

Gender and Sexual Health: A Religio-Cultural
Examination of Masculinity in the Film
Yesterday

By

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Declaration

I, Leballo Tjemolane, declare that this dissertation is my own original work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been acknowledged. I submit it this work jointly to the research concentrations in Religion, Gender and Health, which is under the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. There are no parts of this presentation that have been submitted to another University or higher education institution for degree or examination purposes. Unless it is stated within the text, this is wholly my own work.

Leballo Tjemolane

December 2017

As candidate supervisor I hereby approve this dissertation for submission

Dr F.G Settler

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Abstract

The way that the South African society functions and operates in the post-apartheid era, and the engagement with gender and sexuality after apartheid has reveal an expanded understanding of gender and sexual identity, but also a marked increase in violence against women and assertions of new African patriarchies. Religion and culture promotes certain kinds of masculinity/ies which have an impact on women's SRHR. The film *Yesterday* provides a scope through which to engage with masculinity/ies as it impacts negatively on women. The religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity representation found in the film presents the lived experiences of the women in the film and how these articulation religio-cultural articulations of shape their lives. This study is an interpretive analysis of the impact of religiously and culturally informed masculinity/ies on women's Sexual and Reproductive, Health, Rights and Choices. The film *Yesterday* takes place in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, where women carry the role of both mother and father, because the vast majority of men migrate to the cities in search of labour. Connell's Hegemonic Masculinity and Chitando's Redemptive Masculinities will be used as lenses to look at how the film opens conversations on issues in masculinity, men's sexual behaviours, men's sense of entitlement to their partners bodies, and the impact of this on the lives of women.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DA	Discourse Analysis
GBV	Gender Based Violence
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive and Health Rights
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
TV	Television

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

South Africa has for many decades, even centuries, been subjected to cultural, religious and socio-political restrictions on gender roles – where men or headmen have functioned as heads of households and homesteads as political, legal and religious functionaries (Chidester, 1996). However, since the advent of democracy in 1994 there has been wide-ranging public, legal and religious discussion about taboos related to gender and sexuality resulting in remarkable impact on citizenry in general. Many scholars agree that a close look at historical configurations of gender and sexuality cannot be divorced from the various projects and configurations of apartheid – where men and women, and racial or religious groups were strictly fixed and regulated according to imagined norms. These issues have impacted the way that the society functions and operates in the post-apartheid era, and the engagement with gender and sexuality after apartheid reveal an expanded understanding of gender and sexual identity, but also a marked increase in violence against women and assertions of new African patriarchies. For example, despite the fact that South Africa invests more than \$1 billion per year to attend to HIV/ AIDS programmes (Maurice, 2014), it remains the biggest and highest HIV epidemic profile in the world, where women's health and lives has been negatively impacted by the crisis. Coupled with this ongoing health crisis, South Africa also has a very high incidence of violence against women (Wood and Jewkes, 2005) where only a fraction of violent sexual crimes are reported, which some have argued is fuelled by a neo-patriarchal backlash against legal and social rights afforded women since 1994 (Snodgrass, 2016). The combination of these forces and social trends have led many scholars and activists to conclude that South Africa is facing a crisis in masculinity.

It is against this background that this study will focus on the role that religion and culture play in shaping masculinity/ies in contemporary South Africa, and how this impacts on women's SRHR. In South Africa, masculinity has traditionally been a mechanism of oppression and exploitation (Mfecane, 2011; Morrell, 1998, 2001). There has been a great many gender-critical, social policy and public health studies done where the intersection of masculinity with

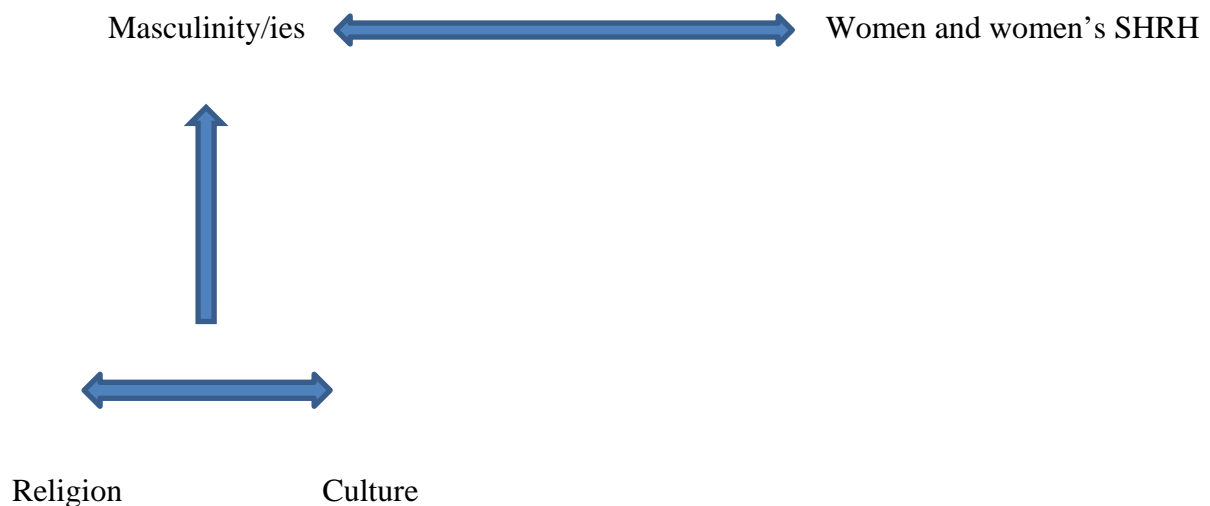
women health and wellbeing is addressed. Likewise, religious and faith communities have produced meaningful scholarly and activist responses to the same crisis in public health and gender (Haddad, 2002; Cochrane, 2012). During this period a number of documentary and feature films have been produced in South Africa as the country sought to capture and highlight the urgency of the gender and health crisis. It is in this socio-political context that the iconic and widely celebrated film, *Yesterday* was produced. I have chosen to do an examination of masculinity through an intimate study of the film *Yesterday* because I believe the film not only explores the intersection of masculinity with women's health and wellbeing, but also captures the subtle and insidious ways that religion and culture authorise violence against women, and legitimate hegemonic and toxic masculinities.

1.2 Background and motivation

Kopano Ratele holds that, "South African society and its cultures are in the middle of a sweeping Gender and Sexual transition that in turn is changing the very nature of society"... according to him men are, "...experiencing psychological distress for no longer being in power over women's demand for choice and decision-making" (2016: 16-17). This has been manifesting in and through the violence and abuses of women by men in South Africa. The cultural and religious conceptual imaginings articulated through accepted actions and norms of being a man are undergoing a transition, and there has been a sustained call to interrogate masculinity through the shift in gender dynamics within post-apartheid South Africa (Morrell, 2005).

One among many challenges comes from the fact that men generally find it hard to recognise and understand the impact of male privilege, male violence and expressions of dominance, and they fail to recognise the many different ways that it impacts the lives of women. The film *Yesterday* offers precisely such a portrayal of cultural and religious ideas which sustain male privilege in ways that put women at risk. The unequal power relations between genders can be said to be based on ideas about norms and practices of patriarchy that are informed by either religion or culture and in some cases by both religion and culture.

The diagram below seeks to illustrate how this study seeks to engage with masculinities, religion, culture and women's sexual and reproductive health rights and choices.



In the diagram religion and culture are presented as primary sources of legitimating certain kinds of masculinity – which are sustained through religious or ancestor ritual, rites of passage such as *lobola*, inheritance traditions, and prejudicial labour practices that relegate women to rural homesteads to look after children and the elderly. In this way patriarchy has a negative impact on, or impinges on, women's SRHR and choices. In this study, my concern is not so much about the kind of masculinities articulated in the film, but I will be examining the roles that religion and culture play on the production of masculinity in the film, particularly with respect to women's lives and women's SRHR in South Africa.

Commentators agree that the film *Yesterday* is clearly a commentary on HIV /AIDS in South Africa (Ngcobo, 2012) insofar as it frames a set of real world problems faced by a woman who contracts HIV from her partner, a migrant worker. The film also raises critical questions about sexuality and gender in an HIV and AIDS context, and about contestations about healing, and access to health services in Southern Africa (Mathewson, 2009). The 2004 film *Yesterday* is used as a point of entry, and a primary data set to consider and interrogate ways that religion and culture influence the making of masculinity in the film as it relates to the women's SRHR. In his work Ratele argues that "work on masculinity cannot but show the centrality of gendered and sexual politics and practices" (2008: 30). The importance rests on the fact that the

interrogation of masculinity/ies is worth considering when engaging with social constructions of religion, gender, sexual identity, power distribution and privileges offered in society.

In the context of South African religion and culture is said to support the privilege given to men (Morrell, 2005), despite the fact that the constitution of the country advocates for equality at all levels. In particular, I propose to interrogate cultural normative ideas permitting men to have multiple sexual partners, as intimated in the film, as a social norm that makes women susceptible to infections, poor health and death (Hunter, 2004). In examining religion in the film, I will use Clifford Geertz's (1966) approach to religion as a cultural system which will be used to analyse religio-cultural ideas which uphold masculinity as god-given and sacred. This provides a lens through which to engage with religiously and culturally informed objects, articulations, traditions, expressions and experiences presented in the film as they relate to masculinity in South Africa.

The film *Yesterday* offers a clear scope for examining and interrogating how religion and culture inform the making of masculinity. Using a constructivist approach to both religion and masculinity, the study will interrogate how religious and cultural concepts play a part in the shaping and reinforcing prevailing performances and articulations of masculinity in present-day South Africa.

1.3. The film *Yesterday*

Yesterday is a 2004 South African film that addresses the social conditions surrounding the transmission, treatment and stigmatization related to people who live with HIV/AIDS. The social reality of people infected with HIV and affected by the virus is sensitively represented through the lived experience of the main character and this is captured through the film by Darrell Roodt the scriptwriter and director. Roodt's approach to the film can be said to revolve around a social criticism of the government's failure to address the health crisis and an affirmation of the resilience of people living with HIV and AIDS. The film director consistently privileges story that focusses on challenges and difficulties South African women go through in their daily life experiences, and this is portrayed through the female lead character, named "Yesterday" – the film is an account of her struggle and life as a black woman suffering and resisting toxic indigenous patriarchies.

An impoverished young mother with few comforts, Yesterday, is presented as a person with an unbreakable spirit who is determined to see her growing daughter receives a decent education and life. After becoming sick Yesterday learns that she is infected with the HIV virus. Her life takes a turn for the worse as her already vulnerable condition deepens. Uneducated, and now faced with a desperate health condition, this young mother is motivated to live so that she could see her daughter go to school and gets a better start in life - before she seemingly succumb to the illness.

1.3.1. The context of the film

Despite boasting a progressive constitution, the Republic of South Africa has been playing catch-up with regards to recognition and representation of gender and sexuality with the society at large. The pace of RSA's HIV and AIDS epidemic has been slow, and many non-governmental organisations (NGOs) responded, producing a range of genres related to gender and sexuality within a number of public settings. While there was silence from Mandela and other political leaders during his time in office, followed by disagreements during Mbeki's term, many NGOs reacted with both vigour and concern (Cullinan, 2003; Doubts, 2016). During this period, extensive and controversial, but not necessarily successful, public health campaigns such as "LoveLife" were established with the aim of educating the public about the transmission and prevention of the HIV virus.

According to Mswela "media-based AIDS education campaigns in South Africa have chosen to focus strongly on issues of sex and risk rather than on other facets of the epidemic and its impact" (Mswela, 2009). This was an approach which was a partial response to the pandemic without doing very much about shifting the prevailing sexual and gender norms in the society (Mantell, 2009). The most widely support of these initiatives was the LoveLife Campaign, which was funded by government together with international donors. This campaign intentionally brought together messaging about safe sex with popular cultural icons. As such the campaign was an attempt to get people to present themselves as modern sexual subject, one who is informed, accountable, in control and free to make informed choices with the view to protect oneself and others from HIV and AIDS.

Within most of these campaigns, it is typically heterosexual sexual expressions and desires that are spoken about and its imagery is presented as threatening and contaminated. As such we see from these media representations and campaigns that sex is viewed as unsafe, and presented as

a social encounter characterised with violence, pain and conflict. Nevertheless, in agreement with Posel (2005) what did become more evident after 1994, was that sexuality has been thrust into public prominence in ways that had not been possible, permitted or legal, during the apartheid years. The post-apartheid period has also been characterised by the rise of films, magazines and television programmes that would previously had been considered taboo. The rise of public sex images, representations and approaches to sex talk have been patterned (Posel, 2005). In the production of a series of discrete discursive bumps, each is premised on and shaped in particular ways - either by recent global economic positioning, constitutional and legal changes in South Africa since 1994, the emergence of new black elites and finally by the acceleration of the AIDS epidemic.

The new Constitution of 1996 has fundamentally destabilised the idea of sex and sexuality as a private matter; installing a profoundly different rule of sexual issues and gender politics. The authority and stability of these rights makes them undeniable considering religious norms which are used to claim authority given to or claimed by men. The issues of sexual practice, sexual identity, violence, and varieties of desire, have been incorporated into the wider discourse of democratic rights in the post-apartheid era. The allocation of sexual rights does not in and of itself change established sexual practices and sexual norms. Nor does it resolve the problems of sexual violence, abuse and homophobia. In some instances, it may produce conservative backlashes which weaken the alternatives to sexual violation and discrimination (Snodgrass, 2016).

Popular discourses of masculinity 'in crisis' which have substantial currency in other parts of the world, particularly the West, has begun to take root in South Africa. Increasingly, scholars and activists in South Africa speak and write about complaints or anxieties of men who feel their masculinities undermined by women who assert and claim their right to equality. Accompanying this is the increasing visibility of sexuality, and the extent to which its representations had become uncontested. Even though that is the case, resistance has been strong, as this is one of the features of a society which has been used to the emission of sex, sexuality and gender to the limits of public debate and exposure, expatriated by a persuasive mixture of religious or cultural taboos and politico-legal prohibitions (Posel, 2005). For example, public and media discussions related to the Jacob Zuma rape trial, signals precisely this increased public interest and commitment to sexual rights and the politics of gender (Hassim, 2009). The novel prominence of gender and sexuality co-occurs with a blend of angry

surges and staunch objections, resistant silences, denials and refusals (Posel, 2005; Ratele, 2016).

Increasingly scholars have drawn our attention to the extent to which masculinity is coupled with discussion about women, who are perceived to be powerful, assertive and emasculating – and that this coupling seem more prevalent than before. The Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), who has run twin campaigns about anti-stigma work around HIV infection and appeals for appropriate treatment for the disease, has also run many AIDS literacy workshops across the country. During one such workshop, run in conjunction with the *Bothers for Life* campaign. In such campaigns while themes of sexuality and sexual practice take a projecting space on their outline of conversation, one often comes accross continuous struggle of black men to transform their sexual behaviour and becuse it is a strange way for them it becomes the dread of their own vulnerability.

Scholars within South Africa have argued that in contemporary South Africa, men expect their partners to be submissive and unquestioning of masculinity. In this respect black women's acquaintance with GBV and their appreciation of new rights they have to sexual assertiveness, to sexual pleasure and the right to fight sexual advances made by men, are progressively seen to destabilise recognised norms of sexual authority given to men, and what this does is to destabilise and dismantle the very basis of masculinity. Unexpectedly, the sharp eminence of sexual issues within the representations of HIV and AIDS in public health campaigns, together with the rising internalisation of the message that the virus is sexually transmitted, perhaps reinforces the tendencies to intensify and actively deny HIV status, as a suggestion of the strong uneasiness attached to the dominant conceptions of men's sexual identity.

This study seeks to identify and engage with some of the many ways in which public representations of gender and sexuality are the product of socio-political, and religio-cultural regimes. Masculinity as a constructed sexual identity has subsequently become increasingly contested – insofar as it is simultaneously the site of assertions of power, status and aspiration, heated public argument, source of stigmatization and shame, and basis for social mobilisation and/ or conflict. While TV shows like *“Yizo Yizo”* and *“Soul City”*; or movies like *“Tsosti”*, *“Jerusalem”*, and *“Hijack Stories”* have triggered intense public support and criticism about (black) South African masculinities, they have drawn attention to the ambivalence and violence that characterise the masculinities that these movies and TV shows celebrate. In these media masculinities are presented as a style and status, a way of being that relies on racist imaginaries

of a violent and oversexed black male subject (Haupt, 2008; Stadler, 2008). Conversationally, the “imagery of sex as freedom, as the symbol of a virile new lease on life” (Posel, 2012), undermines the opposite ideas of sex as dangerous and as something that results in death – both these operate in the South African context and are increasingly theorised by local scholars. In the film both tropes of sex and sexuality as sustaining and as menace or death operates, and thus I propose to interrogate how they are positioned in relation to masculinity in the film, *Yesterday* and the consequent impact it might have on women’s SRHR.

1.3.2. The plot of the film

The plot of the film *Yesterday* takes place in rural KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, where women become both father and mother, this is because the majority of men in such places migrate to the cities in search of labour. In fact, South Africa’s economy has historically relied on cheap migrant labour from rural area, and the containment of men in squalid worker’s hostel, where men live in cramped condition, with poor quality of life and isolated from their families. Portraying a similar setting, *Yesterday*’s husband is one of those rural men who goes to the city so that he could be able, as a man and father to take care of his family financially. Industry and a capitalist system is a product of the West and this has impacted negatively on how men imagine themselves as they assume roles in society.

The context represented by Roodt through the film, though not explicit, shows how an African society with all its features is structured. Through the political coupled together with the economic stability of the country, together with the religious and cultural, all these have been what has been shaping how African societies since independence of respective African countries. One the prevailing feature, among many others, through which the story develops is that of a poor underdeveloped community which has as its prominent feature a social mark caused by HIV and AIDS. Within this represented community there is still a great amount of fear and stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS.

The story starts off with on a long dusty road which seems to go nowhere. It is a sunny day, and this suggests summer of Zululand where the film is shot. *Yesterday* (Leleti Khumalo), a thirty-year-old woman, and her seven-year-old daughter, Beauty (Lihle Mvelase), in the heat and on the dry dusty road make their way to the clinic in the small village of Kromdraai about two hours from where they come from. *Yesterday* has been coughing and she has no choice but to travel over two hours so that she can receive medical attention. As she was travelling

with Beauty they came across two ladies who introduced themselves as teachers in search for work. They express that they have been looking for work for two years now and to their luck Yesterday tells them, that they might find work in her village, Rooihoek, but they will have to travel for two more hours before reaching there. Finally, Yesterday and Beauty arrive at the clinic but in vain. After the long walk they had to endure they also had to endure the blazing sun as they waited in a long queue. All the waiting and the long walk did not end up with them seeing the doctor, instead they were told to go home so they can come back next week.

On Tuesday of the following week, Yesterday and Beauty decided to go much earlier to the clinic, but that was also in vain. The queue was still long and they received the same message they had last week, that they should go home because the doctor won't be able to see them all. Disappointed and exhausted they make their way back home. On their way they come across one of the teachers they met last week. She tells them that her companion was employed in Rooihoek. Yesterday is told by the teacher that her companion is a good woman and later in the story that teacher will be a pillar of strength for Yesterday. The following day Beauty was coming back home from being with other kids in the village. She is shocked to find her mother on the ground; with no knowledge of what to do, Beauty storms away hysterical in search for help. Because of the fainting and failure to see the doctor, Yesterday finds herself at the local sangoma's place. She does not seem to have much trust in the sangoma. The sangoma claims that the source of Yesterday's sickness is that she is angry, and it will only be through getting rid of the anger that she can be cured. To this Yesterday objects and says that she is not angry.

After learning of what happened to Yesterday, the new-found friend, the teacher, suggests that Yesterday take a taxi to the clinic the next time she goes. The teacher, worried about Yesterday, suggests taking a taxi to the clinic. But considering her financial state Yesterday acknowledges that it will be a waste of money for her and that for her a walk is much cheaper. The following Tuesday the teacher goes very early to Yesterday's house and persists that she take a taxi which she has already paid for. Trying to avoid that Yesterday brings up Beauty and the teacher offers to look after her while she is gone.

At long last after two failed attempts Yesterday gets to see the doctor (Camilla Walker). The doctor was a white woman who speaks fluent Zulu. After the medical examination conducted by the doctor, Yesterday is asked to fill in a consent form to have her blood tested. Embarrassed and shy Yesterday confesses that she can't read or write. Seeking to get to the bottom of what is wrong Yesterday takes the test. While engaging with the doctor there are unsettling questions

which relates to her sexual life which seems to be the greatest concern of the doctor. The doctor asks Yesterday about her sexual life and whether has she been sexually active with anyone apart from her husband and whether she uses condoms. These are shocking questions to Yesterday and they fill her with despair. As much as she can not read or write, Yesterday is sharp enough to know that there is something very wrong with her. From all this the doctor asks her to get in contact with her husband that he too my get tested.

After the encounter with the doctor Yesterday tries to get hold of her husband telephonically without success. At that Yesterday descides to make her way to the mines in Johannesburg where her husband John (Kenneth Kambule) works. John does not seem particularly impressed by her presences at his work place. Yesterday tries to explain the purpose of her visit to which John responds with a violent physical assault. On her way back home Yesterday remembers all the good times she shared with John in their marriage even after he had physically assaulted.

The seasons changed and now it is much colder which suggests that it is now winter. Yesterday is sick but she is still able to do things she would normally do on a day to day basis. She is fairly sick, but she is managing well as her body keeps the virus at bay. On her way from one of her daily chore of collecting fire wood, Yesterday is suprised by the return of her husband home. John does not look well and he later that evening confesses to Yesterday that he has been in denial, especially the time he assaulted her because of the news she had brought to him. It was only after his health deteriorated and he was no longer able to work that it dawned to him that there was no point of living in denial. John breaks down and cries because of his health as he narrates to his wife how embarrassed he had been because of his deteriorating health.

As life continued as normal, Yesterday goes to communal source of water and there she comes to face one of the fates which comes which being HIV positive. As a norm the women were talking about things which are happening in their community. This time around Yesterday and her husband are part of the agenda. There are talks about why haven't Yesterday's husband left his house ever since he got back from Johannesburg, and the women are wondering whether he is sick of something. On her next visit to the clinc Yesterday impresses the doctor by how she is keeping up. Yesterday expresses that what keeps her that way she is that she would really like to see her daughter go to school before she gives in to the virus. The teacher as a good friend informs Yesterday that people in the villege are talking about her husband having AIDS. Yesterday admits that she does and that people around where she stays are ignorant about the

virus. Yesterday starts telling the teacher about people in the next village of Bergville who stoned someone because she was HIV positive.

To minimize the stigma, she and her husband are subjected to in her village, Yesterday tries to go find a place for her husband at a hospital in Tugela Ferry. The hospital even with its capacity is unable to accommodate John because of the many people who suffer from AIDS who occupy the beds of the hospital. The sangoma mobilized a group of women in the village to go and speak with Yesterday at her home. The sangoma is still on the note that Yesterday is angry and that is why she is sick. Tired and frustrated by what is happening to her and her family in the village, Yesterday decides to go build her own hospital for her husband where she can take care of him without the interference of the members of the community. Just after she had finished the structure and moved her husband into it, John died.

The winter finished and now Yesterday's health has hugely deteriorated and she is aware that her life as well is coming to an end. Her good friend the teacher assures her that she will take care of Beauty as if she is her own child. As a proud mother Yesterday presents Beauty with the uniform she will use to go to school in. Yesterday is filled with joy to see her only child go to school and experience what she never got the opportunity to enjoy. Like how the story started, the story ends with Yesterday on a long dusty road on which she walks.

1.4 Methodology

The method I used to approach my study is based on what a qualitative researcher seeks to do. Drawing on Dawson (2007), this study will with the depth of what the data presents, namely the religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity/ies presented; and not much concerned about how masculinity/ies are formed. The film will be approached as a life world which provides the data to be used. It was through reading/viewing of the film that any discourse about masculinity was isolated through identifying the scene and isolating it from the other scenes. In this study I did not engage with men or women directly but through using scholarly work done around gender, religion and culture within a visual sociological framework. This I did by bringing into conversation gender, religion and culture to see how they play out in the film, and in particular how they impact on masculinity/ies represented in the film.

To engage with masculinity in the film I looked at how religion as a cultural system (Geertz, 1966) inform and shape the representation of masculinity/ies in the film. My focus is religious-cultural portrayals of masculinity and the criteria used for searching for scenes was:

1. Scenes depicting visuals of men and conversations about men.
2. Scenes relating to men's sexual behavior; either expressed or implied.
3. Scenes depicting or suggesting impact of masculinity/ies on women through scenes which offer women's daily experiences.

It was from scenes chosen according to the above criteria that material for my analysis surfaced. As much as the film does not have many visuals of men, the film speaks volumes about masculinity. Using content analysis, I was able to ascertain and clarify what is going on in the film, while discourse analysis enabled me to ascertain the ideas and biases related to masculinity that lurk below the surface of the film, and to expose and engage with the director's orientation and intent with regards to masculinity.

1.5 Theories of masculinities and the film, *Yesterday*

To conceptualise what the study engages with theoretically, Connell's conceptual tool of Hegemonic Masculinity and Chitando's Redemptive Masculinities have been key. The two theories offer me a framework through which to engage with representations of masculinity in the film *Yesterday*. Hegemonic Masculinity as used in this study views the gender order dynamic in the same way racism can be termed in terms of a racial order dynamic. Here Hegemonic Masculinity is used as a way of understanding men within a social order in order to engage with how power is distributed. Hegemonic masculinity being the form of masculinity which is most aspired or desired and promoted, plays a role in how the social order is created (Connell, 2005). This is a kind of masculinity which claim dominance and is supported and promoted by religious and cultural norms which favours men over women because of its apparent privileges. Chitando (2012), on the other hand, speaks of redeeming religiously and culturally informed masculinities through seeking healthier alternatives to gender relations and sexuality, with respect for the other person's rights without subjection to any form of abuse or oppression.

In this project I used the concepts of Hegemonic Masculinity and Redemptive Masculinities as lenses to look at how the film opens conversations on issues in masculinity, men's sexual behaviours, sense of entitlement carried by men as it relates to their partners bodies, and the impact of this on the lives of women. The women in the film are subjected to religio-cultural norms which gives role to men and women within a given social context. These religio-cultural norms influence behaviour and shape how power is distributed. Men are privileged and this the premise of engaging with the film. Connel's and Chitando's lenses clearly sees and acknowledge this privilege. Religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity in the film shows how hegemonic masculinity/ies can impact negatively on women within the milieu of HIV and AIDS. Redeeming the unhealthy articulations of masculinity according to Chitando needs to involve using that which promote them; religion and culture should be used as resources.

1.6 Conclusion

Religion and culture are very present within the South African context and this most of the time is taken for granted. In this chapter I tried outline the background of my study and express the motivation behind embarking on this project. My choice of engaging with religio-cultural issues as they are depicted in a film which is about HIV and AIDS offered space through which to engage with religio-cultural representations of masculinity. The film offers a sad but touching story where gender and sexuality within a patriarchal context are represented: women's misfortune at the hands of their partners is presented, and women's death through the behaviour of partners is illustrated. The effect of male privilege is given little consideration, if ever at all. This I find has been a setback to social transformation in regard to gender and sexuality. My study is limited but is seeks to reveal taken-for-granted and inherited assumptions about how men behave. The film *Yesterday* offers a particular presentation of how religiously and culturally informed articulations of masculinity are pervasive and their present impacts on women's SHRH. The following chapter engages with scholarly work done in gender, religion and media in order to facilitate a clearer engagement through work done in these areas.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter a general introduction to this study was presented. Information regarding the objectives, theories, and methods that gave shape, informed and gave direction to this study were also presented. In this literature review the focus will be on outlining the three major fields of research that have shaped this project, offering developments in each one of these areas of research. The first section refers to the debate around the notions of masculinity. masculinity as a conceptual tool in understanding all that it means to be a man (ontologically), how to be manly (articulated) and how to be masculine (performed), and ultimately how this impact on women. The two following sections are focused on religion and culture in context of HIV and, finally, media and masculinity. To engage with masculinity within the South African context this chapter will theoretically, and to an extent, chronologically engage with scholarly work done in the area. This means this chapter basically seeks to construct and present an overview of how discourses developed around masculinity and where at present are these discourses. This first section will give some specific attention to Connell's Hegemonic Masculinity and how this concept evolved from its first usage. Much of the literature used for this study will reflect this influence, and it will also include Robert Morrell and Kopano Ratele who have written much on the subject in Southern Africa. Furthermore, this section, engaging with Ezra Chitando, will look at Religion and Culture in context of HIV and AIDS. This scholar will be used to serve to enhance a better understanding in search for alternative expressions and articulations of masculinity in the African context within an HIV and AIDS context.

2.2. Masculinity

Rising from the impact of feminist studies; studies done in field of men and masculinity have sought to identify and engage with masculinity/ies within a reality where gender is dynamic

and does not follow what it set by society (Connell, 1987; Butler, 1990). Both Connell in “*Gender and Power*” (1987), and Butler in “*Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*” (1990) hold that gender is ever evolving and it should be engaged with within a historical context, and with a consideration of all the phenomena experienced within that context. Engagement with masculinity in any given time and space, and to whatever scope cannot be without a consideration of the influence of the historical; religious and cultural; sexual, biological and psychological; socio-political and economic factors. These factors create a space within a given time in history. According to Capraro (2004) the study of men and masculinity “focuses on the lives of men, and in particular, on the lives of men as they are framed or made meaningful by prevailing models of what it means to be a man in any particular historical or cultural milieu” (Capraro, 2004:23). This space created has been viewed by scholars I will later engage with in this section as a space for expressions of what it means to be a man, spaces where constructs of male identity happen, a space where being a man is dictated, and a space where men claim their place in society. This is the arena in which studies in masculinity have evolved.

Pioneering work done in studies of men and masculinity can be traced back to Jeffrey Weeks’ engagement with the history of sexuality around the early 80’s (Brod, 2013: 83). Masculinity as a conceptual tool was adopted and employed by leading scholars in gender studies who saw that the sex role theory carried some fundamental limitations (Brod and Kaufman, 1994). Connell, and Brod were among the first to employ masculinity as a conceptual tool in their research and they have been key theorists in the field. Research done in gender and sexuality has shown that gender and sexuality are not fixed and that they are not governed by cultural and religious binaries (Butler, 1990). It is with this awareness that critically engaging with masculinity calls for the acknowledgement of how being a man and understanding what and how men are, unfold within a time and space which can be also said to be greatly influenced by religion and culture. Contemporary discourses on gender equality and gender identity are a constant call for rigorous engagement with masculinity. Among those who initially theorized about masculinity Connell is the most acclaimed. In agreement with what Wedgwood (2009) argues, the value of Connell’s theory rests on that what it does is to offer a feminist engagement of a kind of masculinity and, according to Wedgwood, still offers an opportunity to consider the agency of men in the production of masculinity.

In both the private and public space involvement and engagement with gender equality is rare among men, and as a result men are generally oblivious to the power given by the privilege they receive. According to Coston and Kimmel in “*Seeing Privilege Where It Isn’t: Marginalized Masculinities and the Intersectionality of Privilege*” – one of the main issues regarding gender equality is that men do not comprehensively understand how traditional masculinities disadvantage women (Coston and Kimmel, 2012). In “*Work, Clothes and Leisure Suit: The Class Basis and Bias of the Men’s Movement*” Brod holds that many men can be said to not see or consider their location within the socially constructed gender structure are unaware they exist within socially constructed “gender structures which favours men over women, and therefore do not recognize a problem. Thus, engaging in discussion about gender equality is often a pointless experience for men who find it challenging to appreciate how entrenched the issue is in society. Fortunately, attitudes, and the gender profiles they are associated with, are subject to social construction and transformation” (Brod, 1983). Ratele in “*Liberating Masculinities*” says that he himself,

“now recognize[s] why some people are resistant towards the changing gender and sexual relations and want to keep the ‘traditional’ models for being a man or a woman. I am aware that in different ways some are angry and frustrated. These negative emotions, however genuine, are too often taken out on others, often those closest to them, physically or sexually. But sometimes they are also directed internally, against the self, through the abuse of alcohol or drugs.” (Ratele, 2016: 16-17)

Kimmel (2005) advocates that masculinity, as is the case with femininity for women, are socially constructed gender profiles under which men and women are categorized. However, they are not created equal as power distribution aid in their construction. For men, according to Kimmel in “*Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*” there is “... a culturally preferred version that is held up as the model against which men are to measure themselves” (Kimmel, 2005:4). “The dominant model to which men must aspire is that which Connell describes as Hegemonic Masculinity. It is a location within the male gender hierarchy that occupies the hegemonic, or top position” (Connell, 2005). However, hegemonic masculinity is not a fixed position, and occupying the position is contested. According to Christian (2003) Connell (2005) “masculinity can be viewed as a social order that lends analysis and structure from Gramsci’s notion of class relations. As such, hegemonic masculinity retains the dominant position of social life, while other masculinities, such as homosexual masculinity, and women

are subordinated” (Christian, 2003; Connell, 2005). According to Christian in “*The Making of Anti-Sexist Men*”,

“the current, and historical, occupier of this hegemonic position is traditional masculinity, which can be said to point to the stereotype of the twentieth-century male-chauvinist outlook which result in activities from the kinds of gender socialization conventionally seen as appropriate to males in Western societies since at least the late Victorian times.” (Christian 2003:7)

According to Gardner (2005), one of the major principles of traditional masculinity that impedes gender equality is that women are fundamentally considered inferior to men. He holds that this view can be traced back to the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who based this claim on the principles of reason. In Gardner’s article “*Men, Masculinities, and Feminist Theory*”, Aristotle is surmised as saying that “masculinity was equated with the human rationality of men, and women were marked by sexuality, emotion, and their bodies” (Gardner, 2005: 36). The notion that men are intellectually superior has already been disproved; however, what Aristotle articulates about women and their bodies remains relevant. According to the French feminist philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir in “*The Second Sex*”, men consider humanity to be constructed in their image and it is clear that in dreaming of himself as donor, liberator, redeemer, man still desires the subjection of women (Beauvoir, 1993). Furthermore, according to Beauvoir the subordination of women is not a fact of nature, but the product of social conditioning that has become part of our everyday thinking (1993). This idea of male superiority and female inferiority, according to Beauvoir, is one that must be maintained by traditional masculinity if it is to occupy the hegemonic gender identity. According to Plan (2015) in “*It’s a Man’s World: The Effect of Traditional Masculinity on Gender Equality*”, attitudes that stem from traditional masculinity, such as the notion that ‘real men’ are tough and hard and that the only appropriate emotion for them to display is anger, this presents a significant barrier towards gender equality, and this impact on women in a negative way (Plan, 2015).

How masculinity has been theorized is of great value in that it makes it possible to interrogate the formation of hegemonic masculine identity\ies as contested, inherited, internalized and performed (Morell, 2001). For Morell (2001) in “*The Times of Change: Men and Masculinities*”, understanding how masculine identities are formed demands a deeper consideration because expressions of masculinity are often associated with violent acts against

women and the spread of HIV. Morrell (2001) has argued that it is difficult to define a form of masculinity that is dominant, or hegemonic, within an African society because of its diversity in terms race, class and ethnicity.

Representations or portrayals of alternative masculinity/ies suggested by Chitando (2012) in '*Redemptive Masculinities: Men, HIV and Religion*', and by Van Klinken (2011) in both "*Male Headship as Male Agency: An Alternative Understanding of a 'Patriarchal' African Pentecostal Discourse on Masculinity*" and "*St. Joachim as a Model of Catholic Manhood in Times of AIDS: A Case Study on Masculinity in an African Christian Context*", shows that the changing African context is also open to reformed and alternative or non-hegemonic ways of being a man. According to Ratele (2016) getting involved in the project of gender activism, critical gender enquiry and social transformation requires caution because transforming masculinity/ies should not be about undermining male power. In his book, "*Liberating Masculinities*" Ratele holds that "we need to liberate men from oppressive and injurious models of masculinity. In a new society, we all need blueprints of how to be new sexual and gender subjects so as to better live with each other's emergent identities" (Ratele, 2016:16-17). Masculinity/ies as performances (actions and articulations which are done within time and space) call for reform in order to achieve a health and non-oppressive society where women don't need to have the constant need to be uneasy in their relating with men.

Other scholars like Isabel Phiri and Sarojini Nadar (2008) have argued that performance of gender can be said to be centred on power and privilege of which is enjoyed largely by men. For Phiri (2002) in "*Life in Fullness': Gender Justice. A Perspective from Africa*" the humanising idea of the God's justice emerge as a starting point in approaching gender and reforming or alternative approaches to masculinity. She holds that if that could be the case the relationship between males and females would mean "liberation from all forms of oppression and promotion of responsibility, mutuality and acceptance of one's duties towards oneself and others" (Phiri, 2002:82)

Involving men and encouraging them to converse more openly about their lived experiences can make it is probable to inform men on how the roles and responsibilities they are given by society impact women. Changing male's attitudes towards an open acceptance of the gender outlines they function within is an vital step in reaching gender equality. "The absence of such progress would only serve to maintain the disempowerment women down the generations and the restriction of boys and young men to traditional male roles" (Plan, 2012; Fonseca, 2010).

This suggests that gender equality is attainable through the dismantling of traditional masculinity as the hegemonic masculinity.

“Male stereotypes affect the manner in which men engage with women, and traditional masculinity acts as the dominant masculinity for men” (Connell, 2005). As held by the above-mentioned scholars, although there different expressions articulations and imaginings about masculinity/ies, the idea of traditional masculinity remains the most influential. Gender equality is difficult, because the essential features displayed by traditional masculinity shield against change. For global gender equality to progress, males must recognize themselves as fundamental actors and actively work to change the patriarchal structures, which benefit them to the exclusion of women. Without the supportive contribution of males, gender equality is condemned to continuous existence power imbalances that favour traditional masculinity. To progress towards gender equality, efforts must be made to deconstruct traditional masculinity.

2.3. Religion and culture in the context of HIV

To understand the religio-cultural dimension of the study of gender and health a feminist critique of the role of men and masculinity is important. Work done by Adrian Van Klinken in “Theology, Gender Ideology and Masculinity Politics: A Discussion on the Transformation of Masculinities as Envisioned by African Theologians and a Local Pentecostal Church” (2010), shows that the HIV and AIDS pandemic played a key role in bringing the discourse on masculinities in Africa to the fore. However, African discourses on masculinities are by no means limited to the epidemic. Masculinities have been analysed in relation to a variety of issues such as sexuality, HIV and AIDS, fatherhood, history, health, religion, culture, education, power, conflict and violence, as well as issues relating to theory. Richter and Morrell (2006) in “*Baba: Men and Fatherhood in South Africa*”; Harris (2012) in “*Masculinities and Religion in Kaduna, Nigeria: A Struggle for Continuity at a Time of Change*”; Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger (2012) in “*Hegemonic Masculinity/Masculinities in South Africa: Culture, Power, and Gender Politics*”; Elliot (2003) in “*Masculinity: Key South African Issues and Debates: Soul City Review*”; Ratele (2008) in “*Studying Men in South Africa*”; Odimegwu and Okemgbo (2008) in “*Men’s Perceptions of Masculinities and Sexual Health Risks in Igboland, Nigeria*”; Barker and Ricardo (2005) in “*Young Men and the Construction of Masculinity in*

Sub-Saharan Africa: Implications for HIV/AIDS, Conflict, and Violence”, are all examples of key work on masculinities in the African context.

A number of scholars in their theorizing about masculinity in the African context have pointed the extent to which HIV and AIDS has been feminised, and how the role of men in the spread of the virus needs further engagement so as to transform prevailing forms of masculinity/ies which are in themselves not healthy (Richter and Morrell, 2006; Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger, 2012; Elliot, 2003; Barker and Ricardo, 2005). Chitando (2008) argues that faith communities in the region play a significant role in reforming masculinities. In this regard both Chitando (2012, 2013) and Van Klinken (2001, 2013), argue that through drawing on local religious and cultural resources that masculinity can be reformed in a manner that may be redemptive, with a life-giving consequence for women. Moreover, one cannot talk about religion, culture, and HIV and AIDS within the African context without touching on the concerns of the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians. The Circle engage and deal with issues around individual and social transformation through challenging what is upheld and protected by patriarchy.

Masculinity within post-colonial Africa has proven its own challenges, through how African men have been imagined. The idea and conceptualization of masculinity has been significantly informed by the colonial legacy which has displaced African men. Ratele (2016) expresses how men within the South African context have been alienated by the new dispensation of the country which come through the 1996 Constitution of the country. Here there is a need to speak about men within this context.

Scholars in Africa care about a broad range of issues relating, but not limited to, affirmation and (re)definition of African cultures and identities in a global context. Decolonizing and deconstructing prevailing articulations of masculinity involves the interpretation, upholding and approaching epistemology in a way that responds appropriately to the unique African experience and identities (Louw, 2010:42-43; Kistner, 2008:92-93). This rests on a premise that the current reality or representation of Africa does not actually capture the essence of African realities, identities and cultures. It follows then that Africanization is an active call to Africans (Okeke, 2010: 42). Those who respond to this call have sought to explore possible opportunities to bring about some level of decolonialization. It is against this background that Chitando in his theorizing on masculinity presents the emerging field of masculinities in religious discourse as one such opportunity for contextual and life-giving articulations.

This would mean that the study of religion and masculinity/ies presents an opportunity to reflect on African issues, utilize African resources and methodologies, and come up with African modelled solutions to African problems (Chitando, 2013: 666-667). It would be misleading to think of Chitando's position here as merely a call for scholarly engagement with issues of masculinities. Chitando is actually critical of any such engagements that do not have practical relevance in addressing real life problems of Africans such as HIV and AIDS and GBV (Chitando, 2008: 67). Thus, any Africanization effort in relation to religion and masculinities will only be relevant if it holds some transformational value. It should, for instance, contribute towards bringing about change in men in a way that makes them more caring and responsible as it relates to issues like HIV and AIDS and GBV. And for Chitando, it is important too that such change be approached radically.

The style and tone of the writings presented by Chitando on masculinities are consistent with the actual content in terms of radicalism. He consistently challenges men, for instance, to "give up" "patriarchal privileges" or "patriarchal dividends" (Chitando, 2010: 29-30; 2008: 66). These are privileges men enjoy simply because they are men (Ditz, 2004: 2) and which they must "give up" because they are oppressive to women. This displays a lack of tolerance for patriarchy and its ideals and values, which follows in the tradition of African women theologians, especially members of the Circle. This lack of tolerance for patriarchy is clearly displayed in Chitando's (2007) assessment of Pentecostal efforts to produce "new men" in Zimbabwe.

Religion and culture in the context of HIV and AIDS can be closely related to masculinities, gender and patriarchy (Chitando, 2012: 17). In other words, it is potentially or actually constructive and destructive at the same time. On the one hand, religion and culture are major contributors to the development of dangerous masculinities both in their nature and structure as well as in the ways they have been used. They have, for instance, promoted, sustained and justified patriarchal structures (Chitando, 2010: 29). They have also promoted ideals like headship and leadership as exclusive to men to whom women are subjects (Chitando, 2013: 665). Religion is able to achieve this or be used in this way because the worldviews, beliefs, standards of morality and even actions are shaped by religion (Chitando, 2013: 665). This resonates with the position of Ter Haar and Ellis in *Worlds of Power: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa: Religious Thought and Political Practice in Africa*, that "it is largely through religious ideas that Africans think about the world today, and that religious

ideas provide them with a means of becoming social and political actors” (Ter Haar and Ellis, 2004: 2). Although their concern was with the relations between religion and politics in Africa, this assertion sheds more light on Chitando’s exposition of the importance of religion in issues of construction of masculinities in Africa.

On the other hand, the same religion that contributes in the production of dangerous masculinities can also be utilized in the transformation of such masculinities into life-promoting and harmless alternative ways of being “men” (Chitando and Chirongoma, 2012: 17). This idea is clearer in Chitando’s discussions on the theme of religious resources. Men have used such religious and cultural resources as “ancestral tradition”, doctrines, and sacred texts such as stories of masculine figures in the Bible to maintain dominance and sustain their patriarchal privileges (Chitando and Chirongoma, 2012: 3).

In the same vein, Chitando (2010) holds that resources such as the Bible can be used to produce alternative masculinities that are not harmful. He holds that men need to engage differently with the Bible, with open minds and a willingness to discover new masculinities and to challenge dangerous ones (Chitando, 2010: 29). Jesus, for instance, is said to have wept (John, 11:35). This can be used to demystify the idea that crying makes one less a man (Chitando, 2012: 263). The concern of Chitando for production of alternative masculinities which runs through the themes that have been discussed so far raises important questions: what precisely would constitute such alternatives and to what specific end, other than the fact that dominant masculinities are harmful to women and to men in some cases?

Likewise, Skovdal (2011) in “Masculinity as a barrier to men’s use of HIV services in Zimbabwe” highlights the need to facilitate a safe and supportive social space in which men can openly discuss the social constructions of masculinity and develop and promote masculinities which promote health and wellness. In *“African Masculinities: Men in Africa From the Late Nineteenth Century to the Present”*, Ouzgane and Morrell (2005) argues that in re-addressing masculinities within the African context culture should be considered as a way to revise and moderate gender relations in society. What these authors highlight is the concerns that a failure to view the emergence of postcolonial African masculinities in historical context might create more resistance than reform. They also advocate against the uncritical adoption of universal ideas about what it means to be a man, as not without cultural content. Finally, Ouzgane and Morrell (2005) argue for the incorporation of indigenous ideas into postcolonial construction, and/ or reform of masculinities. Ratele (2008) in *“Analysing Male in Africa:*

Certain Useful Elements in Considering Ruling Masculinities”, suggests that it will be close to impossible to create a gender-equitable Africa if the daily experiences of men are not considered. According to Ratele (2008) a great number of social ills and crimes in South Africa are committed by males who are both old and young man within South Africa. This can be an indicator that “ruling ideas of being a man or boy” are not life-giving to those who follow them.

In his book chapter “*Religious Ethics, HIV and AIDS and masculinity in Southern Africa*”, Chitando (2008) captures the articulation and expression of masculinities at play in Africa, and discusses a range of challenges and opportunities a gendered theology offers the context of post-colonial Africa. Chitando argues that faith communities in the region play a significant role in reforming masculinities, and consequently impacting on the spread of HIV and AIDS. In this regard both Chitando (2012, 2013) and Van Klinken (2001), drawing on the religious and cultural resources, hold that masculinity can be reformed in a manner that may be redemptive for both men and women as it addresses gender equality issues.

Studies done on religion and masculinity grew out of the work done by feminist theologians. Not as a reaction or protest to what feminist theologians were doing, but as means of addressing gender issues without neglecting the experiences of men. African feminist theologians’ project is the concern about the vulnerability of women and girl children in the context of HIV and AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa. HIV and AIDS have been feminised and the role of men in the spread of the virus needs further engagement so as to transform prevailing forms of masculinity which are in themselves not healthy.

2.4. Media and masculinity

The third element to be developed is the analysis of the interrelation between media and masculinities. The relationship between masculinity and media has gained increased scholarly interest and has continued to generate work that theorizes, interprets, and evaluates masculinity with or within media (Hanke, 1990). According to Hanke in “*Redesigning men: Hegemonic masculinity in transition*” (1992), intersecting media and gender in critical enquiry open to the field of masculinities new engagements as relevant questions are evoked as to how masculinities are imagined and what powers are behind the conceptions and imaginings. Identity is shaped around socially constructed norms and principles and it is with this that the

importance of interrogating the effects and role media has surfaces (Hanke, 1992). Saco in *"Masculinity as Sings: Poststructuralist Feminist Approaches to the Study of Gender"* (1992) holds that within a constructionist approach to representation and meaning, some scholars have adopted a feminist poststructuralist orientation to "masculinity as signs" where masculinity, as part of a gender construct, can be regarded as one of the biases that make up social identities.

Hoover (1997) in his article *"Media and the Construction of the Religious Public Sphere"*, acknowledges that there has been tension in the past when it came to the intersection of media and gender. The leaving out of theoretical and empirical works in this regard has been convenient in order to avoid some troublesome issues (Hoover, 1997). Categorizing men under one umbrella has not done justice in theorizing about masculinity and I find that this might have been another reason for avoiding rigorously engaging with the intersection. Media creates meanings about gender, and plays an important role in the way we understand it as part of our identity, our history, our social institutions, and our everyday lives (Hanke, 1992). Gender is a word we hear in everyday conversation. It is commonly used to describe an individual's identity as male or female, and sets out roles for them through social norms, subscribe ways of behaving, and offer opportunities in claiming and finding their space within social structures. However, the term "gender" is actually more complicated, and needs to make distinction between what is actual and what is imagined. In an article *"Masculinity in Selected North African Films: An exploration"*, Downing (2010) warns against over simplifying the concept of masculinity and talking about masculinity as a "generic metaphor for socially diffused power; because masculinity as a conceptual tool is ideologically re-categorised under the same terms as with race (Downing 2010). At this point it is important to note that interrogating the imagining of masculinity in media and how masculinity/ies are articulated and imagined calls for a clear understanding of history, the present contextual reality and all the external powers which influence socially constructed ideas and norms which surround what it means to be a man. The intersection of Masculinity/ies and Media in the African context calls for a contextual approach to the reality of Africa and its social factors. Africa carries with it the legacy of colonialism and this is to be considered whenever doing research which involves what could have been destabilized by the colonizers, in this context gendered identity (Chitando, 2012).

Linderman (2001) in *Rethinking Media, Religion, and Culture* in *"Mediating religion: Studies in media, religion, and culture"*, highlights the importance of culturalist scholarship to religion

and media studies as the focus is on culture and meaning. Intersections of religion, media and gender also call for the same approach (Linderman, 2001). This is worth noting as social and individual construction of meaning, and thereby the construction of basic values systems and cultural norms become the focus of media and gender scholarship. Through this, I acknowledge that the intersection between gender and media calls for careful engagement so as to provide valuable insight.

Gauntlett (2008) in *“Media, Gender, and Identity: An Introduction”*, holds that media and communication are central elements of modern society, whilst gender and sexuality remain at the core of how we think about our identity (Gauntlett, 2008). He ascertains that, with a consideration of the role media representations plays, images and performances of men and women in media influence how human identity, gender, and sexuality is conceptualized, engaged with, and thus inform how it is performed. Gauntlett establishes that, with considering the impact and influence of media, that it will not pass by that the image of men and women presented in media influence how human identity, gender, and sexuality is imagined (Gauntlett, 2008; Gill, 2007). But Gauntlett (2008) also warns that assuming that people copy or just borrow what they hold as their identity from the media leaves much space for interrogation. Theorists in social sciences, media and gender, religion and culture conceptualized ideas about identity and these theories Gauntlett uses to work with when considering the role of the media in the formation and negotiation of gender and sexual identity (Gill, 2007).

Scholars like Tager (1997) in *“Identification and Interpretation: The bold and the beautiful and the urban black viewer in Kwazulu-Natal”* and in *“The Black and the Beautiful: Perceptions of (a) new Generation(s)”* and Strelitz (2004) in *“Against cultural essentialism: Media reception among South African Youth”*, through their research in media, have demonstrated that the different generations of audience consume and identify with media texts differently. Also, according to Strelitz, “the environment can also be very influential in how audiences consume media” (Strelitz, 2004). Viewers not only make their own interpretations of shows, but they also construct the situations in which viewing takes place and the ways in which acts of viewing, and program content, are put to use. Audience members confront their experience actively, taking from it in accord with the certain satisfactions they pursue and the perceived abilities of a number of media sources to satisfy these enjoyments. This can show how representations in media can be misrepresentation. In *African film and literature: Adapting violence to the screen*, Dovey (2009) directed attention that “cinematic texts in South Africa

have a great deal to offer when read as primary texts in the same way as literary texts as evidence or even as interview and narrative 'entry-point' text..." (Dovey 2009: 70).

2.5. Conclusion

The focus in this chapter was to give a detailed background to the study as it relates to literature and theories in the field, offering developments in each one of these areas of research. This I did by engaging with notions of masculinity; masculinity as a conceptual tool. I then looked at religion and culture in the context of HIV and AIDS. This is where I engaged with work done on the African context focused on creating a gender balanced society which can result in the spread of HIV and AIDS, and stop GBV. Finally, I looked at media and masculinity. Media representations of masculinity offers entry points to consider what or how a certain phenomenon in prevails in a society.

Masculinity as a conceptual for men and men's actions and behaviours framed through Connell's Hegemonic Masculinity paired with what Chitando says about alternative masculinity/ies helps in identifying represented male actions and male behaviour. This is beneficial to the study as it created a framework through which to seek religio-cultural representations of masculinity in the film based on work already done in the area of gender, religion, sexuality. There has been growing scholarly interest in intersecting media and gender in South Africa and this for me seemed like an opportunity what is being said and to engage with what has been so prevalent in our context; putting gender and sexuality into the public through media.

CHAPTER 3:

THEORY AND METHOD

3.1 Introduction

Representation of men in different forms of media has offered a range of various masculinities and as result scholars have developed an equally wide range of theories and methods to understand, interpret, and make sense of manhood and masculinity/ies. This study is an interpretive analysis of how masculinity/ies are represented and understood in the 2004 film by Darrel Roodt, *Yesterday*. An interpretive study is undertaken to enhance understanding of and engagement with the social phenomenon placed under the microscope. The determination of this approach is to facilitate a better consideration of, engagement with and even utilization of the subject or object of analysis (Maimon, 2012: 183). Meaning that this study is an interpretive study because it will benefit the process of engaging with masculinity/ies as presented in the film. The value of an interpretative approach to a study rests on that the fundamental ideas which are of engaging with what is presented through and within the kind of representation it receives, and that of understanding that which is represented as it is represented. There is always more than what meets the eye involved in the representation of any social phenomenon. In this context an interpretive study is important for analysis, because the study takes as its starting point an intimate study and critical examination of the film *Yesterday* in order to theorize about masculinity in a film that is not explicit about its discourses about masculinity/ies. The film is the primary source of data and I will use it to explore and examine discourses about masculinity/ies. These discourses will be drawn from how the film is designed and from what is presented in the film. With interpretive studies the framework used does not matter, and this is so because analysis often entails taking something apart and then putting it back together by figuring out how the parts makes up a cohesive whole; the goal of analysis is to create a meaningful interpretation (Maimon, 2012: 185).

In this chapter I will present two theorists who will be my companions in analysing masculinity/ies in the film *Yesterday*. These theorists are Raewyn Connell and Ezra Chitando. Both Connell and Chitando I will engage with because of their work on masculinity/ies and power, as well as masculinity/ies and religion and culture respectively. The second part of the

chapter will look at the methods employed for excavating selected data on masculinity/ies from the film. Finally, this section will also show how I applied content and discourse analysis to elaborate on the depictions of masculinity in the film.

In this study *Yesterday* is approached as both text (narrative) and film (visual representation), and as such I used a combination of methods to interrogate and understand how the director and filmmakers understood or depicted men. I viewed the film *Yesterday* as a life-world of its own, with its own horizons and internal rules regarding genre, narrative and characters. The film forms a kind-of case study insofar as it has strict boundaries. The study is focussed exclusively on the possibilities of what can be said about the film, and while the conclusions drawn refer to depiction about representations of masculinity in media, the study is generated from within the limits and narratives horizons of the film.

3.2. Theoretical framework

To analyse the representations of masculinity in the film, I will draw on the work of Raewyn Connell and Ezra Chitando. Raewyn Connell is an Australian sociologist who engages vastly with the social construction of masculinity. In studies in gender which specifically relate to men and men's experiences Connell is said to be one among the founders and pioneers of this research field. Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity has been predominantly significant and has provoked much discussion ever since it was brought to the field. Hegemonic masculinity can be termed as a gender order dynamic in the same way as racism can be seen in terms of a racial order dynamic. Hegemonic masculinity is not a theory per se; rather, it is a way of understanding men within a social order. In social orders there are other forms of masculinities, but hegemonic masculinity is the one that is most aspired or desired and promoted because of its apparent privileges.

Ezra Chitando, a Professor of religion at the University of Zimbabwe, has given much attention to HIV and AIDS, masculinities and gender based violence in the Southern African context. Chitando is of the position that faith communities can play a significant role in reforming masculinities. The call for reform suggests that there is something wrong with prevailing articulations and embodiments of masculinity. The contribution made by Chitando is that masculinity discourses can be seen as an opportunity for contextual and life-giving articulations

(Chitando, 2007; 2008; 2009; 2010; 2012). Chitando is critical of any engagements that do not have practical relevance in addressing the real-life problems of Africans, such as HIV and AIDS and GBV (Chitando, 2008:67). The aim of his engagement is to contribute towards bringing about change in and among men in a way that will make men more caring and responsible in relation to issues like HIV and AIDS and GBV (Chitando 2012). For Chitando there is no denial of what patriarchy dictates but his work shows and offers alternatives to the kind of masculinity/ies that dehumanizes men and has a negative impact on women.

3.2.1. Raewyn Connell's hegemonic masculinities

In “*Masculinities*” Connell defines hegemonic masculinity as “the current pattern of practice that legitimizes men's dominant position in society and justifies the subordination of women, and other ways of being a man” (Connell, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is conceptualized to aid in interpreting the powers behind the ruling type of masculinity/ies, and it can be used to explaining the intentions men have in preserving power over women; that which has as its conclusion as power and privilege received through the domination. Hegemonic masculinity is conceptually useful for understanding gender relations (Connell, 2004; 2005a; 2005b; 2012; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Ratele, 2001; 2008a; 2008b; 2016), education (Morrell, 1998), the depictions of masculinity in the mass communications media (Hanke, 1990; 1992), and the health of men and women (Chitando, 2007; 2008; 2010; 2012). Hegemonic masculinity is the way of being a man that is shaped by how men are imagined through power relations present in social structures. In “*Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept*”, Connell and Messerschmidt state that “hegemonic masculinity is the particular normative form of masculinity that is the most honoured way of being a man, which requires all other men to position themselves in relation to it” (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). On a global scale, “the impact of hegemonic masculinity has been considered in determining unequal social and political relations that are harmful to the health of both men and women” (Scott-Samuel 2009).

In “*Gender and Power: Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics*”, Connell conceptualizes “hegemonic masculinity and argues that masculinity is not completely dominant, however, it becomes dominant as it only exists in relation to non-hegemonic, subordinated forms of masculinity” (Connell, 1987). What comes out through this is that even though there seems to be one form of masculinity that is most desirable, there are other forms of masculinity that can also be said to be hegemonic in their own rights. This means there are more hegemonic masculinities rather than ‘the’ hegemonic masculinity. This is one of the most expressed

critiques to a single uniform hegemonic masculinity. The concept of hegemonic masculinity employed in the study is going to aid in engaging with the type of “masculinity represented in the film.” (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).

3.2.2 Basic assumptions of hegemonic masculinity

From its origins hegemonic masculinity has been a way to critique/understand gender relations with specific reference to virility, dominance, and violence. According to Donaldson the characteristics of hegemonic masculine include “violence and aggression, stoicism (emotional restraint), courage, toughness, physical strength, athleticism, risk-taking, adventure and thrill-seeking, competitiveness, and achievement and success” (Donaldson, 1993). Hegemonic masculinity defines the ‘real man’ and how it is conceptualized by Connell hegemonic masculinity resembles the kind of masculinity as represented in the film *Yesterday*.

In the film there is great male absence, yet there is also a strong presence which prevails even when visuals of men are not presented. The main character in the film – *Yesterday* - suffers illness at the hand of her husband, and she also experiences gender based violence at the hands of her husband. Hegemonic masculinity stands on two pillars: one being domination of women and the other the domination of other men who display ‘inferior’ masculinities; with it being the manly way of being a man. If not all, most of the characteristics listed by Donaldson are captured in the film and they are promoted and preserved by cultural and religious norms and practices. Talking about hegemonic masculinity Connell holds that it is a way of being a man that is a socially constructed within a gender order that is preserved and promoted by religion and culture. It is with this perspective that an enquiry will be made to how religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity impact on women’s SRHR as presented in the film *Yesterday*. Practices like risky sexual behaviour that play out in multiple sexual partners, violence and dominance, reflect ideas that are captured through how hegemonic masculinities are present in the film.

Hegemonic masculine ideals, especially stoicism, emotionlessness, and invulnerability (Donaldson, 1993) can help explain the distaste to seeking health care, and as represented in the film through the violence expressed at knowledge of having HIV by John, *Yesterday*’s husband. Acknowledgement of weakness would be appreciation of femininity, so men, as presented in the film, disturb themselves, dodge the problem, or become angry and act out in violence. One of the few emotions permissible under hegemonic masculine norms when

depressive symptoms surface they are dealt with through anger expressed through violence or destructive behaviours. The diagram below – designed by Scott-Samuel – shows the place of hegemonic masculinity within the patriarchal social order:

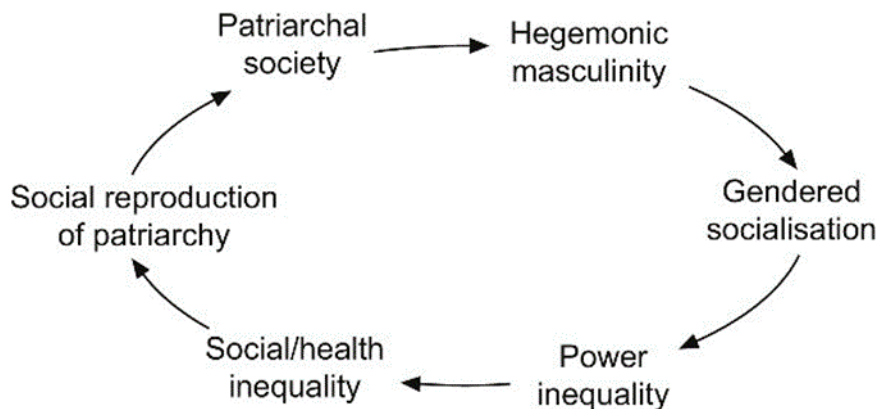


Figure 2¹

Class and racial discrimination carry similar tensions as with dominant and privileged gender articulation. The diagram above shows how hegemonic masculinity exists within a patriarchal structured society where male dominance is a norm. Connell’s work, as illustrated above in the diagram by Scott-Samuel, shows that there is a flow which is circular as to how hegemonic masculinity feeds gendered socialisation, and how that feeds power inequality, which translates or feeds social/health inequality, resulting in a social reproduction of patriarchy which sustains hegemonic masculinity for its survival, and the circle continues. Hegemonic masculinity stands as a conceptual tool that is descriptive and analytical.

Notions of power and privilege are the basic beliefs of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity reflects what was captured by Hacker in “*The New burdens of masculinity*” for hegemonic masculinity draws some of its historical roots from both the fields of social psychology and sociology which contributed to the literature about the male sex role that had begun to recognize the social nature of masculinity and the possibilities of change in men’s conduct (Hacker, 1957). Hacker wrote before the women’s liberation and feminist theory of

¹Scott-Samuel-<http://www.scielo.org/scielo.php?pid=s0213-91112009000200016&ing=en&ting=en>

patriarchy and this shows how a dominant form of masculinity/ies have since been a concern in the project to encourage and promote inequality.

3.2.3. Ezra Chitando's redemptive masculinity

Chitando addresses or tries to remedy unhealthy articulations of masculinity constructed the concept of redemptive masculinities. The relevance of redemptive masculinities rests on that this concept suggests alternative expressions of what it means to be a man as opposed to hegemonic masculinity. Redemptive masculinities have gender equity at its core. According to John, Siwila and Settler (2013), “the term ‘redemptive masculinities is said to distinguish masculinities that promote or give life in the face of violence and HIV. Moreover, it takes seriously the place of religion, theology, and religio-cultural resources, and “‘evokes the spiritual dimension’ in the reconstruction of alternative masculinities” (John, Siwila, and Settler 2013: 167). As opposed to the kind of masculinity captured through hegemonic masculinity the articulation suggested by redemptive masculinities encourage positive, peaceful and life-enhancing alternatives (Chitando, 2008). These kinds of masculinities suggested, turns patriarchy upside down and challenges the issue of male privilege and offers privileges to both men and women equally as means to create life-nourishing relations which in turn will respect and protect women’s SRHR.

Social structures in the African context can be said to be informed by both religion and culture. This can have a number of implications, especially in a context that has been influenced by external forces. The colonial legacy has not done justice to how things unfolded within the African context, especially after the independence of respective countries in Africa. The colonial masters came to the African continent and termed African ways as barbaric; and what this did was to make natives hate who and what they are; and so, the outcome was to assimilate foreign ways of living and expression; expressions which became become a deficit to the African way of finding solutions to African problems. Redemptive masculinities speak against hegemonic masculinity/ies and show that there can be an articulation of masculinity that can be supported by both religion and culture, and yet not be dominating but able to express sensitivity around equality. The ideas carried through dominant articulations of masculinity/ies that are in themselves not African per se but are the Western articulation of what it means to be a man. I think for Chitando it is important to contextualize the African man so as to find better and life-giving articulations of being a man in contemporary Africa.

3.2.4. *Basic assumptions of redemptive masculinities*

Chitando's work has no tolerance for patriarchy and its ideals and values. According to Chitando (2010) in "*Patriarchy and the Political Economy of the Biblical Culture*" religion and culture have promoted, justified and sustained patriarchal structures. This structure is a major contributor to the development of unhealthy and dangerous articulations of masculinity. The ideas promoted by religion and culture are headship and leadership as exclusive to men to whom women are subjects. Furthermore, in "*Redemptive Masculinities: Men, HIV and Religion*", Chitando and Chirongoma hold that there is use for religious and cultural resources such as "ancestral tradition", doctrines, and sacred texts such as stories of masculine figures in the Bible to maintain dominance and sustain their patriarchal privileges (Chitando and Chirongoma, 2012: 3). This will help the study as it engages with religiously and culturally informed symbols, acts and norms.

John, Siwila and Settler (2013) in "*Men Can, Should and Must Change!*": *An Analysis of Ezra Chitando's Writings on African Masculinities*" view religion and culture as double-edged sword. What is suggested by this is that both religion and culture are potentially or actually constructive and destructive at the same time (John, Siwila, and Settler, 2013). Religion and culture shape, in African epistemology, how reality is viewed and how issues are engaged with (Chitando, 2012). According to Chitando, both religion and culture have been used as means of oppressing women through promoting and protecting patriarchy, thus he argues that this can be flipped around and be used as a resource to shape healthy masculinities.

In his works "*Acting in Hope: African Churches and HIV/AIDS; Troubled but not Destroyed: African Theology in Dialogue with HIV and AIDS*"; and "*Living with Hope: African Churches and HIV/AIDS*", Chitando engages with the Church's responsibility in the HIV and AIDS era. As mentioned above a number of African scholars have alluded to the fact that in the African context issues around HIV and AIDS have been feminised, and the role or impact of men never given the attention it demands. In order to engage fruitfully with masculinity issues, it is important to consider that which shape and inform those articulations. Redemptive masculinities offer hope for the kinds of masculinities which impact negatively on women within an HIV and AIDS context.

3.2.5. *An analytical synthesis: Masculinity, religion and power*

Within this perspective masculinity is framed around patriarchy and privilege given to men; not just any man, but men who display dominance, aggression, leadership, the responsibility of being providers, and men who are solely the ones who to always are make things happen within the family, be it economically, religiously or culturally; all these give men the upper hand. All the above-mentioned masculinities display demands an 'other'; and 'other' upon which to be acted, and this through the power and privilege given to men which has shown the 'other' to be women through negative impact on women's lives. Privilege comes at a cost of a sense of entitlement that is fuelled by the patriarchal privilege given to or claimed by men (Chitando, 2012). This research project is concerned with masculinity and takes as its first premise the assumption that men are privileged. Drawing on Connell's understanding of masculinity, captured through the concept of hegemonic masculinity, male dominance is socially constructed within a given context, and informed or reinforced by either, if not both, religious and cultural norms. This is precisely where this study is located.

Through engaging with religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity in the film *Yesterday* I seek to understand, and explain how religion and culture shape men's ideas about themselves and how these ideas impact on women on various levels, most specifically women's SRHR. Using a constructivist approach to interrogate masculinity, I engage with the film to see how male privilege and power are sustained through religion, and cultural norms and practices. This is a privilege enjoyed by men, but it also has a negative impact on men. According to Gramsci's capturing of dominant ruling powers through the term hegemony, we can learn that those with power in a society or culture maintain their dominance not necessarily through violence, but rather ideologically (Gramsci, 1971). Thus, male privilege is upheld not only through the threat of violence but also through social and cultural ideologies about what men and women are entitled to and what is expected of them.

Hegemonic masculinity is undergirded by patriarchy and sustained through particular ideas and performances of maleness (Connell, 2005b; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Demetriou, 2001). Some scholars have suggested that in the African context that this kind of masculinity, considering its impact on both women and men within an HIV and AIDS context, is, can and should be redeemed, through (John, Siwila and Settler, 2013; West, 2013b; Van Klinken, 2011a; 2011d, 2011e; Chitando, 2012; 2013; Hategekimana, 2012); and through a decolonization of African masculinities (Chitando, 2012). In the film, *Yesterday*, men are

presented as privileged and entitled, dominant, and aggressive. These ideas both appear to be supported by religion and culture.

Male privilege is a reality, and this kind of articulations of masculinity is oppressive to women (Oduyoye, 2001; Phiri, 2002). This is visible through men's social practices and through behaviors that sustain gender discrimination, abuse of women, denial of women's sexual and reproductive rights, and exploitation of women on the sexual level on the base of the privilege received or claimed. African feminist epistemology considers the role and place of culture as deficit and as a possible asset for recovering women's rights through a decolonization of what it means to be a man within an African context (Chitando, 2012; John et al., 2013).

Often people invoke religion and culture to legitimate male dominance and power through the respective sacred texts and cultural traditions. In some local cultural contexts, the idea of male privilege is believed to be God-given and this justifies male headship over the clan (Ngwane, 2012), inheritance (Ngcobo, 2012; Cartar and May, 2001) and male domination (Ratele, 2008; Richter and Morrell, 2006), and to forms of social order that places men above women in all areas of life, thus undermining women's sexuality, sexual choices and sexual rights as represented in the film.

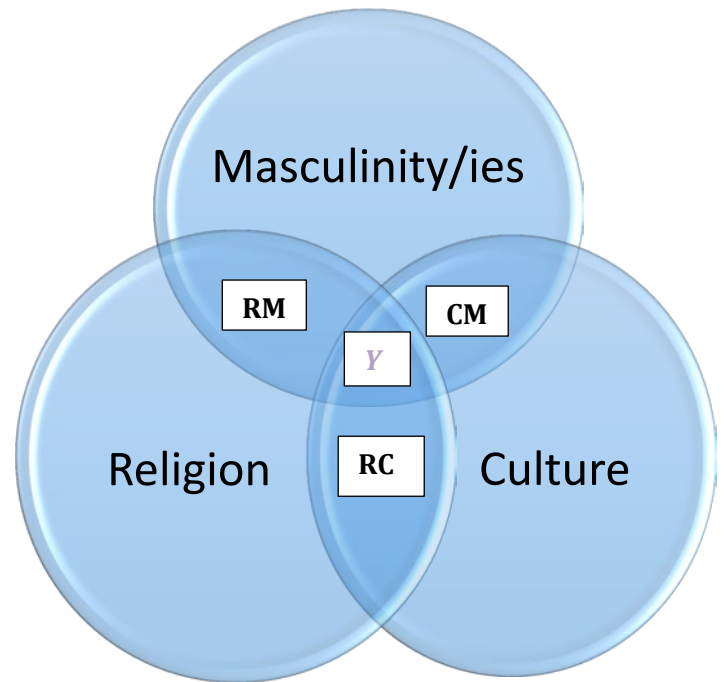
To consider religion and culture I will draw on the work of Clifford Geertz (1965) insofar as he argues that religion is a set of cultural beliefs that shape the formulation of the conceptions of a general order of existence. Taking this constructivist view Geertz suggests that religion not only explains the social world, wherein some things are believed to be sacred, but that it also offers an explanation of social hierarchies. Through this view of religion, the study examines how religion often places men over women, and give some privileges to men that men are believed to be primordially entitled to.

Religion as a social system is important in the construction of gender because often Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions rely on creation narratives and other texts from their respective sacred texts to justify privileging men over women (Phiri, 2002; Nadar and Phiri, 2012; Oduyoye, 2001). For example, in the Christian tradition, the use of Pauline Epistles to support ideas about male headship over women (Dube, 2000), especially where it speaks of subordination of the women (1 Cor 14:34-35; Eph 5:22-24; Col 2:11-15). Geertz (1965) holds that these conceptions are seen to be factual and sacred in that they create moods and motivations which determine people's behavior, choices and actions. The study is engaging

within a framework informed by Connell and Chetando's approaches to engaging with masculinity. The two scholars will be unpacked so as to understand what is meant through them by engaging with representations of masculinity in the film *Yesterday*.

3.3 Methodology

Drawing on what Dawson says about qualitative research in "*Practical Guide to Research Methodology: A User-Friendly Manual for Mastering Research Techniques and Projects*", and in line with one of the key features of qualitative studies, this work is concerned with "depth" of information and analysis rather than concern itself the formation of the phenomena put under the microscope (Dawson, 2007: 16). Lin in "*Higher Education Research Methodology – Literature Method notes*" that literature based qualitative methodology involves reading, analysing and sorting of literature in order to distinguish what is essential. Lin further refers to it as the "non-contact" method because the researcher does not deal directly with the object of study but indirectly, through literature (Lin, 2009: 179). Thus, while my object of study is masculinities in relation to religion and culture, I am not engaging with men and/or women directly, but indirectly through scholarly work done on gender, religion and culture within the framework of visual sociology, where visual representations are approached as texts. Lin further made a general observation to justify literature-based studies, he noted that "literature materials are the crystallization of wisdom, are the ocean of knowledge, have important values for the development of human society, history, culture and research scholars" (Lin, 2009: 179). What this implies is that reading/viewing is taken as an element of critical literacy that can inform how social issues are address and gendered issues are presented and engaged with as presented by the diagram below. Approaching the film as a life world of its own this study will practically do what the diagram below seeks to visualize:



Y - The film *Yesterday* (Singh and Roodl 2004)

RM - Religion and Masculinity

CM - Culture and Masculinity

RC - Religion and Culture

The diagram above illustrates how religion, culture and masculinity intersect and how these finds their presence in the film *Yesterday* which is at the centre of the study. In this study religion informs masculinity, culture informs masculinity, as religion and culture shape how identity is claimed and a place in the social order is claimed. The intersectionality is where these religio-cultural articulations are represented is the film *Yesterday* which is the main source of data I engage with in. The film as the main source of data will be at the centre of the study and literature in religion, gender and culture will be used to draw out and engage with themes that emerge from the movie. The use of analytical tools like content analysis and discourse analysis will be employed. Content analysis will help to ascertain and clarify what is going on in the film. Finally, discourse analysis will assist to ascertain the ideas and biases

related to masculinity that lurk below the surface of the film, as well as to expose and engage with the director's orientation and intent with regard to masculinity/ies in the film.

3.3.1. Research paradigm: Interpretive approach

This study is situated within the interpretive paradigm. A research paradigm is explained to constitute a researcher's framework of thinking which guides his or her behaviour as a researcher. Such a framework usually includes "a set of fundamental assumptions and beliefs" that make up a certain perception of the world (Wahyuni, 2012: 69). Wahyuni highlights two important philosophical dimensions that can be used to differentiate between research paradigms. These are epistemology and ontology (Wahyuni, 2012: 69). Ontology has to do with how reality is perceived. From a research perspective, reality has been perceived by some – such as positivists, post-positivists, or realists – as objective. In other words, reality is independent of social agents or actors and how these actors interpret reality. On the other hand, others, like interpretivists and constructivists, see reality as subjective. That is, it depends on social actors, and their interpretation of it. Thus, persons play a part in the construction of social phenomena (Wahyuni, 2012: 69-70). Epistemologically, paradigms are distinguished based on the beliefs about knowledge generation processes, appreciation and application of what may be considered acceptable knowledge (Wahyuni, 2012: 69). Thus, the research paradigm shapes everything about the research to be undertaken, including its design and methodology.

The interpretive paradigm within which this study is located allows for subjectivity, multiplicity, changeability and social constructionism in a way that recognizes the active participation of social actors (Wahyuni, 2012: 69-70). It is the appropriate paradigm for this study because of the nature of its object/subject and goal. Most studies suggest that issues of masculinity/ies can best be understood and engaged with within this paradigm due to the nature of masculinities as multiple, fluid, socially constructed, and contextual (Connell, 2005; Ratele, 2008a; Morrell, 2001). This paradigm also allows for my own interpretation of the film through scholarly work done in masculinity, because it recognizes the freedom to produce subjective details by the researcher. And finally, other than being appropriate, the qualitative approach adopted for this work adequately fits into the interpretive paradigm.

3.3.2. Research questions

In order to structure my inquiry into understanding the depictions of masculinity in the film, I have constructed several sets of question to guide and determine the scope of my research.

While I recognise that there are a wide range of possible ways to approach this study, and other have done this, I have chosen to pursue an interpretive study of masculinity as depicted in the film *Yesterday*. As such I ask the following question:

What roles does religion and culture have in the production of masculinity in the film Yesterday with respect to SRHR in South Africa?

In order to address this question, I will attempt to answer the following sub-questions:

1. What are the religio-cultural portrayals of masculinities in *Yesterday*?
2. How do these religio-cultural norms support particular sexual behaviours in the film *Yesterday*, and among South African men, generally?
3. How do particular, religious and cultural ideas about masculinity impact on women's sexual and reproductive health, rights and choices?

The deliberate focus of my study is not a general review of the range of representations of masculinities depicted in the film, but it is, firstly to understand how in the film, the role of culture and religion is imagined, and framed as critically important dimensions of masculinity in SA. Secondly how such particular, culturally and religiously informed ideas about masculinity's impact on women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. This is to understand the role religion and culture play in the shaping of articulated masculinity/ies in the film *Yesterday* and in South Africa at large.

3.4. Data development and collection

Methodologically, this qualitative study looks at the film as the producer of data to be analyzed. This is employed because the concern of the study is not techniques and technicalities used behind the making of the film, but the kind of masculinity represented in the film. More specifically the impact of the displayed masculinity as it relates to the experiences of *Yesterday*, the main character. I first saw the movie around 2005 and I found it to be a touching movie considering the time it was produced; a time when HIV and AIDS related deaths were on a high. My choosing to engage with the film in order to theorize about masculinity was inspired by a project I for my honours on the Brothers4Life campaign. I watched the film about 4 times before I thought of using it in my masters project. My critical watching of the film has

amounted to 25 times. After my project was approved I went to the school of media trying to acquaint myself with tools form media. I thought I would gather some with a hope that they would help me with my engagement with the film. I did not use any film software or any technical tools to help engage with the film. What assisted me has been tools used in visual sociology which take the film as a world of its own which offers the data to be analysed.

Between June and November 2017 I have been tried to get hold of the director of *Yesterday*, Darrel Roodt, and HBO Films, the distributing company, for a full script of the movie. With no avail. As a result I resorted to manually transcribing the movie. I came across limited transcriptions on the internet which did not have the language in which the film was screened. These transcriptions were poorly translated into English and did not adequately capture the isiZulu language. I translated the full movie and I have attached the transcriptions in appendix (1).

To choose the scenes for analysis I drew a table and through it isolated all the scenes I thought to be depicting visuals of men and conversations about men. After isolating those scenes, I further isolated scenes relating to men's sexual behaviour, either expressed or implied and it was from that that I isolated scenes depicting or suggesting impact of masculinity/ies on women's SRHR. Finally, I isolated scenes depicting or suggesting impact of masculinity/ies on women through scenes that offer women's daily experiences. From these isolated scenes I managed to gather the data with which I worked with to draw out themes form the film so as to analyze them.

3.4.1. Data analysis

This study focuses on the level of *content and representation* of masculinity in the film *Yesterday*. The focus will be on how religion and culture shapes masculinity in the film and how these impacts on women's sexual and reproductive health, rights and choices. I engage this using Connell's hegemonic masculinity and Chitando's redemptive masculinities. Through qualitative methods, I approach the world represented by the film as a world of its own using tools from visual sociology (Newbury, 2011). This approach helps in understanding, describing, interpreting and explaining a social phenomenon from the inside (Flick, 2007) as the visual representation presents it. This I do by analyzing experiences of the main characters and the society presented in the film through selected scenes. In addition, analyzing interactions and communications in the making as they unfold in the film to "unpack how people construct

the world around them, what they are doing or what is happening to them in terms that offer a meaningful and rich insight” (Flick, 2007: xi).

Newbury (2011) suggests three approaches to film analysis which help in visual scholarship. As this study will use the film *Yesterday* as its primary source of data, it is important to note how images can be used. According to Newbury images can either be used to illustrate, analyze, present or make an argument. In illustrating the images are endowed with value “for the economy with which they are able to describe the world they are presenting” (Newbury, 2011: 654). When it comes to analysis the presented images as the object of the study, the represented images take the focal point. In creating or presenting an argument, the images “originally understood and used principally as descriptive illustration may later be subject to an analysis which directs attention to the form of image, the way subjects are posed in order to comment on the dynamics of cross-cultural encounters” (Newbury, 2011: 655). The film will be approached as life world of its own through film analysis, content analysis and discourse analysis.

3.4.2. *Film analysis*

In this project, I employ visual sociology, which uses visual representations to examine pre-existing visual representations. Representations “are therefore subject to the influences of their social, cultural and historical contexts of production and consumption” (Hall, 1998; 1993). Hall holds that it is important to remember that all visual representations are not only produced but are consumed in a social context (Hall, 1993). Through visual sociology the film *Yesterday* will be approached as the primary source of data. The film *Yesterday* will be approached as text with a consideration of gendered language, gendered patterns and gendered ideas captured and represented in the film.

Through a phenomenological study of the film the study seeks to identify perception and representations of masculinity. This is done through the reading/viewing of the film to identify religio-cultural constructions of masculinity. In seeking to interrogate role of religion and culture in the constructions of masculinity in the film, I followed the six steps suggested by Mikos (2008) in “*Film and Television Analysis*”. The steps are as follows:

1. The development of a general cognitive purpose for the use of the film.
2. Watching the visual material.
3. Develop questions to be asked.

4. Sampling of material to be used and how scenes would be selected:
 - Scenes depicting visuals of men and conversations about men.
 - Scenes relating to men's sexual behavior; either expressed or implied.
 - Scenes depicting or suggesting impact of masculinity/ies on women through scenes which offer women's daily experiences.
5. Coding and decoding data.
6. Commentary of film components from the data collected.

Following the steps used in film and television analysis suggested by Mikos (2008) I have watched the film over and over, more than 25 times. During this watching and re-watching my viewing changed in a number of ways. The change was important when my focus or my attention was captured by different scenes every time I watched the film. From being very concerned with identifying scenes to use to engage with my topic I started seeing how the director chose to present certain scenes differently and placed emphasis on certain issues in particular scenes, for example the lived experience of Yesterday. The film is mainly concerned with the life of Yesterday, but in the life of Yesterday there is this man who has brought what she is experiencing, and this man is absent but yet present. The scenes I initially focused on were scenes that were explicit about their representation of masculinity, but to my disappointment in the film there are not so many explicit scenes. The film carries subtle discourses around masculinity and this called for me to read/view the film more closely and this is where Connell's concept of masculinity helped. At some points in the process there was frustration when it came to how I was to identify religion and culture in the film. Both religion and culture too are not explicit in the film. But in this regard Clifford Geertz's idea of religion as cultural system came to my aid. I was challenged a number of times not to become focused on the media aspect of film analysis, as my project is not located within the field of media studies. I struggled to identify how I was to engage with the media aspect of my study. In response to that visual sociology offered tools through which to engage with. Because my study is not concerned with technicalities, approaching the film as a life world of its own made it possible to engage with the film without any expertise in media studies. What hegemonic masculinity opens to conversation is seen in the life of Yesterday and the women in her community as a result of dominant forms of masculinity promoted by religion and culture.

3.4.3. Content analysis

Qualitative content analysis used in film studies provides tools to do hermeneutics on the film *Yesterday*. The film was analysed on the first level outlined by Flick (2014) in “*The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*”. Flick holds that in analysing film there are various levels that need to be considered in order to interpret meaning from the content of texts. These elements are context, the level of narration and dramaturgy, the level of aesthetics and configuration, level of content and representation, and the level of characters and actors. Although this study focuses on the level of *content and representation*, the study pays close attention to its relation to narration and dramaturgy, characters and actors to aesthetics and configuration and finally considering the context. This will be done through selected aspects or discourses about masculinity within the film, these aspects or discourses are those that relate to the research question: What roles does religion and culture have in the production of masculinity in the film *Yesterday* with respect to SRHR in South Africa? The film is looked at as the provider of data to be engaged with. The content of the film provides what I seek to engage with, that is the religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity within a context of HIV and AIDS. An example of a scene that speaks to the research question is; after Yesterday discovered that she is HIV positive she decides to go and see the husband and hear what he has to say about this. Upon arrival her husband did not welcome Yesterday, but rather, after telling her husband about her HIV the status, he severely abused and beat her.

This scene represents the kinds of masculine discourses that presents a male dominated world and men’s failure to accept weakness. In this context women do not belong in the space socially constructed to belong to men – urban areas, mines–, and they cannot assume roles set aside for men, and they have to be obedient to their husbands and submit in all ways; most especially sexually. In the scene no one stopped John as he was beating his wife. Finally, the scene presents as if it is the wife’s fault that she is infected. In the presentation of a film,

- “Contexts affect the
- Level of narration and dramaturgy,
- The level of aesthetics and configuration plays an important role in the
- Level of content and representation, and the
- Level of characters and actors is linked closely to the level of narration and dramaturgy” (Flick, 2014: 413).

The content of the film is where my data is gathered. The questions to be answered will be answered by what is represented in the film. Men in the film are presented as having power over women and they have certain privileges that they enjoy. How the film is presented gives a context in which the film becomes relevant in answering my research question.

3.4.4. Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis (DA) is a theoretical and methodological tool that allows one to “examine the constitutive role that discourses play in contemporary society” (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2010: 244). Although it shares a lot in common with the broader field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), it nevertheless differs in its particular history and ideological leanings. CDA methodological history can be traced back to the British and Australian critical linguistics in the 1970s that researched the intersection of discourse, ideology, and power (Given, 2008: 145). As for its ideological history, this can be traced back to Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci and the Frankfurt School (Littlejohn and Foss, 2009: 221). CDA’s ideological commitment is to transformation (Lewis-Beck; Bryman and Liao 2004: 215). CDA assumes that discourse structures social inequality and injustice, and this is applicable to my study. DA on the other hand is concerned with the way discourses are constructed and how language is use with an aim of revealing characteristics of a person or persons.

Scenes that will be engaged with are tabled and this will help in isolating relevant scenes without being bias with the selection. There is spoken and non-spoken language present in the film and DA concerns itself with language usage. DA considers language as social interaction and is concerned with the social contexts in which discourse is found. An example of a scene where DA is applied:

The women are gathered around the communal source of water and they gossip about the man of their village who is getting married to a foreign girl. The women’s conversation is around relations, who relates with who and who shouldn’t relate with whom. Starting from that the conversation ends up being about sex. But these women do not freely and openly talk about their sexuality, even among each other.

Woman 2: *Kufanele! Unesagila phakati kwemilenze yakhe. (Exactly! He must have a spear between his legs.)*

The language given to the man's penis describes how this part of the male anatomy is regarded. It is here that a simultaneous sense of power and violence, and this part is presented as an instrument of penetration and fear is presented. However, the tone of the discussion also contains a degree of admiration and cultural and sexual appeal, though always with a note of caution. This reference to the penis as a "spear" incorporates and conveys multiple meanings that are both affirming and critical. As such, in this dissertation discourse analysis is used precisely to identify and make visible ambivalent meaning in dialogue or text, and to expose the ideological and power regimes at play between the different actors and stakeholders in the film.

3.5. Positionality

I am a black South African man of Sotho origin in his early thirties. I am of a heterosexual orientation. I am a religious person with a background of religious formation to the priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church. I have developed my own personal outlook on religious teaching because of my philosophical and theological training, both within a church institution (St. Joseph's Theological Institute) and a secular institution like UKZN. I have been fortunate, if I may say, to have a supervisor who pushed me to step down from the abstract philosophical approach to social phenomena because of his own academic formation.

I was born in Lesotho but migrated to Johannesburg with my family in the late 1980's. I grew up in the context of Soweto and have witness how things changed in South Africa pre-and post-1994. I might have been very young pre-1994 but the experience of growing in that context exposed me to a number of different articulations of masculinity which I on my part questioned. I grew up without a father like many of my peers, and this also contributed to the imaginations of masculinity in the context where I grew up. There was a constant negative representation of what it means to be a man. These negative articulations were most of the time, if not all the time, harmful to both those subjected by them and to those who were acting them out. I grew up in a context where I saw women die because of what they were subjected to by men, I saw women allow themselves to be exploited and abused by men without claiming their rights, and I saw women being forced to do things which they would not do generally just to please a man. The subjection of women seemed a normal thing. Religion and culture calls women to be submissive and men to be leaders; this has its implication, especially within a patriarchal

context. For my honours project I did a critique of the Brother's for Life campaign. This campaign was aimed at transforming social inequalities that prevail within the South African context. In seeking to deal with that I found it limited as for me it never adequately dealt with what really causes men to act the way they do.

My engagement with this study surfaces from the fact that I am aware that there is something that is not allowing us as a society to become what we should. As such, as a religion and gender student I really want to engage with what informs men to be what they are and act the way they do. I am aware that as humanity we are still in the making of our human history and that things are still unfolding, but it is my desire that men are made more aware of that which they dearly protect, to see its deficit and to seek better way of helping socialize future generations of men without being exclusive in the approaches to engage men in the project of gender equality.

I personally think that becoming aware of the privilege given to men can open opportunities for better approaches to what it means to be a man within a context of a changing society. Men who find it difficult to identify the role played by patriarchy in shaping their identity, become a stumbling block to gender transformation. The point here is not to turn the tables around, but to allow each and every person, including myself as a researcher, to be aware of role that inherited norms play in day to day living through engaging with masculinity/ies as portrayed and represented within society. This awareness surfaces from my own personal journey as a researcher, and it led me to ask how and why certain actions by men finds justification and legitimization even though they are in themselves toxic and unhealthy. I have had to be aware of my own culpability as a man and not simply project the bad man idea onto other, while rendering myself innocent. Finally, I recognise that to approach gender inequity as I am in itself is a manifestation privilege, and that this position impact also on how I approached the study, read the text, and analysed masculinity.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter explained the theoretical framework, and methodology used in this study, including how data was collected and analysed. This framework and methodology influenced how the film *Yesterday* was viewed and engaged with in order for the possibility of theorizing about masculinity/ies. Doing an interpretive study of the kinds of masculinity is represented in the film *Yesterday* benefited the process of engaging with religio-cultural representation of

masculinity in the film. The film is not about men and men issues, but it offers a great scope of discourses around masculinity.

My first approach to the study was with great conviction that issues in masculinity are explicit in the film. This was a challenge to me to clearly articulate for myself what can be seen as a representation of masculinity in the film is. I no longer looked much for what is explicitly about masculinity; what I did was to look at the lived experience of *Yesterday*, as it is presented, and from there listen to the conversation within that context about men and see the impact of the expressed male behaviour. The following chapter will take an intimate view of the film so as to engage with religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity/ies in *Yesterday*.

CHAPTER 4:

PORTRAYALS OF MASCULINITY IN THE FILM *YESTERDAY*

4.1. Introduction

Masculinity/ies as ways of ‘doing male’ or being male (Connell, 2005) is a continuously evolving concept. The reason for this is because masculinity/ies is lived out and represented through the lived experience of men within a given time and space in history. It is held by some of the leading scholars of gender that it is important to understand men’s own sense of identity and their understanding of their role in society, particularly in relation to women, if we are to rigorously engage with Masculinity (Connell, 2005). I find the scope offered by the film *Yesterday* to be helpful in theorizing about masculinity and this will be demonstrated through an intimate engagement with selected scenes from film, all of which I will present below. Theoretically, I have outlined what is meant by masculinity in this study in the preceding chapters. Having conducted a systematic reading/viewing of the film, I have devised and combined film analysis and content analysis to isolate key scenes concerned with (a) depictions of masculinity, (b) men’s behaviours that are supported by religio-cultural norms and (c) how those behaviours impact on women’s sexual and reproductive health rights and choices.

While there are many critical themes that emerge from this film, such as gender-based violence, HIV/ AIDS, parenting and stigma, for the purposes of this study, I have identified the following themes related to masculinity: vulnerability, virility, authority. For my study I will look at these themes as they manifest in men’s behaviour such as absence, aggression, and sexuality.

4.2. Masculinity/ies presented in the film *Yesterday*

The film *Yesterday* presents a life story of a woman who faithfully lives out what has been prescribed to her by religion and culture. Yesterday is a good, submissive and obedient wife,

and she is also a good mother. She gives off herself even when she has nothing more to give. As a victim she surfaces as a victor. She is a strong character who tries to do what she knows to be good for her husband and family. She longs to see her daughter on the road to success through education; an opportunity she never had. She also teaches her daughter how to take care of domestic chores. These depictions of a mother and wife within the context presented through the film can give insight into what men are also expected to be. Socially constructed gender roles within the film creates space to engage with masculinity/ies through the film.

Darrell Roodt, the film's director, is a renowned South African director who has shown interest and concern through his films by presenting films with female heroes. Among films directed by Roodt there is "*Sarafina*" (1992), where women are shown to have played a great contribution to the struggle against the apartheid system. In *Sarafina*, Leleti Khumalo plays the lead character Sarafina, a schoolgirl who is inspired by her mother who is played by Miriam Makeba, and Whoopie Goldberg who plays her teacher. The other film by Roodt is "*Faith's Corner*" (2006). In this film Leleti Khumalo plays the character of Faith, a mother of two who struggles to make a living through bagging in the streets of Johannesburg. There is also "*Ella Blue*" (2008), a film presenting a life of Ella Blue. Ella Blue is a mother and wife in a disadvantaged family in Cape Town during Apartheid in the 1960's. Finally, Roodt worked on the film that adopted Anne Marie du Preez Bezrob's biography "*Winnie Mandela: A Life*". In the film "*Winnie Mandela*" (2011) Jennifer Hudson plays Winnie Mandela, wife of the late former president and world icon Nelson Mandela. From these films one can see how much Roodt has played and is playing a role in contributing to the fight for the struggle for liberation of women from the notions or ideas that women are helpless and are always victims in need of help. I emphasise this here because it is my aim to show how prevailing representations of men have been what has put women at a disadvantage, through the repetition and representation of the privilege and power given to men.

Looking at other films produced and directed by Roodt it is clear that Roodt is concerned with the plight of women, and I believe this plight can be used to liberate men from unhealthy articulations of masculinity as well. Using the film *Yesterday* to theorize about masculinity through engaging with both Connell and Chitando will take a form of looking at the film through the lenses used by the two scholars, Connell and Chitando, as presented in the previous chapter. I do not think it was Roodt's idea when producing the film to deal with issues surrounding masculinity/ies, but to create a dialogue for the liberation of women in South

Africa. From the films by Roodt I have presented above what I gather is that Roodt seems to be tapping into the South African “*wathinta umfazi, wathinti’mbokodo*” which translates, “you tamper with the woman, you tamper with a rock”. Roodt tries to break the neglect of women in South African films where women are noticeably absent in film narratives that are mainly centered on male orientated plots. The film *Yesterday* has a woman-centred plot but nevertheless speaks volumes about issues surrounding masculinity.

In addition to being a representative film about strong women figures in the South African context, *Yesterday* also falls into a South African film genre concerned with public health (HIV/AIDS) and other issues of social development. Other South African films are generally developed around male-driven plots and these include films such as “*Tsotsi*” (2005), “*Jerusalem*” (2008), “*Hijack Stories*” (2000). They respectively deal with crime committed by ‘the black man’. These films reinforce stigma about the black man who is a thug and cannot be trusted (Haupt, 2008; Ellapen, 2007).

With regards to *Yesterday*, a number of reviewers commented on the poor script writing, storytelling and directing of the film but recommend how the film presents the issues surrounding HIV and AIDS and the plight of women (Mncube, 2005; The SJW Movies Review, 2017; The Ordinary Review, 2013). The story presents a life of a young woman *Yesterday* who is infected with HIV by her husband who works in the mines. *Yesterday* is a ‘typical’ rural woman who is in the point of view of reviewers like Bheki Ka Mncube in “*Film Review: Yesterday*” (2004), senior reporter for The Witness (Pietermaritzburg), “a stereotypical African woman as a collector of wood, bearer of children and beast of burden” (Mncube, 2005). While according to the SJW Movie Reviews *Yesterday* is “...a young woman [who] tries her very best to succeed at retaining the humble life she’s always wanted for herself” (SJW Movie Reviews, 2017). The two reviewers I will engage with on this part appreciate the film differently and from their appreciation one can in a way deduce their location. Mncube is African while the SJW Movie Reviewers’ comment carries with it a foreign appreciation of African realities.

Mncube sees the film *Yesterday* to have been meant to “portray a rural African woman struggling to come to terms with HIV, poverty, illiteracy, and the poor delivery of health services, water and other resources” (Mncube, 2005). The SJW Movie Reviewers on the other hand see the character of *Yesterday* to be a woman who “...without an ounce of malice or spite, cares for John (Kenneth Khumalo) and their daughter even as her own condition worsens,

displaying a graciousness and kindness, and mental perseverance and fortitude...” (SJW Movie Reviewers, 2017). Mncube speaks to the painful daily experience of women in the contexts like Yesterday’s as presented in the film. The SJW Movie Reviewers speaks nothing of Yesterday’s daily experience but only of how a much of a good wife and mother she is.

As a young woman who is located within an underdeveloped context, Yesterday struggles every day as she makes her days through life. Being infected with HIV by her husband brought more strain to an already strenuous livelihood. Yesterday is longing to see her daughter Beauty (Lihle Mvelase) go to school, which can be an indicator that she does not want her daughter to live a life similar to her own. All that Yesterday knows is how to build a home for a man who is away; and this is something which is commonly done by men in the community Yesterday lives in. Men go and work for their families in the city. On their arrival back home, they expect their wives to be sexually available to them without question because it is a ‘manly’ thing to always want sex (at least this is what is presented in the film). The film presents women at a disadvantage as they are presented as being at the mercy or under the care and protection of their husbands. The imposed reality of women presented in the film is what commentators term a collector of wood, bearer of children and beast of burden. According to this representation all that women are good for are the domestic chores and the rearing of children. This is how the women are presented in the film and this can tell us how men are viewed in turn.

When the community finds out that Yesterday is HIV positive the community treats her as if she is the one who gave herself the virus. This is a representation of an ignorant and backwards community that the director seems to have wanted to present his message through. To this Mncube points out that it is a misrepresentation of black communities. The truth of the matter is that while there is still ignorance when it comes to HIV and AIDS, it is not to the extent to which it is represented in the film. The film seems to have taken the context of South Africa fifteen years backwards to its engagement with the HIV and AIDS pandemic. I think I would have been good if the plot was presented within a more truthful and contextually sensitive reality. There are certain truths captured but the neglect of certain truths can make the message of the film to be missed.

The SJW Movie Reviewers have nothing more negative to say about the film except its poor production. Mncube on the other hand sees a lot of neglects and misrepresentation of the reality which the film tries to present. Firstly, Mncube points out how the film does not give the context of what happened before, nor try to inform the viewer what happened before Yesterday

discovers her cough. Yesterday, according to Mncube, is a lonely character with no background and she is at the mercy of her husband and has no family members to aid her except her new friend the new village teacher. The film, as Mncube points out “provides a shopping list of contemporary social issues: domestic violence, absent husbands, unfaithfulness in the context of HIV/AIDS, rural underdevelopment, confronting Africans in our country today. [And] none of these are fully developed” (Mncube, 2005). Mncube holds that the film is one-dimensional and fails to engage with what is at the root of why Yesterday is subjected to the experiences presented in the film. Speaking to how John was sent home because of being sick Mncube challenges this by pointing out that “mine houses were amongst the first companies to roll out anti-retroviral drugs for their staff” (2005). Another misrepresentation is that of the process Yesterday goes through before she knew her status to after she found out. She was not counselled, and she was not informed about anti-retrovirals. Mncube says he was indeed touched by the film; not by the lonely struggle of the character Yesterday but “by the opportunity missed to produce a great South African film devoid of all neo-colonial stereotypes” (2005).

Yesterday experiences intimate partner violence because she informs her husband of her HIV status; him being the person responsible for her being sick. The film does not at any point present any positive impact men have on women. Men are away, men are entitled to their wives’ bodies, men have a right to more than one partner, men can be violent with their partners and it seems to be allowed (the security never intervened as John was assaulting his wife), and finally men are presented as not being able to accept vulnerability and sickness. Religion and culture support and protect such display of masculinity presented in the film. The following section engages more with the religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity in the film *Yesterday*.

4.3. Religio- cultural portrayals of masculinity

In the film *Yesterday*, much of the social lives of men and their families are depicted within strong cultural and religious context – this society is patriarchal, it has a social system which is supported by both religion and culture. In the scene of the women at the river the women sing a song to baba *mfundisi* (their pastor) that talks about the absence of their husbands who are away working in the mines in Johannesburg (57:27 mins). Men are both absent and powerfully present in the movie. They are visually absent for the first 20 minutes into the film,

however when men do appear on screen they are depicted as ethnic subjects, labouring subjects (a person who has a job in the city as opposed to the rural area), social but humiliated beings (man as subject of economic alienation – hard labour under the earth in Johannesburg where they live in packed hostel dormitories). Finally, men are represented as perpetrators of violence against their partners.

The film represents black men as oversexed, irresponsible and dangerous. The idea of men as oversexed is depicted in the exchange between Yesterday and the doctors at the clinic. The context of the conversation is when Yesterday sees the doctor to get her results for the blood test. While with the doctor, Yesterday is asked a number of questions relating to her sexual life. The director presents Yesterday as a naïve and innocent woman, as someone who gets a shock when she is asked by the doctor if she uses condoms when having sex (37:29 mins). Yesterday says she is a married woman (37:40 mins). This scene presents a faithful wife coupled to a seemingly unfaithful husband. The director's presentation of men is that they are primarily the ones who infect their wives with sexually transmitted infections such as HIV. Yesterday acknowledges men's demand for sex when she says "*Yes, you know how men are when they are away for a long time. all they want is sex*" (38:34 mins). In this dialogue Yesterday's words at once reinforces her vulnerability to her husband's sexual needs, that his needs and wants take precedence over her needs and desires. It also suggests that he too is subject and vulnerable to his own sexuality and irrepressible desire for sex. What finally, emerges from Yesterday's words is that while she may be innocent, she is not naïve – she is aware of what unreasonable demands are made on her time and her body.

However, the director overlooks this point to focus on Yesterday's vulnerability and turns the viewer's attention instead to the irresponsible and dangerous behaviour of her husband. Her subject position to his archaic patriarchy is later reinforced when her husband, John refuses to care for his wife, or to acknowledge her needs by refusing to talk to her when she tells him that she has contracted HIV from him. When she goes to find him on the mining compound in Johannesburg, she informs him of her infection – part, presumably to alert him to their shared fate, and part to invite care and concern. He demands her silence on the matter and beats her instead. John is here depicted by the filmmakers as a primitive man who is unable to speak and who violently denies and beats his partner (48:13 mins). His violent response, though presented as common and expected, can also be viewed as an assertion of his sexual autonomy, in that her condition is unrelated to his, though it is also an assertion of his authority

over their sexuality insofar as she is presumed to have no rights to determine the future of his sexuality and conduct. Her presence and declarations marks a call to reform and change behaviour, to which he refuses to submit. Ultimately, the film presents men as pitiable figures, who do not take responsibility for the consequences of their behaviour but instead turn to their wives for care and support when acknowledgement of weakness and frigidity is demanded.

The gender binary that the film sets up presents Yesterday as an insignificant, unmotivated, lonely wife in the rural home, who becomes infected, and confronts her husband about the infection, is assaulted by him, but she takes care of him and she dies infected but with dignity and admiration of the viewers and commentators of the film. The man on the other hand starts off as a strong, driven breadwinner, who is a physically capable labourer; but who later becomes infected with HIV, denies the infection and assaults his wife instead; he returns to rural home sickly, and dies as a lonely pathetic figure rejected by the community.

Life cycle of characters	Yesterday	John
Relative innocence	Lonely wife in the rural home	Strong breadwinner, physically capable labourer working in the mines
Infection	Becomes infected because of her husband's extra marital affairs	Becomes infected with HIV because of multiple partner sex
Confrontation	Yesterday informs and confronts her husband	John denies the infection and is violent towards his wife
Bodily decline	Care for her husband with resilience	Return to rural home sickly as a pathetic figure
End of film	Dies infected but with dignity and admiration of the viewers and commentators	Dies a lonely pathetic figure to be despised by the viewer

In my analysis of the material concerned with religio-cultural depictions, the characters change fortunes due to the choices they make and because of their approaches to individual responsibility. The film does not necessarily deal with or offer alternatives to dealing with the trauma, stigmatization and all the negative responses to the HIV and AIDS virus; instead the film opens dialogue all that surrounds those religiously and culturally informed norms and how these impact on women as presented in the film. The man in particular is presented as a stark figure, and below, I outline some of the themes that emerged from my review of selected scenes

concerned with how men are portrayed, what is said about men, and how men represent themselves in the film.

4.3.1. Absence

The film does not offer many visuals of men but in the absence, there is a great deal of representation. The film speaks to and about men and their sexual behaviour, and their place on the social hierarchy. It is only 20 minutes into the movie that the first visual depiction of a man comes through. While the film presents men as transmitters of infections, they are not the focus of the film. Nonetheless, the director's intention appears to be to highlight the vulnerability of Yesterday – through the scene of her walking along a lonely dusty road, against a harsh environment and being subjected to the harsh responsibilities of domestic chores and caring for her daughter Beauty. The viewer will later learn that she is travelling to the nearest clinic because she has been feeling weak and has been “coughing for a long time”. She is presented as poor and dependent on her husband's income – money he sends from working on the mine. It is when Yesterday goes to the clinic that the first man is seen.

This first visual representation is of a man who holds a position of authority, the man Yesterday meets at the clinic is the one who determines whether the patients can see the doctor or not. This representation can be also about men acting as stumbling blocks in their partner's seeking medical help; this will later play out where John assaults Yesterday for going to see a doctor (48:20 mins). No matter how much Yesterday expresses how far she comes from the man stands between Yesterday and her being attended by the doctor (17:27 mins). This first appearance of a man and the mock authority given to him by the makers of the film can be seen a representation a hegemonic masculinity. This man is presented as a gatekeeper to the health facility, who is tasked with assisting patient to get access to the health facility, he uses this position – a cultural privilege afforded adult men – to assert his authority over, and to sustain the subordination of women. Yesterday tries to explain to the man but with no success:

***Man:** Udokotela uzobona ukufikelala. Nina abanye hambani ekhaya. (The doctor can only see up to here. The rest of you, go home.)*

***Yesterday:** Ucolo bhudi, ngiyacela...Ngeqamuka eRooihoek. Kufanele ngibonile udokodela namhlanje. (Please. I'm from Rooihoek. I have to see the doctor today.)*

Man: *Ngiyacolisa sisi, kodwa uzobona ukufika la. Uzobuyangesonto elizayo. (I'm sorry, but she can only see up to here. You will have to come back next week.)*

Yesterday: *Kodwa ngiyagula! (But I am sick!)*

Man: *Ngiyacolisa sisi...ayikho into engingayiyenza. Uzobuya ngesonto elizayo. (I am sorry. There is nothing I can do. Come back next week.)*

However, most of the first part of the movie can be viewed as a 'commentary' on the absence of men, especially the absence of Yesterdays' partner and other men in the village. Walking back on the dusty road back from the clinic to Kromdraai, Beauty, Yesterday's 6-year old daughter, misses her father and says:” - *Mama, ubaba uzobuyanini? (Mama, when is Daddy coming home again?)*” (9:10 mins). The director uses this opportunity to represent that Yesterday and the daughter depend on the father because if the father was around they would be able to buy a car and not walk for this long (9:20 mins). The harsh walk Beauty took with her mother makes her remember that her father can make things better. The director depicts a tired and frustrated Beauty who acknowledges the absence of the father due to the harshness of the journey they took to the clinic.

Through the absence of men due to migrant labour, men are depicted as going away from their families in search for financial income as presented in the film, most vividly this is expressed through women singing about their men in Johannesburg to the Baba *uMfundisi* (priest). The women are presented at a river doing their laundry and they sing a song that goes as follows:

“Sanibona wemakhosgazi...

(Greetings lady...)

Yebo babu'mfundidis...

(Greetings to you as well our priest) ...

Aphi amadoda enu...

(Where are your husbands...)

AseGoli babu'mfundiso...”

*(They are in Johannesburg in the mines
our priest) (57:27)*

Three times in the film Yesterday will be asked about the whereabouts of her husband. Firstly, it is Beauty asking her mother about the father: “*Mama, ubaba uzobuyanini? Mamma, when is Daddy coming home again?*” (9:10 mins). The second time will be by the teacher: *Uphi umyeni*

wakho? Where is your husband? (36:01 mins) and the third time is when Yesterday gets the opportunity to be seen by the doctor and doctor asks: *Uphi pho, ngisho umyeni wakho? And where is he, your husband?* (38:01 mins). For most of the film John, a migrant labourer is away from work, and the suggestion is that he probably has another woman, or women, in his life in the city. The narrative is clearly less concerned with whether John lives a polygamous life with two wives, but more concerned with portraying himself as someone who has unsafe sex with multiple partners, who holds little regard for the fact that he was infected with HIV and later infect his wife Yesterday.

Absence can mean a number of things. One of the film's representations of men as absent concerns the physical distance that results from migrant labour, which results in Yesterday's social isolation in the rural community. This kind of absence is upheld by patriarchal patronage that is supported and promoted by religion and culture where the man is the sole provider for the family, and the one who decided where the family would live. Migrant labour has had a terrible impact on household patterns and support for black families in rural areas, where the majority of mine labourers were historically drawn. This was intensified by apartheid through extracting male labour and reinforcing the secondary economic status of women. It is also seen in Yesterday's lack of knowledge about John's life and sexual or social behaviour. The doctor's question also speaks to the prevalence of polygamy and the social prevalence of infidelity. John's absence also means economic vulnerability that Yesterday displayed when she fails to pay for a taxi.

4.3.2. Aggression

Another major religio-cultural portrayal is aggression, which is powerfully represented in the film. The director, in the presentation of the film, does not give much space and attention to the how men conduct themselves, but the story line cannot avoid articulations of masculinity that show men as an embodiment of violence. This is depicted through the encounter Yesterday had with her husband at the mine. Yesterday arrived at the mine looking for her husband. Yesterday met with the security guard who was not friendly to her. He directed her to where she would find John. As they were talking John shouted and did not talk to Yesterday as if he was talking to his wife whom he had not seen in a long time. The security guard was nearby could hear when John was assaulting his wife, but he is presented as if there was nothing wrong happening. Aggression and lack of affection on the part of men are some of the features of the representation of hegemonic idea of masculinity, though not explicit, they are some of the

prevailing masculine themes in the film. Images 1, 2, and 3 depict the scene where John assaults Yesterday while the security just stood there and watched.



Image 1.



Image 2.



Image 3.

The violence emerges as an assertion of John's authority and privilege. It is also a means for disciplining his self-asserting wife who travels all the way from Kromdraai just to tell him that she is infected and that he should get tested. The violence performed by John on his wife, Yesterday, suggests that he has public support for his conduct (his violence goes unchallenged). In the film John fails to accept that he was sleeping around and resorts to assaulting his wife, this represents an idea about men resolving problems with physical force even though they are the ones at fault. After being directed to where John is Yesterday went and waited for him. She is presented as being happy to come see her husband. It seems that is not the case with John who instead of greeting her the first thing he asks is:

John: *Ufunani la? (What do you want?) (47:34)*

Without hearing her out he jumps on and asks:

John: *Ngabe kukhona okuyenzakele kuBeauty? (Has something happened to Beauty?)*

Yesterday: *Hai cha, uyaphila. (No, she is fine). (47:44)*

John's concern seem not to be the welfare of his wife Yesterday. He first asks, without greeting, as to what brings her to see him here and what he does next is to follow with a question about their child. He is presented as assuming the role prescribed to him by culture and religion, he is presented as a provider whose main concern is the welfare of his child more than his wife. Just after hearing that she is fine he jumps again to talk about money and he is presented as being shocked to learn that he is the one Yesterday has come to see:

John: *Ngabe imali. (If it's money...)*

Yesterday: *Akuyona imali. Ngizobona wena. (It's not money. It's you I've come to see.)*

John: *Hhh...Mina? (Hhh...Me?)*

Yesterday: *Yebo. (Yes).*

John: *Mina? Uzongibona ukuthi ngiyenze njani? (Me? Why do you want to see me?)*

Just outside the office of the security that helped Yesterday there is a clash with words, which is started off because Yesterday tells John that she is infected. John asks Yesterday about how she got sick and Yesterday answers:

Yesterday: *Angazi. (I don't know.)*

John: *Uyazelaphi? (How do does she know?)*

Yesterday: *Angazi (I don't know.)*

John: *Uthi lodokotela yelenikuyena? (You say why did you go to the doctor for?)*

Yesterday: *Bengigula! (I was sick!)*

John: *Ugula uguliswa yini? (You were sick, what made you sick?)*

Yesterday: *Angazi (I don't know.)*

John: *Sewuhamba odokotela? (starts beating her) (So, you got to the doctor?)*

John does not give Yesterday time to express why she would travel all the way to the city without being aggressive verbally and then later physically. This can be an expression on the part of John to show his wife that the mines are not a place for her, she does not belong there, and this is a place for men. The first thing asked about is the welfare of Beauty and finances, which also displays how detached he is from his wife's life. John instructs her to go home (she has no place here; in the city the centre of his economic life) – and with the response or reaction

John gives to her presence there is a claim that her presence humiliates him; her complaint undermines and threatens his privilege and authority as a man for he is the head and provider and he can do as he pleases without taking responsibility for his actions.

-Yesterday is having beautiful memories of her husband providing and loving her even after he assaults her. (48:43)

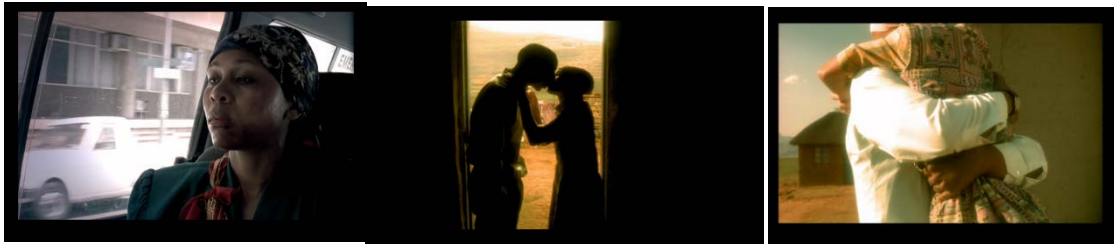


Image 4.

Image 5.

Image 6.



Image 7.



Image 8.

When Yesterday is on the way from the mines she has flashbacks of the wonderful and loving moments she has shared with her husband. She remembers him, through how the flashback is presented, as a man who is glowing with light suggesting what he means to her. Yesterday displays what generally happens in the cases of intimate partner violence; she uses good memories to cloud her experience of being beaten up. She had just been assaulted for reporting that she is infected and the man who infected her assaults her, but she still thinks well of him. This can suggest how much she depends on him. After being badly beaten her thoughts are still for John's welfare. Masculinity is represented here as being ambivalent, both loving and aggression but love seems to override the aggression considering the memories Yesterday has while she journeys back home with a bruised face. The images above show a scene presented as Yesterday returns from the city. Images 5, 6, and 7 are flash backs between images 4 and 8.

When the women are at the place for collecting water, they enter a discussion about one of the men in their community. They are speaking about a young man who is notorious for causing

trouble in the village. What comes out of the conversation is that this young man has been getting away with being cheeky and this has come to expected of him. The women are gathered around the communal water source. While they are fetching water, there is time for gossip and this is where all the happenings in the community are learned about. This time the women are talking about one of the notorious young man who is getting a new wife from the next village. The local women do not approve of this union, and Yesterday is asked to comment and all she says is there is nothing to be done if people love each other. The man who the women are talking about is notorious for his rudeness and aggression. Furthermore, he is known for his love for women. The images blow (Images 9, 10, and 11) are a representation of what happens at the communal tap. The dialogue suggests that this place besides being the communal source of water, it is also a place where the women in the community came and share knowledge and exchange their lived experiences of men. Most importantly, it is where the women come, and advise and motivate each other.

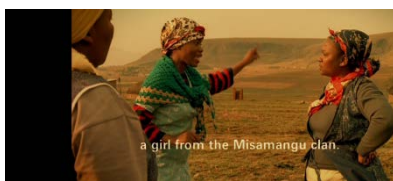


Image 9.



Image 10.



Image 11.

Yesterday arrives at the communal tap with her new-found friend to come across a heated conversation about a certain young man in their community who loves women:

Yesterday: *Sinalempompi kuphela la endaweni yakithi. Amanzi amnandi a hlanzekile. Nawukuthi makukhona okwenzakalayo ila uzothola khona kucala. (This is the only pump in the village, but the water is good. Also, if anything's happening in the village...this is where you can find out about it first.)*

Woman 1: *Hee...inkosi neke ikuvumele. Uyakhumbula ukuthi kayenzakalani iskhathi esindlule umunye wesilisa bethi ukugana intombi yesiwe sale kwaMsimangu. Kwaba nempi iminyaka emithathu. (The Chief will never allow it. You know what happened the last time one of our men married...a girl from the Msimangu clan. There was a war for three years.)*

Yesterday: *Uyabona ke? (See?)*

Woman 2: *Bathi iduku elimhlophe ndizela phezulu...huh...kufanele ukuthi uyamthanda ukusikazi wakhe omusha...iduku elingaka...Ai mina angikaze ngilibone elide kangaka. (Well, the white flag is flying high...he should love his bride with such a big symbol...He must like his new wife very much. I have never seen a flag so high.)*

Woman 3: *Akulona elimhlophe kuphela...ngizwe kuthiwa kunelibovu eceleni kwalo. (Not only a white flag, I hear a red one, too.)*

Woman 1: *Hai khona, uyadelela lomfana, uyadelela. Akuhle neza afune ukususa uthuthuva ukuthi afune ukushada intumbi yale kwaMsimangu. Kwodwa seka ganisa omunye unkosigasi. (He's a cheeky boy, that one. It's not enough that he's causing problems by wanting... to get married to one of Misamangu's daughters...but he's already advertising for another wife.)*

Woman 2: *Kufanele! Unesagila phakadi kwemilenze yakhe. (Exactly! He must have a spear between his legs.)*

Woman 1: *Hei kodwa angiyithanidi lento, yazi ngibona impi. Uthini wena Yesterday ngale ndaba? (I don't like it. Trouble is all I see. What do you say, Yesterday?)*

Yesterday: *Hawu phela uma abantu bathandana bathandana. Akukho umuntu ongayenza luthuo ngaloku. (If they are in love, they are in love. There's nothing much anyone can do about it.)*

Yesterday: *Bheka la...ngempela Bacinisile umabethi uthanda abasfazane loya... (Look here. It's true, he likes the ladies too much, that one.) (19:23 mins)*

The conversation between the women presented above sets a masculinity issue in the daily living of the women in this community. The young man is presented as wanting to start a dispute between their own village and the kwaMsimangu's village. The issue is because of inter-marriages. This has happened before in the village and it did not turn out well. There is an undertone of power to dominate women through possessing them through marriage and the women are represented as submissive. This young man is said to be justified to do what he is doing because "Kufanele! Unesagila phakadi kwemilenze yakhe" (he should, he has a spear

between his legs) (20:13 mins). The *sagila* (spear) is a symbol of power and a symbol of domination (when in the hands of a young man), but it can also be a symbol of wisdom (where it is possessed by an elderly man or someone with a certain power within that community). Yesterday as a married woman is singled out to comment on the behaviour of the young man but she chooses to be impartial and comment with what none of the people who were around can say anything against, and she remains silent and buries her experience:

Yesterday: Hawu phela uma abantu bathandana bathandana. Akukho umuntu ongayenza luthuo ngaloku. (If they are in love, they are in love. There's nothing much anyone can do about it.) (20:31)

This scene presented above takes us to the next theme to be considered. Virility as a theme in the film comes out more than once, and in different contexts. The above scene brings out the question of male domination through possession of women in marriage. To support the possession of women the *sagila* between the young man's legs gives him right to dominate through a sexually connoted cultural symbol. The *sagila* can be a symbol of sexual power, which is a cultural representation given to men. Questions can be asked why this man is said to have a *sagila* between his legs by someone he is not married to. This can mean that there are others who have experienced the *sagila*. The following section will be an attempt to engage with the latter question.

4.3.3. Virility

A young man is presented as having a *sagila* between his legs; and this according to the women at the communal tap seems to justify him having more than one wife. Considering that the film is said to be a commentary on HIV and AIDS and a commentary on the plight of a woman; men not being presented positively is not a surprise as they indeed have played their part in the spread of the virus. In the film it is the man who infects his wife, it is a man who wants another wife because one is not enough for him to 'sharpen his spear'. This film presents a context in which women are subjected to avail themselves to the demands of oversexed men which generally results in sickness and death. The fact that this young man has a big penis apparently gives him the right to have more than one woman. In the scene at the communal tap the women's conversation ends up including a talk about the big penis possessed by the young man who likes women.

Woman 1: *Hai khona, uyadelela lomfana, uyadelela. Akuhle neza afune ukususa uthuthuva ukuthi afune ukushada intumbi yale kwaMsimangu. Kwodwa seka ganisa omunye unkosigasi. (He's a cheeky boy, that one. It's not enough that he's causing problems by wanting... to get married to one of Misamangu's daughters...but he's already advertising for another wife.)*

Woman 2: *Kufanele! Unesagila (Exactly! He must have a spear between his legs). (20:04)*

The young man's advertising for a new wife reflects that he is not satisfied with his one wife. The *sagila* between his legs brings the question of how did this come to be known unless he has been sleeping around. The *sagila* can also be a reflection of his sexual appeal, this sexual domination comes out to be something attractive as it fascinates the women as they converse about it in a way they director presents it as if it's something likable. The culturally symbolic power captured by the *sagila* presents male domination over women, and reflects what is set by both religion and culture. The women are not presented to have any problem with the young man marrying another wife, the issue is that he should not marry outside his village and not that he should not marry for a second time. When one of the women says "*he's already advertising for another wife*" she is pointing towards a number of things that are problematic. To start with, the represent man are known not to be content with having one sexual partner, for them one woman is not enough. Furthermore, not long after consummating his marriage – when the community expected him to show love, respect and interest in the new wife, he is already advertising for a new one. He has no shame or reservations about seeking sex with women other than his wife, this is a reflection of a sense of entitlement which this man possesses. Men are presented as having a right to have more than one partner and this is given by sexual power of dominance they have in society.

The film does offer a mixed commentary on men's sexuality. Men are portrayed as over-sexed and always seeking sex, and the wives are represented as knowing that they should be sexually available to their husbands. When at the clinic talking to the doctor Yesterday points to how to men sex is one of the primary things they want, something which the doctor also affirms as she agrees to the statement. The doctor asks Yesterday about her appreciation of a healthy sexual life but the answer she gives is about her submitting to the high demand men make about sex.

Doctor: *Ngiyabona. Manje uyayithokozela impilo yozocantsi ejwayelekile? Uyaya ocantsini. (I see. And do you enjoy...a normal, healthy sex life? Do you have sex?)*

Yesterday: *Yebo. Nawe uyazi ukuthi anjani amadoda mawa hambe isikhathi eside. (Yes. You know what men are like after they have been away for a long time.)*

Doctor: *Ngiyazi kahle. Kuyofanele ngimhlole ngokushesha okukhulu. (I know. It is important that I test him as soon as possible.) (38:22)*

Sexual availability from the part of women is presented because of men's heightened need for sex. This is how Yesterday got infected because she is obliged to do so as a good wife. She only has sexual encounters with her husband, but she finds herself infected with the virus. What this suggests is that wherever the man is, he is having sex. The man might be married but to infect his wife shows that he has been having sex elsewhere and not only with his wife. Two women, the doctor and Yesterday, converse about men and their sexual appetite. This part of the conversation starts off with the doctor asking Yesterday about her appreciation of a healthy sexual life. Yesterday does not answer what she is being asked but what she does is to point to the shared knowledge about men's sexual appetite. Women in the film are portrayed as having inherited knowledge about the sexual norms and expectations of men. Men always demand sex from their partners. Yesterday, herself has experienced male sexual demands and virility and it's an experience that she assumes is shared with other women. The doctor on her part does acknowledge that this is the case because she herself agrees with Yesterday in this regard.

Virility is about sex and the film presents how power dynamics are within sexual relationships. What is presented opens dialogue issues around bodily integrity and autonomy of the man and woman. The issue of consent which is brought about by Yesterday when she tells the doctor how men are when it comes to their demand for sex, and raises questions about what this means in the context of HIV and AIDS. The power claimed by John was when he responded to Yesterday when she raises the question of his sexual behaviour that resulted in them being infected.

4.3.4. Fragility

In the film male vulnerability is also represented. When the virus took hold of John it was embarrassing for him that he was weak and for that fact his own colleagues were teasing him,

and he had to break down, something which is not allowed for men. Signs of weakness are not 'manly'. It was embarrassing for John to show weakness and this brought him to tears as he was narrating what was happening to him when he was among other men who were teasing him for being sick. Weakness and sickness as presented in the film is something not associated with me. Men should be away working and this is why the women were concerned about John's being home and not even leaving his house.

John: Endlini yamajaga...bengigijimela endlini yangasese ngingaqedi. Njalo nje emuva kwemizuzu emihlanu. Kodwa ke emgodini phanzi azikho izindlu zangaphadle. Hai la ngisebenza khona bonke abantu bamatasatasa kuqumiswa amadwala, kukhala ipikinefosholo, simba siya le emajukujukwini omhlaba. Yini enye ebengayenza, ngiyengazikhudela. Ngaze ngaba manzi nte, ibukwe linyamathele emlenzeni. Nginukanje ngesilwani. Kungena muntu ofuna ukusondela eduze kwami. Bengingafuni ukukholwa lento bewungitshela yona. Bengingafuni, kodwa beyiloku ikhala ekhanda lami iphindekile, njalo nje ingisanganisa ikhanda. Ngakhuda ngaphela. Induna yami ikhathele ukunuka yangithumela kudokodela. Udokodela wangihlola. Washo nje ngoba bewusho.

(In the men's hostel...I used to run to the toilet all the time. Every five minutes. But there are no toilets...under the ground. Not where I work...blasting the rock...going deeper into the earth. What else could I do? I messed in my pants, over and over...until they were wet and sticking to my legs. I stank like an animal. No one would come near me. I did not want to believe what you told me. I did not. But...it kept playing over and over in my mind. Over and over, driving me crazy. And the shitting would not stop. Until my shift boss had had enough and made me go to the doctor. The doctor...did tests. And he said just like you said).
(54:50mins)

John has been an able man who was physically strong enough to find employment deep in the mines. After he contracted the HIV virus he remained strong and denied that he is sick to a point of even assaulting his wife for telling him that she has the virus. His body could no longer function as he knew it and he was no longer in control as he used to. This was for him the source of his public humiliation as he stank like an animal. Still even if that was the case he denied persistently even though the shitting wouldn't stop. It was only through the intervention from his shift boss and the doctor's confirmation of his sickness that he was able to leave work

and go home. So robust and stubborn is his idea of himself as a man that his denial about his body persists, presumably he continued to have sex. In the face of undeniable health deterioration he hang on to the idea that he is not ill. Fragility coupled with an exacerbated by the public humiliation became his lot. The strong and proud man he was now became a weak and humiliated person, and this is the state that he returns to Yesterday in.

John, while on their way to the place Yesterday had built for him tells Beauty how he was strong and fast when growing up. The field they were crossing to the shack built for him was the place where they used to go play when he was young. He says he used to run like a leopard then but now he cannot even walk for half a kilometre, this renders him less of a man than he used to be. For him he has to be strong to feel that he is a man. Physical weakness is something that makes John feel less of a man. .

John: Ubaba wakho...bekadlala la leskhathi amcane. Besigijima ngejubane nje ngengwe. Kodwa manje ngiyahluleka ukuhamba amabanga ambalwa. (Your daddy...used to play in this field when he was your age. Used to run free...as a leopard...But now, I can't even walk...half a kilometer). (1:15:30mins)

In the face of his present vulnerability, John indulges nostalgic memories of his childhood and feels sorry for himself. The physical state he is in makes him feel less free that he has ever been. Comparing himself to a leopard is a deep cry from him as he is no longer able to do with his body what he used to do. He is in denial of his present condition and wishes to go back to his glorious and 'manly' state physically. The fact that he is now become a pathetic and an unmanly figure he expresses his resentment at the illness through nostalgia memories of better times. This suggest that he has vey fixed ideas of hegemonic and phallocentric concepts of himself as a hunter and conquer as traits of his manliness.

Lastly, the issue of fragility or vulnerability is at the heart of hyper-aggressive masculinity. John is presented by the director as a pathetic and ignoble figure. Ultimately even when he is actually vulnerable and pathetic (dying and soiling himself), his male privilege is sustained through the level of care and priority he receives, that his shame is obscured so that he saves faces as a man.

4.4. Conclusion

Chapter 4 has engaged with portrayals of masculinity/ies in the film *Yesterday*. This has been done through looking at the scope of masculinity/ies present in the film *Yesterday*. The reason for doing this was to identify religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity/ies in the film. From this close reading/viewing of the film four themes were identified: absence, aggression, virility and fragility. These themes identified will, in Chapter 5, be used to illustrate how the religio-cultural norms analysed above support particular sexual behaviour of men in the film *Yesterday*. These behaviours are: multiple sexual partners, women's fidelity and submissiveness. Religio-cultural norms presented in the film seem to legitimize or naturalize these behaviours.

The director's presentation of women, as good intended as it might be, presents female heroes who do not receive justice. The director presents black female bodies as resilient but defeated heroes. Absent and aggressive men are men are conditioned by their role to provide for their families to go away to seek financial resources far from their families. When the men are not there they neglect their families, and make their families suffer because they depend on them. But when they are around they inspire dominance, aggression and fear.

Gender and sexuality represented in the film shows how complex sexuality is, sexuality is presented as ambivalent. Male sexuality is presented as virile and vulnerable. Men are presented as unable to control their sexual urges. Men are also represented as being vulnerable and always in need to be taken care of. The film suggests that women are there to contain men's sexuality and thus continuing the male impulse for violence if they feel that their pre-ledge is being threatened. The film also presents women as responsible for/victims of men's sexuality. To my conclusion the film present black masculinity as dangerous and as something that perpetuates the idea that black men are not to be trusted and are agents of destruction and that they are good for nothing but oppress and kill their wives. Men presented in the does not show realistic portrayal as men are not seen as agents but that does not do away with the fact that the film creates discourses about masculinity.

CHAPTER 5:

MASCULINITY AND WOMEN'S SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, RIGHTS AND CHOICES IN THE FILM YESTERDAY

5.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter I took an analytical view on the film *Yesterday*, and having approached the film as a self-contained lifeworld, I drew out the following themes from the film: (1) absence, (2) aggression, (3) virility, and (4) fragility, to show the various way in which masculinity is imagined, represented and critiqued in the film. While the film is singularly focused on the story of its main character, Yesterday and her plight as a woman who becomes infected with HIV, I sought to draw attention to the portrayals of men and masculinities in the film, and to here offer a critical discussion the religious and cultural complicity with, or license of for men to engage in sexual behaviour that has impacted negatively on women sexual and reproductive health and rights.

For the director and producer of the film women are victims of men's social and sexual conduct or women are presented as at a disadvantaged position within a male dominated society, but they nonetheless emerge as heroines. The overarching view of (black) men presented in the film is (1) that men are untrustworthy and unreliable (sexual) partners – whose privilege is underscored by patriarchy– insofar as they do not need to account for their use of money or their sexual behaviour, (2) that men do not acknowledge the link between their sexual conduct and the health and wellbeing of their partners, and as such they fail to take responsibility for sexual health in intimate relationships. (3), more generally, men are also presented as gatekeepers to women's access to medical services, help and support. This latter issue is demonstrated on a few occasions in the film: once, in the scenes where at the clinic a man plays a role of turning back the women who came to see the doctor (8:32 mins and 17:18 mins), and also when John interrogates Yesterday about her being sick, and then chastises her for having gone to see the doctor without having consulted him. "*Sewuhamba odokotela? So, you go to the doctor?*" (48:20 mins) before he proceeds to assault her. What these scenes suggest is that

the dominant role given to men in society, as depicted in the film, allow men to presume and to assert themselves the discussion makers for their partners (Ampofo and Boateng, 2012: 428).

In this chapter, I hope to outline and interrogate how the relationship between religion and culture converge with masculinity to shape or distort issues related to women's sexual and reproductive health rights and choices. I will start this chapter with an overview of scholarship on gender and social transformation in which scholars in both religion and culture seek alternatives to patriarchy. Among the scholars who are concerned with feminist hermeneutics of religious or cultural texts are Wadud (2006), Phiri (2007), Schussler-Fiorenza (2013), and Ngwane (2003). What these scholars share as a common project, is that they show and critique the various ways in which religion and culture have been implicated in the persistent oppression of women within religious institutions, though they also offer insights into how religious and culturally inherited ideas are used to sustain women's marginalization, in society more generally.

Engaging with themes explored in the previous chapter, this chapter seeks to engage with how religious and cultural norms impact on women's sexual and reproductive health, rights and choices. According to Mfecane in "*Narratives of HIV disclosure and masculinity in a South African village*", it has been shown that men worldwide tend to embrace notions of manhood that encourage them to have multiple partners and not pay attention to their health needs (Mfecane, 2010). Patriarchy, for Mfecane, is sustained because it provides men with power and privilege over household, clans, partner and families, where the health and wellbeing of partners and family is always secondary to the whims and comfort of the patriarch. Patriarchy has and is, as a social system, opposed to equal distribution of power between men and women. As far back as 1998 scholars like Morrell (1998) have noted that rigorous engagement with the types of unhealthy masculinity/ies can assist in rearticulating what it means to be a man today.

Chitando, in his work on "*Redemptive Masculinities*", offers a particularly insightful alternative to patriarchy, though integrating life-giving forms of masculinity. He goes on to show that as much as religion and culture have been used to support inequality, they can also be used to change unhealthy articulations of masculinity/ies and to transform them into life-giving ones. In this sense, according to Chitando, religious and cultural norms become important resources in instilling respect for women and ending practices that humiliate and subjugate women. The same applies to men becoming disorientated from no longer having the power and privileging afforded to them within the South African context (Ratele, 2016).

Chitando argues that religion and culture can be used to restore the sense of loss of dignity and respect, which men experience as their phallocentrism and hegemonic masculinity/ies are challenged. Below I will briefly sketch some of the current scholarship on masculinity in South Africa, before going on to offer a discussion about how such phallocentric and hegemonic masculinities are seen to impact women's SRHR in the film

In an article, "*Migrancy, masculine identities and AIDS: the psychosocial context of HIV transmission on the South African gold mines*", Campbell (1997) noted that levels of HIV infection are particularly high amongst migrant workers in sub-Saharan Africa. This context of migrant labour and its privileging of male labour in South Africa, provides the background against which we must understand the story of Yesterday. From this study done among migrant miners, Campbell found that "masculinity emerged as a leading narrative in informants' accounts of their working life, health and sexuality" (Campbell, 1997: 273). Like what Campbell (1997) suggests in the article, the film also frames a context where migrant labour results in men being away from their rural households, resulting not only in a shift in the rural economy and cultural geography (Ngwane, 2003) but also a shift in intimate partner relations and sexualities. Thus, we could provisionally conclude that migrant labour comes out as a key factor in disrupting households, relationships, and sexual politics at home and in the hostels, as well as cultural norms related to masculinity. I would argue that migrancy not only disrupts traditional ideas about being a man, but also reinforces unhealthy articulations of masculinity/ies seen through reforming traditional masculinity. On the one hand, migrancy places the rural family (eg. Yesterday and her daughter) in a position of economic dependence on men (eg. John), while keeping them subjected to African traditional norms of the homestead, thus producing an indigenously sanctioned masculinity – where the father has supremacy despite being an absent or uninvolved father (Lynch, 2008).

According to Hadebe (2010) it is important to take into consideration the cultural and religious/faith practices and beliefs that inform or influence the formation of men's masculine identity. In the film, religious and cultural authorities appear to support the sexual behaviour of men such as multiple partner sex and domination of women. The behaviours do not come out of themselves, they are there because they are supported by religious and cultural norms. Culturally, the formation to prepare boys and girls to assume roles as adults is different. For instance, in his 2001 article, "*Real Men Reawaken Their Fathers' Homesteads, the Educated Leave Them in Ruins': The Politics of Domestic Reproduction in Post-Apartheid Rural South*

Africa”, Ngwane (2001) argues that young men are taught to assume roles of being the provider and protector of their future families, while also being assured that their absence from the traditional homestead is permissible and does not dilute their authority. In such rural economies – as lived in by Yesterday– women are put at a disadvantage because women rely on men to provide for them. This idea is reinforced by Yesterday’s daughter when she asks – *when is daddy coming home?* – Because his arrival represents relief from the hardship. Similarly, the reception that Yesterday received when she got to where John works shows that the two worlds – work and homestead – are clearly demarcated. Yesterday belongs to the rural homestead with its norms, values and expectation of submission. Both John and the security guard the hospital responded negatively to her unaccompanied wanderings. What this implies is that women are not just expected to financially and socially dependant on men, but that they must assume a posture of submission in all aspects of life, and possibly to all men. Men being heads and providers of their families limits and disfranchises women; opening them to be exploitation and abuse (Morrell, 1998).

Furthermore, I hope to illustrate how the religio-cultural norms analyses above support sexual norms and behaviour in the film *Yesterday*. I will look at behaviours such as multiple partner sex, fidelity and submissiveness expected from women, and gender-based violence. Religio-cultural norms presented in the film seem to legitimize or naturalize these behaviours. In the context of the film, religio-cultural norms are variously supported by people at the homestead (*mfundisi*, other women, the doctor) as well as by John, and at times by Yesterday herself. In this regard I propose to explore the discussion of how masculinities impact women’s lives through a discussion of the pervasive phallogentric masculinity presented in the film (spearing the nation), before going on to interrogate how particular sexual behaviour is supported and sustain through religio-cultural norms (infecting the nation), before closing the chapter with a discussion on liberating masculinity (from phallogentrism and hegemonic patriarchy) with the view to restore and support women’s sexual and reproductive choices.

5.2. Spearing the nation

The role of religion and culture has been interrogated on different levels and contexts in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Scholars like Chitando (2012), Phiri and Nadar (2002), Van Klinken (2010) and Ratele (2016) talk about religion and culture, especially within the context

of HIV and AIDS, often if not always, include talks about phallocentrism and a patriarchal society. This has given rise to discourses that critique the ways in which patriarchy is supported, protected and encouraged by religion and culture. The power endowed in the male sexual organ emerges as a key issue in the film, when the women assert about one of the men – who is presented as sexually insatiable and threatening – *Kufanele! Unesagila (Exactly! He must have a spear between his legs)*. This highlights the fact that the women are acutely aware of the expected sexual norms and that they discuss this among themselves in the homestead. This exchange between the women in this scene in the film gives insight into what really happens in the distribution of power within genders (Macleod, 2007). Religion and culture are the shared beliefs, and transmitted values, norms and ways of making sense of life, which are guides to decisions, actions, and patterns of living (Geertz, 1965). Such transmitted values, norms and behaviours shaped the distribution of power within gender relationships (Morrell, 2007). In the discussion below, I will unpack the women's reference to the penis as a spear between the legs of man as a commentary and critique of religious and cultural norms that privilege men's sexuality and sustains their dominance over women (Ratele 2016 and Chitando 2012, and Morrell 2007). Finally, the fact that the women invoke the cultural symbol of the spear suggests something of their qualified critique of culture and religious norms.

The scene (19:23min) in the film *Yesterday* offers an entry point to a discussion about phallocentric male identity and behaviour as characteristic of men represented in the film and among men in SA more generally. Here, though referring to a penis as the *isagila* (spear) between the young man's legs in the Zulu context highlights the religio-cultural significance of the *sagila* in Zulu cultural cosmology. The *sagila* is a symbol of Zulu identity and prowess – a symbol of resistance to colonialism but also a symbol of violence. It must be noted that in this exchange the women afford the same religio-cultural meaning to the penis as is ordinarily afforded the spear in traditional cosmology.

Not everyone has the privilege to own a *sagila*. A *sagila* is possessed by warriors, diviners and traditional healers; it is possessed by those who are given or hold a certain authority and power within a given society, such as clan leaders (Sithole, 2009). A visual representation of this is presented in the scene where the sangoma leads the group of women to *Yesterday's* house (1:08:48 mins). The scene depicted by Image 12 represents the cultural leadership role assumed by the one with a *sagila* in their hand just like the sangoma in Image 12; which is a role claimed by hegemonic masculinity, through patriarchy.



Image 12

In the context of the film the *sagila* is also given a sexual connotation as it is spoken of in relation to the young penis and sexuality (20:13 mins). Furthermore, there are some suggestions about the promiscuity and sexual prowess made through the statement that the young man has a *sagila* (spear) between his legs. However, Ratele (2011: 399) reminds us that where issues of masculinity and sexuality is discussed, “manliness is closely associated with our sexual partner(s), the sexual appeal of our partner(s), the size of penises, the claims men make about their sexual stamina, whether they can maintain a healthy erection and how virile they are.”

More persistent that the association between sex and masculinity is the association between the penis and masculinity. For a number of scholars (Plummer, 2005; Langa, 2014) the penis is not just a man’s source of sexual pleasure, but it is also seen as a potent symbol of power. Engorged and erect, it is a sign of male power, assertion and achievement, and instrument of conquest. But flaccid it is viewed as weak and pathetic, inactive, without stamina or control. According to Langa (2014), a man’s position, privilege and power in many African societies is based on a functional and active penis.

Elsewhere in the film, the phallocentrism continues in the scene where the women are in a meeting (1:05:47 mins into the film) to discuss the fate of John and his return to the village. The scene primarily present the women as ignorant and ill-informed about sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases, where the teacher tries to inform the women as to how the HIV virus is transmitted. However, the film presents the women as less concerned with learning about sex and sexuality and more with their desire for John to leave the community – hence presenting them as naïve. Finally, what also emerges from this scene is that masculine sexuality (*sagila*) is presented as powerful but dangerous (Mokwena, 2014). In this scene the women express their fear of being infected by John. And the conversation goes,

Teacher: *Leli qigwane lihlala egazini...ithathelana uma igazi la loyo muntu lingena egazini lakho. (It lives in the blood...and you can only get it if it is transmitted into your blood.)*

Women 1: *Hai ukuthathelana? Yini lokuthathelana? Suyangidida mina ke manje. ("Transmitted"? What does "transmitted" mean? You are confusing me now.)*

Teacher: *Nalidlulisela ngokungena emithanjeni nangocantsi. (Passed into your blood. By transfusion or sex.)*

Woman 2: *Habe ucantsi! (Sex!)*

Woman 3: *Ingakho ke kumele ahambe. Singathini umakungaphelela kuthina sonke? (Which is why he must go. What if he bleeds all over us?)*

The women's fear of being infected even though they are not married to John or having any explicit sexual relationship with him gives a hint that these women are aware of the risk that this present to the community. It also hints at the women's awareness that in this community there is possibly a great prevalence of irresponsible sexual behaviour and promiscuity. It is widely agreed that men's sexual behaviour has been a great accelerator in the spread against HIV and AIDS. In South Africa issues in masculinity as a field of study generally surfaced within the context of HIV and AIDS, and GBV (Haddad, Seedat, Van Niekerk, Jewkes, Suffla, and Ratele, 2009). In reflecting on the role of religion and culture in the face of the HIV pandemic, Phiri (2003) and Chitando (2012) along with others have advocated for more meaningful dialogue between public health professionals and religious workers. To this end they particularly identified the churches' engagement phallogocentric masculinities in Africa as a key area of intervention.

Spearing the nation can also refer to the prevalence of the HIV pandemic – and the accompaniment of poor health, and death. In recent years a lot of scholarly work has been done on men and articulations of masculinities in Africa. Many of these studies rose from the shared acknowledgement among those involved in HIV and AIDS work that there is a need to transform masculinities on the continent as a way to contain the virus through responsible life-giving choices (Morrell, 2001; Posel, 2011; Ouzgane, 2005; Epprecht, 2001; Morrison, 2006; Skovdal, 2011; Chitando, 2012; Ngwane, 2011; Courtenay, 2001; Van Klinken, 2001;

Dworkin, 2012; Kalichman, 2007; Simbayi, 2004; Jewkes, 2009). The role of men in the spread of the HIV and AIDS virus based on how maleness and masculinity/ies are imagined can give insight to the into interrogation of the forces that informs those kinds of masculinity/ies at play in the face of the pandemic.

While traditional norms and values permit men to have more than one sexual partner (Ngwane, 2014), women are expected to keep themselves for one man - a cultural dictation. This is in part captured by Yesterday's sense of surprised when asked about whether she uses condoms or not. The answer she gave was that she is married, thus she sees no need to use *ijazi lomkhunyana* (condoms):

Doctor: *Uyalisebenzisa ijazi lomkhonyana? (Do you use a condom?)*

Yesterday: *Ini? (What?)*

Doctor: *Amajazi omkhonyana, uyawasebenzisa na? (Condoms, do you use them?)*

Yesterday: *Kuyini lokhu? Mina ngingowesmame oshadile. Yini indaba kwamele ngisebenzise lezozinto? (What for? I am a married woman. Why would I want to use those?)*

Doctor: *Ngamanye amazwi uya ocantsini nomyeni wakho kuphela? (So, you only have sex with your husband?)*

Yesterday: *Yebo. (Yes.)*

Doctor: *Yena unawo amanye amakhosikazi? (And does he have other wives?)*

Yesterday: *Yimina ngedwa inkusikazi yakhe (I am his only wife.)*

In the film, *Yesterday* men's sexuality is presented as uncontrollable and dangerous (Mokwena, 2014) – something against women must guard and protect themselves. However, this framing is risky insofar as it absolves men of any meaningful responsibility or need to adjust their behaviour. When Yesterday is asked about her sex life and what barriers she uses against infection, she cites monogamy and fidelity as barriers against contracting HIV/ AIDS. However, the question reveals something of a sinister threat lurking in the community, against

which women must protect themselves. Finally, we learn from the film that as a result of John's sexual infidelity, Yesterday gets sick. The fact that she is a married woman has not protected her from contracting an STI. Further, her seeming reluctance and resistance to the idea of using condoms can arguably be related to social stigma about infidelity and HIV/ AIDS. In her article "*Barriers to Condom Use*" Sankar (2008) concludes that beside social stigmas and personal reluctance, prevailing moral norms and religious interdicts also adversely affect use of condoms in patriarchal communities. Similarly, Fladseth argue that "gender norms, interpreted as social and cultural constructions of the ways that women and men are expected to behave, have been identified as important social drivers of the HIV epidemic" (Fladseth, 2015) and that this has widely resulted in women's reluctance to refuse sexual advances or negotiate safer sexual practices such as condom use.

Condom use, or safe sex can be viewed in the context of this rural community as blunting the spear, penis, *sagila*. In the film, Yesterday is presented as a woman with few choices and as always conforming to religious and cultural dictates that her sexuality is subject to that of her husbands, even when there is the possibility of exposure to sexual infections. The two things that threaten and resist the *sagila* in the life of Yesterday is consent (the right to refuse sex) and contraception (the right to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases).

Data presented in Chapter 4 agrees with what Connell (2005) says that masculinity/ies are socially constructed within communities to serve their purpose. Religion and culture play a major role in how power and privilege is distributed between men and women. Religion and culture gives men the right to dominate over women, and with that comes privileges and a great sense of entitlement for men. The film *Yesterday* offers a scope through which to engage with masculinity/ies. There is a hidden text about masculinity/ies in the film *Yesterday* and this text shows that religion and culture in their expression celebrates men over women.

The socially constructed roles and relations ascend out of the course of being made into a member of the society. Bere girls and boys are imparted their respective roles in society as well as how to relate with each other among genders. For African cultures, the men hold the leading position in the home and in society at large. African men before the colonial master were hunters and they have always been providers for their clans and families. Women worked the earth and did all the domestic chores. Men have always preserved a dominating status over their partners. Boys in the African context learn from a young age that they are to provide for their families and that they are to be heads of their families. Girls on their part are taught how

raise a home, rear children and do all the necessary home duties, including sexual availability for the husband. This is clearly represented in the film where Yesterday does all that is expected of a mother and wife and she trains Beauty in also fulfilling these given responsibilities.

African girls receive lessons that they are to nurturers and become caregivers in their families. Their role is to care for their husbands and children. They are also thought to be always humble and respectful, especially as it relates to men. In the African context this is a shared knowledge where these gender roles are not only given as instruction by they are witnessed through observation and rights of initiation. Beauty is seen doing the same in the film. As a result, the gender roles learned and adopted by young boys and girls influence the ways in which they relate to one another later in life and how they conduct themselves in their claiming of their space in the social order. Men are considered providers and head while women are considered caregiver and subordinate. It can be argued that these gender differences and inequalities contribute to the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV and AIDS, in that unequal power relations also come to exist when it comes to sexual intercourse. Sex in some traditional African cultures has mainly been for the pleasure of the man and the film *Yesterday* presents this clearly, though hidden but clearly.

Spearing the nation can also refer to the way in which Zulu cultural and religious norms undermine other rights regimes – such as right to good health, protection from violence, freedom of choice, most especially as it relates to women's right to choose not just sexual partners, but also contraception, conception and sex. Scenes which depict violations of women's sexual rights comes out when the doctor asks Yesterday about her sexual experience but talks about how men are known for their demand for sex:

***Doctor:** Ngiyabona. Manje uyayithokozela impilo yozocantsi ejwayelekile? Uyaya ocantsini. (I see. And do you enjoy...a normal, healthy sex life? Do you have sex?)*

***Yesterday:** Yebo. Nawe uyazi ukuthi anjani amadoda mawa hambe isikhathi eside. (Yes. You know what men are like after they have been away for a long time.)*

***Doctor:** Ngiyazi kahle. Kuyofanele ngimhlole ngokushesha okukhulu. (I know. It is important that I test him as soon as possible.)*

There is a need to analyse the socially constructed realities within culture, as these shape how identity is formed and how life is lived. An African Cultural Hermeneutics offers a systematic method of interrogating culture which holds, firstly, that when approaching African cultures, one needs to be aware that not all practices can be used for women's liberation (Phiri and Nadar, 2006). Secondly, the approach holds that one needs to approach cultures with an open mind, but also with suspicion. Thirdly, one needs to be aware that in culture/s anything that seems not to conform to what is upheld is often met with resistance. Finally, Phiri and Nadar (2006) argue that cultures and cultural practises need to be scrutinised as they are the lenses through which people's idea about reality are formed. Interrogating culture from a feminist point of view opens dialogue regarding what has been advocated for and perpetuated by religion and cultures that promote heteronormativity and patriarchy

Sipe and Hall (1996: x) argue that "from childhood, (men) are encouraged to view violence and sexual prowess as evidence of masculinity" which easily translates as violence and control of women and their bodies central ideas to patriarchy. Patriarchy conceptualized as the rule of the father and superiority of the male over women (Rakoczy, 2004) is therefore pervasive in the institution of religion and culture, and the patriarchal society inevitably perpetuates violence against women in various ways. Davies (1994) locates violence against women in patriarchal social structures and the complex of values, traditions and habits that perpetuate gender inequalities victimising women, and he identifies men as almost always the perpetrators. In line with Davies' argument, Bograd (1990) argues that violence against women should be understood in the context of how society is structured, and that the privileged status of men as a social group entrenches gender based violence. Rakoczy (2004) too suggests that patriarchy is deeply embedded in religion and culture often without being challenged. This is because the pervasive nature of patriarchy has blinded many so as not to imagine the ways in which patriarchy operates. The South African context is extremely violent, especially towards women. The origins of such violence go as far back as the legalised violence during the apartheid era (Rakoczy, 2000). Petersen (2009: 449) further stresses that South African women live in one of the most violent, yet most religious and culturally traditional societies in the world.

5.3. Infecting the nation: Impact on SRHR

Representations of men such as: men like sex and that men are virile encourages the practice of multiple partners as portray in the film. The young man with a spear between his legs is notorious for his love for women but still no one seems to mind if he gets another wife; only that she should not come from the next village. It seems it is a normal thing for a man to have more than one partner. The fact that a man's penis is referred to as a weapon shows that there is power endowed in this organ which overflows as power given to men to dominate. Migrant labour in South Africa has played a huge role in the spread of the HIV virus, as is represented in the film. The sense of domination and entitlement puts women at risk. Men being oversexed and having power over their partners enable men to act with various sexual partners and this at the same time offer ways in which to express their masculinity/ies (Walker, Reid and Cornell, 2004). "Masculinity has been cited as a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality, religion and culture" (Kometsi, 2004). Unequal power distributions between men and women are a reality that exists in all social relationships. The film portrays unequal power balance between genders. This has harmful effects which puts at the receiving end the woman who is at the 'disposal' of the husband.

Uchem illustrates the need for change within established religion and culture in order to accommodate egalitarian views on women (Uchem, 2004). The position held by women under a patriarchal social order has always been under the enduring religious and cultural ideas which conceives women as being weak. This was rationalized and legitimized the subordination of women under colonial and missionary policies, reinforcing gender biases. Reinterpreting these myths in light of other religious and cultural myths and scientific principles has the potential to reshape consciousness of gender equality. In this sense, religious and cultural portrayals of masculinity represented in the film become an important force in instilling respect for women and ending practices that demean and disenfranchise women.

In the film, Yesterday is assaulted for confronting her husband. She is on the receiving end of assault from the man who made her sick. The irresponsibility on the part of the man is that instead of acknowledging his role John expresses irresponsibility through violence and displays the kind of masculinity that has a negative impact on women and ends up in death. Yesterday's quality of life deteriorated and the community harassed her; Yesterday's life is no longer a quality life (health wise) after she is infected by the only man in her life. She draws strength

instead of despairing; through a display personal strength she motivates herself to be alive just because of her daughter. She is not apologetic about what befalls her. The doctor assumes that there is more than one wife, implying that this is a norm in this community. The question posed by the doctor can suggest that the doctor occasionally comes across women who share their husbands with other women thus putting them at risk because of multiple partners.

According to Lule, lack of power by African women in relationships means that they have very limited decision-making abilities in the relationships, and are unable to negotiate safer sex and, therefore, risk infection to please the man (Lule, 2006). This is particularly the case if the woman's husband/partner is the sole breadwinner of the household, or if the woman has a low educational background. Her husband or partner may easily exploit her, resulting in her, ultimately, giving in to all his needs and demands. "HIV contraction has spread widely in such cases, especially as studies have revealed that some black African men prefer sexual intercourse without the use of a condom" (Crosby, Graham, Yorber and Sanders, 2004). What is suggested here is that societies within the African contexts societies which are highly patriarchal create within themselves an environment that maintains men's superior status in sexual matters and this in itself puts women at risk. John infects his wife through his behaviour, which is supported by ideas of being 'the man' that are prevailing in the film and in South Africa. He denied his actions, but ultimately, he could not anymore.

The women in the village fear being infected because they are aware of men's love for sex and that, as it happens in their community, men sleep around. Yesterday's friend the teacher comes by to see her friend and tells her that he people in the village are talking about her, and her husband. In response, Yesterday makes her friend aware of the ignorance of her people when it comes to the HIV and AIDS virus (1:03:49 mins). The following scene presents ignorance in regard to the HIV and AIDS virus. There is so much stigma attached to the virus that people in the film don't even want to engage with what the implication of having the virus, they just fear their own death and shows not pity on anyone infected.

Teacher: *Yesterday, kunendaba ebaluleke kakhulu engifuna ukukhuluma nawe. (Yesterday, there is an urgent matter I need to discuss.)*

Yesterday: *Kuyenze njani? (What is it?)*

Teacher: *Singakhulumela ngaphandle?(May we speak outside?)*

Yesterday: *Yebo. Asambe. Hai ngifisa ukuthi ihlobo lingashehsa. (Yes. Come. I wish the summer would hurry up.)*

Teacher: *Bengithi ngikwazise abantu bayakhuluma kulendawo. (I thought you should know that everyone in the village is talking.)*

Yesterday: *Bayakhuluma? Ngani? (Talking? About what?)*

Teacher: *Ngomyeni wakho. (About your husband.)*

Yesterday: *Bathini ngomyeni wami? (What are they saying about him?)*

Teacher: *Bathi...unecigwane le HIV. Ingabe kuyiciniso lokhu? (They say...he has the virus. H.I.V. Is it true?)*

Yesterday: *Iciniso. Nami futhi nginalo. (It is true. I have it, too.)*

Teacher: *Nawe? Kodwa yingani ungakhulumi? (You? But why did you not say anything?)*

Yesterday: *Uyazi kwayenzakalani kulonkasikazi wase Burgville? (You heard what happened to that woman in Bergville?)*

Teacher: *Cha. (No.)*

Yesterday: *Kuno muntu wesifazane asemusha. Ahlakaniphile. Abantu baleyo ndawo bambekela imali ukuthi ayofunda euniversity eGoli.Wahamba wafika. Kwayizoba into enkulu kakhulu nje. Kodwa wathola iqigwane lenculaza. Kwafanele abuye azojela uma wakhe no baba wakhe...nabanye abantu bezwa ke. Uyazi kwayenzakalani kuyena? Bambulala.*

(There was this young woman. Very clever. So much so that her whole village helped save money... to send her to university in Johannesburg. She went there. She was going to be a somebody. But, she got AIDS. And when she came home to

tell her mother and father... everyone found out. You know what happened? They killed her.)

Teacher: *Hai bo Bambulala? (Killed her?)*

Yesterday: *Baze bamushaya ngamaje waze wafa. (They threw stones at her until she was dead.)*

Teacher: *Awu Nkosi yami. Ingabe iciniso lokhu. (Oh, my God. Is this true?)*

Yesterday: *Kuyi ciniso. (It is true.)*

Teacher: *Manje wena ke unesikhathi esingakanani uyazi. (How long have you known?)*

Yesterday: *Kusukela ngeskhathi seKisimusi. (Since the Christmas.)*

Teacher: *Hawu Yesterday Kisimusi? Usuzoyenzani ke? (Since the summer? What are you going to do?)*

Silence about HIV is also present in the film and due to this the virus easily gets spread (Haddad, 2002). This happens within a context where promiscuity prevails, and everyone sleeps with everyone. This point comes out when the women at the meeting to discuss John's fate they express how he was going to infect everyone even though they heard that this virus is spread through blood transfusion and sex. Campbell holds that "social identities serve as an important influence on peoples' sexual behavior" (Campbell 1997: 273). Men's sexual behavior which are promoted by cultural and religious norms, and which put women at risk makes it possible for the spread of the HIV virus. The action of Yesterday's husband translates into her life as death and rejection by the community and Beauty their daughter is left without parents.

5.4. Liberating religion, culture and masculinity

The film *Yesterday* presents gender binaries and unequal gender power distributions. In order to break the chains of gender binary and unequal gendered power distribution there is a great need to engage rigorously and scenery with that which promotion of articulations of hegemonic

masculinities and see them for what they are (Phiri, 2002; Chitando, 2012). The evidence received about the harmfulness of the kind of masculinity represented in the film is undeniable and they show that which religious and cultural norms support. Religion and culture are not explicit in the film, but they are suggested, and they shape the life world presented through the film. Suggested in a sense that the way life is lived, and the way responsibilities or role are distributed.

In the definition of religion as a system of belief and practice (Geertz, 1966), norms suggested by religion and culture, when it comes to distribution of power within genders, provides adherents with meaning and purpose in life and gives meaning to all social relations. This is a major institution in society, where we find that almost every human civilization has produced their own system of religious belief. Religion does not necessarily have to include a belief in a supreme being. It is with this definition that religious norms and practices show themselves in the daily lives of the community represented. A representation that matters in this context is that where women must rely on their husband's provision and that they need to be submissive to their husbands. According to Connell, culture on the other hand is a complex phenomenon, in terms of which people both form and express their sense of identity (Connell, 2008). Although religion and culture are two separate concepts, there is a great deal of overlap between them. Sithole further suggests that traditional cultural practices have often found their way into religious systems, while religious beliefs influence the cultural life of communities (Sithole, 2009). Where human rights are protected and promoted, culture and freedom of religion are both regarded as basic and these operate within a global framework of universal rights of equality and dignity. Furthermore, the right to culture cannot be used as an excuse to discriminate or oppress another human being, be either man or woman. For example, "violence against women cannot be condoned purely on the basis that it is an acceptable cultural practice" (Chitando, 2012; Ratele, 2008).

According to Chitando and Phiri, religion, tradition and culture are often used to justify women's subordinate position in society. In all the world's major religions, religious texts have been interpreted to reinforce the power of men in society (Chitando, 2012; Phiri, 2002). Attitudes that stem from religion and culture include an idea about women that their proper place is in the home. Patriarchy, meaning the rule of the father, is a reference to a system that privileges men in all aspects of life. In this regard culture and religion carries with them ways of living and offers value to some expressions or behaviours over others. Religion and culture give a

established of social norms that can be used to warrant that men and women follow to their set gender roles and do not challenge the male-dominated order.

From this what can be learned is that the socialization of males globally and in South Africa can be directly linked to gender-based violence. Violence, as shown in the film is supported and promoted by hegemonic expressions of what it means to be a man. Unhealthy articulations of masculinity refer to a collection of socially constructed articulations of maleness that describe the masculine gender as violent, sexually aggressive, and unemotional; which the film does. Subscriptions to unhealthy articulations of masculinity is both destructive and deadly to men and women alike, and this has been witnessed through the raised levels of violence in South Africa, where one will find that men are both victims and perpetrators. Refusing to constructively deal with this this expression of what it means to be a man is a substantial interference to successfully fighting gender-based violence. Unhealthy articulations of what it means to be a man have become part of South African culture, and this has been coming out through the spurt of gender-based violence which has been present through media since January 2017, and also reveals itself in numerous of explicit and implicit behaviours.

Unhealthy masculinity/ies emphasises that what is masculine should be considered brut, strong and forceful, and to show any kind emotion apart from anger is to be consider a weakness and shameful. This conception confines what is to be considered as masculine to physical strength to the neglect of the psychosocial aspect. Any weakness and defencelessness should be protected against. As raised by Robert Morrell, “what forces operate to effect change in masculinities...when, where and how such changes occur, and what their effects are” (Morrell, 2001: 7). This question and the response it seeks is what I consider the skeleton around which every other discussion of masculinities is integrated. And based on some of Morrell’s and Chitando’s writings the response to this question would be that in contemporary South Africa, some of the key forces are religion and religious resources.

Dangerously, unhealthy expressions of what it means to be a man conceptualizes men as being hyper-sexual and hyper-aggressive in nature. Unhealthy articulations of manhood prescribes that men should be uncontrollably virile and voracious in in their sexual appetite. A man is noted by his strong and big penis as it is with his muscles. He is continually prepared for sexual engagement.

Displays of unhealthy masculinity build up towards representations of GBV and a neglect of women's SRHR. According to Ratele gender-based violence is the product of a culmination of flawed and perverted psychosocial attitudes and beliefs, and the eventual physical expression thereof in both the private and public sphere" (Ratele, 2016). Connell also states that "gender-based violence is a systemic problem that has historically conformed to heteronormative masculine norms" (Connell, 2003).

Engaging in the project to imagine more gender just articulations of masculinity/ies which respects women's rights. Chitando, West and Van Klinken advocate for the involvement of men as the agents for this change. From what has been discussed in the previous chapters what can be seen is that redemptive masculinities advocated by Chitando, West and Van Klinken has contributed a great deal to the discourse on masculinity/ies in relation to sexuality and gender equality. Chitando's (2007; 2008; 2010; 2012 and 2013) contribution bases its roots on that men should be involved in this transformation or redemption of unhealthy masculinity/ies. West (2007; 2012 and 2013) on the other hand encourages men to do a deeper reading of scripture in order to contextually relate them to their daily living as they claim their space in the world. Finally, Van Klinken (2011; 2012 and 2013) calls for engagement and a constant interrogation of the norms presented by culture and religion so as to see how articulation of hegemonic masculinity/ies is changing. All three scholars also open our eyes to the immense power of religion and religious resources in the production of change. Although in the patriarchal frame within which people like Chitando (2010) wrote, the tendency is to emphasize more the part that religion plays in the construction of hegemonic masculinities.

The conceptualization of Connell's hegemonic masculinity is characterised through ways of critique/understand gender relations with specific reference to virility, dominance, and violence which are embodied by men. This has created a certain sense of domination of women by men because relational and physical power has been given to men. Connell's understands that this is socially constructed and that it can be reconstructed. Chitando's Redemptive masculinities offers this possibility for alternative articulations of masculinity. It has been witnessed in the history of the HIV and AIDS virus that one of the greater preserver of the virus has been unhealthy articulations of what it means to be a man. It is with engaging with these two scholars that seeking alternative articulations within a life world presented through the film that the study seeks to engage with how religion and culture can be redeemed and thus redeeming unhealthy forms of masculinity.

5.5 Conclusion

Masculinity/ies in relation to women's sexual health rights and choices cannot be denied an opportunity to be engaged with. There is urgency in looking at the roles of religion and culture in how men act out their manhood and how this impacts on women. As mentioned in the introduction, men generally are not aware of the impact of religious and cultural norms on what it means to be a man and how this can impact negatively on women. Enjoying the privilege given renders men blind to the negative impact of hegemonic masculinity/ies and patriarchy.

CHAPTER 6:

GENERAL EVALUATION, PROPOSITION AND CONCLUSION

6.1. Introduction

In chapters one and two I outlined the background of my study and offered a review scholarly work done around masculinity/ies as it relates to how masculinity/ies impacts on women's SRHR. The use of Connell and Chitando as lenses for examining the kind of masculinity/ies represented in the film *Yesterday* as they impact on women helped in engaging with what the film presents. This also helped in the isolation the themes that were singled out. The chosen framework gives insight as to why my study isolated themes such as absence, aggression, virility, and fragility as they relate to sexual behaviours of men which are informed by both religion and culture. These themes have been discussed at length in chapters four and five. Doing a general evaluation to my study I will draw some elements from my theoretical framework to explore more what these elements can help me engage with how religion and culture support patriarchy which gives rise to unhealthy kinds of masculinity/ies. Since in previous chapters I have looked at how religion and culture seem to encourage particular sexual behaviours in men, in this section I am not intending to offer something new but to offer a more general evaluation of my study. Through this chapter I will bring together what I have engaged with from the film, as laid down in chapters four and five, in order to relate all that with my chosen theoretical framework so as to offer more opportunities for further engagement with masculinity/ies as represented in South African film as masculinity/ies imagined in the context of South Africa post-1994.

In the project for social transformation media can be valuable tool to instil change and transformation to how in the South African context masculinity/ies can be imagined, thus articulated. Connell offers a conceptual tool and Chitando offers alternatives to that kind of the kind of unhealthy masculinity/ies. It is my aim in this chapter to show that film makers, who take social issues seriously, in their work can be catalysts in the redemption of that which undermines equality, justice, and healthier ways of approaching life. Roodt, through his films, has shown that women are heroines and they deserve what is their due when it comes to their sexuality, sexual reproductive health, and rights. The film *Yesterday*, as a commentary on women's suffering at the hands of men and men's sexual behaviours, has, as I have shown

offers more than just being a mere commentary. Through the film I have engaged with how religio-cultural articulations of masculinity/ies can result in sickness and death for women. Through the general conclusion which ends the chapter I hope to bring together what has been said throughout the theses and offer grounds to further deal with representation of masculinity/ies in film as presented in the context of South Africa today for tomorrow considering the limitations of the study.

6.2 General evaluation

Religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity/ies are undergirded by patriarchy, a social system that disadvantages women and advantages men. Through this social system men have a sense of entitlement and a sense of authority. Within the South African context, as I have expressed through the work of Ratele (2016), loss of this sense of power and authority results in a sense of disorientation for men. The South African Constitution of 1996 gives equal rights and opportunities to both men and women, and it is through this that the traditional way in which women and men have been socialized is challenged and men who subscribe to the hegemonic masculinity/ies which is shaped or informed by religion and culture feel emasculated, and as a result they act out violently to reassert their sense of dignity as men. My study has engaged with masculinity/ies as it relates to women's SRHR as represented in the film *Yesterday*. Keeping that in mind and with a consideration of the South African context, there is a need to come to the root of unhealthy articulations of masculinity in order to address them better through media. Understanding that men are indeed privileged and acknowledging that religion and culture instil inequality can serve to overcome oppressive and life-threatening behaviours (Phiri, 2002; Dube, 2001). Films in their production are informed by social phenomena; as with the case of the film *Yesterday's* depiction of the result of men's sexual behaviour on their partners. Religion and culture place women lower than men in the social hierarchy and this puts women at risk where sexuality is involved in the context of HIV and AIDS.

The kind of masculinity/ies presented in the film is the kind that conforms to Connell's hegemonic masculinity/ies, which is undergirded by patriarchy (Phiri 2002; Van Klinkan 2013b). Chitando speaks to this when he argues that it is possible to find ways of redeeming masculinity/ies within an African context. The film presents a community where women are oppressed or marginalized by men in relation to HIV and AIDS, and intimate partner violence

or GBV. Understanding how power relations, as they relate to gender and sexuality to be informed by patriarchy, and as presented in the film, offers an entry point to engage with the impact of behaviours encouraged by religion and culture: men being untrustworthy and unreliable and that where men don't acknowledge the link between their sexual conduct and the health and wellbeing of their partners.

Engagement with religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity/ies in the film brings out and shows that there is a need to engage with masculinity/ies from the root or from how they are informed. Represented masculinity/ies in the film are not positive as they result in death and sickness for women. It is easy to present men as villains, but it seems to be, in most South African films, to represent men as doing their part in transforming that which has been a common knowledge about men – that men are not to be trusted and that men can sexually behave as they want. The phallogentric and hegemonic masculinity/ies image presented in the film *Yesterday* calls for engagement with Chitando, Van Klinken, and West's calls for redemptive masculinities. Protecting and respecting women's SRHR demands a different kind of articulation and embodiment of masculinity/ies. While Chitando speaks to the urgency of the need to transform represented unhealthy masculinity/ies, Van Klinken calls for an interrogation of the approaches used to reform masculinity/ies, and West shows that men can change if only they can embrace and integrate ways of articulating healthier forms of masculinity.

Through redemptive masculinities Chitando, Van Klinken and West show that religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity/ies, as much as through the film, can be used as a resource to transform represented kinds of masculinity/ies, including those that are presented in the film *Yesterday*. Chitando sees the Bible as an important tool in transforming masculinity/ies. It is interesting for him to advocate for that as the Bible have been used to disadvantage women. Van Klinken on his part, to speak to the Bible as a resource, holds that it is important to consider who interprets the Bible and to him religious figure like Joseph the husband of Mary can inspire alternative masculinity/ies expression and articulation. Moreover, West shows through one single story from the Bible of Tamar can be used together with cultural and religious resources to transform unhealthy masculinity/ies. The three scholars do not deny patriarchy but uses it to what I can say is advocated by the South African Constitution; that men and women are equal and deserve to be allowed to fully express their autonomy and sexual rights even with marriage setups. These three scholars encourage those who are involved in engaging with masculinity/ies on different levels to also think and seek alternative articulations of unhealthy masculinity/ies

and not just highlight how men are a mess. They have also emphasized the need for thinkers on masculinities to also think in terms of alternatives. The relevance of this is captured by Capraro (2004) in “*Men's Studies as a Foundation for Student Development Work with College Men*”, which argues that this will be in a way maintaining the activist agenda masculinities discourse which hold men as agents. These scholars speak to transformation of men, and equality of women. Chitando takes it further by acknowledging that the African context needs contextual solutions.

6.3. Suggestions

In response to religio-cultural articulations of masculinity/ies represented in the film *Yesterday*, I think there is a need for producers of such films to keep in mind that in redeeming unhealthy articulations of what it means to be a man, there is no need to present men as villains. This is indeed the way men have presented themselves, but it is important in the project of liberating both men and women to consider factors which inform these kinds of male expression. I am aware that the film is a commentary on women but using it to theorize about masculinity/ies has brought to my awareness that there can be a better way to engage in the progress of social transformation where gender and sexuality is concerned. My greatest concern is why are black men always presented in ways that are negative. I find this not that much helpful as this is not encouraging change but perpetuating a stereotype.

The kind of masculinity/ies represented in the film *Yesterday* are the types that have been contested within the South African context through scholarly work done by people like Morrell, Ratele, Ngwane, Dube, Nadar to mention a few. Work has also been done through activism work and through campaigns like the *Brothers4Life* and other government initiatives. My contribution to helping and encouraging men to live out healthy articulations of masculinity/ies will conform with what Chitando, Van Klinkan, and West hold. In his work John (2013) holds that men should change and can change. It is important when using film to engage with issues around gender and sexuality to keep in mind the South African context and all its dynamic and ways of living. It is important to represent men as agents if there change is to be fostered. The film *Yesterday* does present a commentary on masculinity/ies, but a negative one. For the purpose of my study this film has helped in identifying how religion and culture play their role in the production of patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity/ies, but most importantly how these

impacts one women's SRHR. The importance of the approach suggested by Chitando is also given substance through the work which shows that hegemonic masculinity/ies and patriarchy also have negative effects on men (Messner, 1997; Capraro, 2004). Men are not only villains, but they are also victims of a social system that gives them a sense of being in charge. From the work of Chitando one can deduce that men also experience freedom and liberation when they are represented as transformed or agents of transformation in the project for equality and respect for women's rights as they relate to gender and sexuality (2012).

Within the South African context there has been different ways and strategies from the government, activists and several independent organizations by means of which "gender and sexuality has been brought into discourse in the public arena post-1994" (Posel, 2012). It has been that media is used for health education, particularly in the fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS need to consider alternative representations. Notions of gender and sexuality represented in media are claimed to recommend efforts to fashion healthier kinds of masculinity/ies, but it seems to me, that they are in a syncretism with the religious and cultural texts that underscore patriarchy, and the privilege it affords to men. With the influences on new modes of sexual responsibility and empowerment of women, gender and sexuality is also shown as a location of painful, veiled exploitations and abuses, predominantly on the part of men as presented through the film *Yesterday*. Black men are constantly represented as threatening, predatory and tainted, and there is a need to put these representations under enquiry (Van Klinken, 2013). In this regard, representations of gender and sexuality need to be offered as a site for restoration of unhealthy articulations of masculinity/ies. With the virus being made a signifier of bad sexuality it is also presented as locus of moral disgrace, the humiliation of ways of life which were fuelled by hegemonic masculinity/ies and patriarchy persist, and it is concealed by rejections to dialogue willingly about inequalities found in gender and sexuality and how these impacts on women's SRHR.

6.4. General conclusion

My study began with the analytical objective of interpreting reading/viewing the film *Yesterday* as it relates to religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity/ies as they relate to women's SRHR. Doing a careful selection of representative texts helped my analysis, and to identify themes from the film. The themes I discussed in chapters after a theoretical and literature review styled

background to the discourse on masculinity/ies as presented in film. Representations of masculinity/ies in the film *Yesterday* opened to me how masculinity/ies informed by religion and culture impact negatively on women. Women are disadvantaged, and this calls for further consideration of unequal gender power relations, especially in relation to sexuality.

In this chapter I brought together what I have considered in the previous chapters. I have considered religion and culture as social phenomenon which shape the distribution of power as it relates to gender and sexuality. To conceptualize masculinity/ies in the film I made use of Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinities to engage with alternative articulation of representing masculinity/ies Chitando's work was used. With regards to Chitando, West and Van Klinkan, these three scholars engage with masculinity/ies to suggest that there are positive ways of articulating masculinity/ies within a patriarchal context. Religio-cultural portrayals of masculinity/ies presented in the film *Yesterday* provide insights into the discourse on masculinity and opens more opportunities to further engage with masculinity/ies in a more practical and contextual sense as it relates with gender and sexuality.

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