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**‘A woman has no mouth’: A feminist critique of the  
portrayal of woman in siSwati prescribed books.**

*Dissertation Presented to the*

*Faculty of Humanities*

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN**

*In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree:*

**Master of Philosophy**

**Specializing in Applied Language Studies.**

**By**

**Thoko J. Mabuza**

**Supervisors:** Ms Melissa Steyn & Ass. Prof. Russell Kaschula

**JANUARY 2001**

**DISCLAIMER**

**I, Thoko J. Mabuza declare that this dissertation is my own original work and has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree, nor will be at any other institution. Further, all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.**

Signed by candidate

Signature

26.01.2001

Date

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing a study of this nature needs courage and perseverance. Important people in one's life play significant roles by providing the necessary encouragement. It is therefore with great joy to look back and think of many people who gave me courage and the support I needed. I wish to extend my deep and profound gratitude for the kind assistance, which I received, from innumerable friends. I am immensely grateful to one and all.

I wish to pay special tribute to:

- Ms Melissa Steyn and Ass. Prof. Russell Kaschula my promoters for your personal guidance, patience and willingness to help me each time I knocked at the door. Your keenness, dedication and personal encouragement were really a source of inspiration, while your constructive criticism kept me in the right direction of my investigation. Your insistence on quality and thoroughness taught me a great lesson: dedication to one's work. Without your support this work would not have come to reality. I sincerely hope that the offering you have made has done you justice. Many thanks.
- The authorities of the Ministry of Education (Swaziland) for the study leave which they granted me.
- Words are inadequate to thank my family their understanding and increasing moral support. My elder sister, Lucy, I thank you for inspiring and adoring every little step I take in my academic life. I also wish to thank you for the encouragement and words of advice while the going was tough for me. Your ebullient wit saw me through a dark many hours.
- The Inter Library Loan staff for their prompt attention to my ever-urgent requests for books and periodicals, and for their services that are always executed with a smile.
- My friends too many to mention, I thank you all for your encouragement, prayers, and support you gave me. You kept me going and laughing even when I was feeling down because of the strenuous work.
- The generous financial assistance I received from VVOB, without which the project would not have been undertaken.
- Above all, I thank God the Almighty, the one who ably sustains the world for his kindness, unfailing love and protection, and continue to ask him to abide with me all the days of my life.

## **ABSTRACT**

The study examines sexism in siSwati school prescribed books. The study takes the view that textbooks as cultural artifacts are important in the transmission of cultural attitudes, values and ideology, and therefore influence the gendering of identities. The selected prescribed books for Secondary/High School level in Swaziland are investigated for discrepancies in the treatment of male and female characters. Based on a thematic analysis of the selected books the study argues that a marked sexist bias characterizes siSwati textbooks. The first text, *Sinkayinkayi*, is a collection of traditional folk tales. The themes which emerged were organised into three categories: Models of Ideal Behaviour, Reprehensible behaviour, and Maintaining Social Balance. The analysis shows how women are represented as disempowered and second class. The second text is a modern novel, *Ubolibamba Lingashoni*. The study shows a strong continuity between the depiction of women in this contemporary genre and the traditional folk tales. The implications of the findings of this study are of great concern for Swaziland's education.

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## ABSTRACT

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. 1 Background to the study

What influenced the researcher to investigate and analyse women's representation in selected siSwati textbooks was the realisation that discrimination on the basis of gender is the most socially accepted form of oppression in Swaziland. This was realised when the researcher experienced the full impact of being a victim of gender discrimination. There I was, ready to demonstrate how motivated, enthusiastic and willing I was to become part of the generation that would steer the Swazi economic and political climate toward a new horizon, toward the rising sun of the new millennium. When I walked into the room, I was told to 'turn around, go back to where I came from and come back running.' This was supposedly to speed up the interviewing process. I did what I was told to do and when I finally got to sit down and tell them who I was, I had already been sized up as a mere female who was 'ripe' for the yoke of marriage.

It seemed the issue was if I could easily find a husband, I do not need an education. It was on this day that I experienced personally that ranking high on the list of many evils that have plagued Swaziland's education system is gender inequality. It was also apparent that we live in a sexist world where the gender of the child predetermines the course of its future life experiences. It became clear to me how real the limitations of being female in Swaziland are. Women are judged by their physical appearance

rather than achievement, ability or skill. It is likely that this behaviour will be passed on from generation to generation. I therefore became curious to determine what boys and girls are told about themselves through the official materials of the Swaziland Ministry of Education. I chose to explore how the Swazi culture is represented in two prescribed texts: the folktales and the novel, which are important documents that mirror life experiences of the Swazi people.

## **1. 2 The statement of the problem**

Literature both reflects and promotes, in mediated form, social values and norms. Readers may identify with and adopt the projected norms as the correct form of behaviour. Kathleen Staudt (1976: 63) who contends that 'if literary artists affect the way people conceive their culture and ultimately the way they behave, it is instructive to analyse the manner in which artists deal with women', confirms the link between literature and gendered social behaviour.

The issue this study grapples with is how the patriarchal ideology of male dominance has affected the depiction of Swazi women in prescribed books, in particular literary texts. Two texts will be carefully scrutinised.

The study employs a close critical look at two types of SiSwati literature, namely *Tinganegwane* (folktales) and the Novel. Perhaps it is necessary to justify the selection of these two genres to the exclusion of others. The choice for folktales was motivated by the belief that they are the 'storehouse' of the Swazi worldview. They teach cultural norms and values of the society. Msimang (1983: 137) argues that they

are the only means by which the whole culture is handed from generation to generation. Smith (1940: 77) contends that:

Africans have ideals (which) inculcate a high code of social ethics. If people are to live in tranquillity in communities, there must be certain recognised standards of conduct. And if these are to be recognised by the young generation the young people must be taught what they are. Moral instruction there must be; and I think many people would be surprised to know how excellent in quality that instruction is. It is to a large degree conveyed in precept, in maxims or proverbs. But a still more sure way of instilling the rules into the mind of the rising generation is to embody them in tales which are at once interesting and rememberable.

The study will also focus on the novel, as it is one of the genres that allow an all-knowing author to present even the inner nature of the characters (Ngcanga 1987: 12). The study specifically investigates gender bias in these siSwati literature textbooks. This study focuses on the manner in which women and women's issues are included. The interesting question is not whether women are included, but where and how they are depicted. The following research questions are posed:

- How do siSwati textbooks, *Sinkayinkayi* and *Ubolibamba Lingashoni* construct images of men and women, and how do these images promote particular gender roles?
- What is the mode of inclusion of women in the textbooks? Are women and women's issues depicted only in traditional terms?

### **1. 3 Aim and purpose of the study**

Education inevitably reflects the ideologies prevalent in a society, as it is a powerful socialising agent used by those who control it to perpetuate and maintain the structure in society. As Swaziland is a sexist and patriarchal society, the education system will surely be sexist and patriarchal. Swazis hold that women are inferior to men; therefore the textbooks used in this education will try to mould pupils along those lines. While analysing two textbooks the study seeks to show that Swaziland's curriculum is heavily gender inflected, that it either misrepresents or misrecognises, or neglects or denies, and invariably undervalues, the contributions and cultural experiences of women in the society.

The study is an attempt to demonstrate sexism as a powerful hegemonic ideology pervasive in the Swazi society and culture. The thesis examines how sexism as a dominant ideology in education reproduces social norms. As a way of exposing sexism in education the study makes a detailed critical thematic analysis of folktales contained in *Sinkayinkayi* and of the novel *Ubolibamba Lingashoni*. Finally the study explores some means of countering sexism in education and thus in the society.

Textbooks used as medium of instruction are capable of both reflecting and transmitting dominant social values. The study of literature in schools is a powerful means of transmitting values. Analyses of the textbooks will be useful in elucidating forms of bias such as female stereotypes or the disparagement of females. The findings will however be extended to include the ideological basis of the accounts. In Swaziland the role of ideology is of particular importance since the different treatment of the sexes is enshrined in the Swazi Law and Custom.

The approach in this study is one that focuses on legitimation in the textbook. This involves an attempt to identify themes in the textbook that tend to legitimate male dominance. It is particularly concerned with identifying ways in which groups of people are presented in the text. Those with power tend to encourage beliefs and outlooks favourable to the prevailing social order. From the point of view of the dominant, the subordinate group should at least accept their position in the society. The subordinate should regard their subordinate status as inevitable, natural, even God given (Wexler 1982: 279).

Dean (1983: 19) contends that in practice, popular consciousness is cultivated in varied and diffuse ways; through values transmitted in the home, through churches, schools, broadcasting, entertainment and other institutions. She further argues that this may play an ideological role to the extent that the beliefs and values they foster, or the world-views they help cultivate, promote the endorsement of prevailing patterns of inequality. Though these institutions vary in their cultural impact, they are typically the main means by which a dominant ideology is propagated.

It is from this point of view that the analysis of siSwati literature textbooks is approached. Folktales are social indicators of a society. They mirror the African world in all its aspects across all its epochs. The focus of this study in examining the school textbook is cultural rather than psychological. The main concern is with the potential of the teaching of literature to shape the consciousness of the whole generation by providing them with a set of shared concepts and understanding of society. Literature may be ideological in so far as it offers an understanding of the

world favourable to the continuation of male supremacy. Mtuze (1990: 4) confirms this by stating that characters' actions, the way they have been depicted including the circumstances in which the incidents take place, and the narrator's perspective, can produce evidence of a specific ideology. It is necessary therefore to examine how those with power have 'tailored' the textbook to maintain male hegemony

It is a fact that male supremacy is at the very heart of the ideology that justifies the prevailing pattern of inequality in Swaziland. It is with this in mind that the analysis of the textbooks is carried out. It is hoped that the investigation will be able to throw light on how the patriarchal ideology of male dominance has affected the depiction of women. This study is approached from a sociological perspective rather than an educational one. The study is more concerned with the kind of world-views being offered and the implications for the students and the society as a whole, as opposed to the pedagogic merit of the textbook.

Before we can discuss what Swazi children read about themselves in the official curriculum materials, we must understand what characterizes sex role stereotyping in textbooks. Ruth Sheila (1980: 18) defines a stereotype and its negative effects as follows:

Stereotype is a concept related to role, yet distinct. Defined by one other author as a "picture in our heads", stereotype is a composite image of traits and expectations pertaining to some group (such as teachers, police officers, Jews, hippies or women) – an image that is persistent in the social mind though it is somehow off-centre or inaccurate. Typically, the stereotype is an overgeneralization of characterisation of characteristics that may or may not have been observed in fact. Often containing a kernel of truth, which is partial

and thus misleading, the stereotype need not be self-consistent, and it has a remarkable resistance to change by new information...

Klerk Vivian A. de (1989: 5) holds the same views and states that:

Stereotypes are abstractions, simplifying what otherwise may have been overwhelmingly diverse meaning. The expectations stereotypes generate can have undesirable constraining effects on person perception, and have behavioural consequences. Any pervasive, widely shared expectation about people in a social category inevitably exerts subtle pressure on its members to display behaviours, traits and attitudes consistent with it. Sex- role stereotypes are tenaciously held, well-defined concepts that prescribe how each sex ought to perform. Such sex-role stereotypes generate sex-role standards (i.e. expectations about how each sex ought to act) and the stereotypes and standards reinforce each other.

For purposes of this study, sex stereotyping is defined as fixed ideas about the roles that males and females are expected to play in society. The researcher is of the opinion that if there is gender bias in the textbook, students reading them might develop a flawed and inaccurate view of the world. Of concern is the fact that folktales are regarded as important literature that mirrors life experiences of the Swazi society. If all the information presented is about males, or if the few portrayals of women are presented in negative and dysfunctional ways, students will have negative stereotypes reinforced. They may accept the distortions as facts. This will affect their construction of gender in terms of themselves and their future behaviour towards others. Tibbetts (1978) confirms this by stating that what learners may read affects how they view themselves and others, and that sexist stories may be harmful to both boys and girls.

#### **1. 4 The scope of the study**

The study purports to cover thirty-one folktales. Thirty-one folktales are, of course quite a number, but the researcher believes that if a random selection is made, the study might not be truly representative of the popular folktale tendencies. With regard to the novel, the study provides an in- depth study of a single novel. Examining both the traditional folktales and the modern novel serves to highlight the link and perpetuation of the stereotyping of the image of woman in literature.

The textbooks under study are those, which are used in schools. *Sinkayinkayi* is prescribed for Junior level, Forms 1-3 and the novel is used at the Senior level, Forms 4-5. The major portion of the work is devoted to the study of female portrayal in these folktales and novel. The researcher is of the opinion that if these books are biased in favor of men, this might have a detrimental effect on the self-concept of the girl child. The implication of unrealistic pictures for both boys and girls is that being female is tantamount to being a minority and that boys and men are worth much more.

The study is mainly concerned with character portrayal. This aspect is measured by what the authors say regarding the character and what they deliberately omit saying. In this work of art, characters always serve a purpose. Groenewald (1985: 78) confirms that this always goes hand in hand with some form of stereotyping even under normal circumstances:

Whatever the aim the author has in mind the characters are always used with a certain end purpose, they are stereotypes, such as protagonist, antagonist, etc --- a stereotype being a structural unit by which the author (a) outlines or defines the conflict or problem that he

introduces and (b) thereafter shapes the theme he has decided upon. These stereotypes are then allocated certain traits to give each of them a definite personality to discern it as an individual. The features to be assigned to a stereotype belong to definite categories, such as appearance, physical or psychological reaction to affluent stimuli...

Writers have various purposes in their depiction of characters. Cohen (1973: 37) says 'literature portrays almost every conceivable human action, thought, attitude, emotion, situation or problem.' Neethling (1991: 83) states that various scholars of folk narrative have argued convincingly that folktales reflect the broad ethical framework of the society concerned. It is further stated that the moral and ethical expectations are thus confirmed by the actions of the character in the narrative. It is imperative therefore to have a study of this nature, which concerns itself with the interpretation of events in siSwati folktales and the novel.

### **1. 5 Significance of the study**

Studies on the portrayal of woman in literature as published in *Design and Intent in African Literature* (1982) and *Ba Shiru* (1977); focus mainly on Central and Northern Africa. Southern Africa has not been fully explored. Ngcanga (1987) and Mtuze (1990) have ventured into this field for Sesotho and Xhosa respectively. As far as siSwati is concerned this is a pioneering study as no in-depth investigation has been undertaken in Swazi society.

The study intends to make a contribution to education through capturing the attention of the government, curriculum developers and educators. The researcher has taken interest in textbook content because these works contain knowledge considered worth

acquiring. If women are stereotyped or excluded from the texts, the children may be led to believe that women play only a circumscribed role in society. The present study, though limited in scope, purports to contribute to the understanding of gender stereotypes and ideologies prevailing in school texts. It is hoped that the scrutiny of the texts will bring to surface the gendered nature of knowledge, which the schools pass on to our children.

Knowledge generated in studies such as the present may be helpful to both the educators and the nation at large. The findings of the study may lead to suggestions on how to help the girl child grapple the world not as a burden, but as a challenge. Suggestions that will make girls understand that even though culture may think of them as physically attractive and homebound, these are not their only qualities, nor their most important ones. They have personal identities beyond these roles, thus 'life is worth a living.' In addition, it will make girls understand that, although their creative and nurturing functions are vital to humanities survival, they do not have to define themselves only in terms of these roles, because by so doing they will be submerging other aspects of themselves. This will have an empowering effect on the girl child. The government may use the findings of the study to develop strategies on how to empower the girl child in school.

### **1. 6 Assumptions underlying the investigation**

The following assumptions underly the study:

- Textbooks are socially determined reconstructions.

- The textbook is basically framed by the institution (e. g. the education system).
- The textbook is structured to fit institutionally defined needs.
- The values endorsed in school textbooks and popular media in any country will tend to support the existing political system of the country.
- "Groups that are socially and politically dominant will be more favourably presented than subordinate groups. (Dean 1983: 42, Selander 1990: 144-145).

### **1.7 Definition of terms**

#### **Sex**

Sex refers to the most basic physiological difference between men and women – differences in genitals and in reproductive capacities. Some writers argue that other physical differences such as height and secondary sexual characteristics might be added to the list. However, all differences between the sexes other than physiological ones are seen as being produced by society.

#### **Gender**

Gender refers to all differences between men and women other than the basic physiological ones. It refers to specific social characteristics of being a man or a woman in particular historical and social circumstances. Gender is socially constructed.

## **Socialisation**

Socialisation is defined as 'the process by which an individual learns to be a member of his or her society' (Berger, 1976). It is the way we learn the patterns of thought and behaviour considered acceptable in our society. These social patterns vary tremendously in different regions, classes and nations. There are a number of different agents of socialisation. The family, other children and teachers are some of the most significant agents.

## **Patriarchy**

Patriarchy is another significant concept. It holds that there are differences between men and women which are a function of social organisation and power dynamics, and it is important to look at the way these differences are ranked and to recognise that these differences make for powerful forms of inequality. In all patriarchal societies, males have more power and authority than females and specifically they have powers over females. The degree and character of their power varies considerably and there is no universal pattern. Men and women are not just different, but are in power relationships to each other. Some men can exercise more power than others, but patriarchy emphasises the benefits that come to all men from labour and sexual subordination of women. Reskin (1984: 144) rightly defines patriarchy as 'A set of social relations which has a material base and in which there are hierarchical relations between men, and solidarity among them to control women. Patriarchy is thus the system of male oppression of women'.

## 1. 8 The genres defined

Before embarking on an intensive study of the genres chosen for this work, an attempt is made to explain what we understand by the genres; namely the folktale and the novel.

### 1. 8. 1 Folktale

Bascom (1965) uses the term prose narrative as an umbrella term embracing myth, legend and folktale. This has an advantage in that one can avoid using the term folktale as an umbrella term for the entire genre, and then to denote a type within that genre. For purposes of this study the term *inganekwane* (plural) *tinganekwane* will be used both in its broader and narrower senses, because it is felt that this is the sense in which the term *inganekwane* is popularly used. Swazis do not distinguish between different types of folk narratives (such as myths, legends, folktale, fable, fairy tale and animal tale) when they use the term *inganekwane*; but the term embraces all of them (Kamera et al 1998)<sup>1</sup>.

### 1. 8. 2 The novel

The Novel according to Clara Reeve in Msimang (1986: 33) is defined as:

--- A picture of real life and manners, and of the times in which it is written. ---The novel gives a familiar relation of such things, as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend, or to ourselves; and the perfection of it, is to represent every scene, in so easy and natural a manner and to make them appear so probable, as to deceive us into a persuasion (at least while we are reading) that all is real, until we are affected by the joys or distresses of the persons in the story, as if they were our own.

---

<sup>1</sup> This is also true of the sister language, Zulu, according to Msimang (1986: 23)

## **1. 9 Description of teaching material**

Literature was chosen because, as a descriptive subject concerned with people, society and its affairs, it reveals values and underlying belief systems. It focuses on the community. Each member is important not in his own right but as a member of the community. Du Preez (1983: 28) argues that literature embraces the past and the present and contains prophetic elements. Literature wields great influence. Modern literature develops from traditional, for that reason it is necessary to see how women are projected in both. Dakker, in Du Preez (1983: 28) expresses it as follows: 'Literature is rooted and nourished by life itself and also communicates to us beyond its aesthetic function through its portrayal of a multitude of life's fields, spheres and desires. Literature can exert a great influence on the faith and emotional life of the individual'.

### **1. 9.1 Textbook sample**

Since the study of all the siSwati textbooks would be an impossible task, a representative sample is made. Textbooks used in this study are chosen from the siSwati textbooks approved and prescribed by the Swaziland Examinations Council. It is clearly important to analyse influential as opposed to random textbooks. Since the material was translated before analysing it, the thematic analysis given here is based on the translated version of all thirty-one folktales. These are provided in the appendix. With regard to the novel a synopsis of the novel is given at the beginning of the relevant chapter.

### **1. 9. 2 Method of analysis**

Given the purpose of the study thematic analysis is clearly the approach to be adopted, to determine the type of knowledge emphasized in the texts. Thematic analysis is the classification of explicit and implicit themes as they occur. Major themes are used as indicators of how women and women's issues are portrayed. There is a close critical reading to determine gender inclusiveness and the range of occupations portrayed for female characters. The study also looks for bias in what is included and what is left out: which voices are present and absent throughout the texts. This means that the underlying values and attitudes are identified, extracted, carefully examined and analyzed. The aim of this type of thematic analysis is to elicit images of women e.g. girl friend, mother, prostitute, and so forth that the writers produce.

The researcher read all thirty-one folktales and the novel, determining the category to which each emerging theme would be assigned. The categories describing the characters' role assignment were determined only after the data, in this case the books have been read and analyzed. No effort was made to fit the data to predetermined categories.

### **1. 10 The structure of the Dissertation**

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one clearly demarcates the scope of the study. It looks at the background to the study, which identifies and describes the problem of study. The method of research is also discussed.

Chapter two contextualizes the study in relation to theoretical perspectives and reviews literature related to gender and textbooks, textbook analysis, and traditional literature.

Chapters three and four are significant in that the major portions of them are devoted to the analysis and description of the projection of woman in the selected textbooks

Chapter five gives a synthesis of the main observations and concluding remarks on gendered stereotyping in siSwati literature textbooks. The implications and the recommendations are also discussed in this chapter.

### **1. 11 Conclusion**

In this introductory chapter the rationale, aim, scope, significance, and method of approach of the study have been defined.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

'---the institutions that regulate language use in our society, and indeed those of most societies are deliberately oppressive to women. Men control them--- simply because it is the prerogative of those with economic and political power to set up and regulate important social institutions' (Cameron1985: 145).

#### **2 Introduction**

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part deals with theoretical perspectives on gender and feminism. Also customs relating to Swazi women are reviewed. Part two is devoted to the reviewing of literature to determine what has already been conducted to avoid duplication.

#### **Part One**

##### **2. 1 Theoretical perspectives**

###### **2. 1. 1 Theory of gender and oppression**

Theories of gender oppression describe women's conditions as subservient to that of men because of power relationships between male and female. Firestone in Haralambos and Holborn (1995) argued that men and women were created differently and not equally privileged. According to Haralambos and Holborn (1995) women have been disadvantaged in every known society. In the present study the notion of society as a role player in gender socialisation is investigated using two genres.

###### **2. 1. 2 Gender and socialisation**

Weis (1988) states that studies of gender are important for developing the cultural reproduction perspective because it is not clear to what extent gender is similar or different from race and class as a structured social division. Measor and Sikes (1992: 8) highlight that the conservative view states that gender differences and inequalities based on gender are 'natural', that they are drawn from biological differences, and are an inevitable, unchangeable part of the natural order. Feminists insist on the importance of looking critically at gender divisions. They do not accept gender division as 'natural.' From these views it is evident that gender is a critical area with different perspectives. Davies (1993) states that the individual is understood to be subjected to, and created within social structures and discourses that constrain what one can become. Slavin (1993) points out that gender is learnt through the process of socialisation and through the culture into which one is immersed. It is imperative therefore to investigate the issue of gender socialisation through textbooks.

### **2. 1. 3 Feminist Theories**

#### **2. 1. 3. 1 Radical feminism**

The theory asserts that it is patriarchy that oppresses women and that their subordination stems from the social, political and economic domination by men. It is men who force women into oppressed functions and situations. This theory regards women's domination as the deepest and strongest form of inequality and the most difficult to eradicate which can only change once women have means of reproduction (Maclagan 1982: 32). The radicals' account of education is concerned to analyze the way patriarchy spreads its web in schools and the power relation between girls and

boys. It argues that the boy's sexism shapes the image the girls have of their future lives.

### **2. 1. 3. 2 Liberal feminism**

Wollstonecraft cited in Measor and Sikes (1992: 20) argues that women have as much potential as men, but are stunted by being reared to fit an image of weakness and femininity, and degraded by having always to please men. Thus they need to be offered the same civil liberties and the same economic opportunities as men in order to develop their true potential. Mill, also cited in Measor and Sikes (1992: 21), develops the idea further arguing that equal rights for women are necessary to remedy the injustice done to them. The gist of their argument is that women's inequality is unfair, and must be remedied if the goals of liberalism are to be realised for the society as a whole.

### **2. 1. 3. 3 Marxist feminism**

The Marxist perspective argues that inequality is the result of economic, social and political structures in which people live. It starts from a 'materialist' idea of society and from the concept of mode of production (Measor and Sikes 1992). Marxist feminists are concerned with capitalist mode of production and call for an examination of capitalist power. Diamond (1980: 72)<sup>2</sup> observes that:

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Three most significant works on Marxist Feminism are summarized as followed:

In the Kuhn- Wolpe collection, the position of women in the family is isolated as one of the main contributors to the peculiar nature of women's oppression, and to their position to the labour market.

The Eisenstein collection focuses more on the every day issues affecting women's lives as they function as mothers and homemakers and how this contributes of reciprocity between patriarchy and capitalism.

The Dale-Esland collection has a section which analyses cultural forms as they shape gender identities, particularly in the family, and examines how family in a patriarchal, capitalist society acts as a formative in

Marxist feminism has emerged, then as an attempt to understand the mode of production in the formation of social life. Specifically this involves an understanding of women's oppression in capitalist societies, as it results not only from the class oppression of capitalism, but also from the gender oppression of patriarchy. Moreover in a major advance over either radical feminism or Marxism taken separately, Marxist feminists contend that the hierarchical divisions of productive and reproductive work are interrelated.

Marxists and Socialists have looked critically at the role that education systems play in creating and justifying social inequalities. They adopt the view that the main role of schooling is to transmit inequality between generations. They claim that schools make sure that class structure is reproduced from generation to generation. The Marxists view education as an important agent in reproducing the capitalist system. Socialist feminists argue that schools direct a range of messages about appropriate roles and activities to girls, thereby occupying a central place in reproducing the division of labour across generations. Socialists suggest that schools play a part in gaining the consent of girls to their subordinate status and to their place in the domestic sphere (Measor and Sikes 1992).

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The Eisenstein collection focuses more on the every day issues affecting women's lives as they function as mothers and homemakers and how this contributes of reciprocity between patriarchy and capitalism. The Dale-Esland collection has a section which analyses cultural forms as they shape gender identities, particularly in the family, and examines how family in a patriarchal, capitalist society acts as a formative in terms of future, i. e. how historically sociology has come to define 'work' as that paid activity occurring outside the home, thus ignoring the historical specificity of this and over looking the significance of housework for the maintenance of capitalist hegemony. (Maclagan 1982: 33-34)

## **Part Two**

### **2. 2 Review of related literature and cultural concepts**

#### **2. 2. 1 Introduction**

Those of us who have looked to literature for answers and for models are beginning to understand why the things we have sought are not there. We are now beginning to understand how we have been alienated from ourselves, through the bias we have been taught and the biases incorporated in the school textbooks: biases that encourage the notion that the most appropriate sphere of women is the domestic sphere. Of the things one has been taught, and that one cannot easily unlearn, is that males and females are different and unequal. Wexler (1982: 279) confirms that the selective transmission of class culture as common culture silences the culture of the oppressed and legitimises the present social order as natural and eternal. The contention of this work is that women are generally devalued as the subordinate sex, deprived and disadvantaged in various ways by both patriarchy and its chief protagonist, men.

Various groups of literature are reviewed in this section. They are in the areas of:

- Swazi custom relating to women.
- Gender and textbooks.
- Textbook analysis.
- Folktales.
- The Novel

## **2. 2. 2 Swazi customs relating to women**

An examination of women's developmental stages from childhood to womanhood clearly shows that the Swazi customs relating to women are oriented towards their role in marriage. From a very early age girls are assigned to act as nursemaids for younger brothers and sisters. Boys are taught how to look after cattle. This reveals that the Swazi society has different expectations from boys and girls. These respective roles are entrenched into the children from a very early age.

One of the most important motives for marriage is the status it confers on both parties. No Swazi has full social status until married. Traditionally marriage enhances the status of both men and women in the Swazi community. It accords some measure of respect. In the society marriage is considered to be a very serious undertaking, more especially for the women. Old women start preparing the woman to be married long before the time. She is openly told that in marriage she is going to encounter a lot of problems, however she is expected to exercise a lot of patience in order to make it.

Marriage brings full adult status, although for women this recognition depends more upon the birth of the first-born child than the marriage ceremony itself. A childless wife holds a very inferior position in the homestead and remains under the control of the senior women. At the birth of the first child, the status of the married woman changes. She enters into motherhood, which is a sign of having fulfilled the main

function of marriage (Marwick 1963). This gives her better social standing in the family and in the community at large.

In traditional Swazi society fertility is the backbone of marriage. If a couple is childless the woman must shoulder the blame. She will be referred to as *Inyumba*, barren. The man has no shortcomings. Child bearing both enhances the status of the woman in marriage and secures her marriage. Since production of children is the essential fulfillment of the woman's contract, if the woman is barren her parents must return the cattle, or follow the custom of *sororate* providing her with a relative, preferably a young sister, *inhlanti*, (fish) as a seed raiser. No extra *lobola* is paid for the second person (Kuper 1963: 23).

In traditional society a woman never reaches a stage at which she gains freedom of speech. Women are referred to as children and as such they must be obedient. From her parents she moves out to start life as a subordinate daughter-in law. Before being handed over in marriage she is given a code of conduct to follow, which absolutely discourages all forms of disobedience. Any behaviour contrary to the expected is frowned upon and is regarded as a disgrace to *bakhoti*, the couple's parents and her husband.

The Swazi society is not happy with a man who continues to show love for his wife. Such a man is ridiculed. He is told that the woman has put a love portion in his food, *umdlisile*. Swazi culture also allows the man to have as many wives as he pleases.

It is hoped that the above analyses provide a basis for a discussion of the image of woman in the respective genres.

### **2. 2. 3 Gender and textbooks**

Because of the centrality of the textbook in schools, there has been intense scrutiny, attacks and criticism of the attributes of the textbooks to the education system (Chall and Conard cited in Reynolds 1997: 30). Herlily (ibid: 30) states that American textbooks have been accused of being 'dumped down' to meet the perceived needs of a broad market, of being superficial in content, lacking academic rigour, and easy to read but devoid of literary merit (Crismore 1989: 133). We are using the term 'textbook' in the present study to include all prescribed books at grade specific level.

De castell et al (1989), Apple (1979,1989) and Apple and Christian Smith (1991) illuminate the textbook as an instrument of ideological influence through its overt messages and 'hidden curriculum'. A textbook exists as both a cultural artifact and a surrogate curriculum. The curriculum is often conceived as the syllabus with associated textbooks. Cronbach cited in Venezky (1992: 436) refers to textbooks as tools in teaching, implying that the curriculum is defined outside the textbook itself. In contrast, Apple (1988: 85) sees the text as the statement of the curriculum, 'whether we like or not, the curriculum in most schools is not defined by the courses of study or the suggested programmes, but by one particular artifact, the grade-level-specific text'. Venezky further states that for the public, textbooks are the visible manifestation of the schools' beliefs and intention, an open script that can be

scrutinized by different segments of society for evidence of cultural dissonance. This work seeks to scrutinize the text for female stereotypes.

School textbooks occupy a dominant position, situated where the paths of education, society and commercialism cross. Being heavily inscribed in educational practices and emanating from a complex interplay of political, economic and cultural skirmishes that compromise the textbook, it becomes a vibrant site for power struggles among class, gender and religious enclaves (Arnot 1993: 186, Weiner 1994: 11). The content and rhetorical form of the textbook will invariably reflect the beliefs, values and interest of a particular group. Apple (1986: 81), describing the powerful and potentially dangerous role the textbook can play as a vehicle of knowledge, contends that 'it is often the textbook that defines the elite and legitimate culture to pass on'. In a way it is one of the systems that control the society. Thus we can rightfully consider it as an agent of social control. Since textbooks reflect, reproduce and transmit these values it is important to scrutinize their content. By analysing the dominant curriculum ideas one reveals the workings of the society. Anyon (1983) points out that standardized curriculum knowledge takes its characteristics from the exigencies of the underlying social order.

Since the advent of typography and mass schooling, society's valid statements have been encoded and transmitted through books. This is confirmed by De Castell (1989: 245) who states that, 'of the many kinds of texts available to the modern reader, the school textbook holds unique and significant social function; to represent to each

generation of students an officially sanctioned, authorized version of human knowledge and culture'. De Castell (1989: 245) further argues that texts are not only taken as true, but as having authority. The authority of the written school textbook in particular derives not only from the particular linguistic properties of the texts themselves, their explicitness, but also from the social institutional context on which those texts are owned, taught and studied. The meaning and authority of the texts are in fact the meaning and authority of the institutions that mediate them. Nash (1992: 68-69) states that knowledge is partial and incomplete and is produced from particular vistas of power. The school text continues to embody the Authorised Version of society's valid knowledge. (Olson 1989: 238).

Swanepoel (1994: 35) echoes the same sentiments when he states that literature does not originate in a vacuum; it is an expression of society. It has among other things a social function in the sense that it represents the society as it is. Literature mirrors the values of a particular society and unless it continuously aims to help change and develop the thinking of the people who make up the society, those faulty values and perceptions, which have prevailed for generations, will continue. One must point out that it is only through an analysis of those values and how they function that ways in which they can be altered become visible.

The traditional beliefs and social structure of African societies reveal the fact that children were, and still are, considered an important part of the community (Swanepoel 1994: 34). Much interest in the school and children's literature derives from the fact that 'what is read does influence the reader' (Zimet 1980: 14). One is forced to argue about literature for children at school because books affect children's

attitude and behaviour. The content of school textbooks is therefore an important source of people's behavioural patterns. Cultural values and preconceived views of the society are communicated willy-nilly to pupils through textbooks (Du Preez 1983:14).

As an important education institution the school largely determines the pupil's philosophy and view of life. It is the role of the school therefore, to acquaint the pupils with their culture and view of life. The available textbooks in the school are an important source for them to draw upon as they construct their perception of reality. More so if one considers Hartshorn's (1992: 92) observation that students often regard the texts as true. The assumption of truthfulness gives the textbook power that is not shared by other media (Koza 1992: 29).

The first opportunity for educators to intervene in sex role development occurs in early childhood education or kindergarten. By age two most children know their own sex, and by age three they are usually able to label others by sex Brooks-Gunn and Schnapp- Mathews cited in Noddings (1992: 669). Thus, accordingly children come to their first experiences in school with considerable knowledge about what is appropriate for males and females. Schools can reinforce gender stereotypes or try to break them down.

Du Preez (1983: 11) argues that schools transmit the cultural heritage of the society, thus passing on the dominant symbols to the pupils. It is also stated that schools not only determine the criterion on which judgements are based, but also those elements which make up ideals, ideology and goals. Significantly long after the subject content

of lessons has been forgotten, those values absorbed by the pupils will continue to influence them.

Weiner (1994: 112) and Samuel (1993: 12-13) argue that texts are central in the reproduction of patriarchal relations and construction of femininity. From pre-school through graduate school, literature is the main subject that presents gender images and provides concrete models of manhood and womanhood. Research has revealed considerable gender bias in the reading material used in schools. Scott and Schan (1985: 219) reveal that females appear as main characters and in illustrations far less frequently than males, females and males are overwhelmingly portrayed in sex stereotypical roles and that females appear more often than males in derogatory roles.

Smith (1985: 37) cites evidence of the predominance of 'male' reference in most language material from media and fiction to educational and reference sources. Smith also details ratios of positive 'prestige' or 'status' connotations for 'masculine' and 'feminine' words to negative 'masculine' and 'feminine' words, and concludes that the ratio is 3:1 in favour of 'masculine' words.

Gender relations and representations in texts potentially affect students as language learners and users (Sunderland 1992: 86). When children are repeatedly exposed to messages which, for example, denigrate women, they are likely to develop negative attitudes toward women. Similarly if children's literature and textbooks exclude or underrepresent women, readers may conclude that these groups and individuals in them are not important members of the society.

Since books are the 'life and blood of the education system' (Samuel 1993: 9) it is imperative to analyse the ideological assumptions passed on through the textbooks used in schools. Elliot (1990: 47) cautions that textbooks should not be considered to be unquestionable distributors of truth, they are instead to be questioned, tested and doubted. They are conceived, designed and authorised by real people with real interests.

#### **2. 2. 4 Textbook analysis**

Dean (1983: 37) states that at international level, the League of Nations, which passed the Casares Resolution recommending the exchange of textbooks between countries, promoted analysis and revision of textbooks. UNESCO continued the role, and in 1949 published a guide proposing a criterion for evaluation of textbooks. These included accuracy, fairness, balance, and world mindedness (UNESCO1949: 78-81).

According to McDiarmid and Pratt (1971: 95) the field of textbook analysis has been particularly concerned with historical teaching materials, which has been cited as being major repository of evaluative references to minorities. In summarizing the findings of textbook analysis McDiarmid and Pratt (ibid: 95) have identified general biases of omission and commission in treatment of minority groups. The main biases of omission are; failure to note positive contributions and qualities, failure to note contemporary condition, and failure to note persecution of, or discrimination against minorities. Accordingly the biases of omission are: excessively political approach resulting in emphasis on war and conflict, unscholarly reproduction of stereotypes and casual use of emotive and pejorative terms to describe groups. The authors also looked at interpretation of communism in the text books and found that evaluative

such as 'threat' and menace were used, which they concluded were likely to commit the pupils to a point of view before any facts on communism were presented (McDiarmid and Pratt 1971: 95). The conclusion drawn by the authors after they carried out a comprehensive study of history textbooks used in the Transvaal was that education was being used to divide people. This finding was based on the textbook analysis (Dean 1983: 38).

While analysing discursive practices in the teaching of Mathematics, McBride (1989: 42) identified four discursive practices in the teaching of Mathematics and made a case that each promotes gender bias in the classroom; textbooks, teaching methods, examination processes and the use of space in the classroom. She also made it clear that a masculine perspective has been adopted to the exclusion of the feminine voice. Not one comment mentions a woman as an 'inventor' of ideas. The comments given carry with them pictures of men, thus creating a male domain from which women students are excluded. If a cartoon is shown, too many times, it is a girl struggling with a concept. Schmitz, in Koza (1992: 29) outlined four ways in which sexism can manifest itself in textbooks; exclusion, subordination, denigration and distortion or stereotypes.

According to Du Preez (1983: 15) an analysis of textbooks was undertaken internationally in 1972; to establish what prejudices were contained in forty-nine reading literature and social studies textbooks published between 1958-1967. The findings revealed, among other things that: textbooks contain racialistic stereotypes,

textbooks contain stereotypes of sexes, and that there is shortage of material that cultivates positive self-images among children of minority groups.

### **2. 2. 5 Folktales**

The African continent has its own fictive tradition; it has the tradition of story, narrated orally---the medium through which Africa through the centuries has taught its people and entertained itself (Ogutu and Roscoe in Miruka 1994: 133). Storytelling which could perhaps be the oldest form of literature for the Swazi people was the sole method of educating the young ones. Societal rules, customs, and standards of morality were divulged across generations in folktales, which were usually narrated by the grandmother. It is on the basis of the above that they can be regarded as a repository of the cultural heritage of the group, as a vehicle for transmission of societal values and cultural tradition from generation to generation.

Swanepoel (1994: 34) states that stories for children as part of every society's literature have primarily been a vehicle for communicating the beliefs and values of a specific society during a specific period. Swanepoel stresses that deliberate actions were taken to use stories as instruments to educate children, to perpetuate the status quo and to inculcate in them the right responses to the demands and expectations of the dominant group. The norms and attitudes of the dominant social group constitute the basis of the stories, which become one of the transmission vehicles of its systems of values.

Canonici (1988: 111) echoes the same sentiments when stating that folktales have served as the main stem of African education, constantly related to children for both

entertainment and education. It is stressed that folktales were aimed at children serving as a pedagogical aid to inculcate into the young those values deemed important in the society.

The same is true for the Swazi society; folktales play a crucial role as they teach the children. They codify and reinforce the way people think, feel, behave and believe. Thus they can be rightfully regarded as the mirror of the Swazi people. Oral literature in Swaziland, as in the rest of Africa, is verbal art, which we live, experience and observe in the country. Oral literature covers riddles, proverbs, songs, praises and folktales popularly known as *Tinganegwane*. In the folktales we discern the cultural and social fabric of the society. Symbols of order, patterns and systems of social control and complexities of personal relationships are revealed and demonstrated in the *Tinganegwane*. The importance of a detailed and close study of this area of Swazi cultural life cannot be over emphasised.

One would have thought that story telling, riddling and other juvenile socialising activities would be the first to cease or lose their status when formal education appears because these activities and school education compete for the same territory. However, conscious of the formative influence of school, curriculum designers have incorporated and made abundant uses of African didactic stories in the syllabus. It is true that urbanisation and modernisation have resulted in the gradual uprooting of the Africans from the cradle of their prevalent culture. There is more emphasis on the nuclear family, no room for grandmother to live and fulfil the function of educator by telling stories and proverbs. Since most of the modern youth live quite apart from the

sources of national folklore, the only possible contact with it is afforded by the written word. This means that narratives are and will still be passed on to our descendants. This time not solely through the oral word. Literacy had come in to aid the preservation and further transmission of the narratives. Literacy provides a more permanent record of these valuable assets.

Educational institutions are the main agents of the transmission of the dominant culture (Williams 1982: 39). Assuming that folktales are important documents that mirror the African life, the study seeks to explore what messages they convey regarding women.

#### **2. 2. 5. 1 Functions of folktales**

Before we look into the messages conveyed by folktales to Swazi boys and girls, it is important to note their function in society. According to Dorson (1972a: 21):

A tale is not a dictated text with interlinear translation, but a living recitation delivered to a responsive audience for such cultural purposes as re-enforcement of customs and taboo, release of aggressions through fantasy, pedagogical explanations of the material world, and application of pressures for conventional behaviour.

It is clear from the above that a social motive lies behind every folktale. A text of the folktale can therefore reflect the social conditions prevailing in the society from which the folktale comes. Folktales are told as a form of entertainment, thus they are meant to be amusing. This is evidenced in the fact that the audience for story telling is usually children. It must, however, be borne in mind that adults may, and often do, form part of the audience. However, more than just the momentary enjoyment, beyond the story line, behind the characters and actions in the narrative lie serious

meant to be amusing. This is evidenced in the fact that the audience for story telling is usually children. It must, however, be borne in mind that adults may, and often do, form part of the audience. However, more than just the momentary enjoyment, beyond the story line, behind the characters and actions in the narrative lie serious concerns of the society. Bascon in Dundes (1978: 290) drew the following conclusion.

Amusement is, obviously, one of the functions of folklore, and an important one; but even this statement cannot be accepted today as a complete answer, for it is apparent that beneath a great deal of humour lies a deeper meaning.

This leads us to the next function of folktales, which is actually paramount to the study, namely education.

### **2. 2.5. 2 Educational Value**

Folktales portray a system of education through joy and entertainment. Thus Msimang (1983: 136) rightly states that 'entertainment is the means, instruction the end, and theme the embodiment of this instruction'. The dual function of folktales is confirmed by Utley in Dundes (1978: 10) who maintains that

We enjoy the identification and punishment of the villain even as we rejoice in the cunning of the trickster (a very ambiguous figure) and in the ultimate success of the persecuted heroine, the neglected younger son, or the scorned fool. Even a saint's legend or sage of witch or ghost can entertain, despite the fact that its major purpose is instructional.

Folktales, which incorporate morals, serve to inculcate in young people general attitudes and principles, such as diligence and filial piety, as well as to ridicule laziness and rebelliousness. Though the folktale is designed to instruct and entertain,

and have lived, their values, their joys, and their sorrows. It is this very nature of folktales that have captured my interest. Since folktales provide a window on to the world, the study seeks to establish the type of information gathered by Swazi pupils through this window. Particular attention is given to the depiction of women.

Education is a form of communication. We must thus accept that educational materials communicate social values. The material reflects moral and ethical standpoints. Social biases can also find expression in this literature. The concrete images contained in the folktales remain much more deeply impressed in the young minds than the theoretical commands. One must emphasize that those values absorbed by pupils will continue to influence them even later in their lives. Canonici (1992: iv) argues that in analyzing the tales one can easily identify the story's contribution to either an intellectual education, a moral education, or to a social education.

#### **2. 2. 5. 3 Cultural record**

It has already been argued that folktales are used to validate folk beliefs and attitudes. More than that, they can also be used to exercise social control and apply social pressure on individuals who do not conform to the accepted patterns of behavior. Whenever individuals attempt to deviate from social conventions pressure is employed against them. Bacson in Dundes (1965: 294) confirms this by stating that 'When this happens-- folktale may be used to express disapproval'.

pressure on individuals who do not conform to the accepted patterns of behavior. Whenever individuals attempt to deviate from social conventions pressure is employed against them. Bascon in Dundes (1978: 294) confirms this by stating that 'When this happens-- folktale may be used to express disapproval'.

The culture of the people is the totality of their way of life. It includes knowledge, beliefs and customs, arts, morals, law, music, literature, and everything that goes to make the society. The tales expose us to how the society looks at life issues, what it values or decries. The content of the stories epitomizes the foundation of the group. In other words, folktales are the key to our understanding of the society's religious life, its beliefs and practices and value systems. Groenewald (1998: 2) adds that folklore not only explains customs and ceremonies, it also seeks to justify rituals and institutions to those who perform and observe them. Bascon in Dundes (1965: 297) concludes that these functions, can be seen as one function, namely that of maintaining the stability of the culture.

### **2. 3 The Novel**

The novel is comparatively a new genre, which in the process of telling a story communicates other ideas. The novel emphasises certain cultural values, which are important in a period of social as well as cultural change. According to Stevick (1967: 1) the novel more than any other genre is capable of containing large developed consistent images of people. Stevick further argues that the novel more than any other genre can give form to a set of attitudes regarding society, history and the general

and the increasing fragmentation of personality into professional and the social segments. The novel reflects, shapes and enlarges upon these (Stevick 1987: 8).

Literature generally evolves out of people's historical and cultural experiences. Palmer (1979: 4) argues that the African novel derives largely from the indigenous African tradition. Generally speaking there is more continuity between the oral and the written literature. The novelist begins as (and essentially is) a storyteller a fact which witnesses the link between oracy and literacy (Kahari 1986: 37). Palmer adds that a number of African novelists incorporate elements of the oral tradition into their novels. Scholars like Msimang (1983) have confirmed the relationship between the folktale and the novel.

Many critics argue that literature is fundamentally moralistic. The theme of the novel is generally that of formation, education. Kahari (1986: 116) points that novelists endeavour to fulfil the functions of teaching and entertaining because the age-old grandmothers' social roles have been affected by the advent of technology, Christianity, industrialization and the social mobility on them. The idea of didacticism comes out at the end of the traditional novel when justice and peace triumph over injustice and war. Kahari (1987: 145) argues that the novel exposes the human dream and feelings beyond issues, and by so doing the reader will adjust himself or herself better to the requirements of his community. The didactic story is a lesson to the reader not to follow the folly and stupidity of the characters portrayed, as they, convincingly albeit unrealistically dramatise the penalty of evil. Stevick (1967) adds that the novel tends to insist upon its own cultural experience.

The researcher is eager to examine the messages conveyed by a prescribed novel bearing in mind that the novel traditionally functions as an oracle which in the words of Micheal Zeraffa in Gingandi (1987: 1) 'confronts us openly with the issues of the meaning and value of our ineluctable historical and social condition'. The researcher's primary intention is to demonstrate how the novel is an instrument of value and meaning.

#### **2.4 Conclusion**

Chapter two discussed theoretical perspectives, which focused on gender, feminism and socialisation. The Swazi law and custom relating to women was also highlighted. These were discussed with the hope that they may be helpful in understanding the discrepancies in the books.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE IMAGE OF WOMAN IN SISWATI FOLKTALES

Women's entire education should be planned in relation to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to win their love and respect, to raise them as children, care for them as adults, counsel and console them, make their lives sweet and pleasant... these are women's duties and what they should be taught from childhood on. (Jean-Jacques Rousseau 1762, quoted in Cameron 1985:156).

#### 3. Introduction

Education in most societies is viewed as an agent of socialization. It is a form of enculturation, which inculcates the norms, values and belief systems of the social group. It has already been argued that the textbook is the most useful tool in educating the young. Speaking on the role of the textbook, Bordelon (1985) points out that the textbook presents role models with which children identify. Hall et al (1976: 241) confirms that by stating that 'the image we pick, consciously or unconsciously, from literature and history significantly controls our sense of identity --our sense of ourselves as powerful or powerless, for example---controls our behavior'. The representation of females and males in school texts is important because texts are accepted as major agents of inculcating these roles. Smith (1985: 37) confirms this when he says:

First students are less free to be critical of educational material than they are of the media. In fact, they are frequently required to absorb and assimilate these materials in minute detail. Second, people attach a great deal of credibility and authority to educational and reference material, and are therefore probably more attentive to the messages that they convey, and susceptible to the sway of their influence.

Given the importance of the textbook in the development of the learner, the question then becomes, what images of men and women emerge in the study of the texts under analysis. In order to show the images presented, the researcher has read a collection of thirty-one narratives,<sup>1</sup> identified the themes that emerged and analysed the messages conveyed. Due to the multiplicity of themes found in any narrative, only those relevant to the study will be dealt with. In so doing the subsidiary themes will not be ignored. Whenever they help shed light on the analysis they will be referred to. The themes are organized into three categories, namely models of ideal behavior, models of reprehensible behavior, and maintaining social balance.

The study assumes that children read texts as culturally significant and that the content of these texts should be considered as influencing the children's worldview. Koza (1992: 29) confirms that textbooks are designed not only to transmit factual knowledge, but also to have an impact on the students' values and behaviours. As a 'responsive --- audience' (Finnegan 1970: 351) children read the narratives in both the linguistic and extra linguistics contexts. Narratives communicate messages about what kind of behavior is appropriate for girls to engage in. Mtuze (1990: 17) points out that it is important for girls to be subjected to this 'training' since they are future custodians of revered social norms. However, as shown in this work, one needs to view these critically.

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<sup>1</sup> These are contained in a book entitled *Sinkayinkayi* which is currently used at the Secondary level (forms 1-3) in Swaziland schools.

The inculcating of norms takes place through representing positive models that are presented as good to be emulated, and models that are to be avoided. These form the first and second categories of our discussion. According to social learning theory of sex-role development, sex typed behaviors are incorporated into a child's repertoire through selective imitation of culturally designated appropriate sex role behavior (Maccoby and Jacklin 1974). Duncan, cited in Kumar (1982: 301) confirms that, by selecting and representing certain images and ideas out of the repertoire of symbols, a writer prepares the audience to act out those forms in their lives. The positive images reflect societal expectations and stereotypes, while the negative ones reflect public censure for aberrant behavior. In a way, these stories are part of disciplining the young people into appropriate roles. The stories also present models of what happens when these roles are acted out without necessary balance, and this forms the third category in the analysis.

### **3.1 Models of ideal behaviour**

Folklore is a pedagogic device. When societies educate both in an informal or formal sense, they do so with a particular aim in view. As a result the aims of education will be determined by what a society regards as its acceptable worldview. The core of African education is directed towards living in a well-ordered society. Many forms are used to instruct and discipline members of the society. The narratives serve as educational tools and pedagogic instruments to transmit acceptable codes and patterns of behaviors to the younger generation. The narratives are geared towards moulding the characters of the younger generations at the crucial formative years of their lives.

The folktales are intended to have a salutary regulatory effect on society. Malcolm, cited in Satyo (1977: 98) confirms this as follows:

They are told for purposes of enforcing or, at any rate, supporting some point of family discipline or tribal custom. They uphold conduct that is for the good of the society and welfare of the community.

This stresses the fact that the attempt to expose the learner to certain experiences is a deliberate and planned activity. Pongweni (1998: 16) argues that folktales exclusively seek to inculcate values that buttress, rather than interrogate the status quo. As the study reveals, these narratives seem to stress exemplary conduct and self sacrifice in the case of girls more than in the case of boys.

### 3.1.1 Beauty

Portraying the appearance of a girl, beauty is the main feature foregrounded in the narratives. The girls' constitution is carefully scrutinized. The greatest attention is devoted to the physical looks of the girls (*Khabonina* and *Lomalanga na Lomvula*, folktales 1 & 30 respectively in the appendix).

*Abemuhle kakhulu Khabonina...Bamtsandza Khabonina ngebuhle bakhe.* (Khabonina was of exceptional beauty...The in-laws loved Khabonina because of her beauty.)

*Lomalanga abemuhle njengelilanga liphuma. Lomvula abemkhulu, amubi sisu silapha, netihlatsi tingakaya...Abemuhle Lomalanga vele kwamfanela kuba yinkhosikati yeNkhosi...*(Lomalanga was as beautiful as the rising sun. Lomvula was big, ugly, with big stomach and cheeks. Lomalanga was really beautiful and qualified as a Queen).

The girls do not do anything for themselves, their beauty and their goodness ensures they will be saved. They are presented in such a way that their strength and success lie in their beauty rather than achievement. Wollstonecraft cited in Maclagan (1982:

23) confirms this as follows, 'women are told from their infancy, and told by the examples of their mothers, that... softness of temper, outward obedience...will obtain for them the protection of men; and should they be beautiful, every thing else is needless...' The narrator seems to deliberately refrain from giving us a glimpse of their general conduct. Khabonina, Lomalanga, Buhlaluse and Ngcezema are subjects of study regarding this role relationship. The first two will be discussed in detail.

It is Khabonina's beauty that wins her the love of her in-laws. Lomalanga's beauty linked to her ability to understand the mystery of the plant<sup>3</sup> qualifies her as a Queen. That she is close to nature shows her ability to tend the king's interests. This depicts the supportive role of women. Perumal (1997: 62) states that the image of the passive, delicate, and moral female is reinforced by the fact that women are closely connected with plants. The picture we are presented with is that a women's first duty is to be beautiful. Her beauty comes about also through her compliance and patience. The ideal woman is pretty, humble, and polite.

### **3. 1. 2 Great Mother**

A good woman saves man's soul whatever the cost (May 1981: 112). The woman is fairly assertive in *Dumba* (folktale 14 in the appendix) when she gives orders to Dumba not to eat figs on his way to his in-laws. His disregard for the orders brings shame to him. Her wisdom is revealed. We see her role as an educator and nurturer, the custodian of 'soul work.'

In *Zinana* and the *Lizimu lesisu lesikhulu* (folktales 13 & 5 in the appendix) the woman is depicted as 'great mother'. The female stereotype as great giver of life manifests itself clearly in these two narratives. Otherwise the woman only features as subordinate throughout. She shows extraordinary bravery when she goes out to hunt the dangerous cannibal and the elephant. The woman kills the dangerous creatures. However she is unlikely to be paid or given any positive public recognition<sup>4</sup>. She remains a non-person. Instead she is known as 'just a wife', a label, which belittles all her dedication. Moreover she fulfils her role as a wife, adhering to custom, never stepping out of her role as a perfect wife. Throughout these two narratives concern for others is a pervasive theme. Apart from the familiar depiction of females in domestic chores these stories emphasized female sacrifice and suffering for others.

### 3. 1. 3 Leadership

The folktale *Inyanyabulembu* (folktale 25 in the appendix) is in consonance with Swazi political culture, where age and gender influence rank. The order of questioning in the tale, starting with the males; old men, old women, men, women, boys and girls portray males as bearers of knowledge and wisdom. Seniority in age is highly respected and males dominate political leadership. It is not by accident that a male rather than a female avails himself for the daring and risky undertaking of going to search for *Inyanyabulembu*.

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<sup>3</sup> The fish that nurtured Lomalanga told her that if it is caught and killed, she must take the bones and throw them in the king's garden. Lomalanga did as instructed; this is the plant that grew from where the bones were thrown.

<sup>4</sup> Compare with the boys in narratives 22 (*Mpompo*) and 25 (*Inyanyabulembu*)

Due to his bravery the boy is given the position of a chief, a position traditionally occupied by males. The message deduced from this particular folktale is that leadership is exclusively a male trait, and that a boy's strength lies in his achievement, as opposed to the girl whose success depends on beauty.

### 3. 1. 4 Domestic chores

The tales are preoccupied with domestic scenes, with women as housewives and mothers. Following the patriarchal dichotomy of sex based role assignment; the inside of the house becomes the female realm and the outside the male sphere of activity. This is evidenced in the English lexicography related to the word 'tool'. Men use tools and machines outside. Women use utensils for indoor activities. According to Penelope (1990: 43) in English we talk of kitchen utensils, kitchen appliances, and kitchen gadgets. To fight their adversaries the women in the narratives employ these utensils they are accustomed to. In *Lizimu lesichobo* (folktale 15 in the appendix) she uses a grinding stone, and in *Zinana* (folktale 13 in the appendix) she uses a knife, matches, pot and firewood.

The women's place is in the home where she can display womanhood evidenced by hospitality and generosity. Women are depicted as home bound and performing their normal household chores. Cott (1977: 64) explains it as follows,

The central convention of domesticity was the contrast between the home and the world. Home was an "oasis in the desert", a "sanctuary" where "sympathy, honor, virtue are assembled", where "disinterested love is ready to sacrifice everything at the alter of affection".

The narratives are full of mothers who do not work and fathers who do. The narratives *Lomalanga and Lomvula* and *Mphuphu Mnandi* (folktales 30 & 3 in the appendix) heighten the conviction that domestic tasks are the domain of women; men must go out and work. This promotes the patriarchal familial formation of bread winning husband and dependent wife. The narratives thus become an affirmation of tradition. Thus the education received by girls is more often of a domestic rather than a technical nature. Girls are educated and socialized to be good wives, in order to bolster patriarchal values of African society. Daughters are not given the means to imagine a destiny for themselves other than the one their mothers have endured, being both a wife and a daughter in-law. In *Litje Likantunjambili* (folktale 17 in the appendix) the girl stays at home and keeps house as a genuine mother. The boy hunts, for without him the girl would starve. In *Sinkayinkayi* (folktale 2 in the appendix) the girl is made to partake in adult life activities by being assigned to be a nursemaid and by grinding the samp.

In *Lonkombose* and *Demthelele* (folktale 7 in the appendix) we are told that the girls will help with household chores like fetching water and wood, preparing the floor with cow dung, and cooking. In *Inswelaboya* (folktale 29 in the appendix) the mother comes home shouting;

*'Nosizo, -- ufotile yini? Usindzile endlini? ---- Uwakhile yini emanti? Uphekile?'* (Nolusizo did you collect firewood? — Did you clean the house? – Did you fetch water?)

This shows that girls are represented with images of what it means to be a girl through these roles. This is obviously in preparation for their future roles as mothers. The girls in the tales are gradually being introduced into the performance of

household duties so that by the time they come of age they are capable of coping with all household duties on their own (Ngcangca 1987).

### 3. 1. 5 Marriage

Marriage is the most popular theme in the narratives. *Khabonina*, *Lizimu lesisu lesikhulu*, *Intfombatane nelibhubesi*, *Mthezuka naLukhwekhwane*, *Imbulumahashane*, *Nganyana lo*, *Inswelaboya* and *Lomalanga na Lomvula* (folktales 1,5, 8, 9, 12, 16, 29, & 30 in the appendix)<sup>5</sup>. The description of women as compared to that of men differs strikingly in the narratives. By and large, women characters are defined by their relationship to men. They are somebody's daughter or wife or mother. It is rare in the narratives to find female characters with a destiny of their own. Mary Aleen (1972: 2) confirms this as follows, 'in my early reading of fiction I recall few great ladies, but whenever a likely woman appeared, I cheered here on and hoped that she might be more than someone's sweetheart. It never happened.' The only acceptable forms of female definition are by means of the sexual roles of marriage and motherhood. Through this one realizes that a woman has no home of her own, but only a temporary lease on whatever space patriarchy consigns to her.

In most of the tales, marriage and motherhood are characterized as the most important vocational concerns for women. Girls are portrayed as destined for marriage and child bearing. This is evidenced in the following tales, *Khabonina*, *Lizimu lesisu lesikhulu*, *Intfombatane nelibhubesi*, *Mthezuka* and *Lalukhwekhwana*, *Citsekile*, *Imbulumahashane*, *Nganyana Lo!* *Inswelaboya*, *Lomalanga* and *Lomvula*

(cf. preceding paragraph). All these girls whose lives end in marriage are rewarded for their compliance by giving birth to beautiful babies. Babies are also shown to be what fulfils them. In Africa, to marry and have children is the purpose of life for women (Knappert 1977).

Because marriage is rated as an ultimate destiny of women, the wedding ceremony is considered a more important event for women than for men (Adams & Laurities 1976: 29, Dlamini 1994: 90). The central focus of the event is upon the woman. This is an indication of patriarchal priorities. The bride's individuality is tamed, thus the wearing of *sidvwaba* (a traditional leather skirt). This is true of Khabonina (folktale 1 in the appendix). The wedding is a subtle way of incorporation into a subordinate position.

Although marriage is presented as a social obligation, sometimes girls must go through a test before they can marry. They must be worthy of a man. *Lomalanga* has to uproot a flower to marry the king. There are no similar 'tests' for men in the tales.

### 3. 1. 6 The muted voices

In many societies it is believed that women talk too much. English literature is full of characters that confirm the stereotype of a talkative woman (Chaika 1994: 5-36, Coates 1986: 35). McConwell-Ginnet (1990: 158) explains why English literature is saturated with talkative women. Being talkative can be seen as unimportant, rather

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<sup>5</sup> This is also true of Zulu according to Msimang (1983: 168). Oosthuizen supports this by stating that in the Stuart collection, out of 39 human tales 25 of them deal with marriage.

than speaking words of wisdom. It comes as no surprise therefore that the folktales, which are the subject of the present study, are saturated with silent women, often held up as an ideal. There are many more female characters than female speakers. Most of the female protagonists are silent. Silence is synonymous with obedience (Coates 1986: 35-36; Penelope 1990: xxii). This is a virtue to be striven for by women. A silent, submissive wife is presented favourably.

Working from the premise that women in Africa are relatively disadvantaged, oppressed and exploited, Bukonya (1998: 3) adds that one of the tools used to disenfranchise her has been the silencing of her voice. Traditionally a woman 'has no mouth'. The woman's oracy rights are limited. The classical example is the 'kneeling address' at *esibayeni* (cattle byre). Women are expected to kneel down when addressing the Nation at the cattle byre. This act rules out any possibility of equitable interaction in any oratorical encounter. In traditional Swazi society a woman never reaches a stage where she gains freedom of speech. Perumal (1997: 52) argues that the 'theft of speech' is part of woman's powerlessness. In these tales, the fathers are much more important than the mothers who are dead silent. Fathers speak and mothers remain silent. In stories like *Khabonina and Buhlaluse benkhosi* (folktales 1& 15 in the appendix) the mothers give birth and we do not hear about their role again, and that is a symbol of ultimate silencing. Actually it is not that women do not speak, often they are explicitly prevented from speaking by social taboos, customs or practices. This silencing contributes significantly to the woman's disadvantaged position in society. Pongweni (1998: 10) argues that silencing the woman places

severe limitations on the woman's productivity, and her capacity to contribute creatively to the communal activity.

### **3. 1. 7 Moulding of personalities**

The narrative *Litje likantunjambi* (folktale 17 in the appendix) is a classic example of a narrative where females are portrayed as subordinate to males in a number of ways. In this narrative one encounters a smart, brave and very assertive boy, who leads the girl. The girl, on the other hand, is compliant and willing to submit to the brother's leadership. The girl is presented as having no initiative. She takes no decisions in matters pertaining to their stay in *Litje likantunjambili*. All she has to do is comply with decisions laid down for her by the brother. When she acts on her own she blunders, as can be seen by the grilling of the fat in the absence of the brother. A cannibal comes and captures her after frying the fat. Again the brother rescues her. The girl promises to commit no further mischief. From that moment the brother gives her the guidance and protection she needs. The girl gets herself into trouble convincing us of her need for brother's protection. The message to the students from this particular tale is that if you are a male your responsibility is to solve all life's problems for yourself and for any female in your particular environment, from mother to wife to daughter and sister.

The narrative presents the female character as totally passive and dependent on the male character. The boy, on the other hand, is in command of every situation. He is a strong and brave person to be admired. We get a clear portrayal of males as characters who make things happen while females deal with things that happen to them. From

the very same tale we observe good masculine behaviour, but inappropriately applied.

It was the boy's doings that made them end up in trouble as the following excerpt shows;

*Lobabe watsi kulomfana nalentfombatane abangene engutjeni balale...Lenguatjana bebalele ngayo yayinesikhala idzabukile. Lomfana akatange alale abebuka ngalesikhala...Umfan solo uyabuka konke lokwentekako...Sebahambile, emini umfana watsi pheka tinkhobe. Yatsi lentfombatane utatentani tinkhobe? Watsi umfana ngiyatimine musakungibuta...Wase ukhokha lenyoni wenta njengoba uyise bekenta ebusuku...Yakhihlita emasi inyoni solo umfana angayikhawulisi ate aphele emasi enyonini. Bayitsatsa bayihloma lutsi lapha etibunu yandiza yabaleka...Batsi nababuya ekhaya entsambama boyise nenina babona emabala lamhlophe bamangala...Yase ingena endlini ibita lomfati, imtjela kutsi kufuneka labantfwana bajeziswe bafakwe tinsungulo letishosako etindlebeni...Bakhala babaleka bangena esitibeni...Bahamba babona litje lelikhulu lomfana wafike wahlabela...*

(The father instructed the boy and the girl to get into the blanket and sleep...The blanket was torn and had a hole. The boy did not sleep but peeped through the hole...He observed every thing that was happening...When they had gone, during the day the boy instructed the girl to cook *emancoba*. The girl asked the boy what he was going to do with *emancobo*. The boy said, she should not ask him for he knows why...The boy then took the bird out and did exactly what the father was doing at night...the bird squirted, the boy did not stop it until the sour milk was finished. They took the bird inserted a sharp instrument at its back and it flew away. When the parents came home they saw the yard covered with white milk and were shocked...The man entered into the house, called the wife and told her that the children must be severely punished, by having red hot wires inserted into their ears... they cried ran away into a pool...They left and saw a big stone. Upon arrival the boy sang saying...).

To get a cow from the cattle herders the boy puffed smoke, darkness covered the area and they could not see each other. Meanwhile he was driving the cow away. The two characters in this narrative can thus be said to be sex-typed in their personalities and activities. They represent, to a high degree, the traditional models of masculinity and femininity with which the young Swazi boys and girls have been, and to some extent still are, expected to identify. In the same fashion masculinity and femininity are thus

graded in the formative years of the children. Such models predispose boys to demand and perform dominant and domineering roles in society. In direct contrast the models predispose girls to accept and assume subordinate roles.

### **3.1.8 Problem solving**

Despite the fact that there are more female than male characters in the tales, they are rarely found as central characters. They appear primarily as minor characters. When they appear at all, they are often passive figures dependent on male characters. In many of the folktales girls are depicted as helpless, while the boys are presented as intelligent and problem solvers. Girls are rarely seen in situations that require them to solve problems. Should they be found in such circumstances, all they do is sit down and cry.

The narrative of *Ngcezema* (folktale 28 in the appendix) has the most unappealing female characters. These characters have a very low sense of reasoning. No doubt these would fall far below slow learners, they are actually dull. The image depicted in this narrative is that of a careless mother who shows no motherly concern. She is a 'neglector' one who is devoid of any maternal feelings. It also shows some stupidity on the part of the woman. Having lunch does not mean one should not eat supper. Unfortunately this is how the careless mother interpreted things. She can be understood as nothing more than an irresponsible mother.

The young girl in *Ngcezema* allows herself to be ill treated, victimized by the folktale creature every day. Why did she go to the unknown animal to start with? Why didn't she report it to the father there and then? Given the opportunity to disclose

everything, she does not, instead she cries. These are the most uninteresting and unthinking female characters.

In *Khabonina* (folktale 1 in the appendix), the cousin, though she had thought of a rope, took no initiative but sat down and cried until a man came to her rescue. In *Ngcezema* and *Lomalanga and Lomvula* (folktales 28 & 30 in the appendix) it is the father who noted that the girl was losing weight. After discovering the problem he set out to solve it.

It is clear from the preceding points that more than just being passive, the female characters in the tales are emotional. The narratives are instilling a tradition that a woman's life is a life of tears.

All newborn babies cry at birth. Stahl cited in Kligman (1984: 170) adds that so do the mothers because 'she' is not 'he'. Traditionally the bride must cry, this ritual of crying is prescribed for her and the other women present. When someone dies women cry. That women are important figures in situations involving life and death means they are no less important in shaping our idea of home. Kligman contends that from beginning to end a deluge of tears obscures women's clear vision of their circumstances. It is clear from the present study that the literature studied here reduces and restricts women to the level of human beings, who unable to act openly to solve problems, have merely to suffer oppression.

In *Intsenetja* (folktale 27 in the appendix) the female unable to solve her problems directly, resorts to deception. The male character identifies that something is not right with the child, only to discover that there is no child, only a stone. The man would not live with the problem. As a way of restoring the normal order he sets out to look for his child, confronts and solves the problem directly.

Males also display ability, initiative and inventiveness. The few boys are constantly portrayed as daring (*Intjadvo*, *Inyanyabulembu*, vide folktales 4 & 25 in the appendix) intelligent and problem solvers (see *Mpompo*, *Lizimu lesisu lesikhulu*, folktales 22 & 5 in the appendix). They are achievers, heroic and aggressive (Litje *Likantunjambili*, folktale 17 in the appendix). Boys display positive qualities admired by the community, for example in *Mpompo* and *Lizimu lesisu lesikhulu*, (folktales 22 & 5 in the appendix).

The broader community is involved when the agent is a boy but seldom when it is a girl. For the female the emphasis is more on the family where she has to render her services. This very act suggests that boys have a wider audience in the narratives. They have a more public role, as evidenced by the fact that they are made rulers of the people. This is evidenced in the two tales, *Mpompo* and *Lizimu lesisu lesikhulu*, (folktales 22 & 5 in the appendix).

### **3.1.9 Rewards**

In most of the tales immediate rewards are bestowed on the protagonists. Righteousness is rewarded and evil is punished so that the social harmony may be

maintained. Huck (1979: 15) makes the following remarks about folktales 'Poetic justice prevails; the good and the just are eventually rewarded, while the evil are punished. Wishes come true but not without the fulfilment of a task or trial'. Close examination reveals that these rewards are often connected with marriage. Msimang (1986: 168) argues that marriage is the greatest triumph that a hero can achieve. In *Mpompo* and *Inyanyabulembu* (folktales 22 & 25 in the appendix) the boys are rewarded with herds of cattle, probably with a view to starting their own herds for the payment of *lobola*. Their reward is material and empowering. Kuper (1952: 18) confirms that for the Swazis, subjects contribute cattle for their chief's first wife. The girls in *Intfombatane nelibhubesi*, *Inswelaboya* (folktales 8 & 29 in the appendix) are rewarded with marriage; the reward is being chosen. Even in their marriages virtues contributory to good behaviour and successful marriages are always praised. Vices, which result in social conflict, are decried.

### 3. 1. 10 Kin ties

Kin relations are frequently expressed in terms of one character being the possessor and another the possessed. Smith (1985: 46) shows the tendency for females to be defined in terms of male relations. Kin structures were examined for all 31 narratives. Males are portrayed as owners and the females as owned as evidenced by narratives (1, 3, 11, 12, 15, & 24) respectively,

*Indvodza yayinebafati labanyenti* . (A man had many wives).

*Lenye indvodza beyinemfati nebantfwana* . (A certain man had a wife and children).

*Indvodza beyinebafati labanyenti*. (A man had many wives).

*Indvodza lebeyinebafati labalishumi*. (A man who had ten wives...).

*Indvodza lebeyinebafati labanyenti...* (A man who had many wives...).

*Inkhosi letsite beyinemantfombatane lamanyenti.* (A certain king had many princesses).

*Indvodza yateka bafati labanyenti.* (A man married many wives).

Automatically the owner becomes the primary character while the owned is described in relation to that primacy. The possessor could be seen as being in a position of power over the possessed. This is another measure of the centrality of the male characters. (Gupter and Lee 1989: 28). In the present study females never possess males. The distribution of kin terms suggests that females are even less prominent than the small number of female protagonists would suggest.

### **3. 2 Models of reprehensible behaviour**

There are many ways by which children are taught to take their proper place in society. Folktales are the most favoured ones, as can be seen in the discussion that follows

#### **3. 2. 1 Competition**

Girls are depicted as competing and fighting over men and not ideas. They are portrayed as vying for the father or husband figure. Men are sought after; women are seen to be in need and incomplete. In *Lizimu lesichobo* and *Buhlaluse beNkhosi* (folktales 15 & 11 in the appendix) the girls compete for the father's love to such an extent that they attempt to kill the father's favorite, as can be witnessed in the following extracts respectively:

*...indvodza beyinebafati labanyenti. Lomunye umfati walendvodza abenentfombatane yinye ete labanye bantfwana. Lendvodza beyitsandza lomntfwana loyedvwa kakhulu. Lamantfombatane lamanye ase enta lisu lelibi lekuhlupha lentfombatane lenye.*

(...a man had many wives. One of his wives only had one daughter and no other child. The man loved this only daughter. The other girls thought of a way of persecuting the other girl).

*...indvodza beyinebafati labanyenti. Lomunye umfati abete umntfwana. Kwatsi mhlazana atfola umntfwana, watfola umntfwana wentfombatane lomuhle...Wametsa ligama watsi ngu Buhlaluse beNkhosi. Wakhula Buhlaluse beNkhosi amuhle kwengca bonkhe bantfwana beyise...Kuhambe kwahamba avele amtondza Buhlaluse beNkhosi lalamanye emantfombatane, ase acabanga lisu lekubulala Buhlaluse. (...a man had many wives. One of the wives did not have a child. The day she conceived she gave birth to a beautiful baby girl...She named her Buhlaluse beNkhosi. Buhlaluse grew up more beautiful than her stepsisters...after some time the other girls developed hatred towards Buhlaluse, they then plotted to kill her.)*

In *Mthezuka* and *Lalukhwekhwana* (folktale 9 in the appendix) we witness a competition for the husband figure. In Swazi culture proposing love to a man by a woman is a serious aberration. But here we are presented with such a case. The act is not punished because the girl's major task is to acquire by any means necessary whatever the culture considers as positive: a husband, a family, a home, marriage, if they are to avoid the miseries of becoming old maids. In patriarchal society a woman who does not seek or attain these is seen to be in need and incomplete.

Marriage is the completion of life. Mbiti (1975: 13) confirms this as follows:

For African people, marriage is the focus of existence...Therefore, marriage is a duty, a requirement from the corporate society, and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate. Otherwisw he who does not participate in it is a curse to the community, he is a rebel and a lawbreaker, he is not only abnormal but under-human.

### 3. 2. 2 Free woman

It is maintained that in folktales we see the traditional construction of female personhood (Masuku 1998: 91). Yet within this framework we see some women breaking free of the most common stereotypes of womanhood. We witness the emergence of a woman who refuses to be enshakled by oppressive social norms. A woman who feels she can become a wife without sacrificing a grain. The narrative *Citsekile* (folktale 10 in the appendix) presents a female character that has not repressed her independent self. Unfortunately such are usually ridiculed and severely punished.

*Citsekile* is unlike the traditional passive woman. She does not satisfy the customary demands placed on a wife like *Kukotita*. *Citsekile* is not duty conscious. She lacks the very virtue which according to Ngcangca (1987: 10) every household head would prize and be proud of. Even worse, she sends the grandmother to get her water. One day when all others were in the fields *Citsekile* is in the house with the old grandmother. *Citsekile* demands that the old woman should bring her water. This flouts norms because *Citsekile* is supposed to start life as a subordinate daughter in law. She is expected by custom to wake up very early before sunrise, prepare breakfast, fetch water and sweep the yard. A daughter –in- law is supposed to obey the mother in law and work laboriously. Actually, she is supposed to provide the whole family with all household services.

As a custodian and jealous guardian of the dignity and respect that accompanies womanhood in Swazi society<sup>6</sup>, the grandmother cannot entertain her instruction. Since Citsekile is incompetent she falls into the water, and is taken home to her parents. The failure of her marriage affirms tradition. Traditionally to act in a responsible way is the highest virtue and to neglect ones duty is a vice. She is disciplined for disregarding her role. A woman who is not 'feminine', that is, one who does not subordinate herself, puts herself outside the boundaries of respect. It is always the girl who stands to lose if she fails to display certain basic attributes like duty consciousness, humility, and self-sacrifice (Mtuze1990). Throughout *Sinkayinkayi* virtues contributory to good behaviour and successful marriage are praised. Vices, which result in social conflict, are decried as evidenced above. The moral is that people should conform to societal norms, and those who do not conform are punished.

### **3. 3 Maintaining social balance**

Folklore is used as a means of applying social pressure and exercising social control in order to maintain conformity to acceptable behaviour patterns (Groenewald 1998: 3). Cope (1978: 196) affirms that folktales reflect cultural concerns. Thus many forms of folklore are used to approve or disapprove of certain forms of behaviour. The following discussion testifies to this.

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<sup>6</sup> This is given to women who adhere to traditional roles. These are the women who are called upon to prepare the woman about to be married long before the time. She is told that in marriage she is going to encounter a lot of problems, and is expected to exercise a lot of patience in order to make a success of it. (Dlamini: 1994: 90) See also Mtuze (1990: 48) and Ngcagca (1987: 8)

### 3.3.1 Woman Alone

In *Dinka wena Dinka* (folktale 18 in the appendix) we find a single woman and her son. The narrative makes it clear that, 'even as a young boy, man is old'. John Stuart Mill in Romaine (1994: 102) puts forth the view that 'What is to be a boy, to grow in the belief that without any merit or exertion of his own, by the mere fact of being born a male he is by right the superior of an entire half of the human race'. This seems to come out clearly from the character of the boy in the narrative under discussion. The boy utters an aggressive and authoritative statement.

*Lomfati abelivila angafuni kuyolima. Ngalelinye lilanga lomntfwana wabuta unina; Yemake wena utawulima nini? Ngoba bafati bonke baphumile bayolima, kodvwa wena ulibele kulala?....Bonke bafati batsatsa titja nemasikela bayofula. Lomfati wacala umkhuba wekweba kulenye insimi.* (This woman was lazy she did not want to go and plough. One day this child asked the mother; Mother when are you going to plough? Because other women are all out to plough but you are busy sleeping? ...This woman developed a habit of stealing from another field).

His statement depicts an adult woman as less intelligent than her very own son. Feminists concerned with the socialization process argue that an individual speech reflects culturally learnt identities. Coates (1986: 56) confirms this assertion as follows, 'children acquire not only gender appropriate behavior, but also a knowledge of the folk linguistic beliefs of the society'. In this particular narrative the superiority of man's sex is obvious.

Our encounter with this female single parent, who is struggling to bring up her child, implies that women cannot cope on their own. They invariably need the help of a man or even a very young son. Firstly, the woman had to be alerted by her young son as to

what to do. Failure to comply forced her to depend on another man's field, an act that led to her death. Accordingly, woman alone is nothing but disaster.

The narrative also highlights a very prevalent attitude in a sexist society, that although men are depicted as independent and existing in their own right, women tend to be portrayed in relation to other people, as a wife or mother.

### 3.3.2 Food

It is important to know that men tend cattle; women utilize the products that come from the cow like the skin. This indicates the secondary status of women. Milk and cows are symbols of prosperity and are usually associated with men, 'the economic heads of the household' in traditional Swazi society. Within the social framework, cattle the preserve of men, are a principal source of wealth and medium of exchange<sup>7</sup>.

Swazi women are tightly fettered by cultural prohibitions regarding eating certain foods (*Salukati kamkhwenyane*, folktale 31 in the appendix) yet the preparation of food is always the duty of women. The issue of food centres on sour milk as can be seen from the following example.

*In Litje likantunjambili* (folktale 17 in the appendix) the woman has to prepare *emancobo* (boiled corn). This was going to be mixed with sour milk. This is a highly

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<sup>7</sup> On a practical level cattle were a considerable source of food, more for milk than for meat. In addition, they provided many valuable by-products such as skin for clothing and hide and horn for containers...Bride wealth, the cornerstone of tribal marriages, was calculated in terms of cattle...(West 1976: 8).

rated and cherished dish in the traditional Swazi society.<sup>8</sup> Usually when a woman prepares this dish for her husband she is acknowledging their marital relationship. Specifically, she is acknowledging her subordination and inferior position compared to that of her husband. In the same tale we have a brother instructing his sister to prepare boiled corn. She is registering her inferiority and powerlessness. This comes out clearly in their behaviors after leaving home, where the boy thinks the sister is a soft and delicate individual incapable of reason. Thus he defends, protects and thinks for her. And by so doing he substitutes his reality for hers.

It is clear from the narrative *Salikati kamkhwenyane* (folktale 31 in the appendix) that whoever violates a custom puts herself into trouble. The *salukati*, old woman suffers greatly by her impersonation of her son-in-law and by eating the forbidden *emasi*, sour milk, which is a violation of a cultural prohibition. The term *salukati* according to Canonici (1987: 45) denotes 'a wrinkled old hag, who is useless to herself and to society, who has practically no rights, no any function to fulfill'. Accordingly we see in her the epitome of 'lack'.<sup>9</sup> Her attempts to eliminate her 'lack' lead her to endless troubles. When the old woman manages to partake in the forbidden sour milk she is discovered. Being sent to fetch water from a river without frogs punishes the old woman. This is tantamount to condemning her to death. Finally she finds the river but it belongs to the king of the animals. According to Canonici (ibid: 45) 'She is a 'nothing', a complete 'lack', an *isalukati*. She can only await death which is looming

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<sup>8</sup> See also Neethling (1991: 85)

<sup>9</sup> 'Lack' is often the motivation or the starting point of a tale, as it represents an imbalance which must be rectified, or a flint, which can set fire to the whole situation. Lack can be objectified in many ways.

Examples

b) 'Chakijane was hungry and had no food.' c) A woman had ten babies and had no nursemaid. Canonici (1987: 21)

over her during her journey and by the riverside'. The futility for the pursuit for equal opportunity is highlighted by Watkins et al (1992: 165) who states that '...you struggle to climb a few rungs up the promotional ladder, and you find that you are not going to rise up any further. You've reached the 'glass ceiling', the invisible barrier that no amount of legislation seems to be able to break. It teaches you that equal opportunity is a myth'.

### **3.3.3 Social justice**

The thematic concern around social justice is one of the strongest in the narratives. *Lonkombose na Demthelele* (folktale 7 in the appendix) presents a community where girls perform domestic chores and practice to be future adults. It is also out of this that the crisis occurs; Lonkombose breaks the pot. The parents try to kill Lonkombose for what appears to be a petty offence. The parents' anger is out of proportion with Lonkombose's actions, because a human life and a utensil do not weigh equally. The parents are materialistic, giving more value to material things than to human life. It is unjust for parents to torture and kill her. Lonkombose stands out as a victim of very harsh punishment. Thus when she resurrects she symbolizes the triumph of humility over aggression and violence. Lonkombose is thrown into the pool by the parents and is rescued by the water snake, the python, that makes her king of the water, (which is equivalent to marriage).

The main theme of the preceding narrative is the relationship between parents and children. The narratives inculcate the importance of obedience to parents. However,

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after reading the narrative we are left feeling that parental discipline for children requires checks and balances to guard against extremes (Miruka 1999). The narrative *Imbulumahashane* (folktale 25 in the appendix) parallels the preceding tale where a man unjustly kills his favourite wife for eating his meat. The husband exhibits excessive authority and irrational punishment over the wife.

Also, in the same narrative, the *Imbulu* victimizes the dead woman's daughter using the woman's symbol of wifeness, her *sidvwaba* (traditional leather skirt). She suffers all sorts of humiliation and injustice. She also remains passive as this creature abuses her. Thus subverted, she loses everything, including her identity as a human being. This is symbolic of the passage from father's property to husband's. This reminds us of what Ferguson (1977: 37) calls 'feminine mystique', which she defines as the 'willingness of the woman to lose her own identity', a primary attribute of the submissive wife stereotype.

In *Lomalanga na Lomvula* (folktale 30 in the appendix) one encounters a powerless little girl in a hostile household. There is a motherless child under the guidance of a stepmother who despises and persecutes her. The stepmother persecutes Lomalanga when she as a child should be protected, but instead she is victimized. The person going through all this is a girl of eight years without material means ('lack'). Lomalanga is solely dependent on the house she lives in for support and whatever strands of woman worth she can cling to. Her salvation comes when she uproots the flower in the king's garden, a test that qualifies her as a Queen. Lomalanga is rewarded with a husband because she has been kind and obedient. The narrative

instils the notion that in order to achieve fame and recognition, girls are to be self-sacrificing. The narrative teaches the girls that love must be purchased through suffering and self-sacrifice. The image portrayed is willing submission to violence (Hall et al 1976: 118), but at the same time, then excessive violence is shown to have achieved the very opposite of what the stepmother had intended. The correct order is established.

### 3.3.4 Polygamy

Polygamy forms an integral part of most of the narratives. The polygamous inclination of men is presented as quite natural. In African society polygamy is not viewed critically as in western cultures. Jones, Palmer and Jones (1983: 41) have this to say:

The issue of polygamy in Africa remains a controversial one. The received African wisdom seems to be that polygamy has distinct social and economic advantages, that its practiced in the traditional milieu does not necessarily result in the erosion of the status and dignity of the woman and that it is perfectly accepted by both men and women.

All the folktales about polygamous unions show images of jealousy and witchcraft in the women characters. In *Buhlaluse beNkhosi* and *Lizimu Lesichobo* (folktale 11, 7 & 15 in the appendix) we find two girls who were the only ones born of their mothers in the polygamous arrangement. Other co-wives had many children. The fathers loved their only daughters. The stepsisters were jealous thus they plotted to kill the loved daughters. However they did not succeed. In both instances jealousy is decried because custom has room for polygamy.

### **3.3.5 Collectivism**

Hare in *Chakijan* (folktale 20 in the appendix) is portrayed as an idle and conceited individual who refuses to participate in digging a well. In the narrative Hare takes advantage of the whole collective effort of the society. Hare's stupid reason for not participating in the search for water (i.e. going to the toilet) and the silly requests of asking to drink and promising the animals honey, are indicative of the fact that the society is expected to condemn and not emulate such destructive and anti social behaviours. In a nutshell, collective work for the good of the society is encouraged. This is particularly the responsibility of women. Men strive more for individual recognition.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

In the folktales we find a record of the traditional construction of the female personhood. The narratives that the girls read prepare them for the goal of marriage, and never independence. Within the Swazi corpus of folktales moralising tales dominate. The explicit and implicit messages reflect rigid morals. The folktales are used as an unconscious strategy to help children to find their identity and their future gender roles in society. An overwhelming majority of the folktales strongly reinforce the traditional stereotypes of male and female behaviour. Patriarchy does not visualize women stepping out of their traditional role. Girls and women are portrayed as subordinate to men in a number of ways. Girl characters are consistently dull. Women are usually portrayed as mothers and wives with no role in the community besides in the home. Their whole life, as presented, revolves around domestic chores and child rearing. Such images, surely, do not only limit the educational and

occupational aspirations of the girls, but also give a false impression of what their future lives will be. That these narratives are less than lifelike where females are concerned is very unhealthy.

The images of what women are and what they might be, as presented in the folktales, are integral elements in girls' decisions about their educational futures. The restricted lifestyles of their adult acquaintances depress their own ambitions and orients them ever more firmly towards marriage and motherhood. It makes sense, therefore, to make their priorities love, marriage, husbands, children, and careers more or less in that sequence.

Swazi children read about males as active, intelligent, and authority figures. On the other hand, they read that women retain major responsibility for household chores and for bearing and raising children. Boys and girls who have been socialized into thinking that such rigid divisions are right will have their beliefs confirmed by such materials. Truly speaking this should not be the case, because in Swaziland today women occupy prestigious positions, such as the Vice Chancellor position of the University of Swaziland, Deans of Faculties and principals. It is time authors and narrators depict females in responsible and active roles, instead of relying on traditional and stereotyped notions. Since we want our children to think of themselves, as worthy human beings, educators should enhance a 'socially active' education, where individuals of all walks of life enjoy the involvement in a variety of activities.

On the basis of the data presented, it is clear that the tales cannot portray a broad and comprehensive view of Swazi society. There is therefore a need to improve on the depiction of societal groups. Since the school curriculum is the major contributor to social attitudes, it can be used to change these attitudes. This recommendation is explored further in chapter five of this work.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### IDEOLOGICAL BIAS IN THE NOVEL

Textbooks embody what Raymond Williams called a selective tradition---someone's selection, someone's vision of legitimate knowledge and culture, one that in the process of enfranchising one group's cultural capital disenfranchises another's---They help set canons of truthfulness, and as such, also help recreate a major reference point for what knowledge, culture, belief, and morality are (Apple 1991: 4).

#### 4. Introduction

Apple's notion and definition of ideology fuelled the investigation in this chapter. Apple (1979: 20) defines ideology as a system of 'ideas, beliefs, fundamental commitments or values about social reality'. He further describes the interest theory, based on Marxist thinking, which perceives ideology's primary role as the justification of the vested interest of existing or contending political, economic or other groups. It is seen as a form of false consciousness, which distorts one's picture of social reality and serves the interest of the dominant group in society. The images we have in our heads come out of literature and history. Howe (1976: 242) contends that before we can change these images we must see them clearly enough to exorcise them.

Bourdieu (1977) states that school knowledge expresses and legitimizes the interest of powerful groups in society. That the school curricula and the textbook in particular are potent agents of the 'selective tradition' is supported by Reynolds (1997: 55). The previous chapter has analysed this selective tradition at work in folktales, prescribed

at junior levels in siSwati education. However the argument can be extended to all prescribed books like the novel, prescribed at more senior levels. The novel is a modern genre, however the message may still be traditional and patriarchal. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate, through a thematic analysis of a prescribed novel the possibility that patriarchal ideology is sustained through the alter years of schooling. The focus of this chapter is the novel, which is one of the genres that allow the author to present the inner nature of the characters. By analysing a novel in addition to the folktales (Chapter 3) the researcher shows the consistent depiction of gender roles for both men and women in traditional and modern genres in early and advanced school education. The novel *Ubolibamba Lingashoni* (Your Days Are Numbered) by E.A.B. Mkhonta is examined in order to explore the host of crude and subtle ways it supports patriarchal ideology.

#### **4.1 Summary of the novel 'Your days are numbered'**

*Mkhandlo and his wife La Malambe are blessed with only one daughter, Tobhini, a girl of exceptional beauty. They lead a traditional life. Parental scepticism regarding the education of girls is a burning issue in this community. However, Mkhandlo does everything he can to educate his daughter. Tobhini is sent to school so that she can read her father's mail, since the parents are illiterate. Tobhini is therefore an educated girl under parents who are strict and not educated. As a result they subscribe to divergent social values*

*Tobhini has a suitor by the name of Sakhile, a very humble and hard working man. Tobhini does not like him because he was poor. Tobhini finally settles with a white man in the face of every body's disapproval. This white man is a German. Germans are enemies of the Swazi nation, as they killed a number of Swazis including Tobhini's grandfather during the Second World War. The ancestors will not like to see any*

*Germans in an Africa's homestead. Tobhini is informed and warned about the dangers of marrying a German. She decides to take her own way. Thus she has to cut ties with the family. A goat is buried in her place as a sign of excommunication.*

*Lungisiwe, Tobhini's best friend is dismissed from work because Tobhini has lied to her husband about Lungisiwe. Tobhini and Vota leave for Germany where they are wedded. The joy of their marriage is short lived because she is barren. Vota wants a child, a son in particular. All doctors consulted disclose in no uncertain terms that the problem is with Tobhini. The mother-in-law does not like Tobhini. She attacks her son for marrying an African when there are so many beautiful white ladies.*

*The ancestors in the form of her now deceased father start attacking Tobhini at night. Medical doctors fail to cure this. Tobhini suggests that she goes home and talk to the ancestors. She is sent home and divorced in absentia. She discovers that her parents are both dead. Khanjana, the father's friend reconciles her with the parents and ancestors. All her friends are now married with children. Tobhini is finally saved in a Tent Revival. She testifies to a number of people who also believe in the Living God. Tobhini finally marries one elderly man in church. She is employed in the rural Hospital as a secretary.*

## **4. 2 Depiction of Girls**

### **4. 2. 1 Beauty**

Tobhini is the main character in the novel, and predictably, Tobhini is another beauty.

Using the direct method of characterization the author concentrates on the girl's

physical appearance. This is how he describes the compelling power of her beauty:

*Tobhini yintfombi phela hhayi kudlala nje. Lonke live lapha eMkhuzweni aliwuvuli umlomo ngebuhle bakhe---lutsi lwemtimba wakhe lwakheke kamnandzi impela ngoba utsi kantsi uncama aphindze eme kahle. Ungulenhlobo leluhlata ngelibala ledume ngekushayana ngesitfunti. Lapha enhloko uchinile emtimbeni ugcoke lilokwe (Mkhonta1990: 1)*

(Tobhini is a real lady. Every body in the area talks about her beauty...she has a well-built structure, she is slender and well figured.

She has a dark dignified complexion. She has braids and wears a dress).

The main female character is portrayed in a traditional role with her beauty rating high in her social values. Attention is devoted to the looks of the girl, her complexion, hairstyle and type of dress. One also gathers that the girl must wear a dress and braid her hair. The disapproval when she wears trousers reinforces the patriarchal values of African society.

#### 4. 2. 2 Over educated girl child

Parental concern regarding the education of girls is greatly evidenced in this novel. One of the frustrations experienced by girls is to be deprived of educational opportunities for various reasons. Tobhini was brought up in an environment where men did not support education for girls. Her father, fearing that he might end up not getting *lobola*, ordered her to leave school. She had to stay at home. After all, a woman's entire place is traditionally in the home where she has to do household chores. At least her fate is better than the other girls whose parents did not see the need to educate them at all. Tobhini was lucky because she even went up to Standard Five, though she was educated with sinister motives, and the following excerpt confirms that. According to the narrator she is highly educated.

*Nekute amngenise esikolweni wentiwa yinhlupheko yekusolo atingelana nebantfu bekumfundzela tincwadzi letibuya kumnakabo...Lenye yaleto tincwadzi yefika seyivulekile ibuya eposini. Seyifundywa kwevakala kutsi umnakabo abemtfumelele imali...Ngenca yalobo buhlungu bekulahlekelwa yimali, wafaka Tobhini esikolweni kutoba nguye lomtsatsela tincwadzi takhe eposini nalomfundzelako (Mkhonta 1990: 2)*

(Even sending her to school was necessitated by the problems he encountered whenever he had to read mail from his brother. One letter reached his hands open from the post office. Upon reading he discovered that his brother had sent him money. Because of that pain

of losing money, he sent Tobhini to school so that she should be the one collecting his mail and reading his letters.)

*(Wafundza-ke vele ngoba wate wefika ebangeni lesihlanu(Mkhonta 1990: 1)*  
(She is indeed educated since she went up to Standard Five )

According to Mtuze (1990:68) the reason for this reluctance is based on the fact that the girl will get married before compensating her parents for the expenses incurred in educating her. This reluctance is not only peculiar to Swazis. Cott (1977: 101) has this to say:

Seventeenth century Englanders paid slight attention to the education of women. Since women's intellect was considered inferior to men's, extensive learning for women was considered inappropriate at worse dangerous.

Swazi men do not send their girls to school, claiming that school corrupts girls. They evade the fact that they want to secure their dominant position, and that to achieve their aim they must disarm the girls of that powerful weapon, education. Because they know that education equips a woman to be economically independent and prepares her for a job or profession that will enable her to take care of herself and her children without the help of a man (Kathleen Frank in Jones Palmer and Jones 1987: 23).

Men also claim that an educated girl does not get married, instead she engages in prostitution under the disguise of modernization. Accordingly, young women must marry because they need men to legitimize their social position in a male dominated social order. This is a period where marriage is the core of human reputation. Parents would rather see their daughters marry than attain education. The excerpt that follows emphasizes that girls suffer more set backs than boys in this society.

*Phela lamanye emadvodza abese amdvose ngendlebe ambonisa ingoti yekufundzisa intfombatane ngalokwengcile. Abevele amtjele nje kutsi sifundziswa lesifundze kwekwengca sigcina sehlulekile kutfola umendvo. Ngekwati kwawo sifundziwsa sigcina sesigana lapha nalapha (Mkhonta 1990: 1-2)*

(Other men had warned him about the danger of educating a girl highly. They would tell him that a highly educated person fails to secure marriage. According to their knowledge an educated person engages in prostitution.)

One deduces from the above statements that every girl is conscientised right from early girlhood that her destiny is marriage. Therefore the girl soon learns that she cannot pass a certain age without becoming somebody's girlfriend and subsequently his wife.

#### **4. 2. 3 Intellectual strength**

We encounter two specified 'drop outs' in the novel; Tobhini and Sakhile. Tobhini drops out due to customary beliefs and Sakhile due to the death of his father. Tobhini is not involved in any beneficial project. In direct contrast, the boy starts working on his father's garden to everybody's amazement. Both have been exposed to the same education, Tobhini has been negatively influenced; education has changed her in a discernable way. She wears trousers and paints her mouth with lipstick. She has relaxed her hair. She hugs and kisses openly. She has lost her modesty. The author says Tobhini behaves differently and he attributes that to education.

*Utiphatsa silumbi nje Tobhini ngoba sewake walunguta esikolweni (Mkhonta 1990: 1).*

(Tobhini behaves in a modern way because she has been to school.)

Society takes note of the least deviation from the norm in the girl's behaviour. Sakhile has remained humble and sociable. He is just an exception amongst the boys in his area. Everybody says good things about him.

In these two characters one witnesses the perpetuation of the popular stereotype of boys being active and girls as passive. The boy is making things and earning money, the girl on the other hand is occupied with the cooking in her home and helping the mother. This perpetuates the 'folktale stereotype' as witnessed in the previous chapter. The boy is self-sufficient and the girl is dependent with all her beauty. Thus beauty becomes a half God given favour, and intelligence a whole one. This is a classic portrayal of the identification of women with domestic chores and the identification of men with reason and mental powers.

Sakhile is often described in complementary terms while Tobhini is described negatively as the following excerpts show:

*Kwakute kummangalise umuntfu kutiphatsa kwaTobhini ngendlela yesilumbi nakabona umuti nebatali bakhe kutsi banjani --- utiphatsa silungwana nje ngoba sewake walunguta esikolweni* (Mkhonta 1990: 1).

(One is always puzzled by Tobhini's modern behaviour considering her family background. She behaves in a modern way because she has been to school.)

*Bonke bantfu balapha eMkhuzweni abawuvali umlomo ngekukhutsala kwaSakhile* (Mkhonta 1990: 2). (Every body in the area talks about Sakhile's good work.)

*Unjalo nje umuntfu wakhona ute adlisane emahloni ngendlela lahlonipha ngayo* (Mkhonta 1990: 2). (He is surprisingly so humble)

#### 4. 2. 4 Man the ideal

The novel illustrates that whatever good or achievement a girl possesses is understood in terms of the father.

*Ute ufika ebangeni lesihlanu uyise uwa uyavuka utitsintsitsa konke lokuncane lanako kute akhone kumbhadalela esikolweni* (Mkhonta 1990: 2).

(Tobhini went as far as Standard Five because the father stripped himself of everything he had in order to pay the fees.)

The characteristics of the man are the norm and those of women are subsidiary. All reference is based on the male as the yardstick and norm. Even Tobhini's beauty is proper because it does not detract from the father.

*Wafuta mine nje waVilakati wate wangisusa phansi wayongihlabisa etulu. Kunina wa tsatsa letinyawo uyabona tona tinhle kodvwa atifiki ulatami* (Mkhonta 1990: 22).

(She is just my duplicate from head to toe. From her mother she only took the feet, you see those are nice but not as mine.)

She is like him as long as it is positive. When things go wrong, her father distances himself from her as the next theme shows.

### 5. 2. 5 The culture traitor

Culture tends to set limits for our lives. (Hall et al 1976: 148) reveals that people who do not do what culture expects of them have suffered punishments as serious as death. Cultural expectations for women can be harsh or gentle, but they are always compelling. In the novel Tobhini's father, Mkhando has been boasting that Tobhini is his duplicate. Then Tobhini falls in love with a German. By so doing deviating from what culture and tradition expects from a Swazi woman. As soon as the parents receive the news that she is in love with a German, an enemy of the Nation, Mkhando tells a different story altogether as evidenced by the following excerpt,

*Nanyalo ngitsi nangicabanga ngema Jalimane langibulalela babe...ngive emehlo ami ahlengetela tinyembeti...Usho emaJalimane wena awubotisa kulokunyenti umhlaba...Uyati mine wena Makhanda nakungase kwenteke ngilibone liJalimane ngingalingeka ngitfuke sengilisacata ngesagila. Nangikhumbula kutsi babe wafa ngenca yaso lesu sive ngiva ngehluleka kusitsetselela...Emadloti akafuni*

*nekumbona nalapho ahambe khona umJalimane ngobe kutsiwa abese akhumbuteka ngaleso sive lesasala emphini* (Mkhonta1990: 29).

(Whenever I think about the Germans who killed my father...tears flow...You mean the Germans, they caused a lot of harm. Makhandza if I can see a German I can be tempted to strike him by a knobkerrie. When I think that my father died because of that Nation I fail to forgive it. The ancestors do not even want to see a German, because that reminds of the members of the nation who died during the World War II.)

Mkhandlo clearly states that to bear a girl is to bear a problem. If they had given birth to a boy maybe things would not be as they are. The narrative makes it clear that whether you are born male or female will be of major consequence for all aspects of your life. This goes for the expectations that others in society will have of you and for your treatment by other people.

*Emadloti akitsi angima ekutaleni bantfwana. Aye angipha intfombatana kuphela lokuyintfo loyatiko nawe kutsi ayilisiti ngalutfo likhaya lakubo* (Mkhonta 1990: 39).

(Our ancestors deprived me of children. They gave me only a girl, something you know well that is of no help to her home)

#### **4. 2. 6 The Slut**

Through the delay in responding to Sakhile's proposal of marriage one would have seen in Tobhini the portrayal of a girl with prudence, someone who gives herself time to weigh whatever proposal is put in front of her. But her utterances dismiss all such positive thoughts. The theme of marrying for money as opposed to marrying for love is made clear. Tobhini would go for any man whose pockets are full of money. This is a serious indictment on the character of the girl. Loving men for financial gain is a serious aberration as it is a form of prostitution. The prediction of the error of educating a school child is validated.

--*kepha mine ngitsandza kugana umunfu lengineliciniso lekutsi ume kahle ngasetimalini* (Mkhonta 1990: 3). (.but I want to marry someone I know for sure is rich)

--*vele mine angilufuni luphuya.* (I just do not want a poor person)

#### 4. 2. 7 Free Woman

Women are changing and expanding the possibilities for themselves. Women try to overcome the usual cultural expectations by having the courage to say no to unacceptable choices. Tobhini is the heart of this endeavor. Tobhini is a different character altogether. She is more assertive than all the other women in the novel. From actions and speeches, Tobhini is bold, uncompromising and opposes her father. She liberates herself from the bonds of her father who wants to control her destiny under the auspices of ancestral spirits. All her actions are contrary to the traditional social code of conduct. As a result, her father disassociates himself from his daughter. As can be seen through Tobhini's actions, parental control these days is no longer final. The author suggests that her marriage against the wishes of her parents epitomizes the attitude of present day youth towards parental control. She breaks the ultimate social norm by marrying a white man, a German in particular. Time had come for her to serve her interest by marrying a rich man.

*Ngeke mine ngehlukane nalomlungu ngoba ngiyatitsandzela. Ningamane ningibulale nangabe niyangibulala* (Mkhonta 1990: 52).

(I will not part with my white man because I love him. You would rather kill me if you so wish)

In Tobhini one sees a truly free woman. She is alert and questioning rather than opinionated. No amount of persuasion can sway her from her decision. Lungisiwe fails. Her parents try, but to no avail. A liberated woman is portrayed in negative

terms in the book. May (1981: 105) confirms that portraits of such women in modern literature amount to stories of frustration. Because Tobhini is a non-conformist, the author deliberately portrays her as a contemptible character on whom all bad luck must be showered by way of retribution. This, however, has serious implications for women's independence. Seemingly, it implies that parental advice is a guarantee for happy marriage, whereas personal choice is a recipe for divorce and disaster. Mbiti (1975: 210) confirms that misfortune is regarded as punishment and restitution for misbehaviour. Her doom is brought about by her relentless effort to gain erotic freedom a problem for patriarchy. Pratt (1981: 24) comments:

When women heroes do seek erotic freedom, which we define as the right to make love when and with whom they wish, they meet all the opposition of the patriarchy.

This dark heroine who tastes rejection and opposition dominates the scene in the novel. Tobhini's behaviour sets her against her best friend Lungisiwe, the family, and the ancestors and actually against the whole society. She is alienated from her family and society. Whatever Tobhini does from now on solicits agitation and opposition.

*Cha kulungile Tobhini hamba nalowo mlungu wakho. Kodvwa ngiyafunga ngiyakomela ngitsi ubolibamba lingashoni. Kulowami umuti ngitsi ungaphindzi ulugcobe (Mkhonta 1990: 52).*

(Its fine Tobhini go with your white man but I swear your days are numbered. You must never set your foot on my home.)

Free as she is, Tobhini ironically still represents the usual stereotype of woman as a perpetual dependant. Tobhini reassures Davis of her total dependence on him. A girl as a dependant has no alternative but to rely on someone else for the rest of her life.

*Ngeke ngisale nawuhambako Devis ngoba nawe utivele kutsi kutsiwe ngingaphindzi ngilubhadze kulomutiwabo. Loko-ke kusho kutsi sengite limuva. Litsemba lami senguwe kuphela Dali, kusho Tobhini (Mkhonta 1990: 57)*

(I will not remain behind when you go Davis because you heard that I should not dare set my foot at their home. That means I have no home. My only hope is you darling, said Tobhini)

#### 4. 2. 8 Ancestral rejection

The constant consideration given to ancestors as well as the concern over offending or appeasing them takes up a major portion of the family life. According to Swazi tradition and belief, the ancestors play a crucial role in the lives of their living relatives. Mbiti (1975: 83) throws light on the significance of ancestral spirits in African society. They reward, punish, guide, protect, heal, and generally control the destiny of their living relatives. Ancestors are acknowledged by each family at every domestic event; births, marriages, illness, building, moving of homestead, etc<sup>10</sup>. The burial of the goat in the place of Tobhini really means that she no longer exists; she has no protection from the ancestors. She is thrown out of society. The paternal and maternal ancestors have somewhat different roles. According to Kuper (1963: 42) the paternal ancestors stress legal and moral obligations, and the maternal try to prevent harm from befalling their kin. The ancestor being addressed here is Mkhlandlo's father, the paternal one.

*Lomngcwabo leniwubonile-ke ma Phephetse---. Tobhini sewulilahle lilungelo lakhe lekuba ngumntfwanenu. Utimanyanise netitsa tenu emaJalimane labulala wena babe--babulala emaSwati lamanyenti--. Lulaka lwenu lwehliseleni kuye kuphela hhayi kitsi* (Mkhonta 1990: 55).

(The funeral you have seen you of the Phephetse's.... Tobhini had lost her right as a child of this home. She has befriended your enemies the Germans who killed you my father.... they killed many Swazis.... Your wrath should only be upon her and not on us).

---

<sup>10</sup> When a girl goes to marry, her mother weeps and tells her to behave with restraint in the husband's home though she may be subjected to unaccustomed restrictions and accusations, and her father ask the ancestors to protect her in the midst of her in-laws. (Kuper 1963: 24). In this particular instance the ancestors are informed about Tobhini's deviant behavior.

Knowing that words themselves, the material of ideas, are generally tools and weapons rather than honest coins, the foregoing utterance has very serious implications for the life of Tobhini. The traditional and common patterns of thought are clearly stipulated. However, Tobhini dissatisfied with ordinary society believes that man-made values and explanations are faltering. She does not see a sense in tolerating many 'pointless' values. Her arrogance here is yet another step along her path to disaster. The ancestors will be vindicated.

Tobhini is arrogant and refuses to conform to social norms and her mission to marry subsequently fails. Misfortune clouds her so much so that in the end she suffers the greatest humiliation, divorce, a rare thing in Swazi society. Tobhini suffers all these because she married against her parents' wishes, and with a man of her choice. Her father's wrath is only appeased when she apologizes to the ancestors and marries an African man. It is apparent from this that the correct marriage restores social order.

Reynolds (1997: 61) contends that many textbooks have overtly and covertly entrenched bias towards the narrow worldview of the dominant elite. By doing so they have undermined many people's beliefs in their own worth and inflated others. She adds that textbooks have insidiously helped to obstruct the growth of a critical and liberated spirit and have undermined subordinated group's beliefs in their own worth. This is very true of Tobhini who learns that to trust herself is to court disaster. Girls must believe that they must be good and conform to society's dictates because

those who do not are ostracized and meet with inevitable disaster. Lungisiwe, the girl who conforms to these social requirements is blessed with a successful marriage.

#### 4. 2. 9 Barren spouse

It has already been pointed out that ancestors continue to interest themselves in the affairs of their living relatives. In the texts under study all wrong doers suffer retribution as an expression of disapproval, and as a sign of the author's obedience to societal dictates (cf. *Citsekile* in 3.2.2 and *Salukali kamkhwenyane* in 3.2.3) As could be expected, retribution could not but befall the social deviant, Tobhini. No sooner had she and her husband arrived in Germany that cracks began to appear in their cursed marriage. Barrenness plagues Tobhini during her first years of marriage.

*Injabulo yemshado wabo noko yasheshe yaba butsakatsaka ngenca yekungatfoli imbeleko kwaTobhini. ...Vota abejabulele kusheshe atfole umtfwana, ikakhulu wemfana. Lutfo umtfwana kuvela....bonke boDokotela bebangakhohlwa kuchaza kutsi indzaba ingakuTobhini(mkhonta 1990: 66).*

(The joy of their marriage was short lived due to Tobhini's barrenness...Vota was so anxious to have a child, especially a boy. She could not reproduce... all doctors pointed out that the problem was with Tobhini.)

The tragedy of barrenness is a central theme of the novel. In African culture barrenness is the worst affliction a couple can endure. It is always attributed to the woman. In African culture for a woman to lack reproductive power is to be deprived of her very identity in life. Traditionally a woman without a child is a failed woman, her primary role being to render her husband name immortal by producing and nurturing a number of children, sons especially. Child bearing enhances the status of the woman in marriage and secures her marriage. Tobhini endures the same affliction though she was abroad. It is as if she cannot run away from the disaster she has

brought upon herself, it follows her, and haunts her. The Swazi cultural norms are shown to have a general, even a universal validity. This is one instance that proves that the school curriculum contributes to the formation of attitudes that make it easier for the powerful group whose knowledge is legitimised by school studies to manage and control society. Davis is persuaded by his mother to dump Tobhini, and he suddenly succumbs to that. Davis' mother is the stereotypical mother –in- law as she is not on good terms with her daughter in law. Tobhini believes that she is bewitching her and that is why she is barren.

#### **4. 2.10 Culture reigns supreme**

Tobhini is silenced by the blows and is forced to submit to the necessity of conforming to the externally imposed requirements of her masculine society. She must forget about Germany and go back to Africa, for her to succeed. She gets a job in a hospital as a secretary. As could be expected, the novel ends in the well-known archetypal ending, marriage. Tobhini's salvation however comes not only when she repents, but also when she gets married to a man of her own nationality.

#### **4. 3 Portrayal of wife and mother-image**

The novel contrasts Tobhini with her mother, who portrays the wife- mother image in the novel *Ubolibamba lingashoni*.

The mother and wife LaMalambe is given a fair amount of space but is shown in a purely nurturing and passive role. In the novel she conforms to her role as a mother.

She so much desires that her daughter be given a chance to proceed with her education beyond Standard Five.

*Watsi noma etama kumncenga LaMalambe, umkakhe, kutsi sebake bamyekele achubachubeke umntfwana, ngisho nje kuvuma Mkhandlo. Wavele wayekiswa kufundza wabuya watohlala ekhaya* (Mkhonta 1990: 2).

(Mkhandlu did not agree even when LaMalambe tried to persuade him to allow the child to proceed with her education. She was forced to leave school and went to stay at home.)

Men are decision makers for their families. From the above words it comes out clearly that LaMalambe, in her position as a wife, has very little to do or to say in decisions affecting her daughter.

Her act of desiring that Tobhini be given a lucky charm by the father shows her motherly concern about the future and welfare of the child.

*Nanyalo ngikufisela inhlanhla mnfwanami bamane bakubone bakini ufuke ucashwe...* (Mkhonta 1990: 9). (I wish you the best of luck my child, if only your ancestors can go with you.)

*Akabuye neyihlo atekuphahlela* (Mkhonta 1990: 9).

(Your father should come back and prepare some medicine for you)

All these portray her as a mother who cares for the child and is concerned about her future. The woman is seen in her supportive role. It is only in her housewife role that she finds her primary identity and worth, and she expends most of her energy on executing the role to perfection:

*Ewu wate wayilamula Mphephetse; uyati naboTobhini unesandla lesihle ekuphiseni... kudvumisa Khanjana* (Mkhonta: 21). (You have really helped Mphephetse; you know Tobhini's mother is an expert in brewing... said Khanjana.)

So obvious is the association of masculinity with superiority in this culture that even a woman's good qualities make her suitable for an inferior position. LaMalambe's skill and ability fit her admirably for the unpaid job of housewife. While the preparation of

beer is a woman's prerogative, her role ends as soon as the beer reaches the person to be entertained.

In this novel one also realizes that major decisions exclude direct participation of the woman. After Tobhini had vowed never to part with Vota, Mkhandlo discussed the matter about reporting Tobhini to the ancestors with Khanjana and resolves the matter.

*Kusasa lolokusako ngitawutsa tsa sinyatselo lesimatima ngalomntfwana. Kuphiphita Mkhandlo. Tinyatselo sini babe lotasitsatsa? Kubuta LaMalambe. Ngitakutjela kusasa ngoba angifuni kuyitekela emlilweni ingate ihambiseke (Mkhonta1990: 53).*  
(Tomorrow morning I am going to take serious action against this child. Said Mkhandlu angrily. What action are you going to take father? Aked LaMalambe. I will tell you tomorrow because I do not want it to spread.)

It is also clear from the above that women cannot keep secrets. Mkhandlo cannot tell LaMalambe because he fears that the news might spread. This depicts women as untrustworthy when it comes to secrets. Women are seen as generally failing to keep secrets.

#### **4. 4 Conclusion**

The analysis demonstrates that the story told is not neutral. The whole range of themes favour the interest of men, providing ideological justification for the dominance of men. They do not legitimize points of view and priorities of women that compete with these established traditional social codes. Thus Tobhini, though she starts as a bright atheist, ends as a Christian with the conviction that guilt, remorse and pain rule human life. She broke the rules and paid the price. The culture demands that such a spirit must be broken. Tobhini has been thoroughly disciplined, and this is

an example to other girls of what can happen if they do not conform. For young girls the message is clear: 'Don't even think of it'.

From this analysis it is clear how an unstated ideological assumptions pervade yet another prescribed book in Swazi schools. The views embedded in the narrative predispose the young adolescents to accept some values, and not others, and by so doing they provide unconscious boundaries of social choices. In other words, such texts impose beliefs and constrain choices. These boundaries are a basis for social management and control. The novel under study has given a concrete example and thus a substantive instruction about success and failures in social matters. Evidence of what constitutes success or failure as presented in Tobhini's life experiences, provide a compelling guide for making a choice. Anyon (1983: 52) states that this highlights the ideological characteristics of what schools teach; suggesting that social groups with power have had their perspectives legitimized and indicates that the school curriculum can lay a suggestive basis for social control.

Again, what emanates from the written word, the novel, seems to be essentially moulded by the values represented in orality, the folktales as discussed in the previous chapter. These values are, of course, often skewed in favour of patriarchy and they are often questionable in contemporary society.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

Having examined in some detail the various images of woman, we can now pause and take stock of them with a critical eye. The analysis reveals how culture puts boys in active and girls in passive roles through the texts they use at school. It is clear from this study that the literary curriculum both at secondary and high school like so many other social constructs is male dominated.

Having completed a comprehensive review of the bias in the two texts, there are discernible patterns that emerged and shed light on Swati society. There are virtually no women portrayed realistically in their diversity of roles and personalities. The image of women depicted in both folktales and the novel (chapters three and four) focuses on the family and hence on sex roles and domestic work. Women are confined to the home and denied any real existence outside their relationship with men. One can rightly conclude that the books that girls read in our schools prepare them early for the goal of marriage, hardly ever for work, and never for independence.

Though it falls outside the scope of the present study, it would however be worth investigating if this has bearing on the high rate of teenage pregnancies, and consequently on the number of dropouts in our Secondary and High Schools, as per News Paper Reports. (Appendix 2), especially if one considers Vuuren Nancy van's (1938: 12) claim that:

When persons are told so often that... by media, by the teachers, by the writers... that these are their group characteristics, the persons tend to live up to the descriptions, to what is expected of them... So if men... and men control business, advertising, education, the courts, the churches... say that women are the sex objects, dangerous, unintelligent, etc. then women will tend to view themselves as sex objects, dangerous, unintelligent, etc. and will try to act accordingly...

It is depressing that the reluctance to educate girls is 'preached' even by twenty first century cultured and enlightened persons. Mtuze (1990: 84) argues that the image of girls heavily shackled by distorted parental myths has prevented a number of girls from equipping themselves for competitive employment in the economic structures of the land. He adds that they had to be content with inferior education, which led them to inferior roles in life.

The two texts, *Sinkayinkayi* and *Ubolibamba lingashoni* present a very 'dishonest stereotyping' which results in the portrayal of gender roles as more specialized than the actual roles of males and females in country. Thus there is a need for prescribed texts to show more awareness of the real world. Smith (1985: 36) confirms this as follows:

... one would hope that the producers... would be constrained by the criteria of objectivity and realism, at least at the level of constructing images that reflect the relative numbers of men and women in society and the variety of roles that they perform.

A theme common to both genres analysed is the depiction of women's attractiveness. Their charms and beauty are described at length like in the case of Khabonina and Lomalanga (folktale 1 and 30 respectively in the appendix) and Tobhini (4.1.1). Also, women and girls are portrayed as victims of poverty while men and boys are cast in roles associated with wealth and productive activities.

Another component of the image shared by both texts is the desire for independence from traditional dictates. The images of Tobhini (novel) and Citsekile (folktale 10 in the appendix) depict a girl and a wife who want some measure of independence. Tobhini (5.2.7) wants to remain a wife without sacrificing any thing. The images depicted by the two characters show a change from the docile tradition conscious women to daring tradition-querying women. However, they pay for such rebellion by being humiliated. Through the depiction of the two females, the authors advocate respect and adherence to traditional and social norms, and to do otherwise it is risk disaster. From the experiences of Tobhini and Citsekile it becomes clear that the texts continue to perpetuate the patriarchal ideology, thereby subverting any significant attempt at gender reform.

Contrary to the desire for independence the theme of women as daughters, wives, and mothers whose sole purpose is to serve and be dominated by men is underscored throughout. Motherhood is glorified as the full time occupation.

Images of women created so far only depict women in social spheres. The narratives do not provide learners with a broad comprehensive and balanced view of society. Ngcanga (1987: 108) puts forth the view that images of women in education and technological spheres, in business world, and in politics would offer ample material for the novelist to forge ahead and keep society abreast of times. Little (1980: 57) confirms the assertion as follows:

... why is it so difficult to find a central character a female doctor?  
a lawyer, high ranking civil servant, director of public service, and

so on? In real life such persons do exist. Surely it is time for this fact to be signalled to the literature of the novelist in particular... Here, then is a challenge. It is a challenge that needs to be faced by female authors especially.

It is clear that the texts are full of sexism. Sexism in reading texts as quoted in Zimet (1980: 97) is defined as referring:

To all those attitudes and actions which relegate women to a secondary and inferior status in society. Textbooks are sexist if they omit the achievements of women, if they demean women by using patronizing language, or if they show women only in stereotype roles with less than the full range of human interests, traits and capabilities.

We cannot assume that our policy makers desire a clear-cut gender distinction for occupations. One might wish to suggest that school texts should portray a more balanced society. It is evident from the analysis that the present texts in our schools are not capable of moving the young generation towards such a balanced socialization pattern. Rather, the concentration of females in the domestic arena is likely to inculcate and reinforce in both sexes the expectations that males will not do domestic tasks. Thus the socialisation imbued in the texts needs to be considered. And because of the power of this genre as already argued, textbook writers need to develop a conscious awareness of their presentation of gender roles. By simply addressing sexist stereotypes presented in the texts, a different cultural force would be set in motion.

The Reading Teacher (1977: 288) provides a checklist for evaluating sex- stereotyping in reading materials to aid people wishing to choose non- sexist materials. It includes questions such as:

- Are boys and girls, men and women consistently presented in equal balance?

- Do boys and girls participate equally in both physical and intellectual activities?
- Do boys and girls, fathers and mothers participate in a wide variety of domestic chores, not only the ones traditional for their sexes?
- Do both boys and girls have a variety of choices and are they encouraged to aspire to various goals, including non- traditional ones if they show such inclination?
- Are both boys and girls shown developing independent lives, independently meeting challenges and finding their own solutions?
- Are women and men shown in a variety of occupations, including non- traditional ones? When women are portrayed as full time homemakers, are they depicted as competent and desicive?
- Do characters deprecate themselves because of their sex? (Example: 'I am only a girl'.)

By posing some questions towards a non-sexist literature, I have laid the foundation for the final section of this work- some tentative suggestions on how, in practice the educators could begin to counter sexism. Thus the following general recommendations are therefore put forward:

### **Recommendations**

- As textbooks continue to be seen as one of the agents of socialization their content needs to be more closely monitored by educational authorities to be able to move in the direction seen appropriate to current needs.

- Publishers need to improve the depiction of societal groups. Literature should include more females in leadership roles, which depicts them as intelligent and capable human beings with the ability to create and solve problems.
- Students should be provided with narratives that depict them working together, respecting each other and functioning as equals.
- Educators must recommend for inclusion in the curriculum narratives with a sense of relevance, focusing on areas that are central and important in the lives of young learners.
- A woman's desk should be established which would have an advisory role to the National Curriculum Centre
- Further research is necessary that will compare the textbook portrayal of female work force participation with the known labor force participation of women within the Swazi society. The expectations within textbooks should be compared to labor force realities known to students to determine

-If textbooks transfer values incongruent with those of current Swazi society.

-And if the textbooks' transmitted role expectations for girls tally the girls' own knowledge of female participation within the Swazi society work force.

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## Appendix I

### Folktales

#### ***Khabonina***

*Once upon a time a man had many wives. Amongst the wives who had children, one of them always gave birth to a very cute child. Unfortunately whenever she delivers the child would too cutt and would die, the others would poison the child.*

*One day she bore a sweet, cute baby girl. She took the child to her parental home. The child was named Khabonina. Khabonina was hidden in a baboon's skin, which covered her whole body. As she was growing old they would make her another baboon garment. Khabonina was very beautiful. The other women were laughing at Khabonina's mother. Whenever she came to visit they would say, 'what is this baboon?' They did not know that greater things lie underneath that skin.*

*When Khabonina was of age she fell in love with a man from far away. All the necessary preparations were done for her to join her in-laws. Her sisters were jealous of her and did not like her. They dressed her hair in the traditional way and she was really beautiful. They covered her with her skin again. The wedding day came. Her father slaughtered the fatted beast and summoned all those who were going to accompany her, including the traditional best lady. He addressed them collectively.*

*Khabonina's in-law's homestead was really far away. They set off on the journey. Khabonina had a cousin she trusted because she was an uncle's child. She was ever close to Khabonina; she is the one who was carrying the traditional leather skirt. While they were still on the way and the sun was about to set, they came to a very big forest. The route they had chosen had a deep donga on the right. One of her sisters, the one who hated her the most, pushed her into the pit. Khabonina went down into the depths of the pit. It was very dark inside, there were also bones of animals that had fallen inside and died there because they were unable to come out.*

*Khabonina cried down there. When the others were still contemplating on a plan to save her, the girl who had pushed her said, let us proceed a wedding is never postponed, that would be bad luck. She said 'I will replace her as the bride and be the wife to our brother in-law.' There were gentlemen, girls, men, and old maids; all agreed that they should proceed. The cousin remained there alone, crying. She would shout at some point saying 'Khabonina my cousin are you still alive?' Khabonina would respond saying, 'I am still alive cousin.' The umtsimba proceeded and they entered another homestead where they asked for a place to sleep. Khabonina's cousin slept on top of a tree because she was afraid of the forest animals. The next day the umtsimba proceeded with the journey as it was very far.*

*In the morning Khabonina's cousin came down from the tree went to the pit and on arrival shouted, 'Khabonina are you still there cousin?' Khabonina answered and said,*

*'I am still alive cousin'. Khabonina's cousin cried saying, what shall I do, she was afraid to leave her to report home. In the midst of that confusion there appeared a man that was cutting wood in the forest, and said, 'why are you crying you girl?' She said I am crying for my cousin who fell into this pit. The man said, 'do you think she is still alive or she is dead?' She said, she is there I have been calling her recently. The man asked the cousin, 'what can we do to take her out because whatever goes down here never comes out as it is so deep?' The cousin said, 'I have a plan'. The man said, 'what is the plan? The cousin said, 'Let us make a long rope, throw it into the pit and then pull her out'. They made the rope together. They tied it to a tree so that it could not slip off. Khabonina's cousin told her to hold tightly to the rope that was coming to her. She should also tie it around the waist. Khabonin did as instructed. They pulled out. The others were proceeding and about to start the wedding process. The people were commenting how relieved they were that Khabonina got into the pit as it would have been a shame to them to take a baboon for marriage.*

*They pulled and Khabonina surfaced, when the man looked he saw a baboon let loose the rope and scream. Khabonina went down to the bottom of the pit again. Khabonina's cousin cried and said to the man, 'please do not let off the rope that is my cousin, it is not an animal'. She then explained why Khabonina is like that. They pulled her out. Khabonina thanked the man. The man accompanied them to her in-laws' place. The man went via his home and took the fattest beast along. They travelled for the whole night without resting. They arrived in the morning, found the others dressing getting ready for the occasion. Khabonina, her cousin and the man sat together, separately from the rest. They slaughtered their beast. The man asked the other men to assist him in slaughtering the beast. They ate and dressed. After washing Khabonina removed the baboon's skin and threw it into the river. She wore her traditional leather skirt (sidvwaba). She was really beautiful. Her cousin dressed her neatly. When her sisters looked they received a shock of their lives. They all went to her and said, 'Oh! Our sister you are so cute.'*

*They sang and danced up to the homestead. The one who had pushed her to the pit was so embarrassed. The celebration was really enjoyable. Her in-laws loved Khabonina because of her beauty. Everything was reported to Khabonina's father. He gave the man a number of cattle thanking him for rescuing his daughter. Even the cousin was given some few cattle as a token of appreciation. Khabonina stayed well at her in-laws' place.*

### **Folktale2**

#### **Sinkayinkayi**

*Once upon a time a man and a wife gave birth to a baby boy. The woman then fetched her younger sister to be a nursemaid and carry the baby whilst she carries on with household chores. They used to plough big fields. During the night the man would perform his mysterious acts known only by him. At night the man would take unknown creatures to weed his field, the next morning there would be no weeds. People were so*

curious anxious to know what he uses because his fields were so clean, yet everybody else had his fields full of weeds.

One day when the woman had gone to check on the fields left maize, and instructed her young sister to grind and make samp. Before grinding her brother in law called her, taught her a nice song, and said he wanted her to sing it. However, she was warned not to sing the song if there are people around. The song goes

Sinkayinkayi sinkayinkayi  
Oh! Sinkayinkayi  
My in-law has seen that I am a snake  
Sinkayinkayi oh! Sinkayinkayi

When the girl was singing that song, the man would turn into a big snake, and reside at emsamo (right up into the house in direct opposite to the door). After he had turned into a snake for some time, the girl would cover him with a sleeping blanket; he would turn into a human being again. One day when they had brewed beer in this homestead, people came in their numbers, to drink the beer. The woman said to the girl she must grind samp.

The girl took the grinding stone and placed it outside next to the door where they were drinking. She started grinding the maize, ground, ground, ground, the grinding noise was heard, and the child then remembered the song taught by the brother in law.

The brother-in-law heard from inside the house and came out quickly, begged his sister-in-law to stop singing the song, and promised that he was going to give her a chicken, he went back to the house, and he continued with drinking. The girl forgot and started singing, the man started sweating and went out and told her not to sing the song, he promised to give her a goat, and the girl said she understood.

After a short while the girl sang. The man went out and said, do you see I am going to give you a cow, just keep quiet. He went back to the room. Before he could even sit down the girl started again, she said loudly,

Sinkayinkayi, sinkayinkayi,  
Oh! Sinkayinkayi,  
My in-law has seen that I am a snake,  
Sinkayinkayi oh sinkayinkayi.

The man turned into a very big snake, all the people from the house ran out including his wife. The girl then covered him with the blanket; he turned into a human being again. All the neighbors were terrified and said this person has bad things we noticed that from his fields, which are so, free of weed, when ever body is so troubled with weed.

### Folktale 3

#### *Nice mealie meal*

*Once upon a time, in a certain country there was a great famine. People starved and as a result men left their homes in search of jobs in other countries. A certain man had a wife and a child. One day he left his family early in the morning, and said he was going to look for a job, so that they could at least get something to eat. While on his journey, looking ahead he saw an enormous egg rolling on the ground, took the egg, and went back home with the egg. The woman saw her husband entering the house. The woman entered with him into the house and said, 'Father what is going on?' 'Sh! Do not make noise, where are the children? His wife told him that they had gone to play in the kraal. The man closed the door and told his wife; 'I found this egg on the way, so put it into this clay pot, cover it and do not dare open, till it hatches. I am going back now proceeding with my journey, so take care of whatever comes out of that until I come back'.*

*The wife stayed for three months without opening the clay pot. One night as she was sleeping with her children, she heard a rumbling noise coming out of the pot. When she opened up to see, she saw a creature opening its mouth. She poured a bit of mealie-meal into its mouth and it ate. She then placed a bowl of water and covered again. The next morning she heard a sweet song coming from the clay pot saying,*

*Nene nene, Nene nene,  
For you no longer grind the nice mealie meal,  
Nice mealie meal, nice mealie meal,  
For you no longer grind the nice mealie meal,  
Nice mealie meal nice mealie meal.*

*She was very shocked at what she heard. She realized that whenever hunger stroke this animal it sang the song. Morning and evening the song was sung, then she would give it mealie meal and water. As time went on, the food decreased, and the woman in distress thought it best to die at her parental home. At dawn she woke her children and directed them to her home, she remained behind putting every thing in place. She took a bucket as if she was going to fetch water, yet she was following her children. She passed by the river, dumped the bucket there, and proceeded to her parental home. The creature woke up and sang;*

*Nene nene, nene nene,  
For you no longer grind the nice mealie meal,  
Nice mealie meal nice mealie meal,  
For you no longer grind the nice mealie meal.*

*The creature finally got out of the clay pot, searched for food in the kitchen and found none. It went singing its song towards the river. It found the water pot, passed that sniffing the ground. It scented the smell where the mother and children had walked and followed. While they were relaxing at the wife's parental place they heard the creature singing. The children told their mother. The woman told the family members. The animal*

had a soft skin. They placed spikes into the path that led home. The animal had a soft skin; it trod on the spikes and died. When the man returned home, he found that grass had grown tall, and there was no sight of life. He went to check at her wife's place. Upon arrival he was scolded for the egg that he picked along the way.

#### Folktale 4

##### **Intjadvo**

Long, long ago there was a man who had a sick wife. The man went to a traditional healer who told him that only the heart of an intjadvo would heal his wife. One day the man prepared some provision and went to a place full of tintjadvo. The sun set while this man was still on his way. He entered another man's homestead and requested for a place to sleep. The host asked the man where he was going. The man explained that his wife is terribly sick, and the only thing that could cure her is the heart of an intjadvo.

The host explained that intjadvos are animals that are like human beings, except that they do not have hair. The man then requested the host to cut his hair so that he could look like tintjadvo.

The man woke up very early and proceeded to where intjadvos lived. The man was naked because tintjadvo do not wear anything. On arrival the elder intjadvo said 'Ntjadvo' and the man responded 'ntjadvo'.

These animals fed on mud and red soil. When they had finished eating they would hop on the rocks, and relieve themselves, passing out the red soil. The man did likewise, after eating the mud it would say 'Ntjadvo' and then release the red mud. The animals were very happy saying indeed you are an intjadvo.

Amongst the young ones there was one animal, which suspected and often said; 'This is not an intjadvo'. The others would respond 'away with you, this is an intjadvo, can't you see?' It would then keep quiet since it was young. In the place where these animals slept there was an old lady intjadvo, which did not go up to the mountain to eat the red mud. The animals would bring some for this old woman who stayed in the cave, as she could no longer walk a long distance to the mountain.

One day the man resolved to murder the old woman, because the hair was beginning to grow and they would soon realize that he is a human being. When the others woke up rushing to the mountain, the man remained pretending to be suffering from a terrible stomachache. When all the other animals had gone the man killed the old woman, and took the heart, then ran away. He came to the homestead where he had been offered a place, took his attire, passed his gratitude and went to his home. He gave the traditional healer the medicine and the wife was cured.

*The other tintjadvo came back carrying the red mud for the granny, they were met by blood, the granny dead, and the man was not there. The tintjadvo cried, the young one said, 'But I did tell you that was not an intjadvo but a human being'. The tintjadvo cried saying that in future they will inspect any thing that comes calling itself an intjadvo.*

### **Folktale 5**

#### ***The enormous bellied ogre***

*Once in ages past, a young maiden set off to seek marriage. She got married far from home. Very soon she conceived and bore a child. As time went on she heard flabbergasting news. News had spread that a massive fierce ogre had consumed a lot of humans, and all the residential homesteads had entered his gigantic stomach.*

*On a day so fine, she pleaded with her husband for permission to go home with the purpose of inspecting if her family was still safe from the danger she had heard of. Her groom agreed, and so she went.*

*As the sun was setting, two doves soared down and halted in front of her. As she stopped to see what they were up to, one said, 'Hello! How are you?' She responded saying, 'I am fine, and how do you do?' The other one inquisitively said, 'Where in the world are you going at this time of day, do you not know that there and there and all around is the dwelling place of mysterious, fierce ogres, who gobble up those who do not have knowledge of their works?' She lied consulting, 'I never knew that.' They instructed her to climb a large fig tree that stood in front of her. So the doves helped her climb. She sat there with her child in fear that the ogres might see her. The tree had many leaves and, it was an evergreen. Nothing upon the tree was to be seen from below.*

*When it got dark, a mob of man-eating giants crowded under the tree whilst they were all assembled there, half dead with fear the child urinated down the tree. The assembly below looked above in awe, amazed that the heavens were bringing forth rain.*

*In the treetop was a door. The woman decided to let it down. There was a large noise which made the ogres tremble, thinking that the sky was falling. The mother and child slept in the tree until dawn. They arose the next day and journeyed on. They reached their destiny at noon. They discovered that the cattle were skinny for they had been in the kraal for a long time, since the people of the house had been devoured.*

*The smell of human blood reached the nostrils of an ogre. Upon arrival at her home the woman climbed on a maize crib and waited. She had taken with her a big grinding stone. In no time the ogre was there. He set a furnace in the maize crib and relaxed there. The woman, raised the rock and threw it as aim fully as an archer arrow, and down it went. It struck the mighty creature's head and it died on the spot. What's more, it fell head onto*

*the blazing fire for it was very stupid. All turned to darkness as the cannibal lost touch with life.*

*The woman got down, took a knife and ripped the massive stomach. Out came her parents and relatives. She took some maize and ground them healthy softy porridge to help them recover. They thanked her with great gratitude and she stayed with them for a while. She journeyed back to her marriage home after a month, leaving the family better. The cows had regained their strength and had fattened up. For she used to take them to pasture everyday, lead them to the river's edge till they looked plumb.*

### **Folktale 6**

#### ***The cannibal that chopped itself***

*Once upon a time some girls went out in search of libendle from a far away country. The sun set while they were still on their way. They had to travel in darkness. As they were going they saw some fire from far away, and they went straight to that place. Upon arrival they saluted, it was a home for cannibals. The male cannibal ushered them in and gave them food. At night the girls heard some noise outside and it was the cannibal. The female cannibal was boiling water.*

*Amongst the girls there was one known as Lalukhwekhwane. She was very clever. But the others hated her for the skin disease. While all was happening outside the girls were wide awake, and listening attentively to every thing. Lalukhwekhwane said; 'Girls let us take logs and put them under the blankets and run away. And indeed, they did likewise. Lalukhwekhwane then pulled some hair and placed it right up in the hut where they were sleeping, and some at the entrance gate.*

*They left quietly so that the cannibals could not notice them. At dawn the cannibal went out to call others. It came to them and said; 'there is so plenty of meat at my place come for a feast.*

*When they were running away one of the girls forgot her mother's libendle. After they had gone for a distance the girl said, 'Oh! I have forgotten my mother's libendle'. She said to one of the girls; 'my uncle's child please accompany me'. The girl replied and said; Oh! When you are eating at your home do you say, uncle's child come let us eat? I am not going.' She asked another and said; 'My aunt's child please accompany me' She also repeated the same words and said, 'When you are eating do you say my aunt's child come let us eat?' they all refused until she went back alone.*

*The girls followed every instruction that Lalukhwekhwane gave them. She told them to make likhenya. They made one until it was big enough. They waited for the other girl who had gone back.*

*The cannibals coming with the host waited outside the home, the owner of the home shouted for he had heard that amongst the girls there was one by the name of Lalukhwekhwane. The hair at the entrance gate responded, they went straight there, but there was nothing. The cannibal called again saying, Lalukhwekhwane, and the hair in the hut where they were sleeping responded. The cannibals ran to that place, opened the door and forcefully went inside. They chopped the logs thinking that they were chopping the girls. 'You called us for meat yet you meant logs?' The cannibal apologized and explained that it was not aware that the girls ran away, and placed logs in their place.*

*The other cannibals devoured the one that had invited them. It was now in broad daylight and was beginning to be hot. The one who had forgotten her mother's bukhakha arrived. She stood at the door where the cannibals were and said, 'Please pass me my mother's grass'. One cannibal replied and said, 'Why don't you come in and take it yourself?' The cannibals continued eating. The cannibals were eating the other one raw they did not cook it.*

*The girl entered and snatched her mother's grass. She ran away. The cannibals were busy finishing their meat. Before departing from the other girls, she left a stick and told them that they should observe the stick. If it falls it would mean that she is dead, and if it slants it would mean that she is in danger. When the girls looked at the stick they saw it slanting, it was the time when she was snatching her mother's grass. As she was running away from the cannibals they saw it rise again.*

*When the cannibals finished eating their meat, they pursued after the girl. The girl ran faster than before. She came to the other girls and said, 'Let us run away for the cannibals are pursuing after us. Lalukhwekhwane said, 'Let us all ride on this likhenya, and it will take us home. The cannibals were drawing nearer. The cannibals tried to run but likhenya flew away faster and left them with their mouths wide open licking for meat, meat they had seen but will not eat. When they were right above their home, likhenya landed, they all came down and thanked Lalukhwekhwane. The cannibals went back home.*

### **Folktale 7**

#### ***Lonkhombose and Demthelele***

*Once long ago lived a man, his wife and two female children. These children usually helped in doing the household chores, like fetching water, dung polishing the floor and fetching firewood and cooking.*

*In this homestead their mother had warned them saying that amongst all of her water pots there was one which she didn't want them to carry or fetch water with. One day Lonkhombose said to Demthelele, 'Today I want us to fetch a lot of water, and I will use my mother's pot'. When they reached the river's edge, they filled their pots and Lonkhombose told her sister to help her carry it on her head. So Demthelele cautiously helped her put the pot on her head, they lost grip and the pot fell to the ground into a*

*hundred pieces. Lonkhombose wept and sent her sister to report at home immediately. She was a very kind-hearted girl. Demthelele got home to her parents and told them what had happened. Her mother raged with anger saying, 'Go, tell her to come home so that she can explain as to who gave her my pot'.*

*When Lonkhombose got home and her parents went to the river with her, where the pot had cracked. They beat her and went on to tie her to a tree near the river. Then they made their way home. When they had just gone a great wind arose and the rope she had been tied with tore and Lonkhombose drowned in the water. When she got into the depths of the lake she found two large serpents. She found a green mamba and a water python. The water python declared she should be devoured. Opposing to that the mamba said she should be crowned queen of the lake. So she stayed and ruled over the lake. There was dry land in the depths of the water, very beautiful land with sunshine. She ate all she wished for.*

*Demthelele usually went for water in that river. One day she carried a large pot and couldn't lift it onto her head, then she wondered as to who would help her. Then she sang out saying,*

*'Lonkhombose, Lonkhombose of father  
Please come and help me put this pot on my head  
Please come and help me put this pot on my head.'*

*Lonkhombose sang back:*

*'You are here begging me Demthelele,  
Your father and mother Demthelele,  
Tied me upon a tree Demthelele,  
The powerful wind arose, Demthelele,  
Drove me into a river, Demthelele,  
There came the water serpent Demthelele,  
And declared I be devoured Demthelele,  
Then came the green mamba Demthelele  
And declared I be spared, and crowned Queen of this lake, Demthelele.*

*When she had finished singing she got out and helped her, then sank back into the lake. Everyday she came with her water pot and always filled it to the brim then called her sister.*

*One day her mother enquired of her saying, 'well, you claim to fill the pot to the brim, who helps you haul it up, for when you get home you beg us to take it down for you?' She lied saying that no one helps her. Her mother said no word, thinking of how could her daughter carry a brim-filled pot when she old as she was couldn't.*

*So, one day Demthelele's mother hid near the lake while her daughter went to fetch water at the lake. When Demthelele got to the edge she filled the pot to the top, then she sang her daily song, asking her sister to come out. Lonkhombose did as usual; she came out*

and helped her. The mother watched and saw how cute her daughter had become from living in the river. She ran back home and told her husband about the happenings that had taken place by the lake. Demthelele's father said, 'Do not worry. I will go out there and see for myself.' He went there, where the mother had been hiding. Demthelele got to the lake's edge and did the daily procedure, while her father watched. As Lonkhombse drew out of the water to help her sister, their father ran, grabbed her and told her, 'Will you come home, your mother and I have are regretting what we did to you, we're very sorry.' So Lonkhombse, Demthelele and their father went back home. She forgave her parents.

### Folktale8

#### ***The girl and the cannibal***

Once upon a time two men went woodcutting in a forest. At noon one of the men said he wanted water because he was thirsty. The other man said he had seen a river. They went together to the river. The thirsty one knelt down and drank. While drinking they heard a voice from the forest saying, 'Who gave you my water?' Looking up they saw a lion with fire red eyes. 'I will eat you now!'

The man who was kneeling down drinking said, 'Please forgive me.' The cannibal said, 'what then shall you give me in return?' The man replied, 'I will give you my daughter'. The lion roared, 'When should I expect her?' 'I shall bring her to you this evening. I will send her to get some mealie cobs in my field' said the man. 'If you fail to give me your daughter, I will come to your homestead and devour every living soul.'

The two men went back home grieved, because they knew very well that the lion waited for the girl to devour. When evening came he called his daughter saying, 'I yearn for mealie cobs that have been fetched by you, so run to the field and get me some, my girl.' The girl was overjoyed thinking that her father loved her, and really wants mealie cobs that have been fetched by her.

When she got to the field, the lion was already there waitin. It appeared and try to catch her as she started cutting the maize stock, she cried loudly, and ran back home. As she was nearing home the lion went back. Again very late in the evening, the father said, 'My daughter please go again and get me maelie cobs, I cannot sleep without eating that, and I want one that has been collected by you'. Indeed the girl took the sickle and went back to the field. She did not return to the place where she had seen the lion. As she started cutting he heard some funny noise, she cried for help and went back home.

## Folktale 9

### ***Mthezuka and Halukhwekhwane***

*Once upon a time, a woman gave birth to a handsome bouncing baby boy. The boy's mother named him Mthezuka and always locked him in a hut, because she feared that people could steal her handsome boy. The boy went out only when going to the toilet.*

*The boy grew up and became a handsome young man. One day girls from another place went to see the boy who was said to be handsome. All the girls were beauties. When they got to Mthezuka's place, they found his mother outside making mats. They all knelt before her and sang a beautiful song.*

*'Yemamana thente! Yemamana thente!  
Tell Mthezuka thente!  
We love him thente!'*

*Mthezuka's mother was so excited because the girls were all beautiful and thought that anyone of them would be okay. She went to the hut and talked to Mthezuka through a hole. She said:*

*'Hey Mthezuka thente! Hey Mthezuka thente!  
Here are some beautiful girls thente! They love you thente!'*

*Mthezuka didn't have to see the girls, he just replied his mother through the a hole and said:*

*'Hey mamana thente! Hey mamana thente!  
Go and tell them thente! I don't love them thente!'*

*His mother clapped hands with disappointment and went back to say: 'He says he doesn't love you my children.' The girls left.*

*Many girls from different places came and he rejected them all. Another group came and one of the girls had sores all over the body. All the other girls didn't want to be near the girl that had sores. They didn't even want to go with her but she was so determined.*

*Along the way the girls tied the girl with long grass on the hands and feet. The girl cried but they left her there. When they got to Mthezuka's place they sang and Mthezuka's mother went to tell her son. Mthezuka said he didn't love them and they left.*

*The girls met Lalukhwekhwana and mocked her, 'where do you think you are going with all the sores?' Lalukhwekhwanana didn't bother to reply but went on. She found Mthezuka's mother making a mat and she sat down and said:*

*'Yemamana thente! Yemamana thente!  
Tell Mthezuka thente! I love him thente!'*

Mthezuka's mother ignored her and pretended not to have heard a word. She hated the sight of Lalukhwekhwana. Lalukhwekhwana sang again, and Mthezuka's mother went to inform Mthezuka.

*'Hey Mthezuka thente! Hey Mthezuka thente!*

*Here is Lalukhwekhwana thente! She says she loves you thente!'*

Mthezuka replied:

*'Hey mamana thente! Hey mamana thente!*

*Go and tell her that I love her thente!'*

Mthezuka's mother sang with anger thinking that Mthezuka didn't hear her well

*'Hey Mthezuka thente! Hey Mthezuka thente!*

*I say here is Lalukhwekhwana thente! She says she loves you thente!'*

Mthezuka said,

*'Hey mamana thente! Hey mamana thente!*

*Tell her I also love her thente!'*

Mthezuka gave his mother a special soap through the hole. She had to give it to Lalukhwekhwana – she had to warm water and wash her. Mthezuka's mother did that but she did not like it. 'Why is my son interested in this thing that is full eczema when so many beautiful girls have been coming here?'

Lalukhwekhwana was locked in her hut too. She recovered and turned to be a very beautiful lady. The day Mthezuka's mother went to check her she was so shocked to find a beautiful lady. She went to inform Mthezuka. Mthezuka said, 'Bring her I want to see her.' Mthezuka's mother fetched her with joy.

After a few months a party went to Lalukhwekhana's place to pay the bride price. When returning to Mthezuka's place some jealous people hid waiting to kill them. When Mthezuka's party got to that place, a mist started to form and the party passed without being noticed. Lalukhwekhwana stayed peacefully at her marital place, got beautiful children and lived happily ever after.

### **Folktale 10**

#### **Citzekile**

Once upon a time, a man and a woman gave birth to a beautiful baby girl. They decided to call her Citzekile. Citzekile was not allowed to do any household work because of her beauty. She would only take a bath, eat and sit. Citzekile did not know even the path that would take her to the river to get water.

When she came of age she fell in love with a gentleman from far away. Her wedding day came. She got married and went to stay at the man's place. Her relatives took her there and before they left they told her in-laws that they should not give her any work to do. Because the in-laws loved Citzekile they agreed. Time passed by, summer came and they cultivated. When the weeding time came they would go to the fields and work come back at lunchtime.

*Like all days, one day they woke up, cooked and went to the fields, forgetting to get water from the stream so that Citzekile would have water at easy reach. At mid-day Citzekile felt thirsty, she went to check for the water pot if there was any water to drink but found it empty. She went back to the old lady who was there to take care of her and said, 'Granny go get me some water to drink,' and the old lady replied, 'What!' 'Please go get me water', replied Citzekile. The old lady then said, 'How can it be that an old lady like me go get water yet you are supposed to be getting me water?' Citzekile did not reply but went out to the kitchen and took all the relevant utensils (inkhatsa, indzebe) and a clay pot and went to the river.*

*While she was trying to fill the clay pot with water using indzebe, the clay pot rolled down into the stream. She tried to use the inkhatsa to get water and fill the imbata but it also rolled down the stream. She tried to catch it but she also drowned. When she reached the ground she found that the place was dry, there were animals living there, and there was light from the sun. The place was very beautiful, full of trees. She stayed there until she got used to all the things that were done by the animals.*

*Back at her in-laws place when those who were in the fields during Citzekile's accident came back they asked the old lady saying, 'Where is Citzekile?' And she replied, 'I don't know, she said she was thirsty and that was when I last saw her.' They ran to check in the kitchen and found that the clay pot, indzebe and inkhatsa were missing. They exclaimed, saying: 'where did she go? Ever since when did she start water from the stream?' They ran to the stream, and found nothing, they thought she decide to go home. They went home and were afraid to report her disappearance to her parents.*

*One day Citzekile called all the animals she lived with to a meeting. She said to them, 'I want to sent you to my parents at home, tell them that I am here, I drowned when I was getting water.' She called a bird called 'ligobholo'; she said to it, 'If you go to my parents' home what can you say to them?' The bird replied, 'Gibh-go!' She then called a goat, 'What would yew say?' She asked the goat. 'Mm-e-e!' said the goat and an ass said, 'O-o-o-o-o'.*

*She then called a cock and it said, I can go and say, It then took a position where by it could be able to flap its wings and said, 'Ki-kilizi! Ki-kili kizi! I have come to report Citzekile, they sent her to go and fetch water in the stream. The hands are alerting each ather. Chwe! Chwe!' She then sent the cock to go. On it's way it met two men wanted to catch it but it flew away.*

*'Ki-kilizi! Ki-kili kizi!  
I have come to report Citzekile,  
They sent her to go and fetch water in the stream.  
The hands are alerting each ather. Chwe! Chwe!'*

*The family members listened to what the cock was saying. They then filled water containers with oil and brought with then traditional mats and followed the cock. When they reached the stream, they emptied one container into the stream and immediately inkhatsa emerged. They continued pouring more and more until Citzekile emerged. They*

laid traditional mats for her to walk until she reached home. She was as beautiful as ever. She never went back to stay with her in-laws ever again.

### Folktale 11

#### ***Buhlaluse benkhosi***

*Once upon a time a man had many wives. All the wives had many children except for one who did not have any children. One day when this particular one delivered, she gave birth to a very beautiful child. She named her Buhlaluse benkhosi. Buhlaluse grew up and was more beautiful than all her stepsisters.*

*The father loved this child called Buhlaluse. At every meal he would reserve some food for Buhlaluse, at noon he would call Buhlaluse and give her whatever she desires. Days went by, stepsisters hated Buhlaluse and plotted to kill her. They requested her from her mother saying that they are going to get clay for making clay pots. Her mother agreed because she needed the clay.*

*Buhlaluse had a dog she had been given by her father. The dog always accompanied her wherever she was going. Even on this particular day when they were going to the quarry the dog followed her. Along the way the other girls were laughing at the top of their voices. They would run ahead and laugh. They were laughing because they knew that Buhlaluse was seeing the sun for the last. Buhlaluse was a very descent girl. Buhlaluse noticed that there was something exciting but she did not know what it was.*

*They traveled until they reached the quarry. Upon arrival they said to Buhlaluse, 'Buhlaluse our sister you should remain on top and we will go down into the quarry. We will get the clay and bring some for you, for we fear that our father will beat us if we trouble you and make you get into the quarry.' Buhlaluse said, 'No my sisters it doesn't matter, I also want to get in and gather clay.' They refused and insisted that she should remain on top.*

*They went down dug the clay and did not bring any for her. They mocked saying, she is spoiled, and she thinks that we will spoil her like her mother and father. When they had finished they came out and said to Buhlaluse, 'Why are you sitting here? We are going now; you will remain alone with your dog here. Get in fast and get your clay. We are rushing home.' When she got in they started dancing and jumping on top of the quarry. They danced until the quarry collapsed with Buhlaluse inside. They ran home, left her crying underneath. The dog stayed there and did not move from the quarry.*

*When they came home they told the mother that Buhlaluse said she is going to her grandmother's place. And they knew very well that they were lying. The dog worked very hard. It dug trying to take her out. Buhlaluse had nothing to eat down there; as a result she ate the clay. She started getting thin because she was staying in a cold place and was starving. She turned into a bird.*

*At home the father was really troubled because Buhlaluse was not a disobedient child who would just go without reporting. After she had turned into a bird she came out of the pit and stayed in the trees eating fruits. The dog would hunt in the forest then come and sleep on top of the quarry.*

*One day Buhlaluse's uncle went out to cut wood next to the quarry. As he was cutting the wood he heard a bird singing'*

*Hey you, who is cutting wood in this forest  
Hey you who is cutting wood in this forest  
Please report to my mother at home  
That Buhlaluse benkhosi is nomore  
Siyendle and others buried her  
At the quarry at Ntozoma sogo*

*The man listened as the bird was singing, and heard that it was singing about Buhlaluse. He cut the wood again and the bird sung again. The uncle went home and told his brother, Buhlaluse's father, and together they went to the forest. Together they went to the forest with sorghum. They scattered sorghum and Buhlaluse's uncle cut the wood. The bird was hard singing like before. The father was overjoyed saying, it is my child.' The scattered the sorghum again and the bird came down. As it was eating the father caught it. It turned to Buhlaluse*

*They went home and her dog followed. When they got home the father was so angry because Buhlaluse had told her everything that happened to her that day. The father called all those who had gone to get clay into the house and beat them. He then told them that he is going to kill them because they are dangerous. He sharpened his axe, sat outside and called them one by one. They came out; lie down and he chopped the head. The mothers cried.*

### **Folktale 12**

#### ***Imbulumahashane***

*Once upon a time a man had ten wives. Amongst the ten there was only one who was the man's favorite. The man was a hunter. Every day he would go hunting. One day he went to hunt and did not catch anything. Because of anger the man killed the dog, cut off its head and feet and took it home. He went to his eldest wife and requested her to cook the meat. The woman together with her children refused saying, 'No father we do not cook a dog in our house.' He went to the second and she also refused. He moved from one to the other and they all refused. Finally he came to the last one, the favourite. When the children said, 'we do not cook a dog in our house', the mother interrupted saying, 'Where do you think your father should cook his meat because all the others have refused. Leave it father I will cook it for you.' The man went to the river for a bath, as he was tired.*

*After a short while the women called each other to go get firewood. They all left to the forest, ten of them. The children were busy playing outside. The favourite wife returned home. She ate all the meat and then put the cow's dung into the pot and returned to the forest again. When the man came back he went straight to the pot and found cow dung. He was so angry. He called all his wives and asked, 'who ate my meat from the pot?' they all denied knowledge of the meat even the one who ate the meat. The man then told them that early the next morning they should all go to the river that is where he will catch the one who ate the meat.*

*The other wives were so angry complaining that why should they all be bothered when the thief is known. The culprit requested her friend to dress her sicholo (traditional hat) nicely. The man left that night to the river. He hung a rope across the river. In the evening the woman who ate the meat called her daughter and said, 'You must put on this sidwvaba and sidziya (traditional leather skirt and an apron) put your brother on your back, and then go to kababekati (feminine of malume and malume is uncle, mother's brother). When you see this leaf turning red it will mean that I am dead. You must ride on this white cow in the kraal, take this bucket with the child's food and go to your uncle.*

*Very early in the morning all the women went down to the river. They found their husband already waiting for them. The man went across to the other side of the river on the rope. He then instructed the women to follow him on the same rope. The wives all crossed over until there was only one left, the favourite the very one who ate the meat. Seeing that there was no alternative she followed. When she was in the middle of the rope she fell into the river. The crocodiles devoured her immediately. The man cried and wanted to commit suicide. The other wives protested. The girl back at home saw the leave turning as red as scarlet. She did as her mother had instructed her. She carried the baby already dressed accordingly. She took the container with food and rode on the cow. They went and went and came to a fig tree. The girl took the child off and climbed up the tree to get figs. She ate and threw some to the child.*

*The cow was standing underneath the tree. The cow urinated and its urine ran into a hole and imbulu came out of that hole. The imbulu greeted the girl then ate the figs being thrown to the child. When the girl realized that the child is not getting anything, she came down from the tree.*

*The imbulu praised the girl saying, 'Oh you are so beautiful my sister, where are you going?' She disclosed everything not knowing that she is betraying herself. The mbulu then borrowed her skirt saying it wants to see how nice the skirt would fit on it. The mbulu gave the girl its skin. They walked. The mbulu rode the cow with the child and the girl walked along. The traveled for along distance the girl then asked the mbulu to come down and give her the skirt. The mbulu refused and promised to give the girl her skirt at a certain point. The mbulu kept shifting the points. They traveled until they reached the uncle's place. The cow was heard by its sound outside. The uncle sent children to check for the cow that comes home in broad daylight. The children came back and said, 'we do not know this big white cow and someone is riding on it. The uncle came out.*

*The mbulu spoke out first and it did not want to give the girl a chance. 'Hollow uncle! I am the daughter to your brother who married ten wives. My mother ate her meat then my father killed her. My mother said I should come here and stay with the child.' The uncle was so shocked at then news. There were many fields in this homestead. The uncle assigned the girl the duty of scaring the birds away from the fields. All the people feared the mbulu yet they feared the human being in an animal skin. In the fields the boy took turns in scaring the birds away from the corn. They would say, 'there they come mbulu mahashane.' The mbulu would respond, 'Let them eat the witches corn for they drive what is theirs out and bring what is not theirs closer.'*

*The children did not understand this. During the day they would all go to the river for a bath. The girl would take off the mbulu's skin, wash and put it on again. One day the children hid while mbulu was washing and the observed everything. They reported everything to the mother and was shocked. In this home there were a lot of containers (tingula) with emasi. Trouble had started here because every time there would be no curd but only water in the containers. One day the uncle went and hid herself next to the river. The process went as usual. The children shouted, 'there they are mbulu mahashane". The mbulu responded, 'Let them destroy the witches corn for they drive out what is theirs and bring the enemy closer.' At noon she went to the river to wash. As she was washing the uncle ran to her and caught her. She cried and ran for her skirt (the mbulu's skin) but the uncle took it. The girl explained everything and she was astounded when she heard the story.*

*The uncle promised to solve the problem. They knew the mbulu's weakness; its tail cannot resist emasi. A test was to be carried out the next morning. A pit was dug in the house with a bowl of emasi inside. Every member of the homestead was supposed to jump over the pit. They all jumped and imbulu mahashane kept moving back until it was the only one left. It tried to jump; it smelled emasi and thought it would just deep a portion of its tail but the whole body went down. It was killed immediately and buried there. They all rejoiced. The skin was removed from the cousin and was dressed nicely. She grew up and got married at the uncle's place.*

*From the mbulu's grave grew a big pumpkin and they thought a seed fell there. One day the cousin made fire and cooked the pumpkin. She went to fetch water left her child sleeping next to the fire. While she was away the pumpkin pumped out of the pot and took the child into the pot. It then slept on the child's place. The mother found the pumpkin in the child's place and the child dead in the pot, she wept. All the people came out. They smashed the pumpkin and threw it into the river.*

### **Folktale13**

### **Zinana**

*Once upon a time a woman, husband and their children decided to move away from their place. They walked until they got to a beautiful fertile place, which had animal's footprints. They decided to build their hut there. In summer they went to plough fields, which were far from home. The children were left outside to play.*

*One day when playing the children saw a number of animals coming towards their home. The kids were startled and they heard the animals say, 'Who built his house in the animals' route?' The children said, 'It is Zinana.' Another type came and they asked the same question, 'who built his house in the animals' route?' The children said, 'It is Zinana.' All types of animals passed by: antelopes, impalas, buffalos, zebras and all other kinds. At last the elephants arrived, a male and a female. The male said, 'who built his house in the animals' route?' The children said, 'It is Zinana.' The elephants said, 'The male elephant swallows.' And the kids said, 'Let it swallow.' The male elephant swallowed all the children.*

*In this house there was a cock and it saw the elephant swallowing the children. The cock flew and searched for the children's parents. The parents then heard the cock singing like this:*

*'Zinanana zinana oh!  
Zinanana zinana oh!  
Your children have been swallowed zinana oh!  
They were eaten by a male elephant zinana oh!'*

*The woman asked if the husband heard the song. The man said, 'What song?' 'Can't you hear the song that is being sung?' said the woman. The man only said, 'your mind works too much. You are working and at the same time you can hear people singing.' The cock got nearer and nearer and everyone could hear clearly what it was saying. The woman threw down her hoe and said, 'I am going now. I can't continue here knowing that my children have been eaten by the elephant.'*

*The man said the cock was lying, nothing was wrong and continued to weed. The woman went back home and along the way she collected some firewood. When she got home she could see on the ground that animals were there before she arrived. She called for the children but there was no response. She then got into the hut and took a knife, a small pot and a box of matches. She took a small bundle of wood and tied everything into one small bundle. She went after the elephant's foot prints.*

*The man came back and found that there was nobody at home. One day the woman came across the animals and said,*

*'Haven't you seen!  
Haven't you seen hare that eats my children!  
Shame shame m-i-i nice and smooth!'*

*The animals lifted up their heads and responded saying:*

*'We did not!  
We did not see the hare that eat your children!'*

*Shame shame m-i-i nice and smooth!*

*The woman moved out and she sang her song to all the animals she met. At last she came across the king of animals, the elephant, eating. She sang her song and the elephant said, 'I swallow.' The woman said, 'go ahead and swallow me.' The elephant swallowed the woman and the bundle she was carrying. The children heard their mother fall on them and the woman said, 'I have been looking for you all over the place.' 'We are very hungry,' said the children. The woman assured them that they would have something to eat.*

*She unpacked her bundle and a fire ensued in the elephant's stomach. She took her knife and cut some liver and fat from the elephant and put that in her pot. She then dished for her children who enjoyed the meal very much. They did that until the elephant's stomach was empty.*

*The male elephant couldn't cope anymore. He sent a word telling the animals saying 'tell all the animals that their king is sick.' The animals came to visit the elephant and when asked what was wrong he would say, 'In my stomach, there is a fire.' The animals told the elephant not to give up. The woman took her knife and made a hole in the stomach. She went out together with her children. The elephant fell and died. People gathered to cut meat. The woman cut big pieces and told her children to take it home. When they got home they found that the man had become very thin because of hunger. The woman cooked a delicious meal of porridge and meat. Everyone was very happy.*

#### **Folktale 14**

##### **Dumba**

*Once upon a time a young man called Dumba fell in love with a lady from far away. One day he reported to his mother that he desires to visit his in-laws. His mother instructed him as follows; 'If you go on the way please, please make sure you do not eat tincozi, no matter how appetizing they may look, until you reach your in-laws.'*

*Dumba left, on the way the trees next to the road were dark with nice smelling tincozi. He was tempted to eat. Dumba resisted for a while, but finally yielded to the temptation. A soft voice whispered saying, 'Ha! My mother did not mean that, she was only saying I should not climb up the tree and eat there. If I just take off a brunch and eat along the way nothing will happen'. Indeed, he went to the tree, took off a branch he loved and ate along the way. Just after finishing he was so pressed and immediately went to defecate, and then proceeded with his journey. After he had just traveled for a short distance he heard a small voice singing,*

*Wait for me, wait for me Dumba  
So that we can go eat Bonhlumaya nandlubu  
Wait for me Dumba*

Looking back he realized that the one talking is the feaces he had just defecated in the bush because that is where it belongs, but hear it is following him, and singing about his name. He took his stick and hit the feaces, and then ran away. Immediately after him it gathered together again and followed after him. As he was crossing the river he heard it singing again,

*Wait for me, wait for me Dumba  
So that we can go and eat bonhlumaya nandlubu  
Wait for me Dumba.*

The feaces then floated on the water coming to him. He waited for it, took and put it in his pocket. He went and went then came to his in-laws. He entered into the groom's hut. The children saw him and went to greet him, 'Hallow brother in-law'. As he responded saying 'Hallow', a small voice was also heard saying, 'Hallow'. The children said, 'How are you?' The brother in-law said, 'I am fine'. The small voice was heard saying, 'I am fine'. The children laughed as they heard the voice from the pocket. The brother in-law looked so frustrated and did not know what to do.

The adults came in to greet him and also heard the same thing, and they were so puzzled as to what is it that the son-in law has. They cooked tindlubu and brought them together with another child to eat with him as per custom. As they were eating they heard a small voice saying, 'Give me some Dumba'. He dished a bit into the pocket. As he was eating, putting a portion into his mouth he heard it saying, 'give me some Dumba'.

Dumba was very angry, the feaces jumped out of the pocket to the bowl from where they were eating. The child ran out shouting. Dumba took his feaces put it in his pocket and ran away. Along the way he threw it away. It did not follow him but remained there. His mother saw him coming and she was shocked. The mother said, 'what happened just before long you are back. It is obvious that you ate tincozi'. He apologized to his mother, and then reported about the whole journey. The mother laughed.

### **Folktale15**

#### ***The cannibal and a skirt***

Once upon a time a man had many wives. He had many children. Amongst the wives one had only one daughter. The man loved this only daughter from her mother. The other girls devised a plan of ill-treating this girl. One day they called her to go and fetch water. There was a big river where they used to swim. They took the water jars and went with her to swim. When they got to the river they took of their skirts and hid them in the sand, placed a stick on top for easy identification of the spot.

They went into the river and swam. They played pretending to be crocodiles. While all that was happening one girl went out of the river, dug out one's skirt and threw it into the water and it went away. They all went out and dressed. She looked for her skirt but could not find it. They all went home and one of them said 'Why are you waiting? Why don't

*you go down along the river searching? ' And she did that. The others went home. She went down the river crying. As she was going she met a few men and said in singing,*

*You fathers*

*You fathers*

*Didn't you see my skirt?*

*They responded simultaneously also in singing*

*We saw it our child*

*We saw it our child*

*We tried to stop it with our attires but it refused.*

*The girl ran and ran looking in the water but did not see it. Immediately there appeared two mothers, she looked at them and sang,*

*You mothers*

*You mothers*

*Didn't you see my skirt?*

*They all replied*

*We saw it our child*

*We saw it our child*

*We tried to stop it with our traditional attires but it escaped.*

*She ran faster down the river crying. The sun was about to set. The mother was worried as to where the girl was. The told her mother that she ha gone to her grandmother's place. She met girls and sang to them saying*

*You sisters*

*You sisters*

*Didn't you see my skirt?*

*They sang back,*

*We saw it our child*

*We saw it our child*

*We tried to stop it with our traditional skirts but it escaped.*

*She ran and ran until she came across a cannibal with a knobkerrie and her skirt hanging on it. She cried and requested that she be given her skirt. The cannibal refused and invited her to his home. She went with the cannibal in the dark. When they arrived she was given food and a nice place to sleep. In the morning the cannibal said, 'I am going to hunt please do not take your skirt from this horn!' The cannibal went away. She remained thinking about what to do. She went outside and saw the cannibal far away. She went inside and took her skirt. When she started running away the horn started shouting; 'Mpu-u-u-u-u.' She ran away. The cannibal flew and found her in the yard. It said, 'Take back the skirt to where you took it, sit down and do not go away. I am going away again to hunt far away. If you repeat what you have done I will cut of your head. Do you understand? She said, 'I Understand.'*

*The cannibal went far away. The girl thought of another plan. She then carried the horn with the skirt. She went until she was very far. She saw a frog weeding. She requested it*

to swallow her. At first the frog refused but finally agreed. The frog vomited everything that was in the stomach. The girl took the skirt and threw the horn far away. She ran into the frog's mouth and the frog then swallowed its food again on top of her. The horn shouted loudly saying, 'Mpu-u-u-u, she is gone.'

The cannibal heard from far away and ran to where the horn was crying. It landed took the horn and went to where the cry came from. It was shocked. It saw a very big frog. The frog was so big such that it couldn't even walk. The cannibal said to the frog, 'haven't you seen a girl who has just pass here, now- now- now?' The frog said, 'nothing passed here I did not see anyone. However I was facing down working.' The cannibal said, 'But here are her footprints, she stepped here and ended here.' The frog said, 'I was busy eating crabs in the river.' The cannibal said, 'Vomit and let us see.' The frog vomited and crabs came out. The cannibal said, 'swallow-swallow!' The frog swallowed. The cannibal went back. The frog went to sleep at home. The frog vomited her out and she washed herself. The next morning she requested the frog to take her to her home. She directed it well. In the morning it swallowed her and went with her. It could not even walk properly because she was heavy.

The boys who were looking after cattle saw it. They said, 'Boys here is a big frog, I wonder where is it from?' They beat it, it cried singing and said,

Me the one you are beating

Me the one you are beating

I am pregnant with Ntombendala Ntombi's relative.

It went and arrived at the girl's home. As they were drinking beer they heard a young child crying, as they looked they realized that she had been frightened by this big frog. It came and sang. They spread out a mat; it set on it and vomited the girl. Her father was very happy and she gave the frog ten cows as a token of appreciation. It went back very happy. The girls disclosed the one who said they should throw her skirt away because the father loves her.

### Folktale16

#### **Nganyana Lo!**

Once upon a time a girl went to marry. When the wedding party was about to leave the girl's father called her. He told her to tell him what she wanted for a wedding gift. The girl asked for 'Nganyana Lo!' Nganyana Lo was an animal that the girl's father used to hide and use at night for bewitching those he did not like. The girl's father said he would give her a chicken, she said, 'I don't want a chicken I want 'Nganyana Lo!' The father said, 'I will give you a goat.' She said, 'I don't want a goat but only Nganyana Lo!' The girl's father said, 'What about a cow?' She said, 'No! I want Nganyana Lo!'

*At last the father gave her Nganyana Lo. The party left for the groom's place. When they got to the river Nganyana Lo was hidden in a clay pot and he was fed in the pot. Nganyana Lo was then placed in the pool. The party danced and left. When going to the river to fetch water the girl carried some food with a small clay pot – food for Nganyana Lo. She did that two times a day. When going to the river she made sure she was all by herself. She didn't want people to know that she had an animal by the river. When she got to the river she sang like this:*

*“Nganyana Lo! Nganyana Lo!  
They offered me a chicken  
But I rejected, I wanted you Nganyana Lo  
They offered me a goat  
But I rejected it, I wanted you Nganyana Lo  
They gave me a cow  
But I didn't want it, but only you Nganyana Lo  
Nganyana Lo! Nganyana Lo!*

*When the animal heard this song it would come out and have its food. After that it would go back into the water. The woman did that for a long time. One day the children saw her feeding NganyanaLo and they told her husband. The husband went to hide near the river and saw her sing but she didn't see him. She sang the song and the animal came out of the water and started to eat. One day the husband died just like the wife, the animal came out. The man hit it with his knobkerry, it died and he threw it in the water, took another route and went home.*

*When the woman arrived the water was red with blood. She sang and sang but the animal did not come out. She realized that her animal was dead. She went home to the kitchen and made fire. She was positioned where there was a lot of smoke. Her husband asked her why she was crying and she said she was troubled by smoke. She cried again and the man said she should move away from the smoke. At last the man told her that he knew the reason why she was crying and that was because of Nganyana Lo. He told her that he killed Nganyana Lo because he did not want to see it again in his home.*

### **Folktale 17**

#### ***The cave with two holes***

*Once upon a time a man and a woman went out to plough. They had two children who remained at home when they went out. They ploughed and in the afternoon left their hoes and went home. The next morning they were shocked to find that it was as if nothing happened. They ploughed again. That afternoon the woman went home alone. The man hid in the field. The woman covered the man with grass and only his hand was left above. After a short time when the woman had gone a bird came and sat on the man's hand. The bird sang, 'My father's soil cover up, cover up!' The man caught the bird, shook off the dust from his clothes and said, 'ya I found you. It is you who cover up the soul'. The bird*

replied, 'be kind to me. If you place me on top of something and ask me and say, what kind of a bird are you? I will tell you. You should ask me twice and I will tell you.'

The man went with the bird to a stone holding it firmly. Upon arrival he said, 'what type of a bird are you? It said, 'I am bird squirt, squirt.' It squirted umlaza (water that comes from milk when it turns to emasi). The man repeated. The bird brought forth a lot of emasi. The man ate and took his bird home. He arrived home late that day and was full. He put his bird into an empty clay pot and covered it. They ate and finished their supper. The man commanded the girl and the boy to sleep. He then instructed his wife to cook emancobo (boil corn). The blanket these children were using had holes. The boy did not sleep but peeped through the holes. Deep within himself he wondered why his father wanted them to sleep so early that day.

When the corn was ready the man instructed the wife to grind it. When everything was ready he took out his bird from the pot. He told the wife they should talk softly because the children were asleep. The woman brought the boiled corn nearer. The man held his bird and said, 'what type of a bird are you? The bird said, 'I am bird squirt and as it was saying this it released a lot of umlaza. The man repeated, 'what type of bird are you? The bird said, 'I am bird squirt.' It squirted and squirted a lot of emasi. And filled the container until the man stopped it. 'Stop!' The bird stopped. They mixed and reserved some for the next day. The man returned the bird to the big pot. The boy observed everything that was happening.

The next morning they gave the children emasi and took some along to eat during the day. After they have left the boy said to his sister, 'please boil corn.' The girl asked the boy what he was going to do with emancobo. The boy said, 'I know do not ask me.' When they were cooked the boy said, 'grind them.' The girl ground worried though because she did not know what her brother was going to do with the boiled corn. The boy prepared a lot of containers. He then took out the bird and did exactly what the father was doing. The bird squirted until the sour milk was finished because the boy did not stop it. They inserted a pick on its back and it flew away. They mixed emasi ate and were full. The remainder was spread in the yard and even the kraal. When the parents returned they were met by white grounds and were puzzled. They feasted, the man in the kraal and the woman in the yard in front of the kitchen. The man then made a big fire. He entered the house and told the wife that the children must be punished. A hot rod must be inserted into their ears.

The parents sat next to the fire she called the girl to her so that she can inspect her hair for lice. The man called the boy. They both came and slept on their parents' not realizing the hot rods in the fire. The parents took them out at the same time and inserted them into their ears. They went through from one ear to the other. They cried ran away into the river and did not come back home. They went and went until they came to a cave with two holes. This cave would open and close again. It was called the Cave with two holes. When they arrived the boy sang, 'Cave of two holes! Cave of two holes! Open for us to come in.' the door opened and they entered. The next morning the boy told his sister that he is going out to hunt. He went and saw boys herding cattle. He approached them and

said, 'Boys I want this cow (pointing at it) give it to me. The boys told him that the cow was not theirs but belonged to the parents. He continued saying, 'what would you say if I take it.' The boys said, 'you can not take it.' The boy puffed a great mist, darkness covered the area and the boys could not see each other. He drove the cow away running in full speed. The mist cleared after a while. The boys searched for him but did not see him together with the cow he had requested.

He entered with the cow at the Cave with two holes and slaughtered it. They used not to grill the fat because they were afraid of cannibal that would come at the smell of the fat. One morning he said to his sister, 'stay here and I am going to hunt. Please do not grill this fat. Do you understand me?' she said, 'Yes.' The girl stayed and felt hungry. She made fire and grilled the fat. Her brother had gone very far that day. The fat jumped from the fire, she tried to catch it, it ran away. It ran until it entered the mouth of a cannibal. The cannibal followed where the fat had been jumping until it came to the cave with two holes. It took the girl out to his place. The girl took ashes along; she was spreading it as they were going until the cannibal's home.

When the boy returned with a cow he found the house empty. He was so angry, left the cow and went out to look for his sister. He followed the ashes until he came to the cannibal's house. The sister was searching the cannibal's head for lice, and the cannibal was lying on his sister. He hit it strongly on the head and it died. He took his sister back home. The sister apologized and promised that she will never again go against his brother's warnings. They stayed there together.

### Folktale18

#### **Dinka you Dinka**

Once upon a time a woman had children. This woman was lazy and did not want to plough. One day the child asked the mother and said, 'Mother when are you going to plough? Because all other women are out to plough but you are busy sleeping.' The mother responded by saying, 'Why should I plough because there is plenty of food? Autumn came. All women gathered fresh maize cobs from their fields.

One day as the man was going in his field he discovered that someone has started helping herself with his maize. He worked for the whole night digging a big hole. He then covered it so that it could not be noticed. The man then hid far away. He was fully armed. The woman used to take the boy with her every time she goes to the field. One particular night as she was going with her sickle ready for to cut the maize she fell into the hole. She shouted in a loud cry. The man came up rejoicing, 'Awu! I have won'. He came and stepped her and she died inside the pit. The child lamented saying, 'Mother I told you'. In the morning the man tried to pull the wife out of the pit, but failed, she was so heavy and could not move. The man was wet.

*Lastly the man hit the boy on the head saying, 'sing you boy so that I can carry your mother'. The boy sang;*

*Mother be moveable Dinka you Dinka*

*I told you Dinka you Dinka*

*Saying let us plough Dinka you Dinka*

*You said there is plenty of food Dinka you Dinka.*

*Indeed the woman was moveable. They went and went to the man's home, as the man was carrying her he felt tired. When he tried to place her down so that she could rest, it was impossible. He hit the boy again instructing him to sing. Indeed the boy sang saying;*

*Mother please come down Dinka you Dinka*

*Mother I told you Dinka you Dinka*

*That we should plough Dinka you Dinka*

*You said there is plenty of food Dinka you dinka.*

*Then the man was able to place her down. Even after he had rested the boy had to sing so that he could carry her again. Even when chopping, and even when the man was cooking her she did not get ripe no matter how strong and hot the fire was. The boy sang saying; 'Mother be cooked'. The boy also sang until they dished her out. The boy refused his mother's meat. He was only crying and did not eat at all.*

### **Folktale 19**

#### ***An old lady with a nail***

*Once upon a time a man was sent far away. The sun set while he was still on his way back and was trouble as to where to sleep. As he was going he saw a single hut and went straight to it. He knocked and there was no response. He moved in. it was getting dark. Because of fear the man entered into a big clay pot. When it was really dark he heard a person entering and talking to herself saying. 'Who is this one who is in my house?' It was quiet; it was silent.*

*The old lady was suspicious, and had a feeling that there was somebody inside. She made fire and she said to herself, 'I wonder what one can eat?'. She went out to someone's field and drew a pumpkin by her long nail. Upon entering her house she said, 'What will I use to peel the pumpkin?' She answered herself saying, 'But I have my nail'. She then peeled the pumpkin. Upon finishing she said, 'With what will I cut?' again she answered herself saying, "But I have my nail". She chopped using her nail.*

*The old lady was moving up and down in the house. She wanted water but there was none. She then said, 'It doesn't matter, there is my urine'. She sat on the pot and urinated. The man was peeping observing every thing that was done by this notorious old lady.*

*The pumpkin was cooked. The house smelled so badly as the urine was boiling. She was heard again talking to herself saying, 'There is no mealie meal and what will I mix the*

pumpkin with?' She took off the pot set on it and defecated into the pot. The house smelled. She mixed dished out and ate. The man could not even cough as he so afraid of the old lady with her terrible tricks. The old lady then slept next to the fire. At night the man quietly ran away. It was drizzling that very night.

The old lady was disturbed, woke up and said; 'who is this one here?' She said that seeing no one but only suspecting. She then woke up and moved outside. She saw somebody walking afar. She chased him and the person ran for his life. The old lady pursued this man until sunrise. The man heard a voice behind him saying, 'where were you sleeping?' and he answered,

I was sleeping there  
Where the nail is a knife  
Where urine is water  
Where feaces is mealie meal.

The old lady said, 'Oh, I will be the talk of the town'. She chased him until his homestead. The man told his family every thing he had seen. At night when the man went out to the toilet the old lady chopped him with her nail and he died.

### Folktale20

#### **The mongoose**

Once upon a time the hare was asleep under a tree when he heard, 'Cimu! Sa! Catch him!' he woke up, ran as fast as he could. Whilst he was still running he met impunzi, which said, 'Why are you running hare?' He said, 'I was asleep under umhlala tree when I heard 'Cumu! Sa! Catch him!' They both ran. They were still running when they met impala and it said, 'Why are you running?' Impunzi said, 'don't ask me and why don't you ask the hare?' The hare said, 'I was asleep under umhlala tree when I heard 'Cumu! Sa! Catch him!' They all ran and met other animals who asked why they were running, 'you are asking me.' They said, 'why don't you ask so and so...' they pointed at each other until they said, 'why don't you ask the hare?'

The animals ran until they became thirsty, unfortunately there was no water and it was then agreed that they should dig. The animals started to dig using their paws until they got tired. The hare said he wanted to go and relieve himself. He didn't come back because he never liked working. When the animals finished it rained and they had a pool of water. The animals drank there but during the day they would go to far away places looking for grass. The animals would make sure that one animal kept in guard of the pool. They didn't want the hare to come back and drink their water as he ran away when they dug. The hare would come and ask to drink, the animals would refuse telling him that it was against the law for them to give them water for he refused to dig.

The hare found a container and filled it with honey. One day when he was too thirsty he came to the pool and greeted the animal in guard. He took a stick and dipped it in the

honey. The animal on guard said, 'your honey is so delicious!' the hare said, 'do you want to get some more?' It said, 'Oh yes!' The hare took a rope and tied the animal to a tree next to the water. He told the animal that he would give him the honey if it could give him water. The animal agreed. The hare drank the water and got into the stream to cool his body. The animal tried to stop him but all in vain. The hare jumped up and down and dirtied the water. He took his container of honey and left refusing to untie the animal on guard. 'Next time I won't give you water to drink.' But the hare said, 'I don't care'

The animals came back and got so angry when they found the water so dirty. They saw the tied animal scolded but untied it and told it to be careful next time. Another one kept guard and the hare once again came and used the honey trick. All the animals failed to catch the hare. Finally the tortoise was to guard the stream. It got in the water and hid. When the hare arrived he couldn't see anyone. He said, 'Why are you hiding? You think that I couldn't see you...' he waited and got tired. He began to drink and when he was trying to dirty the water the tortoise caught him. He said, 'Please stop it,' but it didn't. The other animals were very happy when they found the hare. They collected firewood and prepared to cook the hare. They took him and threw him in the fire but the hare escaped. The animals couldn't believe it. That is why the hare is always running when we see him.

### Folktale 21

#### **Lomvula**

Once upon a time a woman and a man had a baby girl called Lomvula. They lived at a very dangerous place. There was a cannibal that ate people next to their home.

One day they thought of leaving and move to a better place. The man found a beautiful place and built a home. They moved to this new place, but the young girl refused and cried, saying that she wants to remain at the old home because she loves her old home. The mother agreed that she would come in the morning and evening to bring food to Lomvula. She advised Lomvula not to move out of the house and not to allow anyone into the house. The girl asked how would she know that it was the mother. The mother said she would sing the song:

'Lomvula my child, Lomvula my child  
Take your food and eat my child'

Then she told the girl to reply and say:

'Mom I can hear you "Mom I can hear you  
You are saying I should take food and eat'

So Lomvula stayed. She closed and locked the door. In the evening her mother came and sang the song. Lomvula replied by singing the song and she opened the door. The mother got in and gave her food and water. Lomvula used to move out of the hut and went to play only when her mother was there. The cannibal saw Lomvula and her mother move away from the place. The cannibal used to wonder when it saw Lomvula's mother going to the old place, 'did she leave anything?' It wondered.

*One day, it hid in the bushes and it heard Lomvula's mother singing like this:*

*'Lomvula my child, Lomvula my child  
Take your food and eat my child'*

*Lomvula heard and answered:*

*'Mom I can hear you 'Mom I can hear you  
You are saying I should take food and eat'*

*She opened the door, greeted her mother and went outside. She came back, washed her hands and ate. Her mother bid her farewell and told her to close and lock the door.*

*At night the cannibal didn't sleep well, it wished it were already morning. It was still dark when it woke up. It took its sack and went to Lomvula's old place. It sang in a rough deep voice trying to imitate Lomvula's mother. Lomvula shouted and said, 'but you are not my mother'. The cannibal was disappointed and went back home. When it got home it made a fire and roasted stones until they became red. It then swallowed the stones. The stones burnt the throat and the voice became small*

*Lomvula's mother was busy preparing food to take to Lomvula. The cannibal got to her place and waited outside. It started to sing Lomvula's mother's song. Lomvula was excited, opened the door and she thought it was her mother. The cannibal grabbed her by the neck and put her in the sack. She tried to free herself and the cannibal took its stick and said, 'Don't cry but sing inside the sack.' The cannibal didn't go to its place. In the first home there was sour porridge to be used for a traditional brew. It put down the sack having tied the mouth so that Lomvula wouldn't get out. It then asked for the porridge saying it would play its unfamiliar music. It was given the porridge. It took it and then took its stick and hit the sack saying:*

*Bang! Bang! Bang! Play ndumbadumbabe  
We want to hear stories.*

*Lomvula then sang and said, 'How can I cry, how can I cry for I brought this to myself'  
Lomvula sang beautifully and they all appreciated. The cannibal left. When Lomvula's mother arrived, she saw very huge footprints and she could sense that Lomvula was no more there. She got in the hut tried to call for Lomvula but there was no response. Lomvula's mother went back home and reported the matter to her husband.*

*The Cannibal went up and down with Lomvula in the sack. It said, 'Give me some meat and I will play you unfamiliar voice in music in return.' It was offered the meat and it ate and then played its music.*

*'Bang! Bang! Bang! Ply mdumbadumbabe  
We want to hear news.'*

*Lomvula sang and they all enjoyed the music. The cannibal moved on and in the next home they became suspicious for they heard that Lomvula was missing. The woman in that house asked the cannibal to go and fetch water for her and the container that was given to it had holes. It went and they then opened the sack, took out Lomvula and put a very vicious dog in the sack. They also put a snake, bees, wasps and they tied the sack's mouth.*

*The cannibal was delayed for the container was leaking. It then shouted and said, "The container is leaking. The responded, 'Use clay and close the hole'. The cannibal couldn't close the hole. They then called it and said, 'Come back'. The cannibal came and it was getting late. It took the sack and left. Lomvula was washed with warm water and was then taken to her place. When the cannibal got home it went in the hut and put the sack. It then went to the kitchen where the wife was. It said, 'What is there to eat in this home?' The woman said, "Nothing." And it sad to its child, 'Go and take my sack in the hut.' The child tried to take the sack but failed. The bees were stinging and she threw the sack down and went to the kitchen.*

*Her father asked, 'what is it? Why are you crying?' She said, 'But it stings.' Her father said, 'It's okay, you don't want to eat, you'll eat your tears.' It then sent the wife but she also failed and she came back crying. The cannibal told the child that it was going to eat alone. It closed the door and opened the sack. All the animals came out. The bees stung him together with the wasps. The cannibal started to cry. The dog started to bite and it shouted. The cannibal cried, shouted and opened the door. He ran to the stream. He put his head in the mud thinking that the bees would stop stinging him. The cannibal died and dried there and there. It looked like a dry wood. The bees got into its buttocks and made honey and beehives.*

*One day ten women came to collect firewood. One of them saw the dried wood (cannibal). She saw the bees coming in and out of the wood. She put in her hand and the hand was cut off. She hid her hand and called anther one and showed her the wood with bees. The second woman cut her hand to. The women called one after another and they all cut their hands.*

### Folktale22

#### **Mpompo**

*Once upon a time, an old woman had a very long tooth. This old woman used to eat people using her long tooth. She liked to eat men such that there were no men left in that area. There was a young man in another country. He heard about the old woman and her tooth. One day the young man called a boy and said, Tomorrow I will go, take care of this big dog. When you hear it bark give it food and free it to go. It will follow me to wherever I shall be."*

*He then called a small dog and left. When it was around sunset he went straight to the old woman's house. He asked for a place to sleep. When the young man arrived, he found women only. He then introduced himself but they were all shocked, 'Where do you come from, you who do nott know that there are no man in this area? How can you sleep here for the old woman is the one who eats men?' The young man said, 'allow me to sleep I will take care of myself.'*

*At sunset the old woman came home. She had gone hunting at a far place. She was very happy to see the young man for that was what she wanted the most. She asked the women*

to take care of him. When it was time to sleep the old woman said the young man was to sleep in her hut. The old woman told the young man that the dog was to sleep outside. The young man said 'No Granny, this dog always sleeps next to me.' The old woman said, 'How will I go out when I feel like?' The young man said, 'Just go out it will not do you any harm.'

At night the old woman woke up and stretched her tooth aiming at cutting the man's neck. The dog started to bark and it wanted to bite the unfamiliar long white thing. The young man woke up and said, 'what is it old woman?' And she said, 'I wanted to go out but your dog stopped me. And the young man said, 'Don't come to me.'

They slept, before dawn, the old woman tried again. Once again she failed. They were all surprised in the morning and wondered how the man survived. The old woman thought of another plan. She said, 'Oh, I don't have firewood and I so much want to make a fire, please climb that tree and cut that wood'. She pointed at ten trees, which were in a line. The young man took an axe, called his dog and went to cut the firewood. At home, his big dog started to bark and the young boy gave it food and released it.

When the man was cutting the firewood the old woman was busy cutting the whole tree. The young man started singing a nice song:

*'Mpompo come with the dog from there  
With the dog from there! With the dog from there!'*

The old woman replied and said, 'There is no mpompo who is coming with a dog.' The young man jumped to another tree and the small dog tried to fight but that old woman cut it with the big tooth and it died instantly. The old woman cut all the tree and only one was left the young man was terrified then the big dog arrived. It went straight to the woman and killed her. The man broke the tooth with the axe. The young man became a king of those areas. And the people loved him so much. Women made mats and clay pots for him.

### **Folktale 23**

#### **The ring**

Once upon a time a man ploughed maize in a very big field. A certain animal troubled this man. This animal that used to destroy the maize was huge. It really made a disaster. The first man came to guard with a gun. Every time when this animal was coming there would be a great wind, trees would break. The man was up in the big tree. When he heard the great wind he was afraid and ran away. The animal came and destroyed as usual.

The next day the owner came to inspect his field and he found that the animal had done a great damage in the field. He asked a second man with a gun. This one also climbed up the tree. As he was up in the tree he felt great winds coming and was afraid. He then ran away with his gun. The owner of the field then asked a third man with a gun. Even this one came and climbed up the tree to see everything. When the animal was approaching he felt the great winds, trees broke and fell down the man did not move. The wind blew strongly, still the man did not shiver. The animal came to the field and ate. The man shot

twice and the animal collapsed and died. When it was lying down it shouted, 'Come and take this ring.' The man ran and took the ring. Before dying the man said, 'If you scratch it, it will bring forth whatever you want.' The man thanked the animal and the animal died.

In the morning the owner went to check for the damage done. He discovered that no damage was done that night and the animal was dead. The man was very happy. The man with the ring went to a far away county. He came to a land where he was not known. He scratched his ring and asked for a big house. It came. The inhabitants were shocked to see this new home and wondered as to when and how it was built. When he wanted food the wife did not cook. She would ask the man what he wants and it would come after scratching the ring.

This couple led a luxurious life. One day as this man was about to live, called his wife and warned her. He told her to keep the doors closed until he comes back. The man left and the woman closed herself in. After a short time the woman heard people talking outside. She opened the door and saw three men. The men told her that they want to ask something. The woman left the ring where they could see it. The men asked the woman when and how they built the house and with what. The woman tried to hide but they interrogated her strongly until she disclosed about the ring.

When the men left they stole the ring. When the men left she closed herself in. Her husband came back. The woman opened the door. They stayed for a while the man then asked for food, because he was very tired. The woman searched for the ring but did not find it. She reported to her husband that she couldn't find the ring. The man asked if anyone visited her in his absence. The woman told him that three men came. The man was so angry and realized that they are the ones who stole the ring. The three men used the ring and requested for a lot of beer. They were drunk and slept. A rat came stole the ring and took it back to the owner. As the couple was sitting they saw the ring arriving. The man warned the wife that she should not talk to people in his absence.

#### Folktale24

##### **The king and the Princesses**

Long, long ago, a certain king had a lot of daughters. When his daughters grew up he built them a big house. There were exactly sixteen princesses. In that area was a big house where the youth of that area used to meet. This is where they would dance to the western music.

The king was very worried at what he was going to do because he bought daughters each pairs of shoes and they would get worn out within a week. If he asks them what wears out the shoes they would say they do not know. The daughters dug underground tunnels that led to the house where they had their usual meetings. Under one of the princess's bed was the entrance to the tunnel.

*The king hired a man to watch over the princesses and find out exactly what it was they did at night because during the day he would keep an eye on them. The princesses gave the man some traditional beer and he was drunk. He got drunk and slept. After falling asleep the girls went down the tunnel to the house where they danced. At dawn they returned to their house and slept. The king had bought new shoes for the girls when he saw how old the shoes had become was very shocked.*

*The man hired to keep a close watch over the girls was killed because he failed to do his set duties. The king hired another guard and told him if he did not do his duties he was going to die. The guard promised to do all that he could. The guard failed to do his duties because he too was given alcohol to drink he got drunk and slept. The girls snuck out and came in the morning. When the king went to check on the princesses' shoes they were worn out although they were new. The guard too was killed.*

*One day an old lady who was walking came across a man. The old lady said, 'Hello, where are you going?' The man replied, 'I was told that the king needed someone to guard his daughter.' The old lady said, 'I feel sorry for you because if you fail you will be killed.' The man protested saying he knows all that but wants to try his luck. The man proceeded to the royal residence.*

*The gatekeepers at the palace told the king a man had come to guard the girls. He was ushered to the king and the king told him that if he failed would be killed. The man was taken to the princesses' room. In the evening the princesses gave him some alcohol and he took it, he opened a plastic bag, which he had in his jacket and poured the alcohol in there. He was given more alcohol. He placed his mouth pretending he was drinking yet he was putting it in the plastic bag.*

*The man pretended as if he was drunk, the girls bathed and neatly dressed in their traditional attire and got ready to leave using their usual route. The man was in one of the rooms that was prepared for him and he could see everything that was happening. He then slept on the floor and snored. The princesses then left. The man saw all this, the tunnel opening could be opened on either sides.*

*After a short while when the girls had left the man followed them through the tunnel up until he reached the house where they danced. The girls never saw him enter because there were many people there. They danced until the last song. The man broke a tree in that house and returned home with it. When he reached home he pretended he was sleeping yet he was not sleeping. He wanted to see them when they returned. In the middle of the night he heard them sneak into the house, they undressed and got into bed.*

*In the morning while the girls were sleeping the man took a report to the king on what he had seen and what had happened. The king marveled and thanked the man. He gave him cattle as a sign of appreciation for the wonderful job.*

## Folktale 25

### *A water monster*

*Once upon a time the king summoned all his subjects, the aged and the youth even those who could not walk because of all age. All the people came to the cattle byre and sat according to their regiments. The king arrived when they were all seated. The king said, 'I have called all of you to ask one question'. They all listened attentively to what the king was going to say. The king started with the aged men and said; 'Old man do you know inyanyabulembu?' The old men started talking amongst themselves, arguing. They synonymously said, 'We do not know your majesty'.*

*The king left them and proceeded to the old women. 'Old women do you know inyanyabulembu?' Even the old women debated amongst themselves as others were saying, it is such and such an animal. Finally they responded, 'We do not know your majesty'. The king asked the men, 'Men do you know inyanyabulembu?' They said, 'We do not know your Majesty'. He proceeded to the women and said, 'Women do you know inyanyabulembu?' They unanimously responded, 'We do not know your Majesty'. He turned to the boys and said, 'Young men do you know inyanyabulembu?' They said, 'We do not know your Majesty'. One boy stood up and declared that he knows inyanyabulembu.*

*The king instructed that they should prepare containers, one with ants, one with bugs and the other with lice. Indeed they went to the old ladies and gathered lice that filled a container. They opened the rocks for ants and filled another container. All the people went home except for the boy.*

*The boy left early the following morning with his three containers and provision of bread and mealie cobs. He went and went, came to the first river stood and said,*

*Nyanyabulembu nyanyabulembu  
Come out and devour me, come out and devour me.*

*The nyanyabulembu emerged and said, 'Look I am toothless how can I devour you?' He went and went and saw another river. He went straight to the river and said,*

*Nyanyabulembu nyanyabulembu  
Come and devour me, come and devour me*

*It was quiet nothing came out. The boy sang again saying.*

*Nyanyabulembu nyanyabulembu  
Come and devour me, come and devour me.*

*As the boy was watching he noticed the water moving, an inyanyabulembu appeared and said, 'Look, I am toothless how can I devour you?' The boy moved on in search of another river. He went and went and had to sleep in the forest. The following day he woke up and continued with his journey feeding on his provision. After quite some time he saw a big river, a terrifying one. He drew nearer and said*

*Nyanyabulembu, nyanyabulembu  
Come and devour me, come and devour me.*

*It was quiet. He repeated, and it was quiet again. He repeated for the third time. He saw the water moving as he was looking there came a big inyanyabulembu which said, 'Run for your life'. The boy ran away. He saw the nyanyabulembu after him. When he realized that it was close to him he broke the container with ants. The nyanyabulembu came and feasted on the ants, meanwhile the boy was resting since he had been running fast. After eating the nyanyabulembu followed the boy. The boy looked back and saw it. He ran faster. The boy ran and ran, and when he realized that it was about to catch him he broke the second container with lice. The nyanyabulembu came and engaged in feasting with lice. Meanwhile the boy was walking slowly resting.*

*After finishing it pursued after the boy. The boy ran in full speed. Looking back he saw it closer. He then broke the last container. It came and ate the ants. The boy was now nearing the palace. He shouted; 'Put on the whole armour'. They heard and locked all children in the house, and only armed men remained outside. The boy ran into the kraal. Inyanyabulembu followed, the men pierced and killed it. The skinned it and dried the skin for the king's attire. The boy was given a herd of cattle and chief.*

### Folktale26

#### ***A water monster and a woman***

*Once upon a time a man married two wives. One of the wives always gave birth to ravens and the other to human beings. Whenever the one who gave birth to human beings delivered they would kill the child stating that she or he is not wanted. There came a time and this woman said enough is enough. She purposed in her heart that next time she delivers she will make sure that they do not kill her child. She will always take her along.*

*One day when she had gone to fetch water, she sat next to the river and cried. A monster came out of the river and asked; 'Why are you crying?' She narrated every thing to it about the killing of her children. The monster said, 'If you could trust me, I can take care of your children'. The monster instructed the mother to come twice a day with food for the child and must sing the song:*

*Nyanyabulembu Nyanyabulembu  
Here is your mgcobane nyanyabulembu*

*The woman did as instructed. Mornings and evenings the ravens always visited the woman's kitchen. The always asked where the child was. The woman always said she departed to join the others. Days went by. The monster really took good care of the child and the child was happy. The child grew well and was beautiful. One day the ravens noticed the woman dishing food and putting it in the water pot, they kept quiet. They also noticed her another day. One raven wondered where the mother was taking the food. One of the suggested that matter must be reported to their father. Indeed they reported and said, 'Mum always carries food in the water pot every time she goes to fetch water and we wonder who is she feeding'. The man went and hid next to the river. The child's mother came, put the water jar down and sang,*

Nyanyabulembu Nyanyabulembu  
Here is your mgcobane nyanyabulembu

*The child came out to her mother, she had grown, took her food, ate and they talked. In a twinkle of an eye the man ran and caught her saying, 'Awu! Awu! My beautiful child'. He took the child. The woman cried pleading with the man not to kill her. The man said he will give the monster cattle as a token of appreciation for taking care of the child. The man killed all the ravens; their mother felt the pain of being childless.*

#### Folktale27

##### **Intsenetja**

*Once upon a man and a woman got a handsome young boy. They had fields far from home. When weeding time arrived, the woman carried the baby on her back and went to the fields. When it was hot the woman would encounter problems for the baby used to cry. The woman would then stop weeding and tried to take care of the baby.*

*One day that baby started to cry and a hyena said, 'Woman, give me the baby and continue with your work.' The woman asked if he wasn't going to run away with the baby and the animal said, 'No, I will sit under the tree.' The woman gave the baby to the animal. The hyena took the baby and its food and went to sit under the tree. The woman worked very well that day and in the afternoon she called for the hyena, 'Hyena, hyena, bring back my son'. The hyena took the baby back to the woman and all was well.*

*The animal would do that everyday and the woman started to trust the hyena. One day the hyena took the baby and went to play with it very far without the knowledge of the woman. In the afternoon the woman called out for her baby but there was no response. She saw flowers where they were playing but they were nowhere to be found.*

*The sunset and the woman didn't know what to say at home. She took a stone and carried it on her back. She got home and started cooking without taking the stone off her back. The husband asked, 'Why did you have to work and cook with the baby on your back?' The woman replied, 'The baby is not well today.' The man said, 'I want to see him.' The woman couldn't believe her ears and she tried to take the stone off her back but it fell no the ground. 'But you said it's the baby, how come it's a stone?' The woman then told the truth about the baby and the hyena.*

*The man told the woman to prepare, for they were to wake up early the next morning. They had to go and search for the baby. At midday they met people and asked if they had not seen a hyena and a baby. They were told that a hyena was seen carrying a baby. The man and woman started walking faster. Then they came cross an ogre who was throwing the baby up in the air ready to eat it. The man took out his spear and said, 'Give that child to me.' The Ogre said, 'I wasn't going to do any harm to your baby. I was just playing with him.' The ogre gave the baby back to the parents and they started their journey home. The ogre was heard saying, 'Oh! Oh! Oh! These days children are very scarce to find.'*

### Folktale28

#### *Ngcezema*

*Once upon a time, there was a man who had a wife and one daughter. She grew alone, as her parents could not get another child. She was taken good care of and was fed with sour milk every day. In that year they had planted sorghum in their field. When it was ripe they told their daughter to go and scare the birds. Every morning she would take a pot of sour milk with her. Because of the sour milk she was plump with a smooth skin. One day when she got to the fields she placed her sour milk pot under a sheltered area built by her father. Suddenly she had a voice saying 'Ngcezema, Ngcezema, come and carry me' she answered 'Why don't you come to me' the voice responded 'I fear the dew'. She then went towards the voice and a huge vicious creature threw itself on her. She went back with it to the fields. Immediately when she got there, the creature jumped off her back and went to her pot. Then it asked, who's the owner of this sour milk? She told it that, the sour milk is hers. The creature gave her a hard spanking and warned her never to say they are hers any more, but to say 'they are for, you who has just arrived'. It ate up all the sour milk then it slept. The child was hungry for the rest of the day. When she arrived home her mother only gave her little food, thinking that she feasted in the fields as usual.*

*The creature then came daily. One day the father was shocked when he closely observed her child. He asked her daughter why she was thin, was she no longer eating her sour milk? She started crying, and then she related the whole story. There is an animal that comes every morning, it would shout then instruct her to carry it at her back. Her father was angry, and asked why she did not disclose this early enough. The next day they went together to the fields and he hid somewhere in the fields. In no time the animal was heard saying Gcezema! Ngcezema come and carry me! Ngcezema just kept quiet.*

*The animal shouted again and she said, why don't you come yourself? The animal said 'I am afraid of the dew'. The father whispered and said 'Go'. When she carried it she argued with it dragging it. The animal commented saying 'I wonder what is wrong with you today'. As soon as she placed it down it spanked her saying 'whose the owner of this sour milk?' She said they are hers. It gave her another spanking instructing her to say 'They are yours, you who have just arrived'. She said as instructed. The animal then started eating the sour milk. While it was still eating, Ngcezema's father emerged slowly from its back. He hit it on the head with a knobkerrie and broke a horn. The animal ran away saying 'Indeed I said that you are secured somehow.'*

### Folktale 29

### **Inswelaboya**

*Once upon a time a woman and a man had two daughters. The mother once visited her parental home with her two daughters. They were warmly received as such they wanted to visit again. One day they requested from their mother that they visit the uncle. The mother reported to the father. The father agreed. One day they prepared the provision, as they were to leave the next day. In the evening the mother reminded them about the route they were to take. She cautioned them strongly because the land was full of tinswelaboya, people who feed on human flesh.*

*After they had travelled for a distance they would come to a Y junction. The left route is short but very forested. But in the forest there is nothing that is the route they should take. They should not fear. The right hand side route is nice and clear but long and also has tinswelaboya. That one they should not dare take. They slept for the night with every thing ready. The girls were the first ones to wake up the following morning. They bit their parents farewell and left. The mother accompanied them for a short distance. Before returning back home she reminded them about the route they should take.*

*The girls went and went then came to the Y junction. The younger one talked first and said, 'Mom said we should take this route because it is clear'. The elder girl responded, 'No! Mom said we should take this short one for although it is a forest but we should not fear there I nothing. They argued until they separated their provision each one determined to take her route. The younger girl took the long route. The elder girl took the short route. Before they had travelled for long, the elder one fear and turned back following the younger sister in full speed.*

*As the younger one was going she had footsteps behind her, looking back she saw her sister running after her. The younger one said, 'Ya! I asked you where you were going'. The elder one did not answer. They went travelled and entered another homestead. They were afraid because it was getting dark and they were worried that they might meet tinswelaboya. In this homestead they found a boy and a girl. The girl said, 'Please pass on people no one sleeps in this home, as I am talking my mother is out to hunt for human beings, she feeds on people's flesh'. The girls cried begging her saying, 'Please help us my dear and hide us for we can not proceed since we do not know where we can meet her'.*

*The girl took them to her hut. Inside there was a big ark and they got inside. They took out their provision ate, and gave some to the boy and the girl. The girl said to the boy, 'Do not tell mom that there are people in my hut because mom will eat them. If you tell her I will fix you up'. The boy agreed. At sun set the mother came shouting, 'Nosizo'. She responded, 'Ma'. 'Did you fetch the wood, did you fetch water, did you cook?' she asked. The girl said, 'Yes'. The mother said, 'Oh! Nosizo my child you are so helpful to me'.*

*The woman was carrying a human's leg; she came and dropped it in the kitchen. The girls in the ark were fear stricken. The boy left his sister hut to the mother. After a short while he said to the mother, 'there are two birds in my sister's hut'. The mother was overjoyed. She dished out the supper gave it to the boy to take to his sister. She instructed*

him to say to the sister, 'Here is food for the two visitors who are in your hut'. After hearing this the girl was so furious and said, 'Why did you tell mom about these children?' the boy did not answer and immediately left to his mother in the kitchen.

During the night while they were asleep the woman went to the girl's door. There was a dog that faithfully stayed by the door. It rose, barked her and wanted to bite her. The woman shouted saying, 'Away you! I want to inspect my child's room'. Inside the room they were standing on their feet so terrified, it was obvious that they are just about to be devoured. The elder sister said, 'Look I told you that we shouldn't take this route but you insisted'. The inswelaboya went to her room to sleep a bit then came back again. The dog was so faithful; it did not allow her to enter. At this time she was carrying an axe. She returned to her house.

Her daughter said, 'Let us quietly run away now before she comes back'. They left. In the morning when the woman woke up, she found that they had left. She ran after them with an axe. The girls were running but the inswelaboya ran faster such that when they looked back, her daughter said, 'Hu! Here is mom we are going to die'. The other two cried. There was a tree nearby. The daughter said, 'Let us climb up this tall tree'. Indeed they climbed up the tree. The inswelaboya came and chopped the tree with her sharp axe. When the tree was just about to fall there appeared an inhlava (a bird) and said, 'Fiyo! Fiyo! What are you doing to the children?' After saying that the tree grew again. The inswelaboya caught the bird, removed the feathers and ate it. After eating she started chopping the tree again. And when the tree was about to fall the meat that had gathered in her teeth said, 'Fiyo! Fiyo! What are doing to the children?' the tree grew again.

The inswelaboya took a pick removed the meat I between the teeth and swallowed it. Immediately there appeared the uncle of the two daughters with his dogs. The uncle said, 'Come down to me'. He asked them what was happening and they told him every thing. The inswelaboya shouted and said, 'Awu! Such meat!' The uncle asked, 'What are you saying?' The nswelaboya said, 'I am saying look how nice it is when a man walks with his children'. The man sent his dogs to the nswelaboya because he was now angry. The dogs tore it into pieces and it died. The woman's daughter got married at the two girls' uncle's place.

### Folktale30

#### **Lomalanga and Lomvula**

Lomalanga lost her mother at the age of eight. Her father was working far away from home. At the death of her mother, he traditionally wedded another wife. This wife had a child by the name of Lomvula. Lomvula was a bit older than Lomalanga and was also a crybaby. Lomalanga was very thrilled when her father told her that she was going to live with a new mother, and a sister. Indeed they arrived. Lomvula looked after his father's cattle every day. Lomalanga was very beautiful. Lomvula was fat, ugly, with a big stomach and big cheeks.

Lomvula's mother said, Lomvula should not herd the cattle only Lomalanga should do that. Lomalanga's father continued with his work far away from home. Lomvula's mother would cook and dish for Lomvula and herself, then pour water into the pot. On return Lomalanga would eat from that pot with water. Lomalanga started loosing weight as she was starving. When the father came with new clothes or dresses they were given to Lomvula. Lomalanga always inherited the old clothes from Lomvula. The mother would scold at Lomalanga for being wasteful and tearing clothes, whilst referring to the rags. Lomalanga's father did not like coming home any more after his disappointment at her daughter's appearance. When he was home he would eat, then leave some for Lomalanga. The mother would shout saying: 'I wonder why you eat food and are never satisfied, now you are just going to eat your father's food. Why can't you act like Lomvula, because she eats and it shows that she is eating? She is fat as you can see!

The father would stay for some few days then leave. One day Lomalanga took the cattle out to drink at a nearby river. While the cattle were still grazing, she sat under a tree near the river and cried. She was starving. She cried and cried, and then she heard a voice saying: Why are you crying? When she looked up she saw a big fish and she answered 'I am hungry.' The fish came carrying some meat and bread, gave it to her. She ate, drank water and said, thank you. The fish then told her that, everyday once the cattle had some water she should sit down and would be given food. In the evening as she was coming home she was singing and joyous because she was full.

Her body started to change; it was obvious that she was eating somewhere. One day the mother called her, and asked as to where she was eating and what. Lomalanga said 'Nothing, I only eat what you offer me here at home.' The mother could not accept that, and said 'you are lying, tell me.' She took a stick and beat her, again and again. She cried, till she confessed that a fish was giving her food, meat and bread everyday. The fish had told her that, if by any chance they caught and ate it, she should keep its bones, throw them in a king's garden close by.

One day the mother fell ill. They sent out a word to Lomalanga's father and he came back. He found his wife very sick. He tried different dishes for her, but she did not eat a single one of those. The husband said to her, 'what is it you want? The mother said 'I am craving for fish' the father said 'where will I get it from?' The woman told him in response that there was one where Lomalanga leads the cattle to for water. He went over there with his fishing rod. He fished and got a very big fish. He took it home, it was roasted, and they ate and were full.

In the afternoon Lomalanga came and sat under the tree expecting to get meat and bread as usual. She sat and sat and nothing came. She left. She was hungry that day. She remembered the fish saying one day they might catch it. In the evening she went home and found that the mother was getting better. All she boasted about was that they ate the fish and she was not going to get food from anywhere. She was offered her share. Lomalanga thanked the mother took her share and ate. In the evening she washed the dishes, took the bones and put them aside next to the kraal, so that she would take and

throw where the fish had instructed they must be thrown. The next morning she was the first to wake up. She got the cows out, took the bones and ran after the herd of cattle in the direction of the king's garden. She passed in full speed, threw the bones inside the king's garden. A big red flower grew where the bones fell. It was different from all the other flowers that were in that garden.

Lomalanga never thought of what was going to happen, she was just following the fish's instruction. When the king's workers went to the garden in the morning, this beautiful flower different from the others fascinated them. Every one wanted the flower to give to the king. They could not uproot it. They reported the matter to the king. The king said they should call for all the girls. The girls came in their numbers except for Lomalanga who was out in the fields looking after cattle. Parents also came. The order was that whoever manages to uproot the flower was going to be the queen.

All the girls present tried but to no avail. The king said, 'It is not all the girls of the area present here!' Others murmured saying 'Lomalanga is not here.' Lomvula's mother said, 'what is Lomalanga' It was ordered that she be fetched. Her mere appearance was sympathy seeking. She was dressed in rags and really looked poor. On arrival she did not exert so much effort on it. She simply uprooted the flower. The king instructed that she be bathed and dressed properly. She was married. Lomalanga was very pretty; she really deserved to be the king's wife. Lomvula went home crying. She had to look after cattle. Leisure days were over; she now had to experienced hard rains in the fields.

### Folktale 31

#### **The old lady at her son on law**

Once upon a time an old woman went to visit her daughter who had married far away. She was warmly received. The old woman visited them during the weeding season. She wanted to go with them to the field to weed. The daughter refused telling her that she had come to rest. The daughter then told her to occupy herself with the garden close by so that when the sun gets hot she can go home.

They had a number of calabashes with sour milk. A makoti does not eat sour milk at her in-law's place. For her to partake she must be given a cow by her parents. Otherwise she respects emasi. One day the old woman hoed for a while then took off her sidvwaba (traditional leather skirt) and hung it on the hoe, went back home. The hoe was left standing with the skirt hanging. She then went back home. She crawled until she was close to the kraal. She entered the kitchen and emptied the sour milk containers. She took the son I-law's attire wore it, took a spoon and sat on the son in-law's chair and said,

My son in-law does this, my child whilst sitting here  
My son in-law does this, my child whilst sitting here  
He says khemshe and says moshe (eating)

*As she is saying this she is dishing emasi into her hand and eating. She ate and finished, washed the container and returned every thing to its proper place. She went back o the field to weed. While she was in the house eating the hoe was right up in the field. The daughter even commented about her saying, 'There is my mother busy'. When they came back home they shouted at her to come back. When the son- in-law took his sour milk container he was shocked because all the containers were empty.*

*He kept quiet and did not comment. They filled all the containers with milk the next day and drained umlaza. They poured milk again. It was now delicious amasi. The old lady did like before ran away from the field, dressed in the son-in-law's attire, t on his chair with the spoon and said,*

*My son in-law does this, my child whilst sitting here  
My son in-law does this, my child whilst sitting here  
He says khemshe and says moshe (eating)*

*After dinning she washed the container and took every thing to its proper place, and returned to the field. When the son-in-law came back he saw what he had seen before. He kept quiet. Days went by. When the milk was really formed to the delicious emasi he became so irritable. That morning he forcefully chased everybody to the fields. The old lady also went to her usual plot. The daughter also left running. The son-in-law remained behind and hid behind the sleeping mats.*

*During the day the old lady played her usual game. After she had just started eating, sitting with hwr legs wide apart like the son in law, the son-in-law pushed the mats and came out and said, 'Its you mother-in-law who is throubling me. I was so worried. Take this conotainer and go and get me water from a river without from and whatsoever'. She left the house so ashamed. She took har skirt dress and set of for her miserable journey, to get water for her son-in-law from a frogless river.*

*The old lady went, so a river went to it and said, 'Frog, frog are you there?' all the frogs in the river responded saying, 'KrI Kr! We are present'. She rassed. She went and went, saw another river and came closer to it. She asked and said, 'Frog, Frog are you there?' There was no response. She repeated. The frogs responded saying, 'Kr, kr we are present!' She passed. The sun was about to set. The daughter was so shocked to learn that it was her mother who was eating her husband's emasi.*

*As the old lady looked far away, she saw something shining and it was a river. Upon arrival she aked three times saying, 'Frog, frog are you there?' there was no answer. She was overjoyed, drewt the water, drank and it quenched her thirst. She then rested on a big root of the tree that provided shade there. When she tried to stand up it was impossible because the root had grown into har buttocks. Dask was approaching. She heard some noise and then saw a lot of animals which said, 'who is this one sitting on the king's well? The old lady answered saying, ' it is me! I was sent by my son in law to get him water from a river without frogs and whatsoever.' The animals said, 'Stay there something great is coming'. The animals drank water and then went uphill and rested. A few ather animals came and repeated the same words to the granny. When all the*

*animals were gathered one said, 'No one should release the old lady from the roots. Whoever does that will have dew on his buttocks.'*

*During the night chakijane woke up, released the old lady, told her to get the water and run away. The old lady did as instructed. While chakijane was asleep he felt dew gathering on his buttocks. He woke up and quietly shed them off onto the elephant's buttocks. When the animals woke up they inspected each other. They found the elephant with dew on its buttocks. After skinning it, they cut it into pieces and carried it to the field where they were to eat it. On the way chakijane spoke to himself laughing. When the other animals enquired what he was saying he said, 'I am saying the meat is heavy'. Chakijane would then run ahead and say, 'They killed the innocent elephant thinking that it is the one that released the old lady yet it is me'.*

*The other animals heard that and they chased chakijane. He came to a big river and changed into a nice small stone. They did not see him. Then one animal said, 'if I could see him across I could throw this stone at him'. He said this taking the very stone that is chakijane and threw it across. When it landed on the other side the animals heard chakijane saying, 'Pe! Pe! You helped me to cross over. 'Pe! Pe! You helped me to cross over. They went back because they could not cross as the river was overflowing.*

## Teenage pregnancy a growing problem

BY CEBILE DLAMINI

Teen pregnancy among the youth in Manzini poses a serious problem to the city. According to statistics compiled by the Family Life Association (FLAS) 98 young people have been found to be pregnant so far this year, compared to 50 pregnancies among the youth recorded during the whole of last year.

This year's figures are expected to be more than double last year's toll. According to the Research and Evaluation Unit (REU) Programme Manager Mrs Marjorie Mavuso, the youth visit FLAS clinics, especially the Youth Friendly Centre in Manzini every month for check-ups.

Mavuso said while the large number of youth who fall pregnant was a cause for concern as it indicates that many young people continue to engage in unprotected sex, and it is encouraging that they re-

alise the importance of visiting clinics for check-ups and treatment for sexually transmitted infections.

Mavuso said more youth not only visit the clinics while they are pregnant but continue to come back after delivery. She added that every month FLAS conducts more than a 100 pregnancy tests on youths most of which are positive. The average number of youth coming for tests last year was 104 compared to the 105 so far this year.

According to national reports the incidence of HIV/AIDS is more prevalent among youth and indeed FLAS sees many youth who come for the treatment of STI's. Mavuso warned that unless the youth changed their sexual behaviour and abstained, and practised safer sex like insisting on condoms the problem of teen pregnancy will continue and their young lives threatened by HIV/AIDS.