn's definition, material inequality refers to the fact that:

> [H]umans have very different resources to draw upon. One aspect is access, to education, career tracks, social contacts, and "social capital." In conventional mainstream discussions, this aspect is often described as "inequality of opportunity." Second, there is inequality of rewards, often described as inequality of outcome. This is the most frequently used measure of inequality: the distribution of income and sometimes of wealth (580).

The flatmates search for two weeks and successfully find jobs at the V & A at the Waterfront. What brings a disturbance into their positions where Chris generally ranks above Tshepo is the fact that while Tshepo is offered a job as a waiter Chris is hired as a dishwasher. This therefore speaks to the fact that their access to employment is influenced by their historical access to education and Tshepo having fared better there, thanks to the efforts of his gangster father, manages to obtain a job that instantaneously reformulates the categorical arrangement of their relationship and puts him above Chris in terms of rank. It is no surprise then that Chris "is bitter that he didn't get a job as a waiter" (197). This is because their jobs as I mentioned above

reverse and disturb the dominant/subordinate dialectic that they have chosen and settled into respectively. Since Chris has claimed dominance over Tshepo, the job offered to him reverses his claimed dominance and places him in an inferior position in relation to Tshepo as far as their employment positions and employment rewards (salaries) are concerned. This results in his being psychologically reduced from a higher claimed position of dominance and locating him not equal to, but below Tshepo. It is for this reason that he becomes bitter; however, he is not necessarily bitter over the job offered to him per se, that is to say, his job is not seen in isolation. Instead, his bitterness is derived from his job in relation to the job offered to Tshepo; his supposed subordinate. This is because, according to the dialectics of their relationship, making use of the second dimension of inequality to claim power and dominance is not enough if such a claim is not legitimised by certain aspects of the first dimension of inequality such as material and/ or resource inequalities as seen in the above scenario. We observe therefore that since their jobs are not seen in isolation but in relation to each other, it is arguable that if both were offered a dishwashing job, Chris's bitterness would not exist. Their jobs then become an indication of difference and in return, signify hierarchy and ranking.

Because Chris perceives the relations between men as influenced by power, status and hegemony, he becomes invested in a process where he tries to overturn these reversed positions and does so by lying to the manager to get Tshepo fired and subsequently acquire his job. After being punched by Chris, thus ending up physically bruised with a bluish-purple shading under his swelled eye, Tshepo comes to the realisation that he has lost his job due to Chris's lies:

> "[…] 'he said you had a problem with drugs and that you'd even gone to Valkenberg and everything for it. He said you guys went out after a shift one night and you got completely stoned and then you had a bad trip or whatever and started being difficult and picked a fight with someone. But they fucked you up,' [the manager] says and I realise the shuffling of papers and the expression on his face isn't one of embarrassment at the prospect of dismissing a worker, it is a look of contempt, of someone who just sees me as a pathetic druggy." (262)

Chris's perception of the relations between himself and Tshepo is dominated by the structure of patriarchy as described by Johnson above. According to Chris, Tshepo is his competitor, therefore he struggles to maintain a dominant position over him. Furthermore, in accordance with Joseph H. Pleck's analysis of men and masculinities, this competitive stance is patterned by that structure of patriarchy: "men's relationships with other men cannot help but be shaped and patterned by patriarchal norms […] men create hierarchies and rankings among themselves according to criteria of 'masculinity'. Men at each rank of masculinity compete with each other, with whatever resources they have, for differential payoffs that patriarchy allows [them]" (23).

This is made possible by the fact that "[a]nxiety is crystallized in an unspoken fear (particularly among heterosexual men): [that] all other men are my potential humiliators, my competitors" (Pleck, 40-41). Initially, Tshepo and Chris share a rank as described by Pleck because of the fact that their relationship begins on a clean slate. Due to this fact, Chris tries to separate himself from Tshepo through making use of the second dimension of inequality because he does not believe that men can be equals. Instead his ideology of masculinity is influenced by his experiences of gangsterism (to be shortly discussed below), thus, when he perceives of the relationship between himself and others, that relationship cannot help but be informed by hegemony.

Since one acquires or claims a particular position in relation to another, this therefore means, in accordance with Chris's outlook, that one must always resist any form of change and always compete for status and value. Because he has already claimed dominance over Tshepo, there exists in him an anxiety that Tshepo might still prove to be superior despite the fact that he had already claimed dominance over him. Their appointments at the V & A therefore worsen his fear, that is why the persona of his masculinity requires that he signify himself as the superior one. For Chris, the problem between Tshepo and himself was triggered by their jobs, that is why he thinks to himself: "He doesn't think he's better any more, not since he lost his job. That smile on his face, it's gone. I took it away […] I did what I had to" (278). Here, Chris addresses the problem he assumes he had; he did what he had to do. For him there was no choice, he had to do it, to prove to himself and to Tshepo that the latter is not better, or perhaps he (Chris) is the better one. This notion of proving that Tshepo is not better also works in reverse because Chris can only show that Tshepo is not better if he proves his own worth.

Additionally, the desire of seeking to prove himself means that he harbours within, a crystallised fear about his own worth and the value of his masculinity in relation to Tshepo's. Since Tshepo had a better job, Tshepo must have been better; his position at the V & A gave him a rank higher than Chris's. In view of this fact, for him to return to his previously claimed position of dominance, 'he had to', as he puts it, 'make a plan'. Chris has this particular perspective about masculinity and manhood because hierarchy is what dominates his mind. It is for him a necessary order within the ideals of manhood. In his first-person narrating voice, he immediately brings hierarchy into play thus confirming how he approaches and perceives relations between men: "Everyone expects it […] [it is] a chance to show off […] a chance to see *who's going up the ranks*, who's been made boss, who's running the streets" [emphasis added] (202). That is why as they get to know each other, he dominates Tshepo by shadowing

himself with a negative image in order to maintain his dominance: "We are eating Nandos and watching TV one night after a gruelling twelve hour shift when I ask him about his past. 'So where were you before Sea Point?' 'Why are you fucking asking me that?' he says suddenly […] But later of his own accord he comes back to me. 'I was in Pollsmoor. Jy weet mos waar Poolmoor is?' he says with a condescending grin" (198-199).

Chris is aware that having a prison record or being an ex-prison inmate casts a negative shadow on one and is in itself a negative social identity; that is why his first response is violent when Tshepo asks him about his past. However, after having had some thoughts over the matter, he decides to tell Tshepo about his past because of the realisation that this particular knowledge would help him cement his dominance over Tshepo. It is his belief that the information is likely to be intimidating to Tshepo, and therefore will force him to submit himself to his dominance. This is evidenced by the condescending grin that he gives Tshepo when sharing this information in addition to emphasising Pollsmoor prison, 'Jy weet mos waar Pollsmoor is?' [You do know where Pollsmoor is, don't you?]. This emphasis is included in his response only for the purposes of intimidation.

To understand Chris's condition, it is necessary to recall his first impression of Tshepo: "He's a little spoiled, one of those darkies who went to larney schools and learned to talk like them" (204). The 'them' that Chris refers to is the white South African population. Already, his opinion of Tshepo is informed by the politics of race and privilege; Tshepo's privileged early life, resulting from his father's gangster lifestyle, is intertwined with race perceptions of privilege. Owing to this reason, there is already bias in Chris's approach towards Tshepo. Furthermore, Tshepo's educational background adds intimidation to Chris's perception and undermines his dominance: "The cleanliness, it's my BA Mastership or whatever bloody degree he's got" (205). Therefore, not only is Chris competing with Tshepo given their present circumstances, but in relation to their previous histories as well. When Chris speaks of the privilege that he assumes Tshepo grew up in, he contrasts it with his own upbringing: "I was bred in Cape Flats. Slums, broken toilets with shit flies everywhere, tall riot lamps that pour out so much orange light you'd think you were at a street disco at night. Two families squatting in three rooms. Ja, ghetto life, cheap bunny chows for breakfast, lunch and supper" (202). Although Chris is aware of the racial and spatial inequalities attached to the classifications of apartheid South Africa, he mistakenly ascribes Tshepo's attendance at what he calls 'larney schools' to racial privilege because of his lack of awareness that it all came from his family's criminal activities.

At this point, Chris displays anxiety about himself and his past in relation to what he has learnt about Tshepo. This anxiety becomes his condition because he is trapped in it. Because of this fact, he feels the need to prove himself not only to Tshepo but most importantly to himself. However, his situation cannot be watered down to his relations with Tshepo. This is because in his relations with Tshepo, the history and background that he is obsessed with also reflect his obsession and fear about his own past. He harbours the knowledge (though unknown to Tshepo) that he comes from a disadvantaged position, that is, a position of emasculation because he was raped in prison – discussed in detail later – as he was a feminised member of the 28s gang in prison. It is this history that interferes with his relations with Tshepo and it puts immense pressure on Chris. This pressure is the emasculation that he experienced in prison because of being feminised within the 28s gang. Because of this stigma that he carries within himself and its accompanying fury, his nervous condition propels him to a need and to a desire to prove his manhood. As such, when his relations with Tshepo become riddled with conflict, Tshepo becomes a reference point against which he must prove himself as a man and therefore prove his manhood in the process. The employment of violence therefore becomes a necessary signifier for his masculinity given the dynamics of power that he learned in prison. This is because with violence he is able to re-create himself and make a new man of himself. This process therefore marks his re-signification because this violent masculinity that he employs signifies his male body and through it he claims back his manhood because of a successful fusion of his violent masculinity (signifier) and his male body (signified).

Chris's personhood and self-image are positioned against and in relation to Tshepo. That is why he develops a desperate urge to want to prove himself against the latter: "just because he went to school now he thinks hy ken alles" [now he thinks he knows everything] (217), "he mustn't treat me like a child" (216). It is also worth recalling that Chris has already claimed dominance over Tshepo and this knowledge about the latter's privilege and university studies (even though he dropped out) unsettles him because his dominant position becomes threatened. He realises that these contradict the structure of the hierarchy in which he has located himself as ranking above Tshepo. Additionally, when Tshepo does not agree with him, Chris (because of his insecurities) reads Tshepo's disagreements as the former's attempts to disregard and undermine him: "He never agrees with anything I say. I'm not stupid. I know I don't have reading but I'm not stupid" (228). This is a negative perspective that he develops, and it affects the way in which he relates to Tshepo: "So I'm not stupid. I've got things to say. I also see things out there. Okay, so maybe Pollsmoor made me a better criminal. Maybe I'll always think

like a tsotsi [criminal], but I'm not dik [thick headed]. I can see things. And I don't like it when Tshepo makes me feel stupid. He always does that" (228). As I pointed out in the first chapter, men tend to perceive of each other not as equals but as competitors, therefore, when Chris looks at Tshepo, he sees his competitor. And despite the fact that he has claimed a dominant position over Tshepo, he feels psychologically inferior to Tshepo because of the differences in their backgrounds. In return, because he feels that this relegates him to an inferior and subordinate position, he develops an inferiority complex in which he feels that violence is a necessary tool that he must use. It is for this reason and others mentioned above that he punches Tshepo and subsequently lies to their manager about how Tshepo acquired the bruise under his eye.

In his struggle for domination, Chris indeed manages to get Tshepo fired and acquire his job all at the same time. However, despite his twisted success, Chris is not happy and celebratory. What further exacerbates his already brewing hatred for Tshepo is the way in which Tshepo conducts himself. Since Chris's approach to life is informed by the quasi-military ideology of the 28s prison gang, where violence is the centre that brings all things together, he expects a violent outburst from Tshepo. He expects him to be angry and do something with that anger, something that would have a trace of violence in it, but when Tshepo does not respond violently, as he expects him to, he is overcome with fury. This fury of his is not necessarily invoked simply by Tshepo's failure to respond accordingly, but by what Chris assumes Tshepo's failure to respond means.

The fact that Tshepo does not respond in accordance to his expectations subsequently becomes an insult to him. Tshepo does not become angry and violent as Chris expects him to be, and this is because Tshepo portrays a type of masculinity (discussed below) that is different from Chris's: one that is not influenced by hierarchy and is not informed by a quasi-military ideology as is the case with Chris's masculinity. Although Chris believes that he has proven himself, his inability to provoke a violent response from Tshepo exacerbates his anger as mentioned above:

> "[…] He's so nice, so fucking nice it makes me sick. It makes me want to moer him. I mean, who does he think he is? Here he is struggling […] but he still keeps his manners even when I treat him like a moegoe [an idiot]. He won't break. It makes me naar. Who does he think he is? Everyone gets a little angry, swears a little, fights a little, steals a little. What's wrong with him? Maybe I'm pushing him in a corner because I want to see what he's going to do. I want to see if he's going to make a plan or if he's going to keep struggling. Maybe I want to see that he's not as strong as he thinks he is, not as good as he pretends." (278-279)

The reason that he wants to break him is so that Tshepo can become angry and react at least with a little violence. Additionally, he wants to break his spirit, but since Tshepo does not

become that which he (Chris) expects him to become, this to Chris becomes an insult, and because of this insult that he perceives, he therefore makes another plan to 'fix' Tshepo. This involves two former Pollsmoor inmates, Virgil and Brendan, whom Chris met while in prison.

We see that when these two men now get involved, a previously two-man relationship becomes transformed into a four-man relationship. Although this is not a sustained relationship among the four, it involves one incident that exposes a hierarchy that pre-dates the relationship between Tshepo and Chris. Now that the two-way relationship between Tshepo and Chris has been transformed to a four-man relationship, a quad of masculine relations is created between the four men that is representative of a skewed rhombus. Each individual occupies a corner of this quad and the observed order and hierarchy are informed by a prison ideology of the 28s gang of which the three (Chris, Brendan and Virgil) are all members. Once the three have come together, Tshepo walks in from looking for a job and finds them all in the flat. They then follow him into his room and close the door, then proceed to assault and rape him. It is however important to observe that their actions do not occur in a manner devoid of order. The development of these actions is important to note because of the way in which they point to inequality and hierarchy. This is because the three do not just enter Tshepo's room and proceed to rape him: in their actions, there is a certain order of doing things that is observed.

First Chris highlights this hierarchy, comprised of an inequality in the possession of power and the systematic arrangement of performances that follows, by pointing to the markers of this pecking order: "I […] show him my twenty-eights number on my left hand. I don't think he ever noticed it […] 'You check, these are also my brothers,' I say and they show him their numbers. But it is on their right hands. And Virgil has three lines under his number" (280). These 28s signs already mark Tshepo as an outsider, therefore positioning him at the bottom of this quad. It should also be noted that although Chris, Brendan and Virgil are all members of the 28s gang, they are, nonetheless, not equal and their 28s tattoos are evidence of this assertion. Chris's tattoo is placed on the left hand and the others' on the right. This fact already separates him from the other two. Since his tattoo is on the left, he is inferior to both Brendan and Virgil, therefore he ranks below them.

This fact can be observed in the ways in which their actions are ordered. Virgil is the only one who does not actually rape Tshepo, but he plays a significant role in this assault, because whenever he speaks, he does so in a manner of one who gives orders and his actions also signify this fact: "'Tsek, sonnie [fuck off, boy]. Salute! Salute! Fuck him up Ek sê [I say]' Virgil tells

me" (280). "Virgil stands back and gives me the signal" (281). "'Okay, Brendan,' Virgil says and I swap places with [Brendan]" (281). "Virgil even starts getting impatient with him and hurries him on to breek water [ejaculate]" (281). From the way Virgil conducts himself, and orders both Chris and Brendan around, it is clear that Virgil is their leader, thus ranking above both of them. Furthermore, the three lines below his twenty-eight's tattoo signify this fact. Consequently, this means that Virgil occupies the apex position in this quad-like relationship. Even though the three are a collective force against Tshepo, the manner in which Virgil addresses both Brandan and Chris still requires respect and submission from them. Before he gives Chris permission to 'fuck up' Tshepo, Chris must first 'salute'. He also stands back and gives Chris a signal, after Chris has 'saluted'. Later, he gets impatient with Brendan and hurries him. These are orders which the two subordinates (Chris and Brendan) observe and submit to.

On the other hand, Brendan's tattoo is on the same hand as Virgil's but is missing the three lines that Virgil has. This then means that Brendan ranks lower than Virgil but higher than Chris whose tattoo is on the left hand. Since Tshepo is on the bottom of this quad, Virgil at the apex and Brendan a rank lower than Virgil (the second highest position), Chris then occupies the third rank (the last position in the gang). What is thus observed here, is, firstly, an inequality in terms of a collective power structure because Tshepo is rendered powerless against the institution which the three men (Virgil, Brendan and Chris) are all members of. Secondly, even though the violence against Tshepo is collectively achieved, one should be careful not to view a collective power that he falls victim to as a monolithic force, but rather, as a collective of three men who occupy different ranks in their gang's pecking order.

At this point, it is fair to argue that the 28s tattoo sign branded on their arms serves as a marker of the fact that they are part of this in-group, and at the same time, it is a boundary-maintaining mechanism from within and from without the group. From without, it operates as a protective and exclusionary strategy that functions to separates the insiders (that is, the gang members) from the outsiders (that is, non-gang members, and other gang members from foreign gangs). Tshepo is an outsider, which is why the violence against him is collectively achieved. From within, the function is to deploy a ranking model in order to justify any unfair relations that occur between dominant and subordinate members of the gang.

As mentioned above, the plan that Chris comes up with leads to the eventual rape of Tshepo. However, when Chris approaches Tshepo, he betrays himself by asking if Tshepo knows why his tattoo is on the left rather than on the right. Tshepo shakes his head. Immediately after

Tshepo says no, Chris says to him, "[w]ait here I'll tell you. I'll show you" (280). This is quite revealing about Chris because when he says, 'I'll show you' he then proceeds (with the help of Virgil and Brendan) to rape Tshepo and later adds while in the act, "[n]ow you know what I had to do all those years in Pollsmoor" (281). This sexual act is a response to his previous question: why is it that his tattoo is placed on the left instead of the right hand. His subsequent response therefore implies that the placement of his tattoo on the left is a code which marked him in prison as someone who was given a feminine role. This is because "[m]ale prison populations tend to be divided into people identified as 'men' and those identified as 'women'. 'Women' are seen primarily as the sexual property and servants of 'men' and are often forcibly taken as 'wives' (or wyfies) by other inmates" (Gear, *Rules of engagement* 94). By this active response to the question he asked Tshepo, he forcefully puts Tshepo in his own position and lets him experience the rape that he (Chris) experienced while in prison.

Concerning this violence, Crous observes that: "In jail [Chris] had to join a gang of sodomisers to express himself sexually in a violent manner, particularly to fit in with a particular group" (31). Furthermore, he "had to perform the role of a male rapist in order to survive" (32). I concur with Crous's assertion that Chris joins the 28s to survive in prison. However, I do not agree with the assertion that Chris performed the role of the male rapist while in prison. Instead, I argue that, given the gang members' tattoo placements in relation to Chris's whose tattoo is on the left, Brendan and Virgil are therefore positioned in the 'Blood Line' while Chris is in the 'Private Line': "The specified role of the Blood Line members [in prison] is to commit violence, and to protect the camp […] while the Private Line positions are distinctly feminised" (Gear, *Sex, Sexual Violence and Coercion in Men's Prisons*, par 10). This therefore means that Chris was feminised within the prison domain. For this reason, his was not a position of a rapist but rather the opposite. That is why he angrily says to Tshepo after raping him: 'Now you know what I had to do all those years in Pollsmoor'. It is for this reason that he betrays himself, for he lets Tshepo know through that active response that he survived prison by joining a gang that not only protected him but feminised him in the process.

> [Through his actions] he angrily tells Tshepo that rape is one of the ordeals he faced during his time at Pollsmoor prison […] The 28s were [once] the only group of prisoners permitted to take 'wives' and protect the other gang members. Some members were used a[s] sex slaves within the gang. Chris is a member of the 'feminised' group of men who served as wives for the 'real' men in prison (Dlamini, 111).

The rape that Tshepo experiences is quite different from that experienced by Chris because "[a] prisoner may 'agree' to sex in return for gang-related protection" (Gear, *Sex, Sexual Violence*

and Coercion in Men's Prisons, par 24) and thus garner benefits such as cigarettes and food that only members of a gang may have privilege to (this, however, is not an assumption that Chris was not humiliated by the experience, but an observation that he was a feminised member who benefitted in certain ways from being a member of the 28s while in prison, especially for his survival). On the other hand, Tshepo is not a member of the 28s and neither does he need their protection, therefore the assault that he suffers at their hands "underscores the way through which [the three-man gang] use rape as a tool […] to ridicule [and] humiliate [him]" (Dlamini, 111) in order to affirm their total and unopposed domination of him.

Although the rapes of both Tshepo and Chris may reveal different understandings, there is however an overlap in their experiences concerning these assaults. Both Chris and Tshepo are left humiliated by their experiences. For Chris there is even more to this experience because "[m]ale rape in prison is often associated (as are other forms of violence) with the construction of manhood within the prison code and the gendered meanings with which sex is imbued" (Gear, *Sex, Sexual Violence and Coercion in Men's Prisons*, par 29). Therefore, his own manhood was never constructed, instead it was deconstructed, and a feminised form of masculinity was ingrained in him. Furthermore, the tattoo sign that he received on his left hand instead of the right meant that he was a member of the 28s but the sign served as a symbol of exclusion used for the production and maintenance of inequality. That is because the sign serves as a "barrier […] that makes it impossible or at least difficult for certain groups to access a good life" (Therborn, 580) such as members of the Private Line who receive their tattoos on the left hand like Chris. This ultimately means that for them to have access to a good life or at least protection, they first had to accept emasculation by receiving their tattoos on the left and becoming members of the Private Line. This is a condition Chris is fully aware of because "[a]pparently typical in prison subcultures, is the notion of 'manhood' as reliant on sexually penetrating others while submitting to sexual penetration loses one this status" (Gear, *Sex, Sexual Violence and Coercion in Men's Prisons*, par 29). Chris is therefore aware of how his 'manhood' has been stripped off him, therefore he wants to break Tshepo in the same way that he experienced his emasculation.

However, what complicates this matter even further is that in the same process that he wants to emasculate Tshepo, as well as show him how he (Chris) was emasculated, he also makes a man of himself (as he sees it) and reclaims his stolen masculinity because of that stereotypic notion of manhood derived from prison subculture which specifies a 'man' as one who sexually penetrates another. Consequently, the raping of Tshepo serves Chris with two purposes all at

once: in that one act, he emasculates Tshepo and at the same time he makes a man of himself (or so he thinks). This is because "[r]ape […] is a person-to-person violence deeply embedded in power inequalities and ideologies of […] supremacy" (Connell, *Gender & Power*, 107). In view of this fact, Chris imagines that he who rapes becomes the dominant male, thus cementing his earlier claim of dominance over Tshepo.

4.3)   Contested Sites of 'Significance' and a Play of Differences

In their actions, the four men (Tshepo, Papa, Zebron and Chris) are spurred on either by an imagined need to prove themselves to others (Chris), to exercise power (Papa), or to assert their dominance over others (Zebron). Additionally, (for Tshepo) it is to survive the violence, trauma and assault initially and later to understand maleness and masculinity through understanding men's sexual needs and their bodies (discussed below).

It is through their actions and their relations to each other that different formulations and types of masculinities are observed to exist. These differences are a result of the way in which – as discussed earlier – masculinity as both a concept and a construct becomes filled with arbitrary signifiers, thereby gaining its meaning and significance from those signifiers and resulting in different formulations and types of men and their masculinities. This point is, however, not an assertion that the observed masculinities are concrete character types but an observation that they are positions and roles that the men discussed above fulfil in relation to one another, because they are always contested sites. The most dominant type of masculinity observed in the text is Papa's. His is a "[d]ominant masculinity that silences other masculinities, positioning these in relation to itself such that the values expressed by these other masculinities are not those that have currency" (Morrell, *Of Boys and Men*, 608), but instead function in a way that enforce his own and submit to it.

One can observe this in his relations with both Zebron and Tshepo. Earlier, I noted that, in his conversation with Tshepo, Papa tells him that Zebron does not really have a choice but to feed him information. This means that Papa occupies a hegemonic position because his position allows him to exercise power unreservedly over Zebron and on all others who are found to be subordinates under his dominance because he is a mafia boss. In view of this fact, it is (as a mafia boss) his successful claim to authority that is a visible marker of his hegemonic masculinity. Moreover, he is able to get Zebron to answer to his authority without use of violence (this is however, not a presupposition that there is no threat of violence at all).

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Zebron himself embodies a masculinity that does not actually meet the hegemonic criteria since he is found to be vulnerable under Papa's authority. This vulnerability that he appears to display is, however, limited to his relations with Papa, because where Papa is not present Zebron becomes the dominant individual. Furthermore, as I have discussed earlier, since he commands the kind of respect reserved for gang leaders in prison, his masculinity embodies practices and patterns of a hegemonic type. However, since he is under the shadow of Papa, he does not wholly meet that normative standard. As such, his masculinity is not entirely hegemonic but is in some respects complicit because he falls under the category of "[m]asculinities constructed in ways that realize the patriarchal dividend, without the tensions or risks of being the front-line troops of patriarchy" (Connell, *Masculinities* 79).

Even though he does not meet the standard for a fully hegemonic type of masculinity, he approaches life from an extremely violent point of view which emphasises the notions of power because, like many men, he believes that masculinity is "predominantly associated with a man's capacity to exercise power and control" (Shefer & Ruiters, 38). This means that for him, being unable to control situations and get his wishes when desired is a sign of weakness and if one is found to be in this position, one is devoid of any form of masculinity and reality associated with it, as suggested by his remark: "I most despise being a mental patient […] I feel civility ebbing away from me, I feel weak and emasculated" (61). Civility refers to a norm or a standard of conduct which encompasses tolerance and affirmation of the pursuits of others, in short treating others with courtesy and politeness despite observed differences: "to treat others with the concern and respect they are owed as persons able to act upon plans advancing a conception of the good life" (Sinopoli, 612). Zebron despises civility because he sees it as a loss of the control and power linked to masculinity and authority.

In his analysis of types and forms of masculinities that result from relations between men and the contexts within which they are found, Connell asserts that "[m]arginalization is always relative to the authorization of the hegemonic masculinity of the dominant group" [original emphasis] (*Masculinities* 80-81). Chris appears to represent this marginalised type of masculinity. This is because the ideology of masculinity that influences his behaviour is the one he adopted while in prison: "Okay, so maybe Pollsmoor made me a better criminal" (228). A paradox about Chris's situation is that, as much as he embraces the outlaw kind of masculinity that he adopts in prison, and while arguing that he has become better at it, he is at the same time marginalised by that ideology of masculinity which he embraces.

This is because when he is recruited to join the 28s Gang he is made a member of the 'Private Line' in prison, therefore marked as a 'wife' for other members. Once there, his manhood is turned on its head, and as discussed earlier, he is forced into a feminised role within the gang. What further solidifies this paradox is the fact that even though he embraces the culture of the gang's masculinity, the very same culture is rigid in a sense that "[o]nce in the Private Line, always in the Private Line" because "it is forbidden for members to move from the Private Line to the Blood Line" (Gear, *Sex, Sexual Violence and Coercion in Men's Prisons*, par 14). This therefore means that, since Chris has been pushed to the peripheries and his masculinity feminised, he then cannot be allowed to go up the ranks in such a way that will allow him to overcome his marginalisation (that is, his feminised masculinity). What is observed, therefore, is an individual who is complicit in his own marginalisation. Instead of seeking to free himself from this authority, he looks up to it and envies it. It is this envy that prevents him from wishing to free himself from this marginalised condition.

Although these masculinities are obsessed with power and control, Tshepo embodies quite a different type of masculinity. According to Connell's typology of masculinities, Tshepo's is a subordinated type. He is "symbolically expelled from hegemonic masculinity" (Connell, *Masculinities* 78) as well as from the circle of legitimacy through the names which he is given: "Hey jou, naai" and "gemors" (280). Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, during the night on which his mother is murdered, both she and Tshepo are raped. The rape in this episode marks the way in which one becomes dominated, because penetration from a toxic masculinity's perception has a power/weakness duality. This is because, as mentioned earlier, the one who penetrates represents power while the one who is penetrated is seen as weak.

He is again penetrated when he is later raped by the 28s Gang. Just as Chris was feminised while in Pollsmoor, so Tshepo becomes (in that moment of the rape) feminised. However, their (both Tshepo and Chris) reactions to their conditions are strikingly different. For Chris, the rape that he suffered in Pollsmoor led to the perceived loss of his masculinity. In his relations with Tshepo, he is therefore in a process of re-signification. He is trying to claim back the significance of his lost masculinity and he employs the very same methods that were used against him in his own emasculation in an attempt to re-create himself and his masculinity. This method that he employs is bilateral because it affects two individuals at the very same time. Chris employs this method because by feminising Tshepo, he believes that he is at that very same moment re-creating his own masculinity.

Tshepo, however, in contrast to Chris, does not seek a re-signification of his masculinity through violence or by any means that seek to gain significance by oppressing other men. Instead he finds liberation in understanding himself and other men and this is partly because of his employment at Steamy Windows. It is there where he rediscovers both himself and his body. He therefore manages to transcend his hate and rise above his past experiences and the types of trauma that accompanied those experiences while Chris oscillates between being the oppressed and the oppressor all at once.

4.4)   On 'The Brotherhood'

When Duiker first introduces us to the brotherhood, it is through West, who welcomes Tshepo (Angelo) with a kiss after Tshepo had performed his first massage and thus passed his first screening: "You see it isn't so much that we want guys that look good or have nice bodies. Anyone can have that. We were looking for something deeper, something real, someone who wants to do something with his life. And you passed […] you're one of us now. We're like brothers here" (322). Later this is reiterated by Sebastian after he (Tshepo) probes: "West said to me that you were all brothers here […] So, you guys take this brotherhood thing of yours quite seriously?" (327 & 337) Sebastian responds: "Ja […] The closeness, the openness, they are our modus operandi" (337). He then shows him an oil painting by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and adds: "If you'd noticed, there are several copies of Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood paintings all over the premises. We take our inspiration from them" (338):

> "[I]n their day the Pre-Raphaelites were pioneers, they were reacting against the unimaginative painting of the time. They wanted to set new ideas, new standards in their work by expressing genuine ideas and painting directly from nature. There were three guys, Hunt, Millais and Rosetti. All were under twenty-five. They were probably a little horny and a little ambiguous if you ask me. They saw themselves more as artistic revolutionaries, attacked social injustices and celebrated the values and quality of life in the past. The inspiration of the Pre-Raphaelites is like our foundation, you know. It's like our motto, our mission statement, it's very important. It gives us a direction, a vision, somewhere to go, something to work towards. Without it we would be just another massage parlour." (338-339)

The idea of attacking social injustices appears to be what the Steamy Windows brotherhood seems to be concerned with, and in addition they wish to erase injustices and inequalities. With his induction, West takes good care to remind Tshepo of the importance of this brotherhood: "But you must remember, we are all brothers" (323). After his induction, Tshepo believes that he has involved himself with something arcane: "I suddenly feel as if I have just got myself involved in something I don't fully understand, something arcane perhaps, like a secret society"

(322). This is a sentiment that West confirms by saying to him: "But just one thing. You have a choice. You can go now and never come back. And if you try to tell anyone, no one will believe you" (323). After the initial confusion Tshepo comfortably settles within this brotherhood because unlike Zebron and Chris they are not preying on his weaknesses and trying to exploit them, but instead, they are just "men seeking comfort in each other" (340).

The men of the brotherhood seek to undermine inequalities that affect a politics of men and masculinities in both its dimensions. By emphasising the brotherhood and the idea that they are all brothers, it appears that they are at the same time trying to put forward an agenda which ensures equality amongst themselves. They want to be men who seek comfort in each other without regard to race or nationality thus undermining inequalities as external social products that influences the relations between men. Furthermore, by seeking comfort in each other, they automatically undermine the ideology of patriarchy which puts power at the forefront of men's relations, therefore they also undermine the second dimension of inequality that I explain in the first chapter as an internal process through which the ideology of masculinity oversees an unequal distribution of power in the relations between men.

With this fellowship, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* creates a society of men trying to liberate themselves through undermining popular beliefs concerning manhood and the status of men. Sebastian expresses these sentiments to Tshepo shortly after his induction with West: "I'm not talking about status or power. I'm talking about self-awareness" (328). This brotherhood successfully shatters the homogenous idea of masculinity. According to Sebastian: "Men really haven't been given the chance to explore their sexuality […] [they] haven't really explored the possibilities of being men. There's no place for them" (328). The brotherhood, therefore, seek to undermine the masculinist ideal, which is concerned with status and power, by creating their own ideal image of a man: one who is curious about manhood and who distances himself from injustices. Their attack on patriarchy as well as on different forms of injustice is based on the idea of exploring many ways of being a man and recreating themselves and making new men of themselves. They see themselves as men who are not afraid of failure or weakness but who, as expressed by Sebastian, seek to "get to the root of [their] weaknesses and ideas about [themselves]" (327) because they believe that "there is strength in weakness" (335).

What makes this brotherhood question masculinity and seek to undermine popular beliefs about masculinity is partly because they have first-hand experience of the oppressive nature of patriarchy due to their sexual preferences. Both sexism and heterosexism are types of

oppression and discrimination they have had to live with because among other things, "[h]omophobia is a central organizing principle of our cultural definition of manhood" (Kimmel, 24). Since manhood has been formulated through the repression of weakness, fear, pain and sorrow, through the reproduction of hard and unfeeling men, any negation of this ideal breeds new fear. This includes "the fear that other men will unmask us, emasculate us, reveal to us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men" (Kimmel, 24).

This shared oppression is one of the many things that create the bonds of the brotherhood. It should be noted however that the men of the brotherhood also have their own anxieties they are struggling with. The men of the brotherhood also feel the need to prove themselves and we can see this in Sebastian's lament: "Gay people are constantly having to prove themselves, work harder, achieve, achieve, achieve" (336). Their urge to prove themselves is initiated by the historical oppression that they have faced in their immediate or distant pasts, therefore among other things they seek like the Pre-Raphaelites to set new ideas and new standards by attacking social injustices at their root and through celebrating the quality of life. In order to do that, they celebrate themselves and their masculinities while figuring out "what it means to be a man" (390). Sebastian continues to shed light on the brotherhood's ideal:

> "We're saying don't be apologetic about masculinity, celebrate it and to do that you need relevant figureheads […] You don't have to be a gun-toting idiot to celebrate masculinity. Violence is not a solution. The brotherhood renounces it because it's regressing. To be a man you must be fully aware and you can't be that when you're being violent. Violence and masculinity – that's just a myth that straight men have stupidly accepted, very Neanderthal. Part of the brotherhood ethos is to reject violence. Who says violence has to be synonymous with men? Who says men can't be tender?" (399-400)

While the brotherhood is portrayed in ideal terms, as a society which seeks among other things to do away with injustices and inequalities, there is however a hierarchy observed within this idealised fellowship. When Tshepo is new at Steamy Windows and West is showing him around, he tells Tshepo that he and Storm have their own studios and the rest of them, those without studios, will have to share the three other studios down the hall. This means that both West and Storm are considered important because they are more experienced and because of this they rank higher than all the other 'guys' who will have to share the other three studios. The apex position of this hierarchy is occupied by Shaun, and we observe that like Virgil, when he engages with others, it is often in the form of giving orders: "West, just introduce Angelo to the other guys and show him what we talked about earlier" (306), "'Storm, make yourself busy and get our friend a drink.' Shaun says. Storm gets up sulkily and traipses out the door" (271), "Shaun asks me [Angelo] to check that each studio has two towels" (349).

From these quotations, there is evidence of a certain sense of order and hegemony existing in this society of 'equals' and that order is not self-maintaining, but maintained by one who is at the apex: "'Now when do you guys take a day off?' I ask no one in particular. 'You have to arrange that with Shaun, sweetie,' Storm says […] 'You ask him a week in advance and you usually get the Friday off. Sometimes he'll give you the Saturday off as well,' Sebastian adds" (376).

This therefore means that Shaun occupies an apex position and West and Storm occupy a position one rank below him, while the others are all clustered in the third and last rank. Consequently, this means that not all members of the brotherhood are 'equal'; however, despite this inequality, there are no unfair differences between them. This means that the inequality that is implied here is that which is based on the ideology they have created for themselves at Steamy Windows, and which favours experience in relation to their jobs above everything else. By portraying this form of hierarchy, Duiker may be suggesting that while injustice can successfully be done away with, it is impossible to eradicate hegemony as well as hierarchies because the maintenance of order and of law and order in other instances depends on the observation of both hegemony and hierarchy. However, these hierarchies and inequalities can in fact exist devoid of injustices and unfair differences.

In contrast to the previously observed hierarchies marked by unfair treatment of each other and a struggle for power, here the novel creates a hierarchy that is devoid of injustices and unfair treatment. but further complicates this creation by refusing it a utopian idealism through making it vulnerable to the issues of race and of economic inequalities. While the brotherhood is a society of men seeking comfort in each other and aiming to portray masculinities that oppose violence and those who use it to dominate others, they also fall prey like all other beings to the prejudices of race and of economic inequalities. When Tshepo realises this fact (about race), he is both shocked and offended and submits that the bubble that he'd been floating in that symbolised utopian ideals finally burst, after hearing Shaun comment about a client who was moody and difficult to deal with: "So that's why he was like that. For a minute I thought he was going to go kaffir on us last night" (374). This exposes a crack within the reality of the brotherhood because what they have failed to acknowledge is that they exist within a society riddled with prejudices that are ready-made. Therefore, and since they are part of such a society, they cannot escape these prejudices themselves, that is why Tshepo feels offended and thinks to himself: "That word has always stung, but I smile to dismiss the comment", even after Shaun has offered an apology: "Sorry, I didn't mean it like that" (374).

This means that their actions are always already directed by the society of which they are members, which thus means that they are members of the larger society before they are members of the brotherhood. This is because the meanings and understandings are already predetermined by a larger society. That is why, as a defence mechanism, he finds solace and consolation in alienating Shaun from the brotherhood and subsequently finds rationalisation for this alienation:

> "[…] I can't stop thinking about the stupid indelicacy that Shaun uttered. I feel shattered, having so readily embraced them as brothers. But Shaun is the boss and, invariably, bosses are also idiots, I console myself. Besides, he isn't really part of the brotherhood precisely because he only gives a straight massage with no extras, no risks […] As I look at the others, I realise that perhaps Shaun might have forgotten the original motivation for Steamy Windows. That perhaps the whole idea of forming a brotherhood might have been a gimmick he thought was clever […] But it doesn't matter because the truth is that we, the stallions, have translated it into our work" (376)

Because Shaun is not a 'stallion', Tshepo finds an easy way to isolate and alienate him through that rationalisation so as to deal effectively with his disappointment. What he seems to forget, however, is that these race issues go beyond the brotherhood, and he is unconsciously aware of it: "Going kaffir? What does that mean? I have never heard that expression before. It was probably meant for white ears. You never know with white people" (375). According to Tshepo, although this might be slang used around white people, it is one that is race specific, one which will make the black individual feel a sting because the meanings are already predetermined by the general society and not the brotherhood itself. The meanings are therefore derived from a long history of social segregation. However, we see also that Tshepo is unaware of his own bias: 'You never know with white people'.

The other inequality that the brotherhood feeds into without being aware is one of economic inequality. *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* explores the lives of youths in urban spaces; the brotherhood also exists in an urban space and their clientele is mostly white and middle class. This is suggested by the fact that most of Tshepo's (Angelo's) clients are white and that they tip well. After passing the screening and being offered the job at Steamy Windows, Tshepo had to change his wardrobe as well as his appearance so that he could fit in with the expensive urban gay lifestyle of Cape Town.

4.5)   Conclusion

While it is no longer easy to differentiate neatly between the oppressor and the oppressed in South Africa today due to the regime change of 1994, power imbalances still exist, and patriarchal ideology still influences a politics of men and masculinities.

The Quiet Violence of Dreams is a novel which explores the lives of youths in and around urban spaces and reveals many forms of inequality. The manner in which the novel explores inequality and how it relates to men is informed by the two dimensions through which inequality in a politics of men and masculinities manifests itself. The text explores the first dimension, inequalities as external social products that ends up affecting the relations between men, and this is seen in part in how the gay urban lifestyle functions through exclusion because it targets the white middle to upper classes. Additionally, we observe that past racial biases still affect these social structures despite an intentional struggle to undermine them. The most overriding form of inequality explored in the novel is the second dimension which revolves around power. This is inequality as an internal process through which an ideology of masculinity informed by patriarchy oversees an unequal distribution of power between men. This is seen in the many relationships that develop between men, beginning with the triangular relationship between Papa, Tshepo and Zebron. Followed by the one between Chris and Tshepo, which swiftly develops into a four-man relationship including Virgil and Brendan. Finally, an alternative way of being men is offered by the representation of the brotherhood.

Conclusion

In the beginning of this study, I quoted Michael Kaufman's (7-8) argument that masculinity is power; however, it is also very fragile because it does not exist as a biological reality but as ideology which is in a tenuous relationship with the male body. The relationship, therefore, as presented by this study between the male body and masculinity is a form of signification that cannot happen without there being an association between two or more men or a man and a particular institution. Looking at this as a starting point from which a politics of men and masculinities is observed, it is thus safe to maintain that power is a resulting force from such a politics. It follows then that inequality manifests itself in those power relationships that develop between two or more men. However, as I have noted in the preceding chapters (having begun this thread in chapter one), inequality manifests itself in two ways in the politics of men and masculinities and the resulting power dynamics. The first is inequalities as external social products that influence and affect men and masculinities, and the second is inequality as an internal process through which the ideology of masculinity oversees an unequal distribution of power in the relations between men.

Having pointed out the two ways in which inequality manifests itself in the politics of men and masculinity, it also became prudent to contextualise this observation because men in different contexts do not get affected in the same way by inequalities that develop in different contexts as well as in the same context. South Africa has a long history of inequality and of discrimination, and that history is characterised by different types of inequalities and discriminations which I pointed out in the first chapter and observed that they still persist to this day. The inequalities and different forms of discrimination that I observed in the preceding chapters formulate the external social products through which the first dimension of inequality manifests itself. Among these products are economic inequality, age as a form of inequality, class and race oppression, spatial inequality, ethnic prejudices and others. In their engagements with each other, different men are able to call upon these social predicaments to assist them in their struggles and competition with other men. Therefore, men turn them into tools which they use against each other to gain themselves a better position in the different hierarchies that men create. The use of these social problems for the first dimension of inequality amongst men therefore exposes the second dimension of inequality amongst men which is a psychological one. Here, what is exposed is the ideology of masculinity which presupposes that men are not equal; therefore, it is unavoidable that they should compete for legitimacy and superiority over other men.

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In addition to the above, one observes that masculinity as a gender construct formulates a core structure upon which identity for men is dependent. As such, there is no separating masculinity and identity since the former carries within significant meanings on which the latter becomes entirely dependent and this expression is given more validity by ideologies upon which masculinities become contextualised. In conveying this phenomenon, Dollimore argues: "Identity is a construction and, as such, involves a process of exclusion, negation and repression. And this is a process which even if successful, results in an identity intrinsically unstable. This is bad news for masculinity one of whose self-conceptions is stability, and whose function is to maintain it socially and psychically" (6-7). This need for stability as observed by Dollimore creates a permanent anxiety in masculine subjects since masculinity requires from them permanent signification.

In the chosen primary texts, I have sought to identify the ways in which the male characters have applied themselves in relation to the need for signification and their approach to inequality. I observed Tshepo, Chris, Toloki and Marnus among other characters negotiating their ways into distinct masculine identities. However, the manner in which these identities were assumed and/or negotiated speaks to both the context and the type of masculinity that dominates that context or gathers its significance from the given background. It should be noted that the characters named above, negotiate their identities in quite different ways: in the case of Marnus, a militaristic masculinity is imposed on him and he is thus forced into submission and the acceptance of that identity due to the 'Patriarchy/State/Hegemonic Masculinity Pact' that I discuss in the first and second chapters. However, there is some relief in a sense for Marnus because after this imposition, he uses mimicry as a way to negotiate a kind of masculinity that criticises both his father and his government. Where Chris is concerned, one cannot convincingly argue that his type of masculinity is wholly imposed on him; instead, there is both a voluntary as well as an imposed aspect. Both these are fused together in creating a masculine and at the same time a 'feminine' identity for him. This is because while in prison, he joins the 28s in order to gain protection and privileges limited to the 28s. But once a member of this gang, he occupies the lowest rank and is subsequently turned into a 'wyfie' and forced into a 'feminised' role. However, after he earns his release from prison he gets involved in a process of re-signification because he adopts violence in the hope that he may go up the ranks of the gang and thus of masculinity (as he understands it) itself. Therefore, unlike Marnus who is not offered a chance to make a choice, and who, when he tries to revolt, is beaten into submission, Chris manages to choose an identity he feels at home with, despite that identity

being toxic in a sense that it gains its significance from violence. Ultimately, what is observed in comparing Chris and Marnus is that they both end up subscribing to (for Chris) and forced into (for Marnus) forms of masculinities that are violent and stereotypical.

While Chris and Marnus negotiate their masculinities in relation to forms of imposition, Toloki and Tshepo negotiate their masculinities in direct opposition to stereotypical kinds of masculinities. In opposition to Chris who acts like his oppressor, Tshepo uses homosexuality as a liberating force because it is here where he rediscovers both himself and his body; the way he uses his sexual identity in his job becomes a tool he employs to rediscover himself. The male body represents, for him, a landscape to traverse in search of new kinds of liberation. Additionally, by undergoing such a process, he manages to forgo violence thus transcending his debilitating fear of men and rising above his past traumas. Toloki self-marginalises himself from both societal engagement (besides funeral attendance) as well as from masculinity as an identity. This self-banishment from masculinity becomes an act of criticism because he adopts roles as well as behaviours that are deemed to be feminine ('crying his heart out' at funerals) and he does all this publicly.

The problematising of the categories of feminine/masculine is an important and recurring theme in the three texts and is often used as a reference point against which masculinity either gains its significance or is criticised or through which the male body gains a liberating force. As explained above, Chris loses the significance of his manhood because his masculinity is emptied, and he is filled with a 'feminised' role. Toloki however uses this quite deliberately as a mode of criticism against what he views as oppressive behaviour by men. In *The Smell of Apples* it is observed in a scene where Marnus is fighting a sand shark, exhausted and in pain because of the experience, Marnus asks for help from his father, a plea which leads to the latter reprimanding him and telling him to stop behaving like a 'cry-baby'. The use of 'cry-baby' in that scene as I have explained in the second chapter represents that which signifies effeminacy. Therefore, here, femininity is used as a reference point for the 'weaker other' against which masculinity should be constructed. Finally, in *The Quiet Violence of Dreams*, femininity is referred to a number of times and has the potential to be used as a liberating force, as I have mentioned above. One interesting scene is immediately after Tshepo is raped by Chris and Brendan with the help of Virgil. After the traumatic incident, Tshepo uses a sanitary pad for both comfort (relief from pain) and hygienic purposes.

In certain cases, femininity is used loosely and stereotypically to ridicule as well as to denounce the significance of another male's manhood, that is, some men become emasculated (Tshepo, Chris) by being 'feminised' through rape. Yet, as argued above, Toloki adopted a 'feminine' role as a mode of criticising toxic masculinities. In the same way, homosexuality is also expressed in two contrasting roles as observed in the studied texts. In *The Smell of Apples* it is a sign of weakness and insignificance: "Frikkie and I have decided to join the army when the war comes. The army is better than the air force or the navy where all the poofters go […] Dad also said the navy isn't all that important […] It's on the army's shoulders that the biggest task rests […]" (71-72). 'Poofter' as used in the above quotation is a derogatory term used for homosexuality. In opposition to *The Smell of Apples*, *The Quiet Violence of Dreams* decries the type of violent masculinity that is given significance in certain contexts. This is evidenced by Sebastian's lament while in a conversation with Angelo (Tshepo): "You don't have to be a gun-toting idiot to celebrate masculinity […] Who says violence has to be synonymous with men?" (399-400). Additionally, like its employment of the ideals relating to femininity, it positions homosexuality as a liberating force. This is because homosexuality is initially represented through an ideal of a 'brotherhood' where men do not seek ways to undermine each other in order to gain status but instead seek comfort in each other.

A final point to make is that the link between the constructs of masculinity and inequality can be challenged in different ways, especially since this link seems to be tied to the stereotypic ways of being masculine. For example: in Behr's novel, mimicry was observed as a way of challenging and protesting against that link. In Mda's, the link is challenged through self-exile and self-marginalisation from masculine relations and from the construct of masculinity itself. And in Duiker's, the freeing and non-repression of the male's various sexual desires ranging from homosexuality, bisexuality and other queer sexualities are all presented as ways of emancipation. Therefore, although within the three primary texts one observes a strong link between the constructs of masculinity and inequality, the novels also lament this problem and offer different forms of protest.

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