THE REPRESENTATION OF MASCULINITY IN EUPHRASE KEZILAHABI'S NOVELS

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate

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DEDICATION

For the memory of my beloved father, Richard Mahonge Ng'wanaaia Fukojakae.

Nakutogoa Tate kwa kunifuza utana wa elimu. Hemea he mpolele mishi yoshe!

(Thank you father for teaching me the value of education. Rest in eternal peace)

and

To my mother, my heroine. Without your nonstop prayers and encouragement, I would

not have reached where I am today.

Hongea Mame. Zumbe tiyemuaia na kumtogoa akunke mavui mangi!

(Thank you Mama. May our faithful God grant you long life!)

ABSTRACT

This study sought to critically interrogate the representation of masculinity in Euphrase Kezilahabi's novels as a way of filling the critical gap in the readings of masculinity in his novels: *Kichwa Maji, Gamba la Nyoka, Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo, Nagona* and *Mzingile*. The study assumes that various circumstances influence and determine men's masculinity and that masculinity is a trait that can be exhibited by both men and women. It also assumes that Kezilahabi does not affirm the social constructs but rather interrogates them. The objectives of this study are: to examine the characters' performance of masculinity, indicators of masculinity and gender role construction. It also examines Kezilahabi's interrogation of masculinity in his novels. This is a qualitative study which uses Robert Connell's theory of Masculinity, Judith Butler's theory of performativity as well as Louis Althusser's idea of interpellation as a theoretical framework for textual analysis and interpretation of characters' expressions and performances in the novels. It employs a constructivist paradigm, a method that comprises several stages, including identification of the novels as the primary texts, a close reading of the novels and a review of literature on the gendered representations in Kezilahabi's novels as well as critiquing the representation of masculinity in them. Kezilahabi's novels reveal that masculinity is a circumstantial, mutable and contestable subject. It is constructed within a specific socio-cultural and historical moments and changes according to circumstances. The novels demonstrate the agency of women in constructing men's masculinity. They indicate that masculinity and femininity are not separable entities in the building of a new, peaceful and strong nation. Furthermore, Kezilahabi's novels reveal that power is the key attribute in (de)constructing and (re)defining men's masculinity and state institutions like armed forces, schools and religious centres determine the hierarchies and structures of masculinity. Through his novels, Kezilahabi challenges and changes stereotypes of men, dismantles the conventional gender roles and suggests a new way of imagining gender where hegemonic ideologies can be neutralized. The novels highlight the necessity of female-male gender complementarity in a contemporary world.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

Gender: is a social concept that refers to the social and cultural differences a society assigns to people based on their sex; it involves social norms, attitudes and activities that society deems more appropriate for one sex over another. Gender is also determined by what an individual feels and does.

Gender roles: refers to a society's expectations of people's behavior and attitudes based on whether they are females or males. A person's gender role comprises several elements that can be expressed through clothing, behavior, occupation, personal relationships, and other factors. These elements are not fixed and they change according to circumstances. Traditionally, gender roles were often divided into distinct feminine and masculine roles.

Masculinity: is a broad set of processes which include gender relations and gender practices between men and women. There are multiple forms of masculinity within one setting or context. Masculinity is thus not a fixed, homogenous and innate construct but is rather fluid, relational, contextual, changing and constantly being negotiated (Connell, 2000).

Hegemonic masculinity: is, "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell, 2005: 77). Hegemonic masculinities rest upon social context, and so they reflect the social inequalities of the cultures they embody.

This study defines masculinity as a performed set of socially constructed attributes, norms, behaviors and roles generally recognized as definitive of being a man in patriarchal societies. It is also a performance, which is contextual and can also vary according to time and culture. Women too can perform masculinity.

Femininity: is a set of socially organized relationships between women and between women and men that are mediated by the society. It is constructed through patriarchal ideas, reproduced, and negotiated within the broader context of gender relations and gender roles. Masculinity and femininity are relational concepts, which only have meaning in relation to each other (Connell 2005).

Patriarchy: is the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. The patriarchal system is characterized by power, dominance, hierarchy, and competition. Therefore, patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices, in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. However, it does not imply that women are either totally powerless or totally deprived of rights, influence, and resources (Connell, 1995).

Performance(s): is a set of actions that are done by gender (Butler, 1999).

Modernity: denotes all those cultural practices associated with Western culture. They include Western form of education, Christianity, gender equity, human rights and dignity, freedom of choice and urban life.

Tradition: designates all those cultural practices that are associated with rural life, such as ethnic and kinship loyalties, observation of traditional customs such as circumcision and burial rites, traditional marriage and conventional gender roles.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter constitutes introduction to the study. It provides background to the study and biographical information about Euphrase Kezilahabi. Statement of the problem, review of related studies, objectives, research assumptions, research questions, methodology and the scope of the study are other elements comprising the chapter.

1.2 Background to the Problem

This study examines the representation of masculinity in Euphrase Kezilahabi's five novels. To contextualize this study, we start with a discussion of the historical background to Tanzanian Fiction.

Written literature in Tanzania is not as extensive as oral literature and it is basically in Kiswahili. Written literature may have begun at the time when Arabic script was introduced along the coast in the 10th century (Mulokozi, 1992). Tanzanian literature in English is much less developed compared to its Kiswahili counterpart. Tanzanian colonial and postcolonial governments encouraged literacy in local languages such as Kiswahili, and as a result much of the Tanzanian's literary writings are in Kiswahili.

In 1961 the Government of Tanzania chose Kiswahili as the national language and subsequently promoted it vigorously. Nyerere, the founding president of Tanzania, championed the abandonment of European languages in favour of local languages such as Kiswahili. Around the same time, many scholars in Tanzania questioned the place of European languages like English in postcolonial Africa (Otiso, 2013).

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in the then Tanganyika, written literature, especially poetry flourished. The notable works include Bwana Mwengo bin Athumani's *Utendi wa Tambuka* (c. 1728), Said Aidarus' *Utenzi wa Hamziyya* (c. 1749), Said Abdallah bin Nasir's Al-*Inkishafi* (c. 1800) and Mgeni bin Faqini's *Utenzi wa Ras 'l Ghuli* (1855). These works related the Islamic forms and thinking to the realities and struggles against the British and the Germans.

The novels written in early 1900s were mainly based on colonial themes. Abdalla Bin Hemed for instance wrote a biography on Tippu-Tip, *Tawasifu ya Tippu Tippu* (1902). Hugh Martin Kayamba wrote about the Africans' invitation to England and what they learnt from the visit, *Tulivyoona na Tulivyofanya Uingereza* (1932). Islam and Christianity also inspired the production of literary works during this time. These include Mathias Mnyampala's *Utenzi wa Zaburi* (1965) and *Utenzi wa Injili* (1963), Mzengo's *Utenzi wa Nabii Issa* (1977) and Abdillatif Abdalla's *Utenzi wa Nabii Adam na Hawaa* (1971). Another common theme of the writers in the 1900s was love. This is reflected in Serapius Komba's (1978) *Pete* and Mohammed Mohamed's (1972) *Kiu*. There were several literary works in the forms of poem and short stories on love and religion which appeared mainly in newspapers and magazines (Mulokozi, 1992).

Kiswahili became a unifying language during the peasant struggles, the workers' movements and the nationalist struggles of the 1920s-1950s. This was also reflected when writers voiced radical social criticism in works such as Mathias Mnyampala's *Diwani ya Mnyampala* (1963), Kaluta Amri Abedi's *Sheria za Kutunga Mashairi: na Diwani ya Amri* (1967), Saadan Kandoro's *Mashairi ya Saadani* (1972), Muyaka bin

Haji's *Diwani ya Muyaka Bin Haji* (1979) and Shaban Robert's *Adili na Nduguze* (1968), *Kusadikika* (1971) and *Kufikirika* (1991). These writers wrote satires in the colonial set-up. For instance, Shaban Robert's criticism employs parables and allegorical symbolism (Mazrui, 2007).

At the dawn of Tanzanian's independence, poetic works became more dominant than any other genre. A good number of poets rejoiced over independence, cursing colonialism and its puppets. Kandoro's *Mashairi ya Saadan* (1972) represents the period. The poet expressed his happiness for living in a free country, which was once under colonialism. Although Islam influences his arguments, the dominant idea of his poems is happiness for freedom of Tanganyika (Mazrui, 2007).

In the 1960s, and immediately after independence, Tanzania adopted *Ujamaa* social-economic Policy which intended to benefit all Tanzanians. In order to build *Ujamaa* the government embarked on the implementation of three main programmes: the nationalization of the major means of production, the creation of *Ujamaa* villages and the establishment of the leadership code. Unfortunately, the country failed to achieve its goal (Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003). Mismanagement of resources and poor leadership are among the major reasons that led Tanzania to its downfall during the implementation of *Ujamaa* policy. This posed challenges to many Tanzanians. The challenges were more felt during the buildings of *Ujamaa* villages when people were evicted from their original villages and settled in *Ujamaa* villages. These challenges that many Tanzanians faced during *Ujamaa*, are well delineated in Tanzanian literature.

The post-independence era enhanced the literature of social criticism. In the 1970s, the literature of social criticism was largely a reaction or a response to the socialist ideals of the Arusha Declaration of 1967 and their practical implementation. The new local elites who attempted to outdo the former European colonizer in exploiting Tanzanians disappointed the society and influenced writers. The writers' comparison of the colonial era leadership against the brutality and corruption of the new leadership led to their expression of disappointment.

Typical of these writings includes Ebrahim Hussein's historical drama *Kinjeketile* (1969). Hussein used a historical incident in Tanzania's anti-colonial struggle to probe, allegorically, the pros and cons of the ideas of *Ujamaa* as an African attempt to concretize the universal quest for freedom. *Kinjeketile* was followed by *Mashetani* (1971), *Jogoo Kijijini; Ngao ya Jadi* (1976). Another author of similar context is Euphrase Kezilahabi. His first novel, *Rosa Mistika* was published in 1970. Thereafter, he published *Kichwa Maji* (1974), *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (1975), a collection of poems under the title of *Kichomi* (1973), and two more novels, *Gamba la Nyoka* (1979) and *Nagona* (first published in 1987 and republished in 1990). In these works, Kezilahabi questions traditional social organization and beliefs on *Ujamaa*, Christianity, Western education, political philosophies and practices (Mazrui, 2007). Evan Mwangi (2009), remarks that Kezilahabi's *Nagona* (self-consciousness) and *Mzingile* (labyrinth) involve Nyerere's skepticism towards Western philosophies as a viable means of enabling independence and progress in Africa.

Other authors who have addressed the post-Arusha Declaration problems facing the people of Tanzania include Penina Muhando who produced plays depicting the problems and social contradictions of the 1970s and 1980s. In particular, the plays are about the betrayal of the people by leaders, cultural and moral conflicts in traditional and new *Ujama*a villages; the alienation of the educated elite, and the contradiction between the democratic aims of *Ujamaa* and the egocentric, anti-democratic aims of those who claim to be the pioneers of the socialist process. Among her famous books are *Hatia* (1972), *Tambueni Haki Zetu* (1973), *Heshima Yangu* (1974), *Pambo* (1975), *Nguzo Mama* (1982) and *Lina Ubani* (1984).

Other Tanzanian writers who interrogated the contradictions and tensions afflicting the Ujamaa villages include Gabriel Ruhumbika's *Village in Uhuru* (1969), Ngalimecha Ngahyoma's *Kijiji Chetu* (1975), Euphrase Kezilahabi's *Gamba la Nyoka* (1979) and Kulikoyela Kahigi and Ahamad Ngemera's *Mwanzo wa Tufani* (1976). Other works of socialist-oriented literature have also appeared in Tanzanian poetry such as Kulikoyela Kahigi and Mugyabuso Mulokozi's *Mashairi ya Azimio la Arusha* (1970), *Malenga wa Bara* (1976), and *Kunga za Ushairi na Diwani Yetu* (1982), and Alamin Mazrui's *Kilio cha Haki* (1981). These works questioned whether *Ujamaa* villages were aimed at liberating peasants or were meant to enable collective exploitation by the few and the international bourgeoisie.

From the late 1960s to the 1980s, some writers responded to liberation and nationalistic movement. The liberation novels were exemplified in the works of Kiimbila's *Ubeberu Utashindwa* (1971) and Fikeni Senkoro's *Mzalendo* (1978). In drama, this theme is

portrayed in Ebrahim Hussein's *Kinjeketile* (1969), Mugyabuso Mulokozi's *Mukwava wa Uhehe* (1979), Emanuel Mbogo's *Tone la Mwisho* (1981) and Penina Muhando et al's *Harakati za ukombozi* (1982). These works portray the process of the country's liberation and interrogate the nature and role of the state in the post-independence era.

During this time, other writers concentrated on the criticism of certain specific cultural aspects or beliefs found among Tanzanians. The issue of culture is depicted in Muhammad Farsy's novel, *Kurwa na Doto* (1960), Felician Nkwera's *Mzishi wa Baba Ana Radhi* (1967), Ebrahim Hussein's *Wakati Ukuta* (1969), Farouk Topan's *Aliyeonja Pepo* (1973) and in the famous novel, *Bwana Myombekere na Bibi Bugonoka na Ntulanalwo na Bulihwali* (1982) by Anicet Kitereza. This novel, the longest Kiswahili novel, was first written in the Kikerewe language in the 1940s but could not be published until it was translated into Kiswahili. These writings also criticized Islam and Christian religious teachings and practices in the country.

Several works also portray the ailment and hypocrisy of the bureaucratic strata that state power has been exercising. These include Ruhumbika's *Parapanda* (1976) and *Uwike Usiwike Kutakucha* (1978), Claude Mung'ong'o's *Njozi Iliyopotea* (1980), Emanuel Mbogo's *Giza Limeingia* (1980), George Liwenga's *Nyota za Huzuni* (1981) and *Ayubu* (1984) and Seithy Chachage' *Sudi ya Yohana* (1980), *Kivuli* (1981) and *Almasi za Bandia* (1990) and *Makuadi wa Soko Huria* (2002). These writers have dealt with the ironies of liberalism in the 1990's in Tanzania.

Another noteworthy issue in Tanzanian writing is the unbending rejection of the existing socio-economic system, its working class perspective and heroes, and its innovative,

optimistic solution to social tensions. The proletarian based works include Hamza Sokko's *The Gathering Storm* (1977), Adam Shafi's *Kasri ya Mwinyi Fuad* (1978) and *Kuli* (1979), Said Ahmed Mohamed's *Dunia Mti Mkavu* (1980), and his poetry texts *Sikate Tamaa* (1981) and *Kina cha Maisha* (1984). These texts probe the proletarian problems in the context of the contemporary world and the post-revolutionary period, particularly in Zanzibar.

In the period between the late 1960s and 1980s, Tanzanian literary works reflected a world of experimentation and innovation (Mazrui, 2007). The challenges of Arusha declaration and the liberalization policy invited popularization of socialist and liberation ideas throughout the country. These ideas are represented in the literary works of Mnyampala (1968), the poet who popularized the dialogue verse form known as *ngonjera* and turned it into a vehicle of the socialist ideology. *Ngonjera*, though based on traditional poetic forms, it was spread to all parts of Tanzania and became permanently established as a Kiswahili poetic-dramatic art form within a few years. Mohamed's writing falls in this group also. His poetry *Sikate Tamaa* (1980), *Kina cha Maisha* (1984) and *Jicho la Ndani* (2002) was aimed at reconciliation between the conflicting aesthetic camps of traditionalists and revolutionaries in Swahili poetry. He also wrote novels that including *Asali Chungu* (1977), *Utengano* and *Dunia Mti Mkavu* (1980)*, Kiza Katika Nuru* (1988) and *Tata za Asumini* (1990). His earlier novels dealt with the injustices and atrocities of Zanzibar's colonial history while the latter pronounced an outspoken political critique of postcolonial elites.

A world of experimentation and innovation was also observed in drama. Hussein's *Ngao ya Jadi* and *Jogoo Kijijini* (1976), Muhando's *Lina Ubani* (1984) and Mohamed's *Kivuli Kinaishi* (1990), *Amezidi* (1995), *Kitumbua Kimeingia Mchanga* (2000) fall into this category. In most of these experiments, the dramatists were attempting to transform traditional theatrical forms such as storytelling into modern, Western dramatic art (Mazrui, 2007). These works addressed current topical issues, such as AIDS and famine, and the day-to-day problems of the common people such as unemployment, family jealousies and quarrels, infidelity, economic problems, injustice and other societal problems. In fiction, serious experimentation began with the novels of Kezilahabi, *Nagona* (1990) and *Mzingile* (1991).

Crime and romance are the other themes that Tanzanian writers depicted between the late 1960s and 1990s. These issues were represented in the popular fiction such as Faraji Katalambula's *Simu ya Kifo* (1965), William Mkufya's *The Dilemma* (1977), Elvis Musiba's *Kikosi cha Kisasi* (1979), Harrison Mwakyembe's *Pepo ya Mabwege* (1980), *Kikomo* (1980) and *Hofu* (1988), Ben Mtobwa's *Pesa Zako Zinanuka* (1984)*, Salamu Toka Kuzimu* (1986), *Tutarudi na Roho Zetu* (1987), *Dar es Salaam Usiku* (1990) and *Najisikia Kuua Tena* (1993). The same themes were also portrayed in Severine Ndunguru's *A Wreath of Father Mayer* (1997).

On politics, it is noted that even during the independence struggle, Julius Nyerere, the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) leader, as the pioneer of Tanganyikan nationalism elevated male elites in politics and often silenced the voices of women. When the Tanganyika African National Union party was formed under the leadership of Julius Nyerere, there were no women participants and the British, who had controlled

Tanganyika as a colony asked TANU to include women in its leadership (Musiiwa, 2011). Bibi Titi was the first Tanzanian woman nominated to participate in politics as a leader. She recruited and united other women in political activism, and became a central figure in politics.

During the post-independence period, women were still relegated to the subordinate and status in politics. Women who were educated were given positions that had to do with public politics. Despite the fact that ordinary women played an active role in the building of TANU, they were left out of formal political activities in post-colonial Tanzania. Disregarding women who fought for independence such as Bibi Titi and elevating male political icons like Nyerere, portrays the contrasting gender roles and gender identities, and illustrates how political image, which also reflects gender imbalance is constructed, contested and reconfigured over time (Musiiwa, 2011). The situation still persists. In Tanzania current statistics show that Tanzanian women occupy only 30% of political and most administrative posts (Højgaard, 2002 in Kiamba 2008).

This situation has made Tanzania writers to respond to perspectives on gender as a current issue. Kezilahabi's *Rosa Mistika* (1971), Ibrahim Ngozi's *Machozi ya Mwanamke* (1977), Mbogo's *Tone la Mwisho* (1981), Muhando's *Nguzo Mama* (1982) and *Heshima Yangu* (1974), and Elieshi Lema's *Parched Earth* (2001) are among works that respond to gender issues. Said Mohamed has also dealt with the theme of gender relations in *Babu Alipofufuka* (2001), *Dunia Yao* (2006) and *Nyuso za Mwanamke* (2010).

Tanzanian writers dealing with gender issues portray how the control of social discourses serves to advantage of those in power, perpetuating established gender relations and

identities. These writers' social criticism of conventional gender identities are expressed within the wider context of national problems and concerns. These writers depict women social consequences that are due to the conflation of biological, discursive and social identity. Furthermore, they show how the society maintains status quo by referring to the way cultural constructions are transformed into natural attributes where men are perceived as being naturally gifted with honour while women have to prove their honour in society (Kruger, 1998).

It is however important to note that there are writers who create characters who portray ambiguity of gender roles in their works. In this category, we have Kezilahabi's *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (1975) and Muhando's *Nguzo Mama* (1982). In this case, the writers demonstrate that traditional gender roles are opposed by a subtext of female flexibility, courage, aggression, strength and resourcefulness which allow for multiple dramatic strategies to authorize the counter narratives of female characters. Another observation we can make from such writers is that social economic changes affect women and men, and eventually their sexual behaviour. For instance, women's ability and capability to earn income creates a new awareness, autonomy and self-confidence while men's financial instability disempowers them and causes the damaging consequences for their behaviour and that of their partners. These writings indicate that gender can no longer be conceptualized as a fixed monolithic category; rather the concept is complex, fluid and subject to change. This premise leads this study to interrogate the representation of gender, particularly masculinity as a current issue in Tanzania with reference to Kezilahabi's novels.

1.3 Kezilahabi and his Literary Works

Euphrase Kezilahabi is a poet, a playwright and a novelist. He was one of the first African writers to publish a collection of free verse in Swahili. He has had a great impact on the development of the novel in Swahili (cf. Amold 1988: 216; Bertoncini-Zubkova 1989: 107; Ohly 1990: 165; Ricard 1995: 90; Yahya-Othman 1999: 83, Diegner 2002).

Euphrase Kezilahabi was born on 13 April 1944 in the village of Namagondo at Ukerewe Island, Lake Victoria, Tanzania. He first went to the village primary school and later changed to Nyegezi Juniour (Catholic) seminary where future priests received their education. He left the seminary after completing form six of his secondary education and joined the University of Dar es Salaam in 1967 (Bertoncini: 1989: 107). He received his B.A. in 1970. He wrote his Master of Arts thesis in 1976 on Shaaban Robert's novels. He taught in various schools in Tanzania and lectured at the University of Dar es Salaam before he pursued his Doctor of philosophy studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA where he graduated in 1985. His dissertation was entitled "African Philosophy and the Problem of Literature Interpretation" (Bertoncini 1989: 107: 141). Prof. Kezilahabi has been teaching African Literature, Theatre and Drama, and Creative writing at the University of Botswana. In 1990 he received the Italian Edoardo Sanguinetti Memorial Prize and in 1995 the Shaaban Robert Memorial Prize (Mezger, 2002: 76). His novels, play, poems and short stories have been studied at ordinary and advanced secondary schools in Tanzania, at Diploma and University levels. In Kenya and Botswana, his works are studied in universities particularly those that offer Kiswahili courses.

A central theme in Kezilahabi's early works is the conflict between the older and the younger generations in Tanzanians, which was caused by "de-valuation of all values" concerning traditional life (Mlacha, 1988). The recurrent theme that connects his early novels with the novels of the 1990s is the individual search for meaningful life. His novel *Nagona* was published in 1990 and was soon followed by *Mzingile* in 1991. These two works mark the second period in his writings (Mlacha, *ibid*).

Kezilahabi's first novel, *Rosa Mistika* (1971), deals with the exploitation and self-destruction of a young woman. The story is about the tragedy of a young woman, Rosa, who fails to cope with what her parents and society expect her to be. In this novel, the reader follows the protagonist Rosa from her home to school where she goes against her parents' will and ends up sinking herself into a different world. This is a world characterized by indifference, hypocrisy, spiritual unfriendliness and other equally malicious forces. The institutions entrusted with rearing and shaping the individual's life seems to either have abdicated their responsibilities or are simply unaware of what befits them. Rosa is tossed here and there by whimsical forces. Her uncontrolled life ends tragically in suicide. The novel was banned in Tanzania's schools under the pretext that its theme was discordant with the moral values of the society. It was seen as a scandal because it handled the theme of prostitution (Bertoncini, 1992). After being banned for a certain period, the book was reintroduced into secondary school curricula and became a bestseller in Tanzania (Madumulla, 1991). Rosenberg (2012) mentions that Kezilahabi's *Rosa Mistika* is a work of art that interrogates gender as it is enacted and enforced in both crucial and apparently traditional contexts.

Kichwa Maji (1974) is Kezilahabi's second novel. Like its antecedent, it is set in Ukerewe and depicts a young man's search for the meaning of life. Whereas *Rosa Mistika* deals with the exploitation and self-destruction of a young woman, *Kichwa Maji* deals with the fate of men who choose to exploit such women. By the novel's conclusion Kazimoto, the protagonist, and his lifetime friend, Manase, have come to the realization that as a result of their adulterous relationships with the same prostitute named Pili, they have both contracted and passed on to their wives a disease, which means their death both literally and figuratively (Rosenberg, 2012). In the two novels *Rosa Mistika* and *Kichwa Maji,* Kezilahabi depicts his characters, particularly main characters, as victims of the ideologies of patriarchy and masculinity. The themes of patriarchy and masculinity pervade the two novels. Kezilahabi shows how institutions like marriage can construct masculinity and discusses how traditional manhood and womanhood enslave both men and women. He also portrays men's and women's fates as inseparably linked, and that they are both victims of an ideological value system that defines their symbiotic relationship.

Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo (1975) is Kezilahabi's third novel. The novel continues the search for meaning and values, and at the same time portrays the politicized societal life in Tanzanian's *Ujamaa* period. Kezilahabi integrates his philosophy, theme, ideology and style to make a good and powerful synthetic whole. The narration is quite forceful and so are imagery and symbolism. Right from the beginning, the writer paints an absurd and disgraceful picture of a chaotic world. The villagers, as in *Kichwa Maji,* are fall of all sorts of evil: revenge, witchcraft, theft and mob justice or injustice. The towns are not spared either. They also pervade with prostitution, adultery, and wreckage of the

institution of marriage, mistrust and exploitation. The novel contends that life in the world is chaotic, and nobody seems exempt from that unfortunate reality. Kezilahabi portrays the chaotic nature of the world, complicated by the fact that it is virtually hard to attain happiness. It is a kind of chaotic performance where both men and women struggle and suffer (Wamitila, 1998).

Kezilahabi's fourth novel, *Gamba la Nyoka* (1979), describes the installation of *Ujamaa* villages (often by force) and how people were coped with life in these new cooperative villages. In this novel Kezilahabi reveals the cruelty and inhumanity that characterized Tanzania's implementation of its type of socialism. Besides cruelty and inhumanity, the implementation was riddled with corruption and had a revenge motif as a motivating force (Wamitila, 1998). In this novel, Kezilahabi depicts the villagers of Bucho being deployed in moving their counterparts from Kisole to the designated *Ujamaa* village. The villagers of Kisole are humiliated by the system. They are beaten and tortured under the burning sun, with no shelter. They are also forced to vacate their homes under heavy torrents of rain - a powerful archetypal image that signifies brutal treatment and a poor system in the implementation of the villagization policy. The writer shows how the masculine political system subjects many who are marginalized. *Gamba la Nyoka* also portrays the hypocrisy endemic and pervasive in Christianity through a catholic priest and one of his female faithfuls.

Kaptula la Marx and his short story *Mayai - Waziri wa Maradhi* (1978) are other works of Kezilahabi that emerged after President Nyerere admitted the failure of *Ujamaa* policy. Nyerere's critical review of the *Ujamaa* policy and declaration of the failure of

Ujamaa cleared the way for critical literary works (Bertoncini, 1996 in Bulcaen, 1997). In his work *Arusha Declaration Ten Years After* (1977), President Nyerere admitted the failure of the Tanzanian politicians to live up to the code of conduct stipulated in the Arusha Declaration (Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003). Kezilahabi's works ridiculed *Ujamaa* policy openly. They showed that *Ujamaa* Policy and the Arusha Declaration were umbrellas under which political leaders and other state officials took underserved shelter (Rosenberg, 2012). A good number of nationalized means of production were in the hands of a few groups of people in power, who in fact had replaced white exploiters. Consequently, many parastatals, industries and factories operated inefficiently, leading to underproduction. In *Kaptula la Marx*, Kezilahabi criticized the adoption of *Ujamaa* policy and satirizes Nyerere for forcing himself to wear Karl Marx's short which does not fit him. In the playwright's opinion, Ujamaa policy was not the right choice at that particular time. He suggests that *Ujamaa* should have had African roots for it to succeed in Tanzania.

Kezilahabi's *Kaptula la Marx* portrays the imbalance of gender in the political arena. The play has one female minister; the only female character. This depicts the way the political system elevated men right before independence and muted women's voices in various fields. Kezilahabi's poems, *Kichomi* (1974) and *Karibu Ndani* (1988) mock the Arusha Declaration as something that brought nothing significant but hardships to the majority of Tanzanians, particularly in the villages. In addition, it blinded many from seeing the reality.

Nagona (1990) and *Mzingile* (1991) mark Kezilahabi's second creative period. Most scholars analyze these two books as one according due their close relation. These works are heavily steeped in symbolism and imagery (Gromov, 1998). The two novels paved the path towards what is called "the new Swahili novel". In the creation of *Nagona* and *Mzingile*, Kezilahabi confessed that he had been influenced greatly by existentialist writers, especially Martin Heidegger and Friedrich Nietzsche, though he himself professes another mode of philosophy which he calls 'African philosophy' (Wamitila, 1998: 80). In these two novels, a woman is empowered and given a significant role to play. Although Kezilahabi has written in the four genres of literature: novel, play, poetry and short story, this study focuses on his novels only. The study examines representation of masculinity in his five novels: *Kichwa Maji* (1974), *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (1975), *Gamba la Nyoka* (1979), *Nagona* (1990) and *Mzingile* (1991).

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Literary writing in Tanzania has revealed that although Tanzanian writers have dealt with gender relations as a current issue, gender has remained a one-sided topic, with the focus firmly on femininity issues. The writers depict women as discriminated against, marginalized group in most of their literary works. Only a few women emerge as powerful and credible protagonists (Marie Kruger, 1998; Liv Haram, 1999; Catherine Muhoma, 2000; Sidney Mkuchu, 2004; Kimathi Chabari, 2009; and Ernesta Mosha, 2013). The fiction also exposes how biological, discursive, cultural constructions and social identity lead to extreme social consequences for women. Furthermore, literature review indicates that Euphrase Kezilahabi's novels have received little critical attention in the theme of masculinity. The critics who dealt with gender relations subject in his

works: Aaron Rosernberg (2012), Caroline Lewis (2012), Cesilia Kimani (2003) and Dorothy Kweyu (2007) limited their scope to his two earlier novels; *Rosa Mistika* and *Kichwa Maji.* Their studies indicate that masculinity is a male trait and patriarchal system legitimizes subordination of women. Only few women emerge as powerful and credible characters. The issue of writers and critics paying more attention to women issues than men issues propose marginal focus on understanding men and their own gendered conditions. The little critical attention to Kezilahabi's literary works about masculinity has motivated the researcher to conduct this study. Hence, this study interrogates the representation of masculinity in Kezilahabi's novels as a way of filling the stated gap in the criticism of masculinity.

1.5   Objectives of the Study

The study intends to achieve the following objectives:

i.   To examine characters' performance of masculinity in Kezilahabi's novels

ii.   To examine how characters signal patriarchy, masculinity and sexism in Kezilahabi's novels

iii.   To examine gender roles construction in Kezilahabi's novels

iv.   To examine Kezilahabi's interrogation of masculinity in his novels.

1.6   Research Assumption

The study assumes that various circumstances influence and determine men's masculinity in Kezilahabi's novels; and that masculinity is a position that can be held by men and women in the novel. The study also assumes that Kezilahabi does not affirm social constructs but rather interrogates them.

1.7 Justification of the Study

As mentioned earlier, there is little critical scholarship about masculinity in Kezilahabi's novels, Tanzanian literary works and also from other parts of the world (Lisa Lindsay and Stephan Miescher, 2003; Ouzgane and Morrell, 2005; Lewis, 2012). Our review of literature has also shown that most of the writers who dealt with gender issues focused on how patriarchal ideology perpetuates women subordination (Kruger, 1998; Muhomah, 2009; Mosha, 2013). Chabari (2009) studied boyhood and girlhood masculinities in selected storybooks from the *Moses* series but his focus was on a boarding school as an institution that perpetuates masculinity. Kaihula (1995), Silberschimidt (2001) and Haram (1999) studied gender as well but they focused on how economic independence empowered women and emasculated men, and how cultural ideology victimizes men in Dar es Salaam, Mbeya and Meru, northern of Tanzania.

Kezilahabi's literary works in particular have received less attention from men's studies. Wamitila (1998) for example, studied motifs in Kezilahabi's novels; Khamis (2003) studied fragmentation, orality and magic realism in *Nagona*. Gromov (1998) and Diegner (2005) also studied Kezilahabi's *Nagona* and *Mzingile,* but they did not pay attention to masculinity issues. Kimani (2003), Kweyu (2007), Lewis (2012), and Rosenberg (2012) worked on Kezilahabi's literary works but limited their scope to two novels: *Kichwa Maji* and *Rosa Mistika*. These studies focused on how the patriarchy system perpetuates dominant position of men and subordination of women. The paucity of critical work on masculinity in Kezilahabi's fiction and Tanzanian literary works as well as those from other parts of the world, justifies this study.

In examining how masculinity is represented in Kezilahabi's novels, the research highlights the importance of exploring masculinity in the literary texts, particularly novels in which men constantly negotiate, reject and accept numerous forms of masculinities. The analysis enables us to understand the author's perspective on gender. Using Kezilahabi's texts, the study also contributes to the growing body of local and global research by deepening our understanding of how Tanzanian masculinities, Tanzanian male bodies, subjectivities, and experiences are constituted and manifested in specific historical, cultural, and social contexts.

1.8   Scope and Limitation of the Study

Despite the fact that Euphrase Kezilahabi's writings traverse novels, short stories, poems and a play, the study examined only five novels: *Kichwa Maji* (1974), *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (1975), *Gamba la Nyoka* (1979), *Nagona* (1990) and *Mzingile* (1991). The selection of Kezilahabi's novels as the primary texts for this thesis is based on the understanding that novels are dialogic literary genres. They are rich in dialogue interactions and have multiple voices that are engaging in dialogues and express multiple social perspectives (Mikhail Bakhtin, 1981). The reading of the representation of masculinity in Kezilahabi's novels, is therefore, done through expressions and performances of characters. Through characters' multiple voices, we learn about the author's vision of masculinity.

The selection of the novels from among others is also based on the argument that the writer's text is a microcosm of society. That is, there is a link between the novel and human experience; the novel can offer an experience of life in all its diverse aspects. The novel is a literary transposition of everyday life within a specific social context in which

it occurs. It functions as an oracle, which "confronts us openly with the issue of the meaning and value of our unavoidable historical and social condition" (Goldmann in Zeraffa, 1976: 11).

The study required translationof the collected data. This was a significant challenge since every language portrays the world in diverse way and has its own grammar particles (verb tenses, singular/plural and case markers) and syntax variance. Handling of idioms, puns and metaphors was also a problem. There is always the possibility of losing, adding or skewing some information during translation. However, to surmount this challenge, in the translation process, we searched for equivalents in meaning that produced similar effects in the translated text. We have also paid close attention to the original language's aesthetic quality in the translation process.

1.9   Review of Related Literature

Kezilahabi's literary works have established a significant amount of critical consideration from various scholars' perceptions and reflections. This section reviews the works that are related to this study.

Marie Kruger (1998) examines the notions of femininity and masculinity, and how gender identity insinuates issues of power, agency and authority in Swahili women's writing (Penina Muhando's *Heshima Yangu,* 1974 and *Nguzo Mama,* 1982, and Ari Katini Mwachofi's *Mama Ee,* 1987). Her study explains how gender relations are negotiated with reference to Tanzanian and Kenyan women authors. She also analyzes the narrative strategies that are employed to inscribe gender relations in the fiction, and how a character's speech is qualified and/or disqualified by a superior narrative agency.

Kruger argues that both contextual and textual expressions of gender relations tend to emphasize a moral crisis at the core of gender identities. She claims that violence, indifference, and immorality, moral crises are always associated with cultural change. Her observation is that both literary and social discourses perceive women's qualities as innate, a situation that serves to perpetuate patriarchal ideologies. She emphasizes that women are culturally conditioned to perform according to societal perceived norms.

With reference to Muhando's *Heshima Yangu*, Kruger (1998) reveals that there is a persistence of double standards by which society judges men and women. She adds that social practice and gender ideologies absolve men from guilt and responsibility in sexual relations, while women are readily condemned for any deviance from established sexual codes. In addition, men's position of power and privilege enables them to use cultural concepts to their advantage.

Kruger (*ibid*), however, notes that despite men's perceived position of power and privilege, the portrayal of gender roles in *Heshima Yangu* remains ambiguous. She notices that the author demonstrates that traditional gender roles are undermined by a subtext of female resilience, courage, aggression, strength and resourcefulness, which allows for multiple dramatic strategies to authorize the counter narratives of female characters. In *Nguzo Mama* (1982), for instance, Kruger mentions that Muhando uses the Mother Pillar as a metaphor for peace and unity, but also for the pivotal role women play in society. She emphasizes that women are like the central pillar for every house, they are the foundation of society in their dual function as providers at a family and national level. According to Kruger, the fallen pillar in the play symbolizes that neither women nor

society in general can prosper if women are mistreated and marginalized. She remarks that if the Mother Pillar is ever to be uplifted, if society is ever going to change, women have to maximize their strength and energy through collaboration. Kruger contends that cultural norms, legal standards, economic dependence and political impotence force women to exhibit the existing gender relations.

Kruger's (1998) observation on Mwachofi's *Mama Ee* (1987) is that the play is a scornful criticism of gender relations and identities that replaces the more moderate image of the fallen Mother Pillar with the hush metaphor of marriage as slavery. Like the women in *Nguzo Mama,* Kruger suggests that in Mwachofi's *Mama Ee,* the author calls for imperative change to the unacceptable conditions through cooperation and solidarity. Kruger sees the texts empowering women by giving them ability to analyze and articulate social injustices that attest to their knowledge and agency, establishing an alternative discursive authority that reveals the lies and hypocrisy of the dominant ideology. In comparison to Muhando's *Heshima Yangu,* Kruger notes that traditional and modern authorities, in addition to religious ethics, offer a strict moral code by which to judge women's behaviour. Kruger's study is useful to the current study because it provides insights upon which we engage with gender identities, which is femininity and masculinity as constructed entities that are not fixed.

 Naomi Kaihula's "The Effect of Wives Economic Power on Gender Relationship in Tanzania Households" (1995) pays attention to women economic empowerment and examines how it affects women's relationship to men. Her study shows that women have become the supporters of households, and this condition has affected male supremacy.

Another observation Kaihula makes in the study is that women's businesses and employment in urban areas have made them gain power and own properties: houses, land and cars. This opportunity has created a new awareness, autonomy and self-confidence and it has changed women's own view of their role in households and society.

Margrethe Silberschimidt (2001) conducted a study that does not differ very much from Kaihula's. In her work "Disempowerment of Men in Rural and Urban East Africa: Implications for Male Identity and Sexual Behaviour", Silberschimidt examines how men's power can be emasculated due to social economic changes. Her study reveals that in Tanzania and Kenya, men no longer play their masculine roles competently because of their poor economic status. The majority of households in urban areas and some rural areas are led by women. Silberschimidt observes that lack of male responsibility and financial contributions have created new social roles for women. She also points out that economic changes in the labour market have undermined the role of men as providers and this has affected men's sexual and social behaviour and that of their partners. The economic changes have thus emasculated men in rural and urban areas. This study shows the fluidity of masculinity and how men can also become victims of the environment.

Silberschimidt (2001) and Kaihula's (1995) studies delineate the changes in gender roles and men's traditional identities due to changes in the economic status of men and women. The two studies show how lack of material wealth limits men's gender role of provider or bread winner and affects their masculinity. The studies also reveal that women employment and freedom as well as material possession deconstruct the conventional male-female gender roles, hence redefines masculinity. The major point of variance

between Silberschimidt and Kaihula's studies and mine is that the current study is based on literary texts while the two are social science researches done among urban households in Dar es Salaam and Mbeya.

Liv Haram (1999), in his work "Women out of Sight: Modern Women in a Gendered World. The Case Study of the Meru of Northern Tanzania." focused particularly on modern women who struggle to gain economic independence so as to avoid a hostile environment such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, or psychological torture from men. Haram reveals that most of the women who decide not to maintain their marriages remain single because they want to become economically independent. Haram (*ibid*) concentrates on how these women struggle in the process of transition from traditional ways of earning a living to that of economic independence. Haram observes that there is a change in women's perception of the traditional way of defining gender roles in terms of provision and power. Haram's study reveals that women can also hold masculine positions. Haram's study is useful to this study since it focuses on gender issues. However, his study seems to pay more attention to women and how they enjoy their freedom and economic independence after rejecting the conventional way of living, since depending on men, in their capacity as fathers, brothers and husbands provision, subordinates women. Haram seems to be looking at the whole idea of empowerment from a stereotypical perspective.

Catherine Muhomah (2002) analyses masculinity in relation to romantic writing in Asenath Odaga's two texts, *Between the Years* (1987) and *Riana* (1991). In her analysis, she identifies three conceptions of masculinis tthat revolve around romance as

monogamy and faithfulness, fatherhood, and money and how it is spent. She underlines that these three issues are pressing concerns for women protagonists, and around which the construction of an ideal masculinity is hinged. Muhomah (*ibid*) claims that men in romance novels are unfaithful and promiscuous. She observes the threat of male sexual overtures and how men take advantage of women's innocence in the romantic novels. She argues that men use their masculinity for sexual conquest. Muhomah points out that men are characterized by infidelity in romantic novels while women are characterized by a positive outlook in life; undaunted spirits and the ability to withstand their husbands' selfish masculine practices that are characterized by certain masculine roles that consist of strength, charisma, sex appeal, and wealth, until such a time when these men revert to their senses, and fit in with the women's desires.

Muhomah argues that men are forced to choose between what they have, based on promiscuity and a sound economic base, and what their wives want: faithfulness, as governed by fidelity, how money should be legitimately spent, and a high regard for fatherhood, by being committed to the immediate family. She remarks that negotiation and compromise over these issues is what brings harmony in the marriage. Muhomah's analysis of the romantic novels is essential to our study, for it explains how writers show the negotiations and compromises made by men and women in the literary texts, over masculinity issues.

Muhomah's study of "Romancing the Sugar Daddy in Rosemarie Owino's Sugar Daddy's Lover" (2004) analyses the figure of the sugar daddy as a trope or metaphor that opens up a series of insights into question of gender and romance in the changing context

of contemporary urban life in Africa. She mentions that *Sugar Daddy's Lover* is a text that speaks to the local Kenyan audience about very immediate concerns and experiences to do with the rapidly changing field of marriage, love and relationships in general. The dominant message encourages women not to resign themselves to unhappy relationships, but to strive to turn these unfulfilling situations around for a happy ending. She contends that the text offers a multivocal and contradictory reading, and it speaks to very real problems and tensions in women's lives.

According to Muhomah, the fundamental issues that can be identified in this romantic novel is the dissatisfied lover, the longing for permanent and loving relationships, issues of physical and emotional violence in marriages. Similar to what Muhomah observes in Odaga's *Between the Years* (1987) and *Riana* (1991), Aggy the protagonist in *Sugar Daddy's Lover*, is obsessed with the material the husband owns at the beginning; a car and the most permanent houses in the village and a shower of gifts; expensive dresses and shoes after their wedding. The love is brought about by financial remuneration to Aggy. The male character's money becomes the essence of female's love. The situation is however noted to be temporary. Aggy, the protagonist, illustrates it when beaten by her husband. Despite being seven months pregnant she does not open the door for him, one day leaving the door open because she is tired of opening it for her husband each night. The husband also has a relationship with a housegirl whom he impregnates. Aggy finds him with other women in a pub. He even moves in with women when Aggy briefly returns to her parents' home. Muhomah concludes that the violence is precipitated by the jealousy and sense of insecurity that Abed feels knowing that he is married to a much younger wife who still has a lot of admirers, including Tony, Aggy's childhood friend.

According to Muhomah (2004), the author expresses the way such a situation cannot be tolerated by women, and urges women to react to it. That is why Aggy fights back whenever she is beaten. She even smashes a bottle on her husband's head and his mistresses' face. When she finally decides to return to her village, we see her pursuing a romantic affair and she continues to have a sexual relationship with her former lover, Tony. Aggy's actions are deployed to interrogate the conventional polarity of masculinity as sexually assertive or aggressive, and femininity as passive. In *What Do Women Want?* Muhomah (2002) argues that Aggy's affair with her ex-lover, Tony, in the village turns her to perform a male's role. What she is doing is experimeng with the concept of sugar daddy because she is younger and more financially comfortable than Tony. Muhoma argues that Abed, the husband, and Aggy are involved in informal relationship; polygamy. They both practice infidelity. According to Muhomah, Aggy's competition with her husband characterizes her with a new feature as she takes up a masculine role.

Despite this reaction, Muhomah expresses how the author demonstrates the contradictions of the situation that results from conventional ways of traditional marriages. Muhomah notes that Aggy eventually comes to terms with her predicament. She admits to know her mistake: marrying Abed, an old man who had married two wives earlier on. However, she decides to follow her mother and her aunt's advice to remain in her marriage and be a 'good' wife. From the older women's counsel, Aggy decides to make the best of her married life for the good of her husband and children, and learns to make him feel he was needed, and she insists that they all respected him because he is the head of the family.

Muhomah (2002) argues that this path opened by Aggy's mother and aunt significantly reflects the marriage life from a rural area and from a different context, and that it is in the village that certain positive values are imparted. The values help Aggy save her marriage. She concludes that the message that is conveyed by this romantic novel is that Aggy needs to accept 'African love' hinged on sharing, tolerance for her spouse no matter his weakness, and willingness to accommodate him. Muhomah, in this account, highlights that traditional forms of femininity and masculinity are a site for the reproduction of dominant discourses in relation to violence against women. Muhomah's study contributes to our understanding of patriarchal society gives absolute priority to men and controls women's actions and decisions. It also informs us that patriarchal institutions such as the family and social relations are responsible for the inferior or secondary status of women.

Social institutions in Tanzania play a role in the construction of masculinity. Sydney Mkuchu's (2004) study, "Gender Roles in Textbooks as a Function of Hidden Curriculum in Tanzania Primary Schools" examines how education institutions perpetuate the construction of masculinity in Tanzania. He investigates the portrayal of gender roles in primary school text books and determines the manner and extent of gender roles stereotyping, gender bias and sexism. It also explores the presence of gender bias in the language used in text books. Furthermore, the study investigates the extent to which and in what forms power relations between female and male characters are reflected in the text books studied. Mkuchu observes that female and males are presented in traditional feminine and masculine way in primary school textbooks. Female characters have, on the one hand, been described as weak, sensitive, submissive and

dependent on men. They have at the same time been described as kind, affectionate, loving, trusting and sincere characters.

On the other hand, male characters are portrayed as brave, courageous, adventurous and fearless but also cruel, quarrelsome, thievery and lazy. In the power category, Mkuchu remarks that males have been depicted as powerful while females have been presented as inactive beings. Men's portrayal shows that they own property of high value while women do not. According to Mkuchu, such depiction may reinforce the traditional thinking and prevailing situation that men are powerful and rightful owners of wealth at the household and community levels even if females have a share in the acquisition of such property. Mkuchu argues that through reading these texts, boys and girls may be affected by the biased gender roles and stereotypical ideas. This might lead to reproduction of patriarchal relations in the society and thus lead to subordination of women.

Lutz Diegner's study "Intertextuality in the Contemporary Swahili Novel: Euphrase Kezilahabi's *Nagona* and William Mkufya's *Ziraili* and *Zirani*" (2005) is on how the contemporary Swahili novel has further opened up its scope to universal questions of mankind. Diegner remarks that Kezilahabi and Mkufya's motivation is the search for truth about human life. In these novels, Diegner indicates that while Kezilahabi limits himself to describing this search and consciously leaves the reader puzzled in the dark, Mkufya sheds light on truth in a materialistic sense that expresses his moral attitude. He affirms that they all call upon mankind to think and rethink about themselves and everyone. Diegner sees that on the large scale, *Nagona*, *Ziraili* and *Zirani* show how the

contemporary Swahili novel has left behind the limited scope of dealing with problems of the East African societies and has opened up its view to general and universal questions of mankind. By doing so, writers and readers of other literature are invited to discover what the contemporary Swahili novel has to tell the world. This reinforces the position of our study to find out what Kezilahabi tells us about social issues such as masculinity.

Sylvester Mutunda (2009) examines the representation of masculinities in literary narratives by female writers from sub-Saharan Francophone Africa. In his study "Through a Female Lens: Aspects of Masculinity in Francophone African Women's Writing" Mutunda explores novels of selected Francophone African women from Senegal and Cameroon that include Mariama Bâ's *So Long a Letter* (1981) and *Scarlet Song* (1986); Aminata Sow Fall's *The Beggars' Strike* (1981); Delphine Zanga Tsogo's *Vies de femmes* (1983); Calixthe Beyala's *The Sun Hath Looked Upon Me* (1996); and *Your Name Shall Be* (1996); Philomène Bassek's *La tache de sang* (1990): and Evelyne Mpoudi Ngolle's *Sous la cendre le feu* (1990).

Mutunda (*ibid*) analyzes the different masculinities in the selected novels. His study is based on the argument that masculinity is a social construct rather than a biological state. It is also grounded in the assertion that there is a variety of masculinities and that masculinity exists only in relation to femininity. Mutunda examines how these women writers portray male protagonists in their prose fiction and shows how they represent masculinities through their male characters, and their reactions toward these masculinities. Mutunda is also concerned with the aspect of cultures of masculinity that

need to be challenged or deconstructed in order to make positive changes in male-female relationships in Africa.

Mutunda indicates that there is a display of men shifting their behaviour from non-hegemonic to that of dominance over women in the novels. This shift is done intentionally to suit their interests. He illustrates this shift by portraying male characters moving from being loving husbands and caring fathers to patriarchal patterns of dominance over their wives. Mutunda comments that this shift reflects the ambiguous nature of the environment in which men enact their masculinity. Furthermore, Mutunda observes that socialization determines behaviour of men for it determines who qualifies to be a man in a particular context. He illustrates this through *La tache de sang* where the only way a man can be validated as a 'real man' is by fathering as many children as he can. He however points out that, men are themselves victims of the ideology of patriarchy since they have to live according to the expectations of their societies. This study is relevant to my study as it informs us about the representation of masculinity in novels. However, Mutunda studied men in works of female writers while this study looks at masculinity from a work of a male writer.

Kimathi Chabari's study, "There are Many Ways of Being a Boy: Barbara Kimenye's Imagination of Boyhood Masculinities in Selected Storybooks from the *Moses* Series" (2009) examines Barbara Kimenye's imagination of boyhood and girlhood in the construction of boyhood masculinities in the four selected adventure narrative stories from the *Moses* series which are *Moses* (1968), *Moses and the Pen pal* (1968) *Moses on the Move* (1971) and *Moses in a Muddle* (1976). Like Mutunda's study, it is based on the

understanding that gender is a social construct. Through textual analysis of primary texts and gender related theoretical framework, Chabari highlights various categories of masculine behaviour based on boy characters' power, control and popularity at Mukibi Educational Institute that Kimenye portrays in the *Moses* series. He mentions three distinct categories of masculinities: dominant, normative and non-normative (marginalized) and uses these categories to classify behaviour patterns by boy characters based on power, influence and popularity of a particular behaviour in the narrative stories. He conversely reveals an occurrence of contestation of dominant masculinity in the narrative stories.

Chabari (2009) argues that there are numerous ways of being a boy or rather there are various constructions and performances of boyhood masculinities in the selected texts. He expresses how the boarding school, as an institution, allows the construction and performance of specific boyhood masculinities. Chabari also depicts Kimenye's construction of girlhood masculinities as a literary intervention to critique stereotypes of girls and women by extension. He illustrates this depiction through a female protagonist who attempts to fight the image of girls by males as dainty, sweet, charming and mean. He argues that the author portraying a female character as more masculine than the dominant boys indicates that gender is socially constructed and has nothing to do with one's sex but one's abilities.

Chabari's further observation in the narratives is that boyhood masculinities are diverse, fluid and can coexist depending on specific times and places rather than biological factors alone. He, however, remarks the author's interrogation of the gender equality and mutual

relationship between boys and girls. This is illustrated by the episode of a girl living Mukibi Educational Institute. Furthermore, Chabari comments on the conspicuous lack of female characters in most of Kimenye's storybooks in the *Moses* series and views it as an exhibition of a lack of gender equality and female visibility. He concludes that depiction of boyhood masculinities offers a reader a chance to understand that boyhood/manhood and girlhood/womanhood are socially constructed and can be deconstructed.

Chabari's study is relevant to our study because it deals with masculinity issues. However, this study allows us to look at masculinity in a broader space, not in a limited institution like a boarding school, as in Chabari's study.

Dorothy Kweyu's study on "A Critical Analysis of Patriarchy and Masculinity in Kezilahabi's Rosa Mistika" (2007) questions the traditional definitions of manhood and womanhood in Kezilahabi's two novels, *Rosa Mistika* (1971) and *Kichwa Maji* (1974). One of her major concerns is to examine how conventional patriarchal ideology can lead the victims to a tragic end. She also explores the link between literature and social issues in light of emerging concerns regarding male responsibility in tackling gender problems. Kweyu considers *Rosa Mistika* and *Kichwa Maji* as classic examples of how traditional manhood and womanhood enslave both men and women.

The findings of the study show that men's and women's fates are inextricably linked, and that they are both victims of an ideological value system that defines who they should be and how they should relate to each other. Kweyu's study is useful to our study as it deals with men's issues in Kezilahabi's novels. However, her study is limited to two novels and is interested more in how the two novels link masculinity to tragedy. It also explores how

marriage perpetuates negative masculinity and causes destruction in a society. Our study is not limited to that scope as it observes how marriage and other social institutions such as religion and education (re)construct men's masculinity in Kezilahabi's five novels. It also examines the gender role inversion and its effect in man's masculinity, an aspect that is not observed in Kweyu's study.

Aaron Rosenberg (2012) also studied Kezilahabi's *Rosa Mistika*. In the analysis, Rosenberg focuses on the changing nature of gender politics in Tanzania. Rosenberg observes that Kezilahabi uses narrative articulations to express traumatic experiences of females in Tanzania. He concludes that what Kezilahabi undertakes to achieve in his work, especially vis-à-vis portrayals of culturally sanctioned discrimination and violence against women, is a reevaluation of such cultural beliefs in Tanzania. This work invites the study to pay attention to how cultural practices and ideologies shape men and women in Kezilahabi's novels.

Caroline Lewis (2012) studied Kezilahabi's perceptions towards masculinities. In her work, "From Feminine Men to Masculine Women: Masculinities in two Swahili Novels", she focuses on the ways in which men are fashioned, represented and how ultimately literature participates in the perpetuation of male stereotypes. The work focuses on the concept of masculinity in Tanzanian literature and specifically in Kiswahili novels after 1970. Lewis points out that the study of gender in the world, and specifically Sub-Saharan Africa, is a relatively new phenomenon. She calls upon serious academic discourse in men's studies because her observations show that research has principally been conducted from women centered view point; as the underprivileged who have taken

the reins to bring light to their struggles. Lewis' study is relevant to our study because she studied Kezilahabi and his notion of masculinity although she limited her scope to two novels by Kezilahabi. Further, Lewis' call for men's studies is significant to us as it indicates the need for our study to be conducted for it intends to deal with men's issue.

Cecilia Kimani (2003) in "*Swala la Dhuluma Dhidi ya Wanawake Katika Fasihi ya Kiswahili*" examines injustice against women in Euphrase Kezilahabi's *Rosa Mistika* (1971). Kimani focuses on subordination of women, the causes of the unhealthy submissiveness and how they can get themselves out of the situation. Kimani analyzes the challenges women face in emancipating themselves from subordination by men. Kimani's study is beneficial to this study as it helps us to understand how Euphrase Kezilahabi depicts the patriarchal system in *Rosa Mistika* and the way women are subjugated by the system. However, Kimani's study is limited to only one novel, and apart from this limited scope, the study does not consider women as characters who have potentials and can also possess masculinity.

Ernesta Mosha's (2013) study on "Discourse Analysis of Gender-Based Violence in Contemporary Kiswahili Fiction" is also quite relevant and useful to this study. Mosha examines the privileged discursive constructions of gender-based violence in fifteen Kiswahili novels, and young Tanzanians' responses to these constructions. She examines the textual representation of violence against women in Kiswahili novels. Her study reveals that the novels reflect, reproduce, and at times challenge the dominant discourses in the field of gender-based violence. She argues that Kiswahili novels have helped to maintain the dominant discourses of violence against women in Tanzanian society. She

also indicates that socio-cultural practices, abuse of male power and economic status are the main reasons offered by the depicted violence against women.

Mosha conversely reveals that men are also victims of the cultural practices. She points out that although the position of men as decision makers in the household may provide them with power and authority over women, it may also exert pressure on men to live up to the expectations and positions accorded to them by society. She indicates that men's failure to live up to these expectations in a patriarchal society is depicted as manifesting itself in violence against women. Although Mosha's main concern is violence against women, our study links with hers because she enlightens us on how traditional forms of femininity and masculinity contribute to the reproduction of dominant discourses in relation to violence against women in Kiswahili novels.

The studies cited above demonstrate that many literary works in Tanzania have mostly dealt with women but paid little attention to men. The studies also reveal that Kezilahabi's works have received minimal critical attention, and those who have dealt with his works like Kimani (2003), Kweyu (2007), Lewis (2012) and Rosenberg (2012) limited their scope to his earlier novels: *Rosa Mistika* (1971) and *Kichwa Maji* (1974). Besides, these writers dealt mostly with issues of subordination of women and how marriage perpetuates negative masculinity. They also observed how literature participates in perpetuation of male stereotypes. It is this limited scope that motivated us to conduct a study on the representation of masculinity in Kezilahabi's novels in a broader perspective. Different from the above studies, our study examined how Kezilahabi

interrogates, challenges and tries alter stereotypes of men. It also observed how he tries to dismantle the conventional gender roles and suggest a new way of imagining gender.

1.10   Theoretical Framework

To understand masculinity, we have to consider its multiple dimensions and its multiple perspectives. Our study thus adopted multiple theories to enable a broader interpretation in examining the representation of masculinity in Kezilahabi's novels. This eclectic approach should hopefully give readers a deeper understanding of how gender roles and community practices that construct masculinity are portrayed in Kezilahabi's novels. We draw a lot from principles of masculinity as espoused in selected works of Robert Connell, Judith Butler and Louis Althusser.

In *Masculinity*, Robert Connell (1995), for instance, recognizes that masculinity is socially constructed through performances. Men construct their masculine identities through relationships with others. Connell argues that there is a variety of masculinities which exist only in relation to femininity. She mentions about specific hierarchical gender relationships of dominance and subordination between groups of men. Giving an example of gays as one of the subordinated group, Connell states that '[g]ay masculinities are the most conspicuous, but not the only subordinated masculinities' (1995:79). In this sense domination and marginalization of men connect with the patriarchal network as these men, who do not practice a hegemonic pattern may be marginalized by the dominant group. This means that men's choices and performances of masculinities are determined by a patriarchal system of domination and subordination.

Connell (1995) argues against essentialists' perception of patriarchal ideology because according to her the essentialists believe that, the construction of male gender requires one's molding into a masculine role which presupposes autonomy, competition, and aggressiveness, and the domination of the innate human needs for connectedness, intimacy, and self-disclosure. The essentialist patriarchal ideology rests on the idea that a man behaves in a certain way because he has to prove his manhood. Men need to prove their manhood because they have been socialized to believe that their masculinity is actually biologically inherent, and not ascribed, and therefore has to be continually maintained and enhanced through the externalization of masculine behaviours.

Patriarchy exaggerates biological differences between men and women, making certain that men always have the dominant or masculine roles and women always have the subordinate or feminine ones. However, Connell argues that those so-called 'masculine' and 'feminine' qualities are human qualities and not specific to either men or women. According to Connells's views, women too can possess and demonstrate the features of masculinity. Masculinity is, thus, not a natural state but a socially constructed, fluid, collective gender identity. Connell (1995: 81) emphasizes that masculinities are not fixed character types but configurations of practice generated in particular situations in a changing structure of relationships.

Connell (1995) sees the state as a gendered institution since state organizational practices are constructed in relation to the field of reproduction; the key position of power in the state is mostly held by men who determine the state's masculinity and its outcome. Connell points out that masculinity includes different organizational systems that

inevitably lead to internal contradictions and historical change. Connell's perspective guides us in analyzing masculinity as motif in Kezilahabi's novels and how it creates cultural images of manhood. This perspective also helps the present study to focus on social-cultural ideologies and hierarchical structures of power relations that stem from visible masculinity in the Tanzanian context.

Further, the study is guided by Judith Butler's idea of the performative aspect of gender. In *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity,* Butler (1990) argues that the gendered body has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality. Butler emphasizes that gender identity is a performative construct in which the identities are not made in a single moment in time. It is a human construct enacted by a vast repetition of social performance and varies between situations. Butler further argues that there is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender that include linguistic, physical and visual expressions. She also insists that there is no innate gender identity, only the expression of gender through this performance. Gender is performed through language (as a form of speech act), bodily (in terms of one's appearance), and also through one's actions. Butler perceives gender as a 'corporeal style', an act (or a sequence of acts), a 'strategy' which has cultural survival as its end, since those who do not 'do' their gender correctly are punished by society. According to Butler, men who do not conform to norms of society should be punished.

Butler commends de Beauvoir's claims that an individual is not born, but rather becomes, a woman (1949). Beauvoir maintains that it is civilization as a whole that produces a

woman, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine. Butler responds to this claim in Salih's *Judith Butler*. (2002) in the following terms:

> If there is something right in Beauvoir's claim that one is not born, but rather becomes a woman, it follows that woman itself is a term in process, a becoming, a constructing that cannot rightfully be said to originate or to end. As an ongoing discursive practice, it is open to intervention and resignification. Even when gender seems to congeal into the most reified forms, the 'congealing' is itself an insistent and insidious practice, sustained and regulated by various social means. (45)

Butler's response to Beauvoir suggests that men are also not born but they become men and their becoming is an ongoing process. According to Butler, gender is a process which has neither origin nor end; it is something that we 'do' rather than 'are'. Different from essentialists, who relate sex, gender and sexuality to each other, she claims that there is no necessary relationship between one's body and one's gender. For her, gender is 'unnatural'. Butler's argument implies that it is not necessary for a male body to display traits that are normally considered 'masculine'. Similarly, it is possible to have a 'female' body that does not display traits generally considered 'feminine'. In this case, one may be a 'masculine' female or a 'feminine' male. Butler (1990) rejects such essentialism, even as a political strategy. She claims that the best approach of contesting the status quo is to displace categories such as 'man', 'woman', 'male' and 'female' by revealing how they are discursively constructed within a heterosexual matrix of power.

Louis Althusser's concept of interpellation also guides this study. Althusser (1998) argues that social practices determine the characteristics of the individual, and give him or her, the idea of the range of properties that he or she can have, and of the limits of each individual. He argues that many of our roles and activities are given to us by social

practices and our values, desires and preferences are inculcated in us by ideological practice, the sphere which has the defining property of constituting individuals as subjects.

Althusser (*ibid*.) contends that ideology creates subjective positions which individuals are hailed to occupy either consciously or unconsciously. This implies that ideology interpellates individual as subjects and through practices they enact their subjection to the higher subject. This meansthat there is a mutual recognition of subjects and higher subject; the subject's recognition of himself or herself. In turn, this provides the absolute guarantee that everything is so, and that on the condition that the subjects recognize what they are and behave accordingly, everything will be alright. This means that what we understand about feminine or masculine, do not just seep into our heads; these ideas are reproduced over and over again through the practices. Once an individual has been successfully interpellated by a given ideology such as masculinity in our case, they work to serve that ideology unquestioningly.

Althusser believes that we are all constituted as subjects-in-ideology through the Ideological State Apparatus. That the ideological norms naturalized in their practices not only constitute the world for us, but they also constitute our sense of ourselves, our sense of identity and our relations to other people and to society in general. Thus we are each constituted as a subject in and subject to ideology. The subject, therefore, is a social construction and not a natural one. Thus a biological female can have a masculine subjectivity (that is, she can make sense of the world and of her place in that world through patriarchal ideology).

Relating to the category of masculinity, Althusser's concept suggests that if individual men do not accept and support the ideology of a hegemonic masculinity, they cannot become members of the ruling power and are not represented by it. Althusser's idea of state of apparatus helps the study to examine how the characters in Kezilahabi's novels accept their gender identities; masculinity and femininity without questioning. Inferring to Connell, Butler and Althusser's definition of masculinity we can therefore approach masculinity as an ambivalent, complex and a discursive phenomenon in Kezilahabi's novels.

1.11 Methodology

This study has adopted a qualitative approach as we aim at seeking answers to questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings. Qualitative approach is appropriate to our study because it focuses on how human beings organize themselves and their settings, and how inhabitants of these settings make sense of their surroundings through symbols, rituals, social structures, social roles, and so forth (Mack *et al*, 2005). Qualitative techniques allow researchers to share in the understandings and perceptions of others and to explore how people structure and give meaning to their daily lives. It pays attention to emotions, motivations, symbols and their meanings, empathy, and other subjective aspects associated with naturally evolving lives of individuals and groups (Berg, 2001).

Qualitative research also assists us to engage in textual analysis that involves the identification and interpretation of a set of verbal or nonverbal signs (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009). Peirce (1998) argues that everything that we encounter, from clothing,

books, food to architecture, is a sign and it compels us to think about something other than itself. This implies that a researcher doing a qualitative research is the interpreter of the selected text or texts. Another important thing to note is that in textual analysis, meaning is at the heart of it, and it can be analyzed from the perspective of the writer's intent, the reader's reaction, the historical or cultural context in which the text was created, or the contemporary historical and cultural context in which the text is experienced today (Berg, 2001). These features link with study because reading Kezilahabi's novels needs our interpretation guided by our perceptions so as to construct meanings out of them.

The study employs a constructivist paradigm that comprises several stages including identification of the primary and secondary texts. Five novels are selected from Kezilahabi's broad literary oeuvre (novels, a play, short stories and a poem). These include *Kichwa Maji* (1974), *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (1975), *Gamba la Nyoka* (1979), *Nagona* (1990) and *Mzingile* (1991). A constructivist paradigm is based on understanding the subjective world of human experiences. It studies how- and why-participants construct meanings and actions in specific situations (Kathy Charmaz, 2006). The constructivists propose that there are many realities. These realities are reproduced, negotiated and transformed through social practices. They are the product of historical events, social forces and ideology (Willis, 2007). With reference to gender, the constructivists indicate that there is no inherent truth to gender as it is constructed by social expectations. This means masculinity as a social construct has multiple definitions because it is constructed by social expectations. Following a constructivist paradigm,

Kezilahabi's novels are source of information that reflect social realities and we consider data that are collected from the novels as gender facts that reflects social realities.

The researcher uses a close reading method to select relevant data about masculinity in the five selected literary texts. Connell's theory of masculinity, Butler's theory of performativity and Althusser's notion of interpellation asist the researcher in the discussion, analysis and interpretation of the collected data. After the completion of the interpretation, the researcher works in the key findings of the study.

Following narrative techniques, the study identifies central characters, connects them to the story, and scrutinizes the plot elements that eventually shape the study's findings. Characters help the plot to unfold while focalization helps us to understand the role of a character in revealing masculine themes in the texts.

The study focuses also on the way language is used in the construction of gender identities. Butler (1999) highlights the role of language use in constructing a specific masculinity. She contends that gender is constructed via language and discourse; masculinity is also linguistically performed. It is through language that we understand someone's performance of masculinity: that we give it meaning. Language is thus a basis of reading, analyzing and interpreting Kezilahabi's novels. Through the analysis of language used by the male and female characters, we elucidate how the characters express and construct their masculinities. Furthermore, Kezilahabi has deployed numerous stylistic devices including similes, metaphors and symbols. These stylistic devices enable us to imagine how men perform and construct their masculinity.

Through the portrayal of male and female characters the study examines how masculinity is performed in the novels. The way events are plotted is also interrogated and interpreted so as to give a constructed meaning of the novels related to representation of masculinity.

CHAPTER TWO

PATRIARCHAL IDEOLOGY AND MASCULINITY PERFORMANCE IN *KICHWA MAJI*

2.1 Introduction

Kezilahabi's *Kichwa Maji* dramatizes masculinity as a complex subject. Through the portrayal of his male characters, Kezilahabi demonstrates a direct challenge to the conventional concept of masculinity. His depiction of male characters reveals a constant confrontation between traditional, old, values and modern behaviours in the novel, and demonstrates how traditional and modern gender attitudes are juxtaposed throughout the story. In this novel we learn that while the old generation holds rigid patriarchal codes, the young generation embraces a fluid masculine construction that seems too complex to suit masculine expectations from a hegemonic patriarchal society. Through *Kichwa Maji,* and by means of his characterization, we come to understand that masculinity is defined as a series of shifting and fluid subject rather than a fixed and static one.

Our reading and analysis of male characters in *Kichwa Maji* is anchored on the notions of masculinity and patriarchal ideology guided by the ideas of Connell (1995) and Butler (1990) that have already been discussed in Chapter One. According to Connell, gender is a social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do. She maintains that social practice is creative and inventive and responds to particular situations and as such is generated within definite structures of social relations. In Connell's view, masculinity is a configuration of gender practice, that is, historically and culturally defined gender projects. Connell is against the ideology of patriarchy that legitimizes dominance of men and the subordination of women. Connell argues that this patriarchal ideology

exaggerates biological differences between men and women, making certain that men always have the dominant, or masculine roles and women always have the subordinate or feminine ones (Connell, *ibid*.). For Connell, gender is not a fixed character type. It occupies its position in given patterns of gender relations –a position that is always contestable. Connell (2005) sees masculinities as configurations of practices that are accomplished in social actions and, therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in particular social settings such as traditional and modern settings in our case.

Connell's views of masculinity and patriarchal ideology correspond to Judith Butler's (1990) notion of gender. In her theory of performativity, Butler insists that gender is not something one is, it is something one does, an act, or more precisely, a sequence of acts, a verb rather than a noun, a 'doing' rather than a 'being' (25). She clarifies her argument by stating that gender is the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being.

Following Connell's and Butlers line of thought, we do not therefore examine masculinity as a fixed, unchanging, and universal category in *Kichwa Maji* as essentialists' definitions have assumed, but we explore it from a more multilayered approach. The chapter therefore pays attention to the practices through which Kezilahabi's male characters in *Kichwa Maji* perform their masculinities in different forms that are determined by social settings like modernity and traditional settings, and the way they generate their masculine performances within definite structures of patriarchy.

2.2 Masculinity in a Traditional Setting

Kezilahabi's *Kichwa Maji* portrays a complex representation of masculinities as he demonstrates both rigid and traditional representation of masculinities and fluid male figurations in the novel. The rigid representation is revealed through the characterization of Mafuru and other old men who seem to maintain the traditional values of the community. From the portrayal of these characters, we find that masculinity is far from being about domination and sexual prowess. It is rather about self-discipline, virtue, a control of the passions and a willingness to sacrifice for the family and home. The real man in the novel is the man who can be admired and respected by the family, elders and society; who is willing to die so that others can live; who is ready to face threat of death and stand for his convictions. The ideal man in the traditional society is the one who performs a progressive masculinity.

There is also a group of characters new generation in the likes of Manase, Salima, Kazimoto, Kalia and Sabina. Through these characters, Kezilahabi displays a modern ideology that is in contrast with the hegemonic patriarchal ideology. Both male and female characters that constitute the new generation seem to be liberated from the constraints of traditional masculinity. The new generation in the novel seems to violate traditional patriarchal norms that are expected to construct a traditional 'ideal' masculinity and because of this violation, the young men emerge with a new sense of masculinity.

Western education, modernity, and leadership position are among the factors that seemingly influence and determine the imagination and construction of retrogressive

masculinity in *Kichwa Maji*. From his characterization of a young generation, Kezilahabi describes how Western education transforms young men from traditional to modern life and gives them access to social power that validates their masculinity. Consequently, through the portrayal of male characters, we realize how difference in ideologies (traditional and modern) compete and create tension and misunderstanding between young generation and old generation.

At the beginning of the novel, Kezilahabi depicts Kazimoto as a man who performs progressive masculinity that is apparently considered to be the legitimate one in the traditional society. When Kazimoto returns home for holiday he is informed by his sister about a fearful situation in his home. His sister tells him about a depressive situation confronting their family. She expresses her worries about Kazimoto's return and wishes he could go back to the city. Kazimoto learns that his father is not home because he went to consult other people who can deal with invisible people that threaten his family (27-30). Despite these terrifying explanations and precautions, Kazimoto assumes his patriarchal traditional role and attempts to protect his family against the threatening situation in the village. His sister's worries and his mother's fear do not frighten him. He sounds confident and decides to face the situation without the support of his parents or neighbours.

Through self-reflection, Kazimoto questions himself about the fearful situation he encounters at home. He does not understand why his family is the only one that is threatened in the neighbourhood. His reasoning and arguments express his inner feelings

that encourage him to perform his masculinity. He is determined to fight and stop his unknown enemies from threatening his family. He says:

> *....Niliona kwamba kazi kubwa inayonikabili sasa...ni kufikiria njia ya kuwakomesha watu hawa* (Kezilahabi, 1974: 36).

> (....I thought that the big task before me was to find a way of stopping these people (who threatened my family).

The way Kazimoto and his father tackle this situation demonstrates how they perceive the situation differently. While his father decides to consult other people to deal with the unknown people for the protection of the family, Kazimoto decides to confront them himself. He reflects on the situation and eventually decides to fight: "*....Mimi nitajaribu kuwapiga!....Lakini kwa nini waje kwetu tu? Sijui nifanye jambo gani niweze kuwakomesha!* (I will try to fight them! But why should this happens to us only? (Why not others?). What can I do to stop them?) (Kezilahabi, 2008:30).

Looking into different approaches that the father and Kazimoto opt for and their contrasting portrayals, we can argue that their philosophies differ according to their experiences. Kazimoto's university education becomes an influential tool in questioning the traditions that his father believes in. This suggests that exposure to the modern world has given Kazimoto a new experience that makes him regard superstitious issues as a questionable subject. He questions his reality and attempts to understand why it is only his family that is being attacked.

Kazimoto's disbelief in traditional ideologies such as superstitions drives him to express his masculinity by daring to protect his family during his father's absence. The decision to protect his family, encourages him to exercise his patriarchal authority as he declares

that he has to protect his family because he is the only man who can to do it: *"Mara moja nilitoka nje na shuka yangu pamoja na panga maana mimi ndiye mwanamume peke yangu niliyekuwa nikitegemewa"* (I had to go out immediately dressed in a bed sheet, holding a machete because I was the only man they depended on) (Kezilahabi, 1974: 30).

The author depicts Kazimoto walking around at midnight and running to his mother's house with a machete when he hears his mother and sister screaming. He is determined to fight the fearful, invisible, beings so as to make his family free from fear and ensure that they live happily. His determination and self-realization of his responsibility as a man in the family drives him to perform his masculinity. Kazimoto's masculine performance in this case reflects an ideal masculinity that conforms to traditional norms discussed earlier in this chapter. His expression of bravery and ability to protect his family epitomizes an ideal young man who performs his masculinity in a progressive way by sacrificing his life for the general good of his family.

The contrast in Kazimoto and his father's portrayal is significant in our interpretation of masculinity in *Kichwa Maji* because we see a transformed masculinity that is influenced by modern ideology. The modern ideology that influences Kazimoto's decision and performance is instilled through university education. Although both perform a progressive masculinity, we can argue that Kazimoto's modern ways of living has transformed his performance of masculinity that makes him differ from his father's ideology.

Through Kazimoto and his father's masculine performances, we can see how patriarchal ideology is being enhanced by the male gender. We see both Kazimoto and his father struggling to protect their family: women and children. Although they use different approaches, their intentions show that a woman needs a man to protect her. We also notice entrenchment of gender stereotypes in the same scenario through the traits of male and female characters; Kazimoto, his mother and sister. The author depicts Kazimoto's mother and his sister as visibly frightened of the unknown enemies. While screaming in their room, "We are dying! We are dying", Kazimoto jumps out with a machete to fight them (Kezilahabi, 1974: 30). This depiction indicates courage and firmness of the males in patriarchal community and their role as protectors. They exhibit strong and brave traits while the female exhibit weakness and cowardice. The author portrays the image of females in a stereotypical way as he displays them as characters who are emotional, lacking courage and confidence.

Kezilahabi illustrates further the issue of entrenchment of gender stereotype through the portrayal of Kazimoto and his mother. We see him declaring to his mother that he is a grown up man and does not want to be questioned about his whereabouts. He is bothered by his mother's concern and becomes angry when he thinks that she regards him as a child. Kazimoto tells his mother:

> *Mapenzi ya kitoto namna hiyo mimi sipendi. Kila siku niondokapo nyumbani unaniuliza 'unakwenda wapi?' Mimi nimekwishakuwa mtu mzima sasa, na sitaki wewe uwe unafahamu njia zangu zote. Hata kama nikiwa nakwenda kwa wanawake unataka nikueleze?* (Kezilahabi, 1974: 64)

> I don't like this kind of childish love. Every day when I leave the house, you ask me: 'where are you going?' I am not a child anymore and I don't want you to know everywhere I go. Do you also want me to inform you when I am going to meet my girlfriends?

Kazimoto's attitude towards his mother reveals strong gender stereotypes held by patriarchal males. He does not regard his mother as an elder person who can question him but he rather thinks of her as a woman who has no right to interrogate a man's morals. The situation demonstrates a relationship that follows the hegemonic pattern of the patriarchal son and a docile submissive mother who is subordinated to the laws of patriarchal society. This is more evident when we see a passive and subservient Kazimoto asking for forgiveness from his father when warned about his behaviour but scolding and ignoring his mother when she shows concern and care for him.

Kazimoto's begging for forgiveness from his father suggests that his performance of masculinity is not approved by the elders in his society. The disapproval of such masculinity is observed through the depiction of the two elders, Kazimoto's father and Kabenga who instill morals in Kazimoto (66).They remind him of his adulthood and the way he is expected to behave as an ideal grown up man. In his community, an ideal man is one who respects elders and shows concern about others. Kazimoto's father expresses his dissatisfaction at his son's manners and warns him about (his) being rude and disrespectful to his mother. From the actions of these two elders and Kazimoto, the role of elders in entrenching patriarchal ideology in the youth is indeed affirmed. This also indicates male elders' position in determining the behaviour of individuals in a patriarchal society. Through the depiction of Kazimoto we learn that despite his university education and his modern ideology, he cannot perform his masculinity outside hegemonic patriarchal norms.

Furthermore, Kezilahabi's depiction of young men and the elders reveals that despite young men's grown up status, parents' position, power and ownership rights determine their children's life. We observe this issue through Kabenga and Mafuru, Kazimoto's father, who arrange and negotiate the bride price for Sabina, Kazimoto's fiancée. Kabenga arranges it for her daughter and Mafuru negotiates on behalf of his son. Together, they settle the issue without involving their children (42). We also see Kabenga and Tuza, his wife, choosing for Manase (an educated man and holding a district commissioner post) the woman he should marry (26). When he refuses to marry the girl of their choice, they get another woman for him and start arranging for the rituals of brideprice payment. Moreover, Mafuru orders his son to marry before he dies so that he can take the responsibility of paying a bride price for him (113). This description validates the fact that (male) parents occupy hegemonic patriarchal position that enables them to make decisions for their progeny. Through Tuza's portrayal, we learn that older woman have a chance to exercise dominance, which is tantamount to masculinity.

Further, the issue of parents occupying hegemonic patriarchal position and their imposition of such hegemonic patriarchal ideology on the modern generation is evidenced by Kabenga when he promotes patriarchal values of marriage throughout his son-in-law and his daughter. Kabenga is directing his daughter to behave in her marriage and emphasizes to her the import of respecting her husband. He instructs the son-in-law to discipline his daughter when she misbehaves. In this case, Kabenga is initiating Kazimoto into the traditions of performing his masculinity as a married man. Kabenga instructs his daughter:

Wewe binti yangu, nimekuoza kwa huyu bwana. Umshike na umtunze vizuri huko uendako. Nisisikie kuwa unamfanyizia matata yasiyo msingi. Na sitaki mikwaruzo yenu midogo midogo iletwe mbele yangu. Bwana'ko akikupiga kofi kidogo usimtoroke na kukimbilia kwangu. Umesikia?" (Kezilahabi, 1974: 152).

My daughter, I have married you to this man. Take good care of him wherever you go. I don't want to hear that you have quarreled with him. And I don't want you to bring minor conflicts before me. If your husband slaps you a bit, do not take refuge in my home. Have you heard me?

Through Kabenga and his son in-law, Kezilahabi enables us to see hegemonic patriarchal males' prejudice particularly with regard to women. In Kabenga's patriarchal thinking, women must be subordinated to male authority – he thinks men are always superior and powerful. In our view, Kabenga considers a real man to be one who punishes his wife when she misbehaves and an adorable woman to be the one who keeps quiet when punished. Despite the fact that Sabina is a modern woman, educated and earns a salary, she cannot make decisions for herself and the family (153). In this context, marriage is an institution that determines women's life in a patriarchal society. It becomes a validating system that suppresses her power of education and capabilities. This emphasizes the fact that hegemonic patriarchal ideology sanctions and legitimizes men's performance of retrogressive masculinity.

In addition, Kezilahabi's characterization of Kabenga and Mafuru helps us to recognize complexities of men's masculinity. Although we observe the two old men instilling morals in Kazimoto when he misbehaves, we see them contradicting their morals when they display an utterly outrageous performance. They consider women as objects that are meant to be used and intimidated. Mafuru, for instance, intimidates Tegemea when she tries to question Kazimoto's retrogressive masculine performance over her daughter.

Tegemea confronts Mafuru in his compound after learning that her daughter has been abused by his son. Despite this fact, Mafuru, an ardent believer in hegemonic patriarchal ideology declares to her that his compound has never been threatened by a woman and if Tegemea continues to be stubborn, he will stab her with an arrow (93).

Mafuru does not seem to be really concerned about the girl; rather, he undermines the issue of his son intimidating and abusing Vumilia by expressing his superiority and masculinity by intimidating Tegemea. This presentation explains that as long as the patriarchal system and its dominating and subordinating ideology remain intact, a woman cannot change her feminine identity. However, Tegemea's attempt to fight Mafuru and his son for her daughter demonstrates an attempt to challenge the patriarchal system that takes for granted that a woman has to remain submissive.

This challenging situation that Tegemea faces can also be related to her name which symbolically means 'depending on something/someone'. Relating Tegemea's name and gender issues in the novel, we can argue that Tegemea, as a woman, cannot change this harmful situation by herself because she lacks support from males. The change depends on males' understanding and taking measures against negative performances that are harmful to all members of the community. This situation implies that without a supportive contribution of males, the patriarchal society will continue to ignore and suppress women, and perpetuate existing power imbalances that favour men.

Tegemea is not recognized by the patriarchal males despite the fact that she has been performing male duties; bread winning, providing for and protecting her family (93). However, as observed above, Tegemea's potential is not appreciated and her masculine

performance is ignored by Mafuru and other men. Masculinity is thus not an independent subject. The performer of masculinity needs recognition by those who surround her/him. This means that since a woman is conventionally perceived as a feminine subject, to change her status needs men's recognition and approval.

The issue of dependency is further demonstrated by the author through the depiction of Tegemea's marriage life. In this depiction, Kezilahabi highlights the fate of a woman in a patriarchal society and the instability of gender. Tegemea displays contradicting facets of her life as she appears to be an independent woman before entering into marriage life but loses her independence after marrying Kabenga. As a single and independent woman, Tegemea proves that women are not different from men in terms of making wealth, provision, protection and strength but this definition changes immediately when she decides to live under a man's custody. We witness Kabenga forcing Tegemea to follow his orders and when she refuses to do so, he threatens and punishes her. For instance, when she refuses to continue working in the field, he assaults her:

> *'Umeolewa ama hukuolewa? Wewe sasa ni mke wangu nafanya nitakavyo! Unakaa chini?' alikemea Kabenga...Alipomkaribia alimpiga makofi bila kusema lolote. Tegemea alijaribu kujikinga kwa mikono. Nahilo ndilo lilikuwa kosa lake kubwa. Alishikwa mara moja na kutupwa chini kama gunia, miguu juu.* (Kezilahabi, 1974: 134)

> 'Are you married or not? You are now my wife and I do what I want! You are sitting down?' rebuked Kabenga … Upon getting closer to her; he slapped her without saying a word. Tegemea tried to defend herself using her hands. That was her big mistake. Kabenga threw her down like a sack, her legs up.

From this depiction it is apparent that marriage is an institution by which the hegemonic patriarchal society undermines any probable feminine rebellion. Kabenga epitomizes

tyrannical patriarchal system that entrenches intimidation and subordination of women. However, Tegemea's attempt to reject her husband's orders and to defend herself demonstrates a challenge to the rigid hegemonic masculinity presentations that entrench retrogressive masculinity.

2.3 The Challenges and Ills of Modernity in a Patriarchal Society.

The patriarchal system that is represented by Kabenga and Mafuru is further challenged by the young generation whose masculinity is determined by modern social standards. Kezilahabi portrays Kazimoto, Manase, Salima and Sabina as representatives of a young generation that undermines traditional gender norms as they consider them worthless social constructs. Through the depiction of these characters we learn that modernity, education, technology and money influence youth to undermine and subvert the traditional conventions of gender. They become more prominent in their modern life to the extent of abandoning traditional views of gender roles and social norms.

Kezilahabi illustrates this situation through the marriage of Manase and Salima, and the way they conduct their domestic life. He depicts Manase and his wife in their big modern house receiving Kazimoto as their guest. Traditionally, Salima as a wife is expected to prepare some food for the guest to eat but she seems to ignore her gender role and go to practice driving (119). Manase, her husband, says nothing about Salima's decision. He just reminds her to drive safely. When Salima comes back she complains about a cook being late. We later see an old man of her father's age coming in and asking to be padorned for being late. Salima does not listen; she yells at him and intimidates him for his mistake. When the old man tries to defend himself in a polite way (that his wife is admitted in hospital and he had to take care of her before coming to work), Salima pays

no attention and threatens to deduct part of his salary as punishment; the old man's problem was none of her business. She directs him on what to prepare for the family and the guests and goes back to the sitting room to entertain their guests with pep talk (125).

This episode affirms Connell's argument, which emphasizes that hegemonic masculinity should be viewed beyond the essentialist perspective. According to Connell (2005), there are a number of hierarchically organized masculinities operative in any one place where men and women are seen, be it in public, at the play ground or political party. Her argument is contrary to the essentialists' hypothesis, which views males as homogeneous in their roles as boys and men. In the above scene Salima rejects to stand for a traditional feminine woman and plays a masculine role as she employs a male to cook for the family. She defines herself as boss in the house and controls men and the family schedule. Ignoring cooking and favouring driving portrays her as a modern woman who rejects conventional gender roles. From this depiction, Kezilahabi seems to challenge the stereotypical notion where males are portrayed as oppressors and females as oppressed beings or looking at males as providers and females as receivers. This argument is affirmed by Salima paying the old man a salary.

Moreover, the depiction of Salima mistreating an old man who was taking care of his sick wife brings in an interesting contrast of masculinity performance between the two generations. While the old man seems to perform his masculine gender roles with humility and understanding, as he plays his role as a responsible ideal husband, Salima presents herself as a hostile, aggressive and a cruel woman. Kezilahabi's portrayal of the cook reveals that in a traditional setting, marriage is a bond that holds a man responsible

for his actions. A responsible married man should be caring and provide for his wife and family. Unlike the traditional marriage, a modern marriage is an institution that ignores conventional morals as we encounter a man who remains silent even when ideal norms are violated by his wife. Manase does not stop Salima from intimidating the cook, despite the fact that he is their fathers' age. Reasonably, Manase should have reminded his wife to understand the old man's situation. He does not even remind Salima about her responsibility to serve their visitors. Instead, he allows her to go practice driving.

This portrayal underlines the point of masculinity being a mutable construct. Manase breaks away from a conventional masculine male and provides Salima with a space that makes her ignore feminine gender roles and opt for driving. It is this space that gives her confidence to question and mistreat the old man and to hold a conversation with men on equal terms. Manase's passive attitude towards Salima's behaviour and neglecting conventional gender roles questions his essential masculine status as a husband.

Kezilahabi reveals that Salima's performance is not praised by the society because it does not conform to societal norms. Through Kazimoto's self-reflection we observe how such a performance ruins the relationship between the elders and the young generation. He says to himself:

> *... niliona wazee wetu wakitukimbia. Niliona wakituogopa. Nilianza kujiuliza kama tulikuwa hatuna lolote la kutegemea kutoka kwa wazee wetu isipokuwa kuwafanya wapishi, kuwatisha na kuwakaripia?* (Kezilahabi, 1974: 120).

> ...I saw our elders fleeing away from us. I saw them becoming afraid of us. I asked myself whether we had nothing we could learn from them rather than making them cooks, threatening and scorning them.

Through Kazimoto's reflection we imagine the ills of retrogressive masculinity that is performed by the modern generation. His reflection envisions the danger of such a masculine performance particularly for the disruption it causes in the society. The danger of the young generation's retrogressive masculinity is illustrated further through the conversation of Manase, Kazimoto and Salima. In their discussion on how the parents, older brothers and sisters play a role in youth's behaviour, Kazimoto admits to influence his young brother's behaviour that eventually led to his death. He says:

> *Mimi ninasema hivi kwa sababu nimeona mdogo wangu akiuawa kwa sababu ya kufuata matendo yangu mabaya...Mimi mwenyewe nilikuwa nunda mla watu. Lakini nilikuwa bado sijafikiria kwamba ubaya wangu uliweza kuleta maafa kwa mwanadamu mwingine na kwa taifa zima, pia kwa wajukuu wetu. Matendo huigika kwa urahisi hasa matendo mabaya* (Kezilahabi, 1974: 129-130).

> I am saying this because I have seen my young brother being killed because of following my bad behaviour…. I used to be a man-eating beast. But I never thought that my bad behaviour could bring disaster to another human being and the whole nation, even our young children. Evil actions are easily imitated.

Kazimoto's confession gives clear evidence that modernity perpetuates the performance of retrogressive masculinity that is not conducive to the society.

In addition, Kezilahabi's portrayal of young men raises another fundamental issue that seems to reveal the double effect of the retrogressive masculinity that is performed by the modern generation. His depiction indicates that not only do the retrogressive performances damage the 'other', women and the vulnerable, but also the performers, that is, men who perform their masculinity retrogressively. Through characterization of Manase, Salima, Kazimoto and Sabina, we learn that as modern man enslaves himself in

modern ways of living; he ends up with a deteriorating marriage, loss of hope and eventually death.

This argument is advanced through the depiction of Kazimoto's second visit to Manase with his wife. We see a different situation at Manase's house this time. The modern house is no longer attractive; Manase and Salima both look tired, sick, bony and weak. They look depressed, indicating a miserable life (184). The major talk during the second visit is fear and death which suggest that he is about to give up on life (185). Looking at the wall pictures, Kazimoto and Manase talk about how Africans have embraced western ideologies, their impact and how fear brings confusion to Africans (188). They also discuss the negative effects of indecency in marriages such as getting infected with HIV/AIDS (190). As they continue to talk while eating, a big-headed child comes in. Salima bursts out into tears and leaves the table when Kazimoto wants to know the parents of this child. Manase explains that it is his cheating behaviour with Pili, a bar maid, that brought shame into his marriage.

Sabina, Kazimoto's wife, collapses when Manase mentions Pili because she is a woman who used to have an affair with her husband (192). Manase is shocked but continues to explain how their life has become miserable; it is no longer enjoyable. He only goes to work and locks himself up in the house. His wife burnt a car and does not want a new one. He concludes by admitting that the world is rotten in men's hands (193). Through Manase's confession and regret, we are confronted with the effect of men engaging in multiple sexual relations as a way of displaying their masculinity. We see a man paying a high price for such a relationship as it ultimately diminishes him.

The entire discussion and Manase's confession validate the impact of retrogressive masculinity on the modern generation and society at large. Through Manase and Kazimoto's malicious performances, Kezilahabi implicates modernity in a retrogressive performance of masculinity. Such a performance is discouraged by encouraging patriarchal progressive masculinity through Kazimoto's questioning of the value of the old generation in their modern life. Kazimoto seems not to understand the value and positive contribution of the modern generation in their society despite, himself, being a modern man (129-130). He considers the whole position of modern people to be seriously illegitimate. In this case, young men's modernity and education are discredited and undermined by their ill-mannered behaviour and disorientation.

Manase's characterization illustrates further how Western education, modernity and position of privilege enforce construction of retrogressive masculinity. Kezilahabi depicts him as a District Commissioner (DC) who uses his education, money and privilege of power to perform retrogressive masculinity over those who need his assistance such as Kazimoto, an old man and Pili in his office. He humiliates and harasses an old man as well as Kazimoto, his age and school mate, who lives in the same village. He ridicules and kicks them out of his office claiming that they do not respect his position but serves Pili, a female teacher with passion for his personal desires (3-4). Manase's retrogressive masculinity is evidently performed when he confronts an old man who comes into his office carrying his walking stick in his hand. Instead of listening to this old man, he shouts at him, calling him stupid and pushes him out. The situation embarrasses and confuses the old man. Kazimoto explains:

Mkuu wa Wilaya sikuweza kumwona, kwani baada ya kumsukuma yule mzee nje alirudi ndani upesi kama popo aogopaye jua. …. tuliweza kusikia sauti ikinguruma kama simba. "Wazee wengine hawana akili hata kidogo! Anaingia humu na fimbo! Anafikiri humu kuna vita!" Sikuweza kuamini masikio yangu. Mzee alipotolewa nje alikuwa kama mtu mwenye wazimu. Alikuwa akitetemeka kwa woga. Alitembea kwa haraka kutoka nje (Kezilahabi, 1974: 2-3).*

I could not meet the District Commissioner because after pushing that old man, he returned into his office as fast as a bat that is afraid of the sun….. We could hear him roaring like a lion. "Some old men are stupid! He comes in here with a stick! Is this a battlefield?" .When the old man was thrown out he was like a mad man. He was trembling with fear. He walked out quickly.

This dramatization of the DC's performance of retrogressive masculinity over the old man and Kazimoto explains the notion of intra-gender masculinities whereby men mistreat other men to ensure perpetuation of dominant masculinity. This portrayal affirms Connell and Messerchmidt's (2005) perception of gender. Connell and Messerchmidt suggest that it is important to pay attention to the fact that expressions of masculinities are historical, contingent, subject to cultural dynamics, playing themselves out within local and active intra-male group rivalry, inter-gender struggles, and psychic ambivalence. Their argument further suggests that there can be physical fights, psychological intimidation, ideological struggles, or a war between individuals and groups of males to show each other who among them is more masculine than the others.

What we witness from this episode is the confrontation between two men who represent the old and young generations. This confrontation also involves psychological intimidation as we see how the old man becomes confused and frustrated after being harassed by the DC. We also witness an ideological struggle from the scene between the DC and the old man. This struggle is revealed through the existing tensions that are caused by the two embracing different ideologies. Influenced by Western education and

modernity, the DC differs from the old man who embraces conventional values and norms.

It is important also to note that between the two sides every man wants to impose his power over the other. The old man's power is symbolized by the stick he is carrying and is also manifested in the DC's fear and his running away from him (2). It is this urge to impose one's power over other men that exposes their masculine traits as their performances indicate control, superiority and authority, the very indices of men's masculinity dramatization. These factors are key attributes to men's definition and construction of masculinities. The performance of intra-male gender masculinity that we have observed through the DC's treatment of the old man and Manase succinctly magnifies a rethinking and imagining of masculinity beyond the essentialists' notion of gender or from a stereotypical perspective.

In *Kichwa Maji*, Kezilahabi reveals also that masculinities are not essences that individuals innately have. Rather, they occur in social relations where issues of power exist at the level of practice and structure. The DC's leadership style is not only disapproved by the old men but also the young men as they imagine the destructions it can cause to the society. We learn of the societal disapproval of the DC's performance of masculinity through Kazimoto's self-reflection. Kazimoto thinks such a performance creates a gap between old men and young men. His worry about the impact of this gap is expressed by his confusion, revealed through his statement thus:

> *Moyo wangu ulivurugika kwa mchanganyiko wa hasira na huzuni nilipoona mzee akikimbia serikali yake. Mzee alipokuwa akitoka nje sikuona kitu kingine isipokuwa kwamba wazee walikuwa wakitukimbia. Uhusiano kati yao nasi ulikuwa ukikatika. Niliona wazazi wakiwakimbia watoto wao*

ambao sasa walikuwa kama simba…kweli niliona wazee wakitupa mgongo (Kezilahabi, 1974: 3).

My heart was moved by a mixture of anger and pity when I saw the old man running away from his government. When the old man walked out, I saw nothing but old men running away from us (young men). The relationship between us was being disconnected. I saw the parents running from their children who were now like lions to them. Truly, I saw the old men turning their backs on us.

From Kazimoto's self-reflection, the young generation is equated to a 'lion', suggesting the extent of the power the young men possess and its threatening manifestations. Their power is, however, insignificant to the old generation as we see 'the old men's turning their back' against them. Kezilahabi's portraiture affirms Connell's view on how individual's masculinity has to be determined by the society. She states:

The patterns of conduct that our society defines as masculinity may be seen in the lives of individuals, but they also have an existence beyond the individual. Masculinities are defined in culture and sustained in institutions (Connell, 2002:11).

This argument is confirmed by Kezilahabi through the portrayal of the DC whose performance is not approved by the society as it does not conform to the values of the ideal society. The DC mistreats Kazimoto and denies him the right to get a job in his office because of their past misunderstanding. Their misunderstanding is activated by Manase's brutality towards actions over Kazimoto's sister, Rukia. Manase rapes and humiliates her in his house. He kicks her out of his house and forces her to go back to the village after learning that she is pregnant. This forces Rukia to drop out of secondary school (19-20). She then becomes frustrated, depressed and eventually dies (83). Her future had been completely ruined by Manase. However, despite the fact that Manase abused and raped Kazimoto's sister, he does not admit responsibility; but instead

punishes Kazimoto for questioning him about his brutal and inhuman acts over his sister (6-7). This portrayal is also a revelation of how education and modernity act as spaces for the potential to construct or create retrogressive masculinity.

Manase's style of performing masculinity is totally rejected by the society because of its negative impacts in the community. His father, Kabenga, equates him to a mad man because of these performances. He expresses his disappointment to Kazimoto and asks for forgiveness on his son's behalf (26). We also see Rukia's mother lamenting about such malicious deeds that Manase performs over her daughter. She expresses her resentment and worries about young men's behaviour in her cry:

> *Kazimoto tuache tupumzike, tuache tulie. Huu ni ugonjwa umeletwa na vijana na utatumaliza sisi kina mama wenye mabinti. Ninajiona kwama nitakwenda pamoja na binti yangu." Machozi yalimlenga lenga. Niliona hapa hapakuwa mahali pangu. Niliondoka polepole nikiwaacha wanalia wote pamoja huku wamekumbatiana…* (Kezilahabi, 1974: 37).

> Kazimoto let us rest, let us cry. This is a disease that has been brought by young men and will kill young girls and their mothers. I see myself dying with my daughter. She had tears in her eyes. I knew this was not my place. I slowly left the room leaving them crying and embracing each other…

This cry is a condemnation of young men's retrogressive performance of masculinity in the society. Kezilahabi reveals the worst part of such a performance through the death of Rukia that shocks her mother, leading to her death. The death of Kazimoto's mother and sister, astound the neighbourhood and frustrate Kazimoto and his father. Kazimoto's frustration is revealed through the epithet that he intends to inscribe on graves of his mother and sister. He muses thus:

> *Hapa wamelazwa Mama na bintiye Rukia sababu ya ugonjwa mpya uliozuka. Ugonjwa usiotibika. Watoto wa Dunia, Ogopeni!"* (Kezilahabi, 1974: 86).

>Here lies Mother and Daughter because of a new disease. The disease that cannot be cured. Children of the world, watch out!

Kazimoto's message and the death of Rukia and her mother is a vivid evidence of the negative impact of retrogressive masculinity that is performed by young men. His message explains the impact of the hegemonic masculinity that sanctions negative masculinity, which maintains status quo as men assume they have a right to intimidate, exploit and subordinate women. Kezilahabi's elimination of women is a call to critically scrutinize the destruction that is caused by retrogressive masculinity that paradoxically affects both men and women. We witness how Kazimoto and his father become mad as a result of Rukia and her mother's deaths. Kazimoto decides to punish Manase's family by burning their house for causing the death of his mother and sister (86-88). Kazimoto therefore, expresses his anger and anxiety through destructive performance of masculine that brings tragedy in the society.

Through Kazimoto's self-reflection, Kezilahabi discloses the contradiction between his performance of masculinity and his thinking as a modern man. Kazimoto, who seems to be upset by Manase's negative masculine performance directed at the old man and his sister, and which eventually leads to his mother's death, condemns his (Manase's) offensiveness and negative performances and cautions about the impact of modernity on the young generation. He describes it as a disease that is 'dangerous and cannot be cured' (86). On the other hand, Kazimoto contradicts himself when he mistreats Vumilia. This contradiction emphasizes that masculinity should be considered an adjustable and fluid concept, as opposed to the more static disposition of biology. Kezilahabi depicts

Kazimoto exploiting and abusing Vumilia several times and even abandoning her completely after marrying Sabina. He ruins her life as we see Vumilia complaining about her future being totally destroyed (166).

Vumilia, whose name signifies tolerance, symbolically explains how a patriarchal system subjugates women who are forced to tolerate hardships in order to survive. We learn that she has never known her father, a situation that leads to her rejection by most of the men in the village because they consider her a bastard (68). After being abandoned by Kazimoto, she goes to town to look for a job where she ends up being raped by two young men. Moyokonde, a charcoal seller who is older than her, rescues her from being killed by these two men. Despite Moyokonde's poor financial status, Vumilia eventually gives herself to him as a gift for saving her life (165). She refuses to go home when her mother and Kazimoto find her with Moyokonde, pregnant, weak and unhealthy (172). She tells them that she will continue to tolerate living in her poverty because they both contributed to her current situation. She blames her mother and Kazimoto for being responsible for her disastrous life. She desires that they therefore leave her alone with a man who rescued her from death (166).

Vumilia's lamentation bears witness to the oppressiveness of patriarchy and how it victimizes women. The key players in Vumilia's fate include her own father, who rejects her from childhood, Kazimoto and his father who abuse her and ignore the fact that Kazimoto has been taking advantage of their relationship for his own desires and finally, the rest of the men in the community who reject her for being a bastard child (68-69). This depiction explains how male stereotype affects the manner in which males perform

their masculinity and the way traditional masculinity acts as the dominant masculinity for men.

Although Vumilia's mother intends to rescue her daughter from this situation by confronting Kazimoto and his father for her daughter's rights, and searching for her whereabouts in order to bring her back and give her a better life, Tegemea fails to change this situation because males do not want to support her. We also learn that although alternative masculinities exist, such as female masculinity portrayed through Tegemea's performance and redemptive masculinity that we witness through Moyokonde when he rescues Vumilia from death, the idea of traditional masculinity remains the most influential. From these depictions we can argue that realizing other forms of masculinity is challenging when the fundamental characteristics exhibited by traditional masculinity resist change. In addition, Moyokonde's masculine performance suggests that males must recognize themselves as fundamental actors and actively work to change the patriarchal structures for the society itself to change.

Another evidence of Kazimoto's contradicting personality is observed through his confession when he admits that he has influenced his young brother with his mischievous behaviour (72-3). He says:

> *Shitaka hili lilikuwa kubwa. Lilinichoma sana moyoni. Ilikuwa wakati huu nilipoona wazi kwamba mimi ndiye niliyemharibu mdogo wangu, ubaya na udhaifu wangu wote niliuona ndani mwake. Ubaya huu ukiwa ndani mwangu nilikuwa siuoni vizuri. Lakini sasa ubaya huu ulikuwa mbele yangu* (Kezilahabi, 1974: 81).

> This was a big accusation. I was offended. It was this time that I started to realize that I am the one who ruined my brother, I could see my evil and weakness through him. I could not see the evil and weakness within me well before. But now this evil was before me.

In this confession, Kazimoto acts as a foil for his brother's behaviour. In the novel, we observe that it is Kazimoto's regular visit to Vumilia, with his young brother, that leads him (Kalia) to rape a village girl (80). It is obvious that this abusive and malicious behaviour that develops from him has not only affected the small girl but also her family and the whole society. Kezilahabi demonstrates how the society condemns such an act through the reaction of the villagers to Kalia's action. He depicts the image of furious villagers hunting Kalia and stabbing him to death. His body is found floating in the river and villagers are happy because he is dead (114). The killing of Kalia signifies a total rejection of retrogressive masculinity in the society and the traditional elders' rejection of retrogressive masculinity and embracement of progressive masculinity.

Moreover, Kazimoto's affair with Pili, a barmaid, also marks another contradiction of his performance as this relationship brings tragedy in to his family (156-9). It leads to the death of his child. This death becomes a challenge to him particularly when he learns about its real cause. He considers himself a coward for killing his son. His shameful behaviour and guilt lead him to commit suicide. But before he kills himself, he declares that he has to do it because his existence may pollute the next generation (195). His death depicts Kazimoto as a man who emasculates himself by committing suicide. He punishes himself because of his disastrous actions. As a responsible husband and father, Kazimoto is expected to honour his family by being responsible and not to cause shame in public.

Kazimoto, who is a protagonist and a foil character in *Kichwa Maji,* is presented not only through his outward actions but through his individual interior monologues that express the continuous examination of his masculine identity in relation to his young brother,

Manase and his wife Salima, and the two old men who represent the old generation. His thoughts lead us to question how he fits into a traditional or modern patriarchal society. His interior monologues imply a sense of awareness with respect to problems that are caused by retrogressive performance of masculinity. His self-awareness marks him out as extremely different from Manase, a character who lacks any sense of awareness until the end of the novel. Kezilahabi uses self-reflexive introspection to create a clear distinction between modern masculinity performances that are totally retrogressive like Manase's and those who are modern but with more complex masculinities. For instance, Kazimoto's self-reflection marks his guilty conscience on the impact of retrogressive masculinity; he questions himself, his place and the young generation's place in society, the directives of the society, or the implications of societal decisions have upon others. However, he appears to contradict himself when he behaves retrogressivelly. This contradiction insinuates elusive status and ambivalence in the performance of masculinity.

2.4 Conclusion

Kezilahabi's presentation of male and female characters reveals how education, modernity, the position of privilege and traditional the set-up influence and determine the construction of masculinities in *Kichwa Maji*. We witnes old men performing their masculinity by instilling their ideologies into young men, whose strategies in coping within the traditional context reveals new forms of masculinities, different from the traditional one. We have seen that the young men's performances of masculinities, causes competition and tension among and between them.

Furthermore, we have noticed that, the young generation's masculinity has superseded traditional authority effectively as it tries to undermine the control of old men in their own community. However, we have noted that individuals cannot construct masculine identities outside patriarchal codes of conduct. The competition, tensions and contradictions that are a result of the performance of masculinities by the two generations suggest a societal rejection of the retrogressive masculinity because of its dangerous implication but, however, perpetuate the progressive one that encompasses positive features including respect of all human beings and pride. It also proposes for a societal transformation of the patriarchal system and its dominating and subordinating ideology that exploits and intimidates vulnerable men and women. The chapter argues that masculinity is a social construct and whose extant is not static but putatively fluid in nature. It changes according to the circumstances. This changing nature and fluidity of masculinity is further explored in *Gamba la Nyoka* in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

UJAMAA VERSUS TRADITIONAL PATRIARCHAL IDEOLOGIES: THE (DE)CONSTRUCTION AND (RE)DEFINITION OF MASCULINITIES IN GAMBA LA NYOKA

3.1 Introduction

Ujamaa was Julius Nyerere's social-economic and political philosophy rooted in traditional African values and maintained its core on familyhood and communalism of traditional African societies (Nyerere, 1968). Nyerere believed in traditional African values. He believed in the extended family, the smallest unit of society in traditional Africa, and used the features of this unit to construct *Ujamaa*. He wanted to integrate those values with the demands of Tanzanians' post-colonial setting. Nyerere's *Ujamaa* policy was thus, modelled on the functions and operations of the extended family.

The roles of an extended family included protecting family members from unsafe situations and producing material goods for the family and society. It was the basic unit of production in traditional Africa. With regard to the society's economy, Nyerere described the extended family as "a self-contained economic and social unit" because it depended on its own labour force and on its own resources (Nyerere, 1968: 8). He viewed the extended family as a social and economic independent unit. Nyerere believed that Tanzania could become socially and economically independent by relying on Tanzanians' labour force and resources. Morally, he emphasized that a child who is in an extended family is raised and taught the courtesies of his family, the values underpinning the family, and his rights within it. He stated:

> Early on, a child was told 'go to your brother' or 'that is your share' and criticized and punished if he disregards the courtesies due to other members of the social group, or fails to share the remaining food with a late-comer, or ignores the small duties entrusted to him (Nyerere,1996:14).

> Nyerere wanted Tanzania society to inculcate in the young people values and principles of an extended family that had always been practiced in the traditional African societies through education.

Sharing, co-operation and communal ownership of property in the extended families of traditional Africa was another essential idea that Nyerere used as a framework in the construction of *Ujamaa*. Tanzanians were expected to practice and apply this idea through *Ujamaa* villages. Nyerere wanted the nation, through *Ujamaa* villages, to be the basic unit of production whereby all the villagers become the labour force and own the resources. He emphasized that "*Ujamaa* can only be maintained if all major means of production are controlled and owned by the peasants through the machinery of their government and their co-operatives" (Nyerere, 1968:16). To implement this idea, peasants in *Ujamaa* villages, were encouraged to work together in a communal way and share the profits.

In his *Ujamaa* philosophy, Nyerere pronounced the principles of human equality, state ownership of property, democracy and freedom as essentials in building *Ujamaa* in Tanzania. He believed that "all human beings are equal" (1977: 13). He emphasized that there must be equality, because it was only on that basis that men work cooperatively. He wanted "to see that the government gives equal opportunity to all men and women irrespective of race, religion or status" (Nyerere, 1977: 15). For him, individuals were supposed to have equal chances and qualifications; equal access to educational

opportunities and healthcare services, and equal employment opportunities. In this way, he made his citizens to believe in caring for one another and to consider other family members as brothers or sisters.

Although Nyerere did not involve women during the independence struggles of Tanganyika (Musiiwa, 2011), he recognized their efforts in building *Ujamaa* villages. He admitted that in the Tanzanian society, particularly in rural areas, women worked harder than people in urban areas. He stated:

> It is impossible to deny that the women did, and still do more than their fair share of the work in the fields and in homes…At times [women] work for 12 or 14 hours a day [and] they even work on Sundays and public holidays. Women who live in the villages work harder than anybody else in Tanzania (Nyerere, 1977: 109, 30).

Nyerere's statement expresses his recognition of women's performance in productive and reproductive labor as they performed agricultural activities as well as domestic chores. He wanted both men and women to have control over both the productive and reproductive activities (Nyerere, *ibid*).

The Arusha Declaration of 1967 was a tool used to guide the implementation of *Ujamaa* policy. Among other things, the declaration pronounced a "Leadership Code" as the rules that prevented society members and government leaders from accumulating individual wealth (Nyerere, 1968). Other rules included owning houses for rent or shares in any company and having more than one salary. The nationalization of the major means of production was another leveling device that Nyerere's *Ujamaa* employed to build a new society. He declared ownership of the major means of production as the nation's key goal

in order to control Tanzanians from accumulating wealth through private acquisition (Nyerere, 1977). He believed that people could make great progress and achieve the set goals through the combined efforts.

During the *Ujamaa* era, therefore, individual property ownership was strongly discouraged. Nyerere believed that as long as an individual worked hard, there was no need for them to hoard wealth because society took care of them. He argued that since the well-being of the individual could not be separated from the well-being of the good of the society, it was therefore important and necessary for everybody to work for the society that should stay healthy and strong and ensure the welfare of each member of the community. On this account, *Ujamaa* subverted a traditional patriarchal system since it discouraged people from accumulating wealth, to possess and control their own properties. This means men's patriarchal power over their families could be limited. *Ujamaa* system, sought to minimize men's power to control economic and property resources. Since the village economic activities and production were planned and controlled by the village leaders, individual men's power of making all major decisions as heads of their families were also seriously affected.

Despite the significance of *Ujamaa* and its principles to Tanzanian, there were fundamental problems that became more evident as the nationalization process progressed. State control of the economy did not exactly appear to guarantee a more effective restructuring of the national economy towards the expected self-reliant model. There were contradictions, especially within the industrial sectors (Bolton, 1985: 154 in Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003). Furthermore, the government implemented the

nationalization program by force because individual owners of the means of production did not simply hand over their companies to the state. In addition, some of the peasant farmers were not willing to move to the *Ujamaa* villages because its manner of implementation did not match the social and cultural realities of the rural economy. James Scott in Ibhawoh and Dibua (2003) describes the situation:

> ...the modern planned village in Tanzania was essentially a point-by-point negation of existing rural practice, which included shifting cultivation and pastoralism; poly cropping; living well off the main roads; kinship and lineage authority; small scattered settlements with houses built higgledy-piggledy; and production that was dispersed and opaque to the state (Scott, 1999: 239).

This description suggests that men's social and economic status was distabilised and their autonomy was severely eroded. Moreover, the *Ujamaa* system denied men full access to their freedom of will since the government failed to involve people in initiating the idea of *Ujamaa* and how to implement it. As a result of this, it was not easy for the government to convince people to move to *Ujamaa* villages. Many peasants saw the system as irrelevant to them. However, despite these facts, it was difficult for men to rebel against this new patriarchal authority as it has been observed that those who did not embrace *Ujamaa* ethos were severely punished. The state officials used coercive means in certain instances to ensure the implementation of *Ujamaa* villages (Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003).

Conversely, the villagization scheme was substantial in social welfare development despite a number of limitations. The *Ujamaa* villages were the main centers for the provision of social resources like water, electricity and health services. The villages became very important centers for the promotion of literacy (Ibhawoh and Dibua, 2003).

In addition, through villagization policy, *Ujamaa* managed to unite Tanzanians and to create a strong sense of national identity among them. Nyerere's policies promoted the legacy of stability that has made the country remain one of the most stable countries in Africa (Lal, 2010; Rodney, 1972).

3.2 *Ujamaa* as an Ideology

In tandem with Althusser's (1971) view of the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA), the Arusha Declaration became the ISA that established the subject of *Ujamaa*. The Declaration had principles, objectives and intentions that sought to transform people in *Ujamaa* in a form of interpellation. Moreover, *Ujamaa* government functioned as a Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) when it used forceful methods on those who were reluctant to move to the *Ujamaa* villages. Pressure and violence by means of regulations, economic measures, threats, burning down of houses and physical violence occurred on a large scale in moving people to *Ujamaa* villages (Shivji. e*t al*, 1985: 18). Anchored on Althusser's theory of ideology, we may argue that during the implementation of *Ujamaa*, Tanzanians became subjects themselves by accepting the state order, which was instilled by the *Ujamaa* ideology. Nyerere, the head of Tanzania state, appeared as the subject of the ideology and used state apparatus as an instrument, to call upon Tanzanians to become subjects of the ideology.

Furthermore, from Connell's (1995) view of masculinity, we may argue that during the implementation process of *Ujamaa* ideology, Nyerere as the head of a gendered state and the father of the *Ujamaa* nation replaced other father-figures in the country. In *Ujamaa* village, for example, the village leader became the father-figure as well and the rest

became his wives and children. He became the head of a village family (extended family) and its properties. This means that Nyerere as the head of state and head of *Ujamaa* villages took a masculine role and feminized the rest of the men. This structure deconstructed the traditional patriarchal structure.

3.3 *Ujamaa* **Ideology: Defying Patriarchal Structures**

In *Gamba la Nyoka*, Kezilahabi demonstrates, through the possibilities of the novelistic form, how *Ujamaa* ideology was implemented in Tanzania. This chapter however, is only interested in examining the tensions between *Ujamaa* and traditional patriarchal ideologies and how these tensions influence the (de)construction and (re)definition of masculinities in *Gamba la Nyoka,* particularly in the process of the implementation of nationalization and villagization policies.

Similar to the previous chapter(s), our discussion and interpretation of (de)construction and (re)definition of masculinities in connection to *Ujamaa* and traditional patriarchal ideologies in *Gamba la Nyoka,* is anchored on Butler's (1990) and Connell's (1995) definitions of masculinity and patriarchal ideology. The two scholars recognize masculinity as a social construct that is molded through performances and relationships with others. It is not a natural state but socially constructed and fluid in nature. Butler and Connell are against the essentialists' perception of patriarchal ideology because, for them, the essentialists perceive the construction of male gender requiring one's molding into a masculine role which presupposes autonomy, competition, and aggressiveness, and the domination of the innate human needs for connectedness, intimacy, and self-disclosure. Essentialist patriarchal ideology rests on the idea that a man has to prove his manhood

because he has been socialized to believe that his masculinity is something achieved, and not ascribed, and therefore has to be continually maintained and enhanced through the externalization of masculine behaviours.

To understand the effect of *Ujamaa* and patriarchal ideologies in the definition and construction of masculinity in *Gamba la Nyoka*, this chapter also adopts Althusser's concept of interpellation (1998). According to Althusser, the hailing or interpellation of individual creates a subject who is, without necessarily knowing it, acceding to the ideology of state authority, its laws, and the systems that support and generate it. Ideology transforms us into subjects that think and behave in socially acceptable ways. Although ideology is understood to subject individuals to the needs and interests of the ruling classes, it is not, according to Althusser, fixed and unchangeable. Rather, ideology always contains contradictions and logical inconsistencies, which are discoverable. This means that the interpellated subject has at least some room to undo or destabilize the ideological process. In this case, change or revolution is possible. Thus, our analysis of men in this chapter does not look into men's lives and performances in a stereotypical perspective but considers how *Ujamaa* and patriarchal ideologies influence the (re)construction of their masculinity in *Gamba la Nyoka*.

This chapter regards the Tanzania state through the implementation of *Ujamaa* as a gendered institution that performs masculinity over its people and legitimizes violence towards men and women during the construction of *Ujamaa* villages. In a gendered institution, key positions of power in the state are mostly held by men who determine the

state's masculinity and its outcome. Such a state includes different organizational systems that inevitably lead to internal contradictions and historical change (Connell, 1995).

From Kezilahabi's demonstration of the implementation of *Ujamaa* policies in *Gamba la Nyoka,* we learn that the intention of *Ujamaa* villages was to enforce equality, enhance economic development and provide social resources like water, electricity, hospitals, schools and agricultural equipment to the majority easily. However, the novel demonstrates that despite the good intentions of *Ujamaa* ideology, some Tanzanians did not accept it because, apart from their unawareness of *Ujamaa* ideology, people doubted the government's intentions about their land and feared the nationalization of their land. Kezilahabi shows how the doubt and fear created tensions and misunderstandings between the government and men, specifically the elders who did not want to abandon their traditional patriarchal system. From his portrayal, we learn that while the government works to construct *Ujamaa* villages, men struggle to maintain their traditional patriarchal ideologies.

Kezilahabi illustrates this situation through the depiction of Kisole men conducting a secret meeting in the forest with the main agenda being to resist the government's order that was intended to make them leave their homesteads and move to the *Ujamaa* villages (Kezilahabi, 1979: 15). Kezilahabi's description of the men in this meeting helps us to understand different perceptions by Kisole men and attitudes towards the government's order. We see men confronting one another and expressing mixed feelings about *Ujamaa* villages. Through their discussion, we discern the two conflicting sides of these men: those who think *Ujamaa* is essential and should be practiced and those who do not want it

because they fear its disruption of traditional patriarchal structures and systems. Kezilahabi's depiction reveals that most of the elders in the meeting think that the government decision of moving people into *Ujamaa* villages by force is illogical because they are already living a communal life. They describe *Ujamaa* ideology as a temporal and dangerous phenomenon. They think young men are not wise enough to lead the country.

Contrary to the majority of old men's views of *Ujamaa*, the young men view *Ujamaa* as an essential ideology that is meant for people's development. They caution old men not to underrate them. The young men's opinions however, provoke old men who continue to ridicule them. One of the old men insists that young men should not be trusted, and encourages people to fight if the government forces them to move to *Ujamaa* villages. He declares: *"Ndugu mwenyekiti, hatuhami. Kama wanataka kutuhamisha kwa nguvu, tutapigana!"*(Kezilahabi, 1979: 19). (Dear chairman, we are not moving (to *Ujamaa* villages). If they force us to move, we will fight). The old men's assertions clearly reveal the rigidity of the people in accepting the *Ujamaa* villages.

Despite the old men's strong determination, Kezilahabi's *Gamba la Nyoka* reveals how *Ujamaa* as a governance system has created anxiety and nervousness among people. This is aptly depicted through the character of another old man who expresses his fears and anxieties towards the government's (re)action and power over them. This old man reminds the meeting that the order does not come from the young men, but the government leaders whom they elected. They therefore have to obey government orders. He cautions the villagers about the overwhelming government power over them. He

reminds them about what happened to their neighbours (Bucho men) when they resisted the government's order. They were terrorized, brutalized and injured by government soldiers. Their arrogance did not help as they eventually moved to the *Ujamaa* villages. The old man persuades his colleagues not to wait for what would make them regret (19).

The anxiety of the old man reflects the men's fear of violence from the government, displayed through powerful weapons, guns in particular, in the process of implementing *Ujamaa* ideology. Kezilahabi depicts government soldiers using guns to coerce men who are reluctant to move to *Ujamaa* villages. Guns in this circumstance have a phallic association signifying the dramatization of power by the father of the nation that is Nyerere and his cohort of leaders. Guns humiliate and intimidate the men in the novel. They feel inferior and weak. The guns thus embody power and become significant in the construction of state masculinity as well as emasculation of other men.

This situation also affirms the Connell's view of a state being a gendered institution. According to Connell (1995), state is gendered since the key positions of power in the state are mostly held by men who determine the state's masculinity and its outcome. Connell argues also that patriarchal ideology legitimizes violence towards women and subordinated forms of masculinity as a result of the hegemonic masculinity's superiority over them. From Connell's perspective, we may say that Tanzania is a masculinized state that has legitimized violence in the process of implementing *Ujamaa* ideology.

Despite the fact that Bucho men were brutalized and coerced by the government, the Kisole patriarchal-oriented male refuse to be intimidated by the government and remain adamant as they resist its order: refusing to move to *Ujamaa* villages. They regard Bucho

men who were tortured and moved to *Ujamaa* villages by force as women. They consider themselves as powerful men who are more careful than their counterparts. The old men encourage their people to fight against the government by narrating their experiences of fighting the German and British people during colonial time and remark that confronting *Ujamaa* is easier compared to the German war (20). The chairman who seems to be convinced by the old men's ideas concludes that Kisole men are not ready to be moved to the *Ujamaa* villages.

From the conversation of the old men and young men, it can be deduced that there exists tension between the two groups who hold different ideologies. Through their confrontation we also realize how the old men express their masculinity over the young men; they feel superior to them. They think the young men are weak, unwise, irrational and irresponsible. Kezilahabi's portrayal of the old men reveals that their masculinity is influenced by their age, background and fear of the disruption of their traditional patriarchal structures.

To accomplish their mission, they ambush Bucho men and government soldiers (23). Kezilahabi illustrates this performance of masculinity through the forest scene where Bucho men and women, militantly dressed, and in three trucks are ambushed by Kisole men. It is a sudden and brutal attack on them. Many are shot and become confused and disorganized (25). The Kisole leader cuts the ears of three men who survived the attack and orders them to tell their husbands (government leaders), that they do not want *Ujamaa* ideology: "*Nendeni mkawaambie waume zenu hatutaki kuhama! Nendeni mkawaambie hatutaki Ujamaa wao! Nendeni! Waambieni …*" (Kezilahabi, 1979: 26)

(Go and tell your husbands that we are not moving to the *Ujamaa* villages! Go and tell them that we do not want their *Ujamaa*! Go! Tell them…!). After torturing and killing them, they go back to the forest singing victorious songs. This (retrogressive) masculine performance, leads to the death of eighty seven people and injury to fifty people who are later taken to hospital (27).

Kisole men, in this context, perform their masculinity over Bucho men and government soldiers in a violent manner to express their overt antipathy and rejection of *Ujamaa* villages' policy. The act of ambushing demonstrates their determination, confidence and strength. In this scene, Kisole men portray themselves as men who are courageous and fear no one. According to them, Bucho villagers are women who obey government ('..*Wanaume zenu*..'), without questioning. The killing and chasing away of the Bucho people signify their potent masculinity. They equate themselves to their traditional heroes. Kezilahabi illustrates the way the Kisole men describe themselves through a traditional heroic song that they sing to praise their heroic performance after winning the battle:

> *Sisi ni simba, tunaruka na kuvamia, Tunakula nyama mbichi yenye damu,*
> *Nyama za watu na za wanyama, Lete ini nami nile nyongo, Nile ushujaa wa*
> *babu zangu, tunaruka na kuvamia, tunaruka na kurarua,*
> *Sisi ni simba ogopeni milio yetu,*
> *Tukilenga, makucha hayarudi matupu* (Kezilahabi, 1979: 26).

> We are lions, we jump and invade, we eat bloodied raw meat,
> Both human and animal flesh , bring liver and I will eat the bile,
> I eat the heroism of my grandfathers, we jump and invade, we jump and rupture,
> We are the lions, beware of our noises,
> When we target, we never miss it.

The above heroic song demonstrates Kisole men's pride while defending their patriarchal ideology and structures. They equate themselves to lions that roar, threaten and kill people and other animals. This performance of (retrogressive) masculinity signifies Kisole men's resentment of *Ujamaa* villages' constructions and their fear of losing their masculinity if they allow the deconstruction of patriarchal ideology. Kisole men's (re)action against the government implies that hegemonic masculinity can also be challenged by the marginalized. The issue of hegemonic masculinity being challenged by the marginalized is also pointed out by Connell. According to Connell (1995), the violence of minority men is the rebellion of masculinities which were marginalized by hegemonic masculinity.

However, we discover that *Ujamaa* government is more masculine than Kisole men through the delineation of its leader's masculine performance. Kezilahabi illustrates the government's masculine role through the portrayal of the District Commissioner (DC), Bucho soldiers and young men who follow the DC's orders in the village. Kezilahabi depicts two Bucho young men, Mambosasa and Mamboleo instructing and threatening villagers to move to the designated *Ujamaa* villages:

> *Na kama msipohama mtakiona cha mtema kuni. Kwaheri. Hatuna muda wa kukaa…Waliondoka kuelekea kwenye miji mingine wakitoa ujumbe huohuo* (Kezilahabi, 1979: 12).

> If you do not move, you will suffer the consequences. Good bye. We have no time to waste… They left and went to other homesteads in the village to give the same message.

The two young men's Kiswahili names, Mamboleo and Mambosasa symbolically mean contemporary/current or modern issues. 'Mamboleo' in particular, means today's issues

and 'Mambosasa' current issues. Linking these names and masculinity in *Gamba la Nyoka*, the two young men represent a young generation that is influenced by modernity and privileged with education and power. Their education gives them an opportunity of leadership positions during *Ujamaa* era. Being in the *Ujamaa* leadership hierarchy, Mambosasa and Mamboleo display their masculine traits during the moving of people to the *Ujamaa* villages.

Kezilahabi demonstrates further the strength and power of the *Ujamaa* government and its dominant masculine role through the scene where the government attacks Kisole men and punishing them because of their arrogance. We see Bucho men and soldiers attacking Kisole men, threatening them with guns, and making them surrender their weapons (42). This threatening situation confuses and disorganizes the Kisole men. Mzee Chilongo, one of the old men, tries to challenge the government by attempting to fight back but the soldiers' leader does not allow him to do so. He shoots him in the thighs and kicks him. The old man loses his strength and faints.

Mzee Chilongo, in this instance, symbolizes a traditional patriarchal system that is not ready for change. His stability and determination are however neutered as he fails to free himself from the government authority that appears to be more powerful than him and his people. The power of government is signified by modern weapons (guns) that empower soldiers to humiliate and defeat Mzee Chilongo and the Kisole men. Kezilahabi's description of the government's masculinity over Kisole men is revealed further through the portrayal of the DC and government soldiers harassing Kisole men at the DC's office grounds (43). He depicts Kisole men submitting their weapons (spears and arrows) to the

government soldiers. The DC and his soldiers drill and ridicule them, calling them murderers because they killed their kinsmen. He describes their bodies as filled with rust and must therefore sweat in order to take the rust from their bodies. After four hours of drilling, torture and sweating, the DC calls in a political teacher to teach them about Tanzanian politics, the effect of colonization and make them sing the national anthem (44).

The above description shows how the government used its leaders and soldiers to emasculate men who do not want to conform to national ideology- *Ujamaa*. In Althusser's (1971) view government institutions can function as a repressive apparatus to intervene and act in favour of the ruling class by repressing the ruled class through violent and coercive means. In addition, Althusser argues that nation and masculinity are both ideologically constructed; the nation is constructed in and through discourse and especially in political discourse (speeches, government documents, civics textbooks, etc.). In tandem with Althusser, *Ujamaa* system in *Gamba la Nyoka* is ideologically constructed through political leaders' speeches and education programs: history, civics classes and national anthem in adult education programs. In the above depiction, the DC and soldiers are working to defend the *Ujamaa* as the national ideology.

In addition to the above analysis, we can argue further that the masculinity of the military and *Ujamaa* system are inscribed in the body of the nation through the use of guns, spears and arrows that may be considered as phallic symbols of the state's power. These phallic symbols distinguish the degree of power the two groups (ruling and ruled) possess and mark their status of masculinity, supremacy and subordination. The government's

possession and use of strong weapons like guns characterizes its strength and power, which imposes on Kisole men whose weapons - spear and arrows characterize their weakness.

However, the challenges that the government face from Kisole men and Mzee Chilongo, in particular implies that the dominant ideology can also be challenged by the ruled. Kezilahabi's portrayal of the Kisole men resisting government orders through fighting back confirms Althusser's (1998) views on how the ruling class can be challenged by individuals who are assumed to be interpellated by the dominant ideology. According to Althusser, although ideology is understood to subject individuals to the needs and interests of the ruling classes, it is not fixed and unchangeable. It always contains contradictions and logical inconsistencies, which are discoverable. This means there is a possibility of the interpellated subject to undo or destabilize the ideological process. In this case, change or revolution is possible. We witness several instances in *Gamba la Nyoka* where the elders confront the government because they do not want to accept *Ujamaa*.

In this portrayal Kezilahabi reveals also that *Ujamaa* has given power to young men and made them lose faith in elders' leadership and abilities. Through the DC and soldiers' performance, Kezilahabi demonstrates how young men disrespect the will and power of the old generation. It also implies that education and government positions are major factors in the performance of masculinity in *Gamba la Nyoka*; age seems to be virtually on insignificant factor in this context. Kezilahabi illustrates the way men are totally

emasculated by the government leaders through the depiction of the depature of the Kisole men after being punished by the DC. The narrator states:

> *Wakati wanaenda nyumbani njiani mvua ilianza, si muda mrefu kukawa na gharika. Walihangaika hawakuona nyumba zao. Hawakukuta familia zao pale walipoziacha...Wanyama walitetemeka kwa baridi. Ilikuwa giza, hamna vitanda, viti, wala chochote. Ilikuwa giza nene na kimya, upweke!* (Kezilahabi, 1979: 46).

> On their way home the heavy rain started and caused floods. They were confused because they did not find their houses and families… Their animals shivered from cold. It was dark, no beds, chairs, nothing available. It was total darkness, silence and loneliness!

The depiction above implicates itself in the feminization of Kisole men as we see them being humiliated, ruined and their lives shattered. The DC's performance of masculinity over the Kisole men affirms Connell's (2005) idea of masculinities being operated within a power differential, where certain traits and types of men are privileged and dominant over other men. The DC uses the advantage of his position to control Kisole men and their properties. He takes away their authority to be in charge of their children, wives and properties; they do not find their families at home and they do not know where they are. Through the portrayal of the DC and other government leaders, Kezilahabi reveals how the state can perform negative masculinity that intimidates and emasculates men by disrupting and rupturing their traditional roles and positioning.

In *Gamba la Nyoka*, we have also learned that the leaders use their position and power to control others through their unruly emotions. This is revealed by the author through the portrayal of the president when giving his speech to the villagers. Kezilahabi depicts the DC feeling ashamed of his disruptive masculine performances when the president tells

the villagers that the intention of *Ujamaa* villages was not to coerce and brutalize people (134).

Kezilahabi illustrates further how *Ujamaa* has disrupted homesteads and traditional patriarchal structures through the conversation of patients in hospital beds. In their conversation, the male patients who are hospitalized after being brutalized by Kisole men discuss, while lamenting, how the new structures (*Ujamaa* villages) have caused the breakdown of their homesteads and social networks. These male patients claim that *Ujamaa* system has created classes in villages because rich people's houses are left untouched while the rest are forced to build new houses around them. Kezilahabi exemplifies this situation through the image of Mr Kibila's house that is not destroyed because it is big, strong and beautiful, and Mzee Milambo whose house is destroyed because of his poor status in favour of a rich person (33).

The above depiction suggests that the act of moving men and their families from their original homesteads and mixing the two different economic clusters; rich and poor, destabilizes the social network among the vulnerable as the situation introduces superiority and inferiority complexes within *Ujamaa* villages. Men who are forced to build their houses around the rich are likely to feel inferior and intimidated by the wealthy. This situation gives rich men the opportunity to perform their masculinity over the poor. The *Ujamaa* system in this case has transferred power and strength to the rich men and made vulnerable their poor counterparts in the village. Kezilahabi's description depicts how different levels of *Ujamaa* system has masculinized the rich men and

feminized the poor men. In this case wealth has become an index of masculinity in the novel.

Furthermore, the issue of men moving from their original homesteads to *Ujamaa* villages has caused a greater loss of their livestock and land and affected their livelihoods and masculinity. Through the conversation between Mamboleo and Mambosasa, Kezilahabi explains that in the process of moving people to the *Ujamaa* villages, men are forced to leave their livestock and fertile land behind. They lament that there is no village cattle ranch whereby all men can keep their livestock (106). Apart from inadequate space for individual cattle grazing, men seem to be restricted from keeping and obtaining more livestock through purchase, trade, marriage or even counter-raiding because the *Ujamaa* system emphasizes a collective economy.

From this conversation we learn that the issue of men leaving their livestock and fertile land behind has seriously affected their economy. This situation also suggests that the customary methods that allowed men to provide for their families, consolidate wealth and acquire social status through livestock and land are phenomenally diminished. Only a few people such as the village leaders, the educated and rich men, are in a position to keep livestock because they have access to big land holdings and have the means to exploit other villagers in their own society. Mamboleo explains:

> *Wengi kati ya viongozi ni wazee ambao watoto wao ni wasomi. Na wengi ndio ambao wana mashamba makubwa kuliko wengine, na ndio waliooa Wanawake wengi ambao wanawatumia kwa kulima mashamba na kuendesha maduka.* (Kezilahabi, 1979: 108).

> Many of the leaders are elders whose children are educated. Those are the ones who have bigger farms, and many wives who they use to work in their farms and shops.

The above quotation demonstrates the contradictions of *Ujamaa*. *Ujamaa* was meant to enhance the practices of co-operation and participation, as well as communal ownership of property and to annihilate class differences (conflicts) in the society but paradoxically, the implementation entrenched the social class disparities.

Kezilahabi further expresses the discomfiture with the *Ujamaa* village structures through the portrayal of men who are admitted at the hospital. Through these men's complaints we learn that *Ujamaa* village structures have limited their privacy and autonomy. Men can no longer handle their wives and children easily because of the new structures. They lament:

> *Mtu huwezi kumpiga mkeo. Ukimgusa kidogo tu majirani wanasikia. Nyumba ziko karibu mno. Siri za nyumbani zinasikika toka nyumba hadi nyumba* (Kezilahabi, 1979: 34).

> One cannot beat his wife. If you touch her, the neighbours will hear you. The houses are too close. There is no privacy.

This lamentation suggests that the *Ujamaa* village structure has limited men's power of performing negative masculinity over their wives. In the depiction of the old homesteads, a husband's main house was intentionally built at the center in order to enable him to monitor his wives and children easily but the *Ujamaa* villages have altered this structure. This situation is further dramatized through the actions of Mzee Chilongo who walks around his wives' houses with a spear and machete during the night because he feels the compound is not well protected (102). Since he is a polygamist, he has to enhance the security himself by making sure no other man comes into his homestead. The spear and machete in this context are used as phallic symbols that signify a man's power. These

phallic-like objects enable Mzee Chilongo to perform his masculine role as head of his compound and to impose strict surveillance on his wives and children.

The effects of *Ujamaa* villages in *Gamba la Nyoka* indicate poor government strategies in constructing *Ujamaa* villages. This argument is based on our reading of *Gamba la Nyoka,* specifically in how poor leadership and improper procedures have led to (retrogressive) masculine performances that destroy most men's personality and autonomy. Kezilahabi's depiction of a man who intends to take revenge on the Kisole men despite his poor health condition in the hospital validates this argument. This man, who is brutalized, tormented and intimidated by the government soldiers, explains that the government strategy of making one village to harass their neighbours creates anger and hatred; and since they cannot retaliate against the government, they will continue to take revenge on their neighbours:

> *Hatuwezi kulipiza kisasi kwa Serikali! Tutalipiza kisasi kwa wana-Kisole! Baadae nao wakipata nafasi ya kuhamisha wengine, watalipiza nao hukohuko!* (Kezilahabi, 1979: 34).

> We cannot retaliate against the government! We can only do it to
> Kisole men! When they have an opportunity to move others (to *Ujamaa* villages), it will be their turn to take revenge.

This argument helps us to understand, that the Bucho men's memories of humiliation and torture influence the performance of their masculinity over their neighbours. Implicitly, men's retrogressive masculine performance over other men suggests that the government's orders and improper strategies for the construction of *the Ujamaa* villages have made men to dehumanize and emasculate one another.

3.4 *Ujamaa*: Transcending Patriarchal Ideology

In addition, Kezilahabi's depiction of the emergence of *Ujamaa* in *Gamba la Nyoka* demonstrates how *Ujamaa* ideology and its structures have deconstructed the conventional definition of gender roles. We see both men and women involved in productive and reproductive labor in the novel. This means both men and women perform the roles of provider or bread winner in the *Ujamaa* village farms. Tinda, for instance, is portrayed as a woman who can play both female and male gender roles when her husband loses his job because of his poor leadership. Kezilahabi depicts her scolding Mambosasa for being an irresponsible husband and father and she promises to take care of the family by herself: "*Kama umeshindwa kuulisha huu mji mwenyewe nitalima, na nitaulisha mwenyewe!* (If you have failed to provide for this family, I will do it by myself!) (Kezilahabi, 1979: 135).

Tinda's conscientiousness is also recognized and commended by the villagers as they comment that Mambosasa and his children would have died of hunger if it were not for his hardworking wife (145). Moreover, we see both male and female portrayed as soldiers in enforcing the construction of the *Ujamaa* villages (27-28). This means women are included in the collective militarization, an act that was traditionally regarded as a male domain. This depiction demonstrates the way the *Ujamaa* system has deconstructed the conventional male-female gender roles, domains and identities.

Another issue that is explored in *Gamba la Nyoka* is that of the government using education as an Ideological State Apparatus to instill *Ujamaa* ideology so as to achieve its goal of building a new society. Kezilahabi illustrates the presentation of education for

self-reliance programs through adult education classes that are taught by Mr Magafu, the adult education teacher in *Gamba la Nyoka* (99-100). Despite the challenges that we have highlighted in our discussion, education programs seem to change men's attitudes towards the *Ujamaa* ideology. Kezilahabi illustrates this issue through the depiction of men and women in adult class, who declare not to fight the government again (101). This decision demonstrates that education in the *Ujamaa* era stands out as one of the institutions deployed in re-shaping and altering the rigid masculinities in the modern society.

The effect of education on men in *Gamba la Nyoka* is further explored through the decision by the Kisole men to transform their lives by conforming to the *Ujamaa* ideology. We encounter the change in the Kisole men through Kezilahabi's depiction of inauguration day for the the water system project. On this day the DC congratulates the Kisole people for their decision to join *Ujamaa* villages (156). This explains the inevitability of change in these men's masculinity. We see the Kisole men deconstructing and redefining their masculinity towards the end of the novel. Their change is influenced by the emergence of *Ujamaa* ideology as a national policy in Tanzania. This change affirms Connell's (1995) views that highlight the inevitability of changes in masculinity. For Connell, masculinity includes different systems that inevitably lead to internal contradictions and historical change. Connell argues that masculinity is a social pattern that must be viewed as a product of history as well as a producer of history.

The introduction of *Ujamaa* and modernity have also changed the social and economic patterns of men in *Gamba la Nyoka* as we notice people using water tanks and bathing in

bathrooms instead of going to the river (156). However, this change seems to threaten some of the old men, like Mzee Chilongo, who perceive modernity as an unwelcome interference with the traditional patriarchal way of life and men's way of happiness. Kezilahabi states: "*Mzee Chilongo na wenzake waliona utamaduni wa wanaume kuoga mtoni au ziwani utavurugwa.*" (Mzee Chilongo and his friends (elders) thought that the tradition of men bathing in the river or lake will be distracted) (Kezilahabi, 1979:156).

In the past, the river was a place where men performed their social and cultural rituals. At this place, the elders educated young men about traditional values and checked on their level of maturity. Men who were not circumcised were ridiculed. This is also a place where acts of testing manhood such as wrestling and bull fighting were performed (156). From Mzee Chilongo's assertion, we realize also that the river is a place that participates in the construction of a man's masculinity because there one is exposed to dangerous situations like fighting snakes and crocodiles. Taking a bath in the river is a sign of strength and courage. He says:

> *Nataka kukoga mtoni kwenye maji yatembeayo, mtoni kwenye samaki na Nyoka! Nataka kukoga ziwani kwenye mamba! Mimi sijawa mzee wa kuletewa maji ya kukoga uani*! (Kezilahabi, 2006:156).

> I want to take a bath in running water where there are fish and snakes! I want to take bath in the lake where there are crocodiles! I am not very old and I cannot wait for someone to serve me with bathing water!

Mzee Chilongo's refusal to bathe at home implies his rejection of feminization by the modern life style that seems to be altering traditional ways of life. For Mzee Chilongo, bathing at home undermines the aggressive nature of hegemonic masculinity. To maintain his traditional patriarchal ideology, he refuses to shower at home and instead

continues going to the river. However, his persistent determination is challenged when he findis a snake's skin, which he thinks is a real snake, at the river. This snake's skin shocks him and forces him to run away naked. He laughs at himself when he later realizes that it was not a real snake (157).

From Mzee Chilongo's portrayal, we discover contradicting aspects of his masculinity and the instability of traditional patriarchal ideology. His fears of encountering a snake's skin which makes him to run back home while naked, contradicts his notion of a real man in a conventional patriarchal situation. Instead of maintaining his strong and confident character, he appears to lose his confidence and shows weakness as he runs away from a snake's skin. He also forgets his walking stick; an act that symbolizes his loss of his traditional patriarchal power and masculinity. This situation presents a challenge to Mzee Chilongo and his hegemonic masculine status. It also, in a way, suggests that masculinity is an unstable subject because of its very fluid nature.

From the image of a snake's skin, Kezilahabi provides a powerful symbol embedded in the title of the novel *Gamba la Nyoka* in respect to masculinity as dramatized through the depiction of Mzee Chilongo and the other men's perception of *Ujamaa*. The image of the snake's skin (*Gamba la Nyoka*) symbolically expresses the inevitable change that is brought by *Ujamaa* ideology as a national policy in Tanzania. The depiction of Mzee Chilongo fighting a harmless snake may symbolize the old generation's rigidity in refusing to abandon their traditional patriarchal ideology and accept *Ujamaa* ideology. It may also suggest ironically, a mindset of people who take time to realize that something new might be useful to their lives. Mzee Chilongo's delay and late realization is reflected

in several incidents where he deliberately refuses to accommodate *Ujamaa* ideology in his life. His confrontation with Bucho soldiers, the DC, the nurse, the adult education teacher and his refusal to   shower at home all indicate this rigidity and reluctance to accept changes.

We may also argue that the metaphor of the snake's skin expresses the illusive, fluid and complex construction of men's masculinity in *Gamba la Nyoka*. A stretching of a harmless snake's skin implies that *Ujamaa* ideology and its principals are not harmful; people should therefore be flexible and accept necessary changes. It may also signify the need for the traditional patriarchal society to untie itself from its rigidity and accept a modern ideology such as *Ujamaa*. Consequently, the image suggests that masculinity is expected to embrace the changes envitably taking place in a society; as a society changes, masculinity changes as well. Kezilahabi highlights this reality when he concludes that:

> *Hivyo ndivyo ilivyokuwa kwa Mzee Chilongo na wengine wa namna yake. Jamii ilikuwa imemwacha nyuma. Jamii ilikuwa imejinyambua na sasa haikuwa pale ilipokua. Jamii ilikuwa tofauti sasa na zamani. Ukale una wakati wake. Ukale unastahili kuchunguzwa; lakini haudumu milele* (Kezilahabi, 1979: 158).

> This was the way it was for Mzee Chilongo and others of his kind. Society had left him behind. Society had stretched itself and now it was no longer where he was. The past has its time. The past is worth being studied; but it does not last forever.

Kezilahabi's statement suggests that every ideology is meaningful and significant to people who believe in it. What is needed is mutual understanding in the society for the ideology that suits the particular society.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, Kezilahabi, through the portrayal of male characters, has demonstrated that masculinity is a social construct that is subject to constant changes. The novel seems to suggest that the performance and construction of masculinity is influenced and determined by a number of factors. Power is the key attribute in (de)constructing and (re)defining men's masculinity. Hierarchies are structures within which masculinity is constructed and consolidated in the society. These hierarchies and structures of power are socially maintained within and by state institutions such as schools and the armed forces. The state, is thus another factor that (de)constructs and (re)defines masculinity. Political and cultural ideologies also play a significant role in the construction of masculinity. In the novel, we encounter constant confrontations between young men and old men, caused by their different perceptions of *Ujamaa,* the dominant ideology that is introduced by the state. The confrontations create tensions among and between young men and old men and contribute to contradicting situations for men.

Furthermore, the novel demonstrates how the old generation characters are required to complement their version of masculinity that is influenced by traditional patriarchal ideology with the *Ujamaa* principles and structures so as to reform and construct the ideal men for the *Ujamaa* period. We have however noticed that, in the process of (re)constructing new forms of masculinity, Kezilahabi has destabilized the traditional patriarchal structure that had a profound impact on the imagination of masculinity in a traditional setting so as to cope with contemporary notions of masculinity. In so doing, new forms of masculinity emerge. Kezilahabi, in this case, emphasizes that for a society to build a new nation, changes are inevitable. Conventional gender relations have to be

dismantled and complemented by modern ones. The emergence of new masculinities underlines the mutable state of masculinity. It changes over time, within contexts, and in response to various changes in the individuals as well as in a wider community. This manifestation of flexible and fluid nature of masculinity encountered in Kezilahabi's *Gamba la Nyoka* is further explored in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*, in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

GENDER REVERSALS: MEN'S EMASCULATION IN *DUNIA UWANJA WA FUJO*

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines Kezilahabi's attempt to 'unthink' and deconstruct the traditional

patriarchal definition of man and woman in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*. Kezilahabi questions

the perception of conventional masculinity and gender roles through the portrayal of male

and female characters in a modern setting. In this chapter, we argue that masculinity is a

fluid subject. We also argue that masculinity is fluid and subject to constant alterations.

One can be masculine at one point, and not in another instance. Through his

characterization, Kezilahabi enables us to interpret and understand the mutability of

masculinity.

As mentioned in chapter one, Robert Connell and Judith Butler's perspectives of

masculinity are important in understanding masculinity in our study. Their views assist

us in interpreting and understanding how women's performances and characteristics

affect men and their masculinity in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*. According to Connell

(2005), men construct their masculine identities through relationships with both their

fellow men and women. For Connell, men are expected to actively struggle for

dominance and this active struggle for dominance is actually fundamental in redefining

what a normal male gender identity should be. Men are expected to demonstrate features

of dominant forms of masculinity, such as power, courage and aggressiveness.

Therefore, societal culture and rituals of the everyday practices encourage men to take

up dominating roles over their wives, and women are prepared to be unquestioning,

submissive, passive, and obedient to their husbands. However, Connell emphasizes that the concept of hegemonic masculinity is ever changing and gender hierarchies are subject to change as well. In a changing process, there is a possibility of older forms of masculinity to be displaced by new ones because it is a dynamic 'configurations of gender practice' negotiated in time, ideology and culture (Connell, 2000:28). Connell's perspective of gender helps us to comprehend the dynamic state of masculinity that tends to challenge the configurations of gender practice that legitimizes or guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo.*

Like Connell (1995), Butler (1990) perceives masculinity as a social construct that is constructed through performances. It is manifested in the ways that individuals style their bodies and carry themselves and also in the ways they speak and move. From Butler's perspective of gender, masculinity is not only produced by and on particular bodies but it is also located within particular activities, behaviours, and practices. It is through the "stylized repetition" of these gendered practices such as body gestures and mannerism that gender is performed: through language (as a form of speech act), bodily (in terms of one's appearance), and also through one's actions. Butler argues that these gendered practices are not fixed and they vary between situations. She thus, sees gender as an unstable subject and criticizes categorization of women/men as fixed coherent identity against the opposite sex. Butler's theory of performativity helps us to understand how Kezilahabi's female and male characters perform their masculinities through their repetitive actions and how these actions in return construct various forms of masculinities in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*.

4.2 Masculinizing Female Characters

Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo dramatizes masculinity in relation to modern perspectives that contrasts it with the traditional patriarchal definition of man and woman. Kezilahabi, through the portrayal of his male and female characters, 'unthinks', challenges and deconstructs the essentialists' perceptions and perspectives of a man's definition. His portrayal of a man deconstructs the normalized thinking of the patriarchal male figure that is rooted in essentialist assumptions that a man is aggressive, a decision maker, a provider and his authority cannot be questioned by a woman. In his representation of male and female characters, Kezilahabi dramatizes multiple levels of masculinities that seem to be influenced by modernity, Western ideology, education and money/wealth.

In the novel, the author seems to be anxious to challenge the conventional definition of masculinity through the portrayal of his female protagonist, Vera, who displays masculine traits similar to those of men. Kezilahabi uses Vera as an example of women who can easily transcend conventional gender boundaries. Through the portrayal of Vera (Mama Resi), he dramatizes how a woman can perform masculinity and as such play roles that are traditionally and culturally assigned to men. Kezilahabi depicts Vera fighting with a bus conductor when passengers are told to get out of the bus because it has stuck in the mud and needs to be pushed out. She refuses to go down and when the conductor forces her to do so, she yells at him saying she has paid her own bus fare and nobody should disturb her (56). The bus conductor is irritated by her arrogance and decides to return her money and forces Vera to take her luggage but she refuses, claiming that the agreement was to reach her destination. Angrily, the conductor pushes her down but she stands up and fights back. In this scene, Vera draws every passenger's attention

and the passengers are astounded by what they perceive to be her 'arrogance' and aggression. The author explains: "*Tumaini alishangaa kuona kulikuwa na wanawake wenye kiburi namna hii duniani*" (Tumaini was surprised to see that there are such arrogant women in the world) (Kezilahabi, 1975:58).

From the portrayal of Vera's confrontation with the bus conductor, Kezilahabi is of course challenging normalized definitions and performance of everyday rituals of masculinity and femininity. His depiction of Vera openly fighting with men in public spheres deconstructs the conventional feminine traits of a traditional woman. The conventional patriarchal notion of a woman and the essentialists' perception of a woman regard women as weak and non-aggressive characters who in most cases appear to be inferior and timid in front of men (Connell, 1995). However, Vera disavows this notion as she acts against what is expected of a conventional traditional woman. She undermines masculinity when she adamantly refuses to get out of the bus and the conductor is forced to let her remain, while the rest of the passengers are ordered out.

Vera's action is perceived as strange particularly by men who think that a woman must be submissive, particularly before men. Kezilahabi makes obvious this kind of men's perception towards Vera through Tumaini's comment: "*Tumaini alishangaa kuona kulikuwa na wanawake wenye kiburi namna hii duniani*" (58). This comment captures a male's normalized categorization and generalization of women as submissive and docile. His thinking reflects the society's negative perception of women who try to cross traditional patriarchal boundaries by aggressively standing and fighting for their rights. Such women are branded as stubborn and arrogant. Implicitly, Tumaini's attitude towards

this type of women reveals fear and nervouness in the men's world; the fear that threatens men's masculinity because they do not expect to have a world whereby a woman can act like a man. In other words, this comment implicates itself in the sustenance of normalized and constructed gender imbalances that consider femininity as always subservient to masculinity. Further, implied in Tumaini's comment is the very desire to entrench and perpetuate the patriarchal society's imbalances of masculine-feminine relationships.

However, Kezilahabi reveals that this status quo can be destabilized when conventional gender roles are challenged by men and women in the contemporary world. Through the portrayal of a married couple, Dennis and Vera, Kezilahabi reverses gender roles by depicting a wife who assumes masculine roles and orders her husband to perform what are normally coded as female gender roles in a 'conventional' patriarchal gendered socio-cultural set-up. We are confronted with this situation in the scene where Vera arrives from the village with visitors and instructs her husband to cook and serve them because she is tired. Dennis agrees and acts as duly ordered. Kezilahabi explains:

> *Walipofika nyumbani mke wa Dennis alimwamrisha mume wake apikie wageni, 'Utawapikia wageni; mimi nimechoka na safari, nakwenda kulala tu'* (59)... *'Ukalale tu, Vera' Dennis alimwambia mke wake kwa upole. Dennis alienda kupika. 'Mnaweza kuwa mnasoma magazeti wakati mimi nikitayarisha chakula'...baada ya hapo aliwaandalia wageni chakula, akawakaribisha mezani.*(60)

> When they reached home, Dennis's wife (Vera) instructed her husband to cook for the visitors, 'You should cook for the visitors; I am tired as a result of the journey, I am going to bed'… 'Go to bed, Vera' Dennis told his wife politely. Dennis went to cook. 'You (Tumaini and John) may read newspapers while I am preparing the meal'…after that he prepared and served the visitors the meal).

From a traditional patriarchal perception of a man, we can argue that Dennis is feminized

because he is made to perform feminine roles while his wife rests. Dennis and Vera's

performances of reversed gendered roles may be attributed to their acquiescence to

Western ideology; modernity and education. Kezilahabi affirms this situation through

Vera's argument about Western ideology's perception of equality between men and

women in her conversation with Tumaini. She asserts that:

> *Mimi na bwana wangu tunaamini katika jambo hili la usawa. Hata mimi*
> *ninaweza kutoa maoni yangu mbele ya bwana wangu. Dennis anafahamu*
> *sana kupika. Tunapeana zamu. Mara nyingi tunabishana mezani. Katika*
> *jamii ya kizungu utakuta mara nyingi mwanamke ana sauti kuliko*
> *mwanaume* (Kezilahabi, 1975:71).

> (My husband and I believe in equality. I can give my views before my
> husband. Dennis is good at cooking. We take turns. Several times we argue
> at the table. In the Western society you will find a woman is more powerful
> than a man).

This assertion confirms that Vera and Dennis' life-style is influenced by Western

ideology.

Tumaini, who seems to believe in African traditions and culture, differs with Vera in her

notion of equality. For Tumaini, respect is the key factor in marriage and not the issue of

mutual agreement on family duties or discussing family issues together (72). He insists

that their parents respected one another and that is why they maintained their marriages.

Vera dismisses Tumaini's views as out-dated and argues that African men no longer

exploit and suppress women. Giving his views, Tumaini admits that there are evil things

that have been practised in African traditional societies and are no longer useful. He

further argues that that should however not imply that all aspects of African culture are

evil. He notes that there are good things that should be preserved, and respect is one of

them. Vera takes Tumaini's arguments as a challenge as she admits that she has never come across a man who is quite convincing like him (72). Tumaini is surprised by this comment and concludes that Vera is not an ordinary woman. He says, "*Hiyo haikuwa lugha ya wanawake wa kawaida*." (That was not a language of ordinary women") (Kezilahabi, 1979:72).

The conversation between Vera and Tumaini reveals contradicting perceptions of marriage . It also reveals how Western and African ideologies have influenced their thinking. While Vera condemns African culture for suppressing women and praises the Western world for giving freedom and space to woman, Tumaini rejects Vera's ideas by emphasizing the place of respect in relationships. His insistence on respect in marriage suggests that in the African patriarchal society, a wife should be obedient, subservient and respectful to her husband. In addition, Tumaini's facial expression and response towards Vera's argument and comments, suggest that a woman who does not abide to the ethos of a traditional patriarchal marriage appears as an extraordinary one. As such Tumaini construes Vera as a strange woman who wants to subvert traditional patriarchal practices by living according to the Western culture.

Vera's embracing of Western culture influences her masculine performance in her relationship with her husband. This is further revealed through her views on freedom, culture and ideology. Kezilahabi creates a situation where Tumaini and Vera are sitting in Dennis' sitting room arguing about the notion of freedom and cultures in African and Western countries. This discussion is initiated by Vera who refers to Tumaini's article in the newspaper and her response to it. Tumaini thinks that individual freedom is limited

by (his) culture and considers those Africans who expose their nakedness in public spaces as synonymous with animals who are supposed to live in the forest. He thinks that exposing naked bodies publically should not be copied (74-5).

Contrary to Tumaini's views, Vera thinks Western ideas are not that bad and argues that there is no country that depends on its ideology only; it has to be complemented by various cultures. She emphasizes that every culture is constituted by conflicting ideologies and intervention of various cultures from other countries. For Vera, maintaining a rigid culture means inability to relate with foreign countries, which is impossible. In her view, it is necessary for Africans to allow for some integration of Western culture (76). Vera's argument and performances deflate the rigid standards of African patriarchal ideology and implies the transformation of gender perspectives. We see the integration of Western ideology in her repetitive actions and during her conversations with Tumaini and Dennis. This influence of Western culture in Vera's performance of masculinity affirms Althusser's (1998) views of the construction of ideology and masculinity. According to Althusser, ideology influences individuals' practices and these practices in turn also serve to construct masculinity.

It is important to note that, apart from their differences in perspectives on African culture, what drives Vera to argue with Tumaini is a competition spirit that she has towards him. She does this to prove him less competent than her husband. We are informed that Vera is not happy about Tumaini's progress and hates seeing him defeating her husband (76). Vera sees Tumaini as a man who wants to gain publicity by publishing articles in newspapers. To stop him from being more famous than her husband, she decides to

respond to his article by criticizing him. This spirit of competing with men is what makes us conclude that she embodied masculine characters. We may further argue that her decision to compete with Tumaini on behalf of her husband in fact acts to feminize her husband because her arguments and actions suggest that her husband is not strong enough to compete with another man and maintain his masculine identity.

Kezilahabi's portrayal of Vera affirms Butler's (1990) theory of performativity. Butler attests that the construction of gender identity comprises the stylized repetition of acts, but not of an immutable and pre-discursive identity. Butler also points to the possibilities of gender transformation. These possibilities are usually found in the arbitrary relation between such acts, in the possibility of a different sort of repeating, in the breaking or subversive repetition of that style.

4.3 Females' Negative Masculinity: A threatened Males' World

Kezilahabi's portrayal of female protagonists reveals that women can contribute to traditional harmful versions of masculinity, just as men, and in doing so, they affect men's masculinity. He reinforces this argument through the depiction of Vera who appears to be violating the morals of an ideal society. Vera cheats on her husband; she sleeps with several men even before marriage (111). Kezilahabi illustrates Vera's deceitful behaviour through several instances while she is in secondary school, in college and at the national service. His use of figurative language projects Vera as obsessed with sleeping with men in these various institutions. She is called '*toa*' (giver) in secondary school to signify her act of easily giving her body to men and '*pijo*' (Peugeot car) to mean she could carry any man on her body (68).

Through Vera's description, we can argue that Kezilahabi affirms gender stereotypes that have surrounded the discourse of prostitution, which have often been used to define women as nasty characters when they engage themselves in multiple relations. However, he also informs us that Vera reverses conventional gender roles and approaches men instead of her being approached.

We also learn about her manipulation of men as she is depicted sleeping with other men but denies Dennis, her fiancée, sexual intercourse, pretending that she highly respects him (67). Whenever Dennis wants to sleep with her, she condemns him for being disrespectful and unfair to her. This accusation forces Dennis to often ask for her pardon for annoying and disrespecting her (68). In addition to this, Vera intimidates and undermines Dennis publically as she introduces him as a poor, small boy who has no problem: "*Hicho kiboy changu kinapita, hakina matata, masikini. Nakipenda sana*" (that is my small boy who has no problem, poor boy. I love him very much) (Kezilahabi, 1975:68). This portrays Vera as a masculine figure before Dennis whose failure to understand her cunning and repulsive behaviour makes him look foolish before other men, while his passivity highlights his feminine gender qualities.

By coding men, intimidating Dennis and even paying dowry for him later (69), Vera negates Dennis masculine status and relegates him into a humiliating effeminate position. According to Pierre Bourdieu (1998:22), "[the] worst humiliation for a man is to be turned into a woman". If we agree that a man has to pay bride price in the African tradition, we may thus argue that Vera has taken a masculine position and turned Dennis into woman. Furthermore, this gender role reversal affirms Butler's (1990) views where

she describes female and male bodies as possible site of subversion of normative gender roles.

This gender reversal that reveals Vera's masculinity is further portrayed in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*, when she rapes John, her husband's friend in her bedroom (72). She also invites John to stay in her house during her husband's absence. Vera does not even care about her daughter watching her perform sex with a lover. When John shows signs of fear of nasty behaviour, Vera assures him that her husband cannot do anything because he is very polite and understanding: "*Vera alimhakikishia (John) asiogope na hata Dennis akijua hana matata masikini*" (Vera assured John that he should not worry, even if Dennis knows about it, a poor man has no problem at all) (86). In this scene, Vera reverses masculine and feminine roles as she rapes a man and makes him a 'concubine' in her house. Vera, thus, assumes a masculine role while John embodies a feminine character. Moreover, the way Vera describes her husband to her lover, reveals how she undermines him. This description suggests that Vera controls her husband who is relegated to a feminine position in their marriage.

Vera and John's behaviour in this context affirm Butler's view of gender performances. Butler (1999) contends that gender can be performed and reenacted in a myriad of ways, even those that are against the heterosexual framework of gender embodiment. Further, in Salih (2002), Butler argues that the notion of an original or primary gender identity is often parodied within the cultural practices of drag, cross-dressing and the sexual stylization of masculine/ feminine identities.

Furthermore, Kezilahabi depicts Vera as a woman who rejects her feminine roles of wife and mother. She is portrayed as a discourteous and irresponsible wife and mother, whose deceitful behaviour makes her abuse her daughter by demonstrating a disgusting performance in her presence. Her sensual and immoral actions disqualify her from being a virtuous woman according to traditional norms. Vera, therefore, performs masculinity that is negative and disruptive. Her portrayal inverts the conventional definition of a woman and the behaviour expected of her by the patriarchal society. We learn more about Vera's rejection of conventional feminine roles through Kezilahabi's illustration as he depicts her as a woman who cannot take care of her domestic chores and keep her child clean: "*Vera hakuwajibika, alikuwa mvivu na mchafu. Hakusafisha vyombo wala nyumba. Hata mtoto wake alikuwa mchafu*" (Vera was irresponsible. She neither washed the dishes nor cleaned the house. Her daughter was dirty) (Kezilahabi, 1975:70).

Another factor that masculinizes women and feminizes men in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* is men's financial dependency. The narrator tells us that Vera used to send pocket money to Dennis when he was studying at Kivukoni College. She also pays dowry for him and prepares for a marriage (68). In addition, she takes good care of John, her lover, and buys him expensive shirts and caters for all basic needs (87). This implies that economic independence is an index of masculinity. It is economic power that gives Vera the means to alter her feminine role to a masculine one. Money, in this case, enables Vera to subvert patriarchal gender relations and undermine traditional notions of femininity and masculinity that assumes men as providers and women as dependents.

Kezilahabi's questioning of the conventional notions of masculinity and its fluidity is further laid bare through the act of decision-making in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*. Traditionally, a man has to make decisions for himself and his family. This role is inverted by Vera as we see her possessing power as she decides for herself and for her husband. Kezilahabi portrays Vera as a key decision-maker in the family even on issues regarding employment. Dennis lacks this power. We encounter him telling Tumaini to wait for his wife to decide whether he should be offered a job or not. We witness Vera's power in decision-making when she offers Tumaini a job and decides what type of a job he can do and his location (81). Moreover, Vera orders Dennis not to fire Tumaini from his job when Dennis realizes that he has impregnated his sister and ran away. Another instance that she displays this power is when she stops Dennis from visiting Tumaini at the hospital where he is admitted (103). This act explains more about the masculine position that Vera possesses in the house and before other men and the feminine position that Dennis occupies.

Further, Kezilahabi exposes how Vera's spirit of competition with men and revenge display her masculinity and how this affects men in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*. He reveals that Vera offers Tumaini a security job in bar areas as a strategy to punish him. She aims at diminishing and killing him. Her reasons include his interference in her relationship with John and as a consequence destroy his public image (88). Vera uses bar owners to assist her in accomplishing her mission of killing Tumaini. We see her acting as a leader of a group of gangsters that comprises a bar owner, a bar maid, and Makoroboi, the killer (91-92). She surreptitiously organizes and coordinates the whole process of kidnapping and killing Tumaini. Everything goes as planned except that Makoroboi does not kill

him. He just tortures him severely. He does not want to be jailed for murder (98). Tumaini ends up hospitalized. He suffers for a while but eventually recovers.

Vera's spirit of competition with men leads her to become the most dangerous person in the gangster team. She is depicted viciously threatening Makoroboi and other men for not accomplishing the task of killing Tumaini and gives them money and orders them to complete the job: "*Bwana Makoroboi chukua pesa hizo ukaniletee kichwa chake!*"(Mr Makoroboi, take this money and bring his head to me) (Kezilahabi, 1975: 98). Makoroboi refuses to do the job and condemns her for putting them into trouble, a situation that forces them to flee to another country for two years for their safety. Vera is annoyed by their refusal and swears to kill him (Tumaini) by herself: "*Basi nitamuua kwa mikono yangu mwenyewe*" (I will kill him by my own hands) (99).

Kezilahabi's detailed description of the killing mission depicts Vera as an extra-ordinary woman in a conventional patriarchal society who threatens and kills men. In her quarrel with gangsters, Vera shows her clear-mindedness, unbending will and manlike prowess that not only humiliates men in the gangster team but also embarrasses them as she sees them as incompetent in their assigned job. She condemns them for putting the group at risk by not killing Tumaini because they are evantually wanted by police as suspects in a crime. This portrayal displays Vera as a woman who performs negative masculinity; she ends up appearing as a dictator, criminal and murderer.

Moreover, the portrayal exposes Vera as a masculine woman and the humiliated and threatened men (the gangsters and Tumaini) as effeminate men. This scenario affirms Butler's view of gender being 'unnatural'. Butler (1990) claims that there is no necessary

relationship between one's body and one's gender. For her, gender is 'unnatural'. Her argument implies that it is not necessary for a male body to display traits that are normally considered 'masculine'. In this case, one may be a 'masculine' female or a 'feminine' male. This is what we witness in Vera's performances and the reaction of men she relates with.

Vera's negative masculinity performance is also demonstrated in a scene where she attempts to kill Tumaini so as to accomplish her mission. Kezilahabi depicts her going to Tumaini's house disguised in a *hijab* dress, carrying a knife. Despite the fact that Anastasia, Tumaini's wife recognizes her, Vera does not hesitate to confront Tumaini. She accuses him of kicking her lover out of his house and threatens to kick him out of the town as well. She swears to tarnish his name (107). When she fails to kill him, she runs quickly to her husband and informs him that Tumaini wanted to rape her.

Kezilahabi's description of Vera in this confrontation and her hypocritical behaviour divulges not only her masculinity, which is connected to power, but also her revolting and vulgar behaviour. Her life is full of lies. We witness her cunning and vulgar behaviour from several instances including the one in which she pretends to cry before her husband, accusing Tumaini for attempting to rape her. The husband however finds out the truth from Tumaini and his wife (108).

Through thecharacterization of Vera and those of the male personae that she relates with, we can argue that Kezilahabi deconstructs the conception of traditional masculinity and femininity in the African society by creating female and male characters with non-specific and ambiguous gender identities in the novel. Furthermore, his characters'

performances affirm that masculinity is not a fixed category and is therefore not solely located in male bodies as had been previously thought of by essentialists. As such, masculinity can also be performed by female bodies. In addition, Kezilahabi's portrayal of Vera, Dennis and John is a dramatization of masculinity and femininity as ephemeral conditions extant in gendered bodies.

The impermanence of masculinity and femininity in individuals' bodies is further emphasized by Kezilahabi through the portrayal of Dennis when he regains his conventional masculine traits and divorces Vera because of her adulterous behaviour (108). Dennis explains to Tumaini and his wife what drives him to divorce Vera. He reveals that Vera's continued revolt and deceitful behaviour had become bothersome to him and he had now become tired and sick of it. His joy of divorcing Vera is expressed by the narrator: "... *Aliwaambia kwa furaha kuwa amemfukuza mbwa. Alieleza visa vingi vya Vera toka harusi hadi wakati huo"* (He happily told them that he has kicked a dog out of his house. He told them how Vera troubled him for a very long time since they got married) (Kezilahabi, 1975:108).

What we see in Dennis' performance is what Butler describes as the inconsistency of gender. According to Butler, "…. what we take to be "real," what we invoke as the naturalized knowledge of gender is, in fact, a changeable and revisable reality" (Butler, 1999: xxiii). From Dennis' divorce action, we can deduce that he eventually regained his masculinity, which he has been repressing. In this instance, Dennis performs his masculinity as anticipated by the patriarchal society as normal. His reaction to Vera obliterates his previous passive and submissive character as well as Vera's arrogance and

aggressiveness. In this case, Vera's masculinity is seen as having been temporal and ephemeral as she can now no longer subject Dennis to it.

Furthermore, the use of metaphor "*mbwa*" (dog) explains how Dennis is fed up with his wife's behaviour to the extent of equating her to an animal. Kezilahabi uses the word 'dog' metaphorically to refer to a prostitute. It is a pejorative term that refers to a promiscuous behaviour.   Through Dennis' attitude towards his wife, Kezilahabi highlights how a discourteous wife can diminish a man's stature in a society. This situation suggests the significance of a man marrying a 'good and respectful' woman. It means that a man's masculinity is also judged by his wife's behaviour or actions.

The temporal state of Vera's masculinity and Dennis's femininity in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* emphasizes the argument about the fluidity, ambivalence and dynamism of gender as it seems to change according to circumstances. This state of gender is also noticed in Dennis' change of behaviour. Kezilahabi presents him beating his second wife, Bernadete who insults and accuses him of having an affair with another woman (121).

Kezilahabi's demonstration of masculinity as a fluid and dynamic subject in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* is further revealed through the portrayal of women characters who work as bar maids. Despite their striking differences with Vera in terms of respect to class, occupation, marital status and personality traits, these bar maids can also be categorized as modern women whose characters and personalities challenge the conventional patriarchal perceptions and perspectives of masculinity.

Kezilahabi depicts the bar maids conducting a meeting chaired by Fatuma in a bar. The agenda is on Tumaini and John, the new men in town who seem to have money. In their discussion they realize that Tumaini's financial status is good but John has nothing. His life depends on Tumaini (73). They, as such, strategize to get Tumaini's money and decide that any one of them can sleep with him as long as they get money to accomplish their project: building their house (74). In their meeting, they task Fatuma to continue having an affair with John and Hadija with Tumaini.

To accomplish their mission, Fatuma goes to live with John (76) but she decides to leave him immediately when she finds out that Tumaini's (John's benefactor) financial status has declined. She takes John's property with her and sells it to street vendors. When John and Tumaini follow her to African's Royal Bar, she threatens them for accusing her of being a thief. She scorns them: "*Mnanifahamu! Mnapoishiwa na pesa muwe mnakaa nyumbani*!" (Do you know me! When you are bankrupt you should stay home!) (82). Tumaini and John feel embarrassed and to avoid more humiliation, they decide to leave the place. After three days, they see John's clothes in the market but cannot take any measures to get them back.

Fatuma's boastfulness and her daring act of threatening men are indicative of masculine traits in a female body. She demonstrates her pride and self-confidence for what she has done. This brings to light her masculinity as she humiliates the two men who feel embarrassed and decide to leave her alone. Tumaini and John's humiliation feminizes them as they become inferior before her. This is affirmed by their decision to leave the

place so as to avoid being ashamed in public, since, to be publically ashamed is to lose one's masculinity.

From the bar maid's discussion about John's dependency (73), Kezilahabi dramatizes that money is a sign of success and power for one to be considered a man in the novel. This is evident also in Tumaini's decision when he asks John to go back to the village because he can no longer take care of him. He says: "*Nafikiri kwamba lazima sasa ufanye kazi. Itakuwa vigumu kwangu kuendelea kuishi kutunza mlevi*". (I think you should now start working. It will be difficult for me to keep supporting a drunkard) (Kezilahabi, 1975:100). Kezilahabi further expresses Tumaini's unwillingness to continue taking care of John when he writes: "*Amemlisha kama mtoto inatosha. Achukue pesa aende nyumbani kwao akafanye kazi huko*" (He has been feeding him like a child. It is enough. Let him take the money and go back home and work) (1975:105). This means that masculinity is inextricably linked to a man's economic status. It also stresses the role of money in shaping men's masculinity. John's case also validates the universal effects of hegemonic masculinity which creates pressure within men to achieve an ideal masculine status (Connell, 2000).

Weapons are the embodiment of violent models of masculinity, which, in turn, have broader societal ramifications. Kezilahabi illustrates how weapons enhance women's masculinity through the portrayal of Hadija. Hadija confronts Tumaini in the presence of his legal wife (85). She orders him to give her money for house rent and accuses him of not spending nights with her. To threaten him, she tells him about how she poisoned and killed her ex- husbands and how she then took everything and ran away. Tumaini gets

scared and is ready to give her money however, before he could do so, his wife intervenes and hits Hadija badly on her head with a piece of firewood. Tumaini and John try to assist Hadija but before they could do so, she gets up very fast and shoots Anastasia with a gun that she had hidden under her gown. Being empowered by a gun, Hadija threatens to kill Tumaini and John. She forces them to surrender, takes their money by force and runs away, leaving them crying in pain. Kezilahabi explains:

> *Tumaini na John walipoona Hadija ameondoka walilia kwa sauti wapate msaada kwa majirani. Majirani waliwakuta wote wakigalagala sakafuni. Waliwapeleka hospitalini* (Kezilahabi, 1975:85).

> When Tumaini and John realized that Hadija had left, they cried loudly for help. The neighbours found them rolling on the floor in pain. They took them to hospital.

In this confrontation, we see a woman performing a masculine role. She acts as an armed robber, threatens and attempts to kill others. She is proud of robbing men of their properties, manipulating and even killing them. The gun that Hadija uses can be seen as a phallic symbol of violence that enhances her masculinity. It terrifies men and makes them cry. Hadija takes the role of a man in what would be a normalized patriarchal set-up because of her coercive and violent performance. Men, in this case, are feminized and made impotent as they are left poor, humiliated and scared. From this scenario Kezilahabi has again subverted the conventional definition of masculinity as he reverses gender roles.

However, their individual behaviours represented by Hadija and Fatuma raises questions about this strategy as it exposes them as corrupt and disruptive to societal norms; robbing people of their property and even killing them. Kezilahabi condemns such masculine

performance through female and male characters that run away after their evil performances. We observe Hadija running away after robbing and torturing Tumaini and his wife (85). We also see Makoroboi and his accomplices accusing Vera of putting them into trouble and deciding to flee from their community for two years after attempting to kill Tumaini (98). Vera's divorce is also a sign of disapproval of these evil deeds. Kezilahabi, in this case, seems to affirm Butler's views on the issue of individuals' gender performances being controlled by the society's norms and ethos. Butler explains:

> …..gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence (Butler, 1990:33).

4.4 Conclusion

Kezilahabi's *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* deconstructs and undermines the configuration of masculinity that embraces the conventional masculine and feminine definitions and perceptions. Through his male and female characters, Kezilahabi has explicitly demonstrated that gender roles can be reversed and that masculinity is a position that can be occupied by both males and females. To illustrate this argument, he portrays female characters such as Vera (mama Resi), the bar maids: Hadija and Fatuma, who display masculine qualities such as aggression and arrogance. We have also seen how women can perform negative and disruptive masculinity that are not approved by the society through the portrayal of their characters. This is also true of the depiction of male characters. For example, Dennis, John and Tumaini are depicted as submissive and timid characters when they are before women.

Kezilahabi's portrayal enables us to understand his perception of masculinity as a contested category because of its mutable and ambivalent manifestations. The mutability and ambivalence is revealed through Kezilahabi's male and female characters who exhibit both gender qualities: feminine and masculine. In addition to individuals' occupying dual gender traits, that is, masculinity and femininity in the novel, Kezilahabi condemns masculinity that is disruptive and suggests its elimination.

CHAPTER FIVE

MASCULINITY REDEEMED: GENDERED VISION IN *NAGONA* AND *MZINGILE*

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines how *Nagona* and *Mzingile* present Kezilahabi's overarching vision of a gendered society. We observe how he interrogates, challenges and alters the conventional concept of hegemonic masculinity and gender relations in the two novels, and suggests a new way of imagining gender relations in a contemporary world. Through the representation of his female and male characters, Kezilahabi argues that conventional definitions of gender are no longer valid for the contemporary society because gender is not a static identity. He emphasizes the agency of women in the construction of masculinity and the importance of recognizing the dynamics of hegemonic masculinity. From his characters' representation, we see that in *Nagona* and *Mzingile*, masculinity and femininity are interdependent concepts because they complement each other. The novels affirm that masculinity is not independent and static. It is constructed within a specific socio-cultural and historical moment and changes accordingly.

Like the previous chapters, this chapter similarly adopts Robert Connell's (1990) and Judith Butler's (1995: 2005) notion of gender as a social construct and a performance. Connell and Butler both believe that gender is not a fixed, homogenous and innate construct but is rather fluid, relational, and contextual, changing and constantly being negotiated. According to Butler (1990), gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity

tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts. In *Nagona* and *Mzingile* we realize that gender is a fluid category; indeed, it is this fluidity that manifests a more dynamic notion of masculinity in the two novels than in his previous novels: *Kichwa Maji, Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo,* and *Gamba la Nyoka.*

5.2 Woman's Position in Building the Nation: From Tradition to Modernity

To understand Kezilahabi's overarching vision of gender in *Nagona* and *Mzingile*, it is important to briefly explain how he has dealt with the issue of gender relations in his previous novels: *Kichwa Maji, Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* and *Gamba la Nyoka*. In *Kichwa Maji* (1974), Kezilahabi dramatizes the construction of masculinity that is mainly determined by patriarchal ideology. He reveals that, although challenged by modernity through the emergence of Western ideology, education and religion, the traditional patriarchal ideology determines men's masculinity in the novel because no one could perform his masculinity outside the traditional patriarchal codes. We meet out women like Tegemea displaying their potential and prove to be hard working by owning houses, providing and protecting their families but their potential and contribution to society are undermined by the patriarchal system and its dominating and subordinating ideology.

Women like Tegemea are not recognized by the traditional patriarchal society. The patriarchal system ignores their efforts. Instead of embracing and lauding them, the patriarchal hegemony intimidates and threatens them. In this novel, a hegemonic patriarchal society maintains a traditionalized and normalized woman's status quo. This suggests that a woman is not expected to be anything else but her true feminine self - always, depending on men. However, this rigid patriarchal system victimizes both men and women as we see men like Kalia killed for his negative masculine performances and

his brother Kazimoto ending up killing himself after realizing that he is the source of his family's tragedy.

In *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (1975), we encounter a young generation that is influenced by Western ideology, challenging the rigid patriarchal system that exists in *Kichwa Maji*. The effect of this challenge is realized through the young generation's negative masculine performances which in turn harms to the society. In this novel, the defiance of patriarchal ideology and structure is well depicted as conventional gender roles are challenged by women like Vera and bar maids whose negative masculine performances become distractive and unacceptable in the society.

In the last chapters of *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*, Kezilahabi introduces the subject of *Ujamaa* ideology (115-7). Although not broadly demonstrated like in *Gamba la Nyoka* (1979), we see how politicians and the District Commissioner are introducing this dominant ideology, *Ujamaa,* to people, endeavoring to convince them to build *Ujamaa* villages. These government leaders emphasize to the people the benefits that they will get if they leave their traditional structures and shift to *Ujamaa* villages. Kezilahabi reveals how the introduction of *Ujamaa* ideology affects individuals like Tumaini, who struggled to earn land and financial income for a better life. He depicts these individuals being ridiculed by government leaders in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* (115-7). The leaders call them traitors and order them to surrender their land and properties to the government, for communal sharing. Apart from those who are forced to surrender their land and business properties, Kezilahabi depicts people expressing their anxieties of leaving their traditional structures and moving to the new settlements (117-118).

This situation becomes intolerable to men like Tumaini who cannot bear to lose their masculinity easily (120). Submitting their land and business properties to the government implies diminishing their masculinity because their respect and recognition in the society will drastically wane. Their family status as well as the community will be devalued (129). Kezilahabi depicts Tumaini as confused and frustrated, and this anguish leads him to kill the District Commissioner (128). Kezilahabi reveals the consequence of Tumaini's act. We observe the power of the government over individuals like Tumaini whose negative masculine performances are provoked by the government's decision over their properties; grabbing their land and business assets. When Tumaini decides to express his resistance by killing the government leader, he also ends up being killed (131). This portrayal depicts a masculine nation that imposes its power over the governed individuals who have struggled to earn their social and economic status by working very hard (126). It reveals how the nation has totally emasculated men like Tumaini.

It is important to note that Kezilahabi ends the two novels, *Kichwa Maji* and *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo,* in a tragic way. We witness his protagonists, Kazimoto and Tumaini dying at the end of the novels. However, Tumaini's death in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* is different from Kazimoto's in *Kichwa Maji*. Kazimoto's death signifies his cowardice, which expresses his failure to endure his own evil deeds. The author explains what Kazimoto wrote in his letter before committing suicide:

> *Alijiua kwa pisto… alijiua kwa sababu hawezi kuzaa kizazi kibaya. Mtu yeyote asilaumiwe kwa kifo chake. Aliungama kumuua mdogo wake ingawa hakumgusa…* (Kezilahabi, 1974:195).

He shot himself with a gun…he killed himself because he could not bear producing a bad generation. No one should be blamed for his death. He confessed to killing his brother although he did not touch him…

Kazimoto's death challenges his masculinity and questions the rigid patriarchal system that favours men in the society but ends up disrupting the society. Tumaini's death, on the other hand, is a heroic death and enforces his masculinity as Kezilahabi depicts him feeling proud of killing himself and leaves it up to the future generation to decide whether he is a coward or a 'real man'. Tumaini tells Dennis to tell his family:

Waambie nitakufa. Lakini nitakufa kiume. Sitatoa hata chozi moja. Waambie sina masikitiko kwa jambo nililotenda. Nitakufa na heshima yangu. Kama nilifanya kosa vizazi vijavyo vitaamua (Kezilahabi, 1975:130).

Tell them I will die. But I will die as a real man. I will not cry. I do not regret what I did. I will die with my respect. I leave it to the future generation to decide if I made a mistake.

From Tumaini's assertion, Kezilahabi suggests that individuals' or alternative masculinity cannot exist as long as the dominant masculinity does. In the portrayal of government leaders, Kezilahabi expresses how the government, as a state apparatus, plays a masculine role in building a new nation. However, the killing of the District Commissioner signifies the need for elimination of hegemonic masculinity that is oppressive and suggests a change in gender relations. This is highlighted in the portrait of Tumaini who does not want to submit his propertiy to the government and, in return diminish, his manhood. His pride in killing himself and his call for the future generation to judge his death challenges further the dominant masculinity and emphasizes a need for rethinking the conventional perceptions of gender. This suggests how the young generation is determined to bring changes and build a new nation. This determination and

the urge for change, is further encountered in *Gamba La Nyoka* where the *Ujamaa* ideology is largely implemented.

Gamba la Nyoka demonstrates how the young generation participated in bringing about the changes that are anticipated by the author in *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*. Although some men, particularly the elders, refused to leave their original homes, the *Ujamaa* government in *Gamba la Nyoka* decides to use forceful methods to move them. Kezilahabi depicts constant confrontations during the process of moving people to *Ujamaa* villages. This portrayal of building a new nation through *Ujamaa* villages in *Gamba la Nyoka* reveals intra-gender masculinities as we observe men bullying other men, in several instances, to ensure the maintenance of their masculinity. We see the Kisole men confronting the Bucho men and government soldiers to resist the *Ujamaa* villages and in turn, the DC, Mambosasa and Mamboleo are depicted bullying Kisole men for disobeying government orders. We also encounter a Catholic priest, Padre Madevu, confronting Mambosasa and Mamboleo when they question him about misleading people on the concept of *Ujamaa* villages. The DC favours Padre Madevu because of his rank in the society and punishes the two young men. This intra-male masculinity expresses how *Ujamaa* ideology has deconstructed the traditional patriarchal structures by constructing a new nation.

The presence of women is noticed and acknowledged by the new government as they are seen participating in building *Ujamaa* villages. It is however important to note that although the author's depiction reveals the active participation of women in economic and military activities, their participation is still minimal. This is particularly laid bare in

the case of Kisole village where the elders practice a rigid patriarchal ideology. For instance, the Kisole men order women to stay home when the elders call for a meeting. We also do not see the Kisole women being involved in the ambush; instead, we only find the women participating on the government side through the *Ujamaa.*

Kezilahabi highlights the need for female inclusion in building the *Ujamaa* nation. He demonstrates how the government sets up strategies to ensure that the country becomes a *Ujamaa* nation. Through adult education, we see people changing their minds and accepting to live according to *Ujamaa* principles. In this process we also see women involved in adult education class and actually given space to express their views. In the fields, women are fully involved in production activities and they are depicted taking care of their families and controlling them when men fail to do so.

Different from *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*, *Gamba la Nyoka* demonstrates significant changes in gender relations. Through the portrayal of elders like Mzee Chilongo, Kezilahabi expresses how the traditional patriarchal structure has been destabilized so as to cope with contemporary notions of masculinity. The inclusion of women in building *Ujamaa* villages in *Gamba la Nyoka* indicates Kezilahabi's vision of new gender relations in building a new nation. Kezilahabi, in this case, emphasizes that for a society to build a new nation, changes are inevitable. He thus calls for the interrogation of the hegemonic ideologies:

> *Ukale unastahili kuchunguzwa; lakini haudumu milele...hivyo ndivyo Tanzania ilivyojengwa...hivyo ndivyo ilivyojiendeleza na ilivyojinyambua. Hivyo ndivyo ilivyo Tanzania ya leo labda ijayo inavyojengwa.* (Kezilahabi, 1979: 158).

> The past is worth being studied; but it does not last forever…that is how Tanzania is built…that is how it developed and stretched…this is how Tanzania is and may be the future one is built this way.

Kezilahabi's statement suggests that a new nation can only be built if the conventional gender relations are interrogated, destabilized and complemented by the contemporary ones that allow complementarity. This means masculinity has to be complemented by femininity to suit gender relations in a contemporary world.

5.3 Females' (De)construction of Males' Masculinity in the Project of Building the New Nation

Kezilahabi's overarching vision of gender is clearly demonstrated in *Nagona* (1990) and *Mzingile* (1991) where he presents a more fluid notion of gender relations by demonstrating extensively how women play a great role in constructing men's masculinity. He tries to defy the stereotype of hierarchical traditional model, and presents an alternative approach to interpret gender relations. This alternative approach broadens our understanding of a contemporary definition of gender. It foregrounds what it means to be masculine and feminine and who gets to embody masculinity and femininity. In the two novels, Kezilahabi demonstrates the ways in which masculinity and femininity have become more flexible and interdependent than they appeared previously in *Kichwa Maji, Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* and *Gamba la Nyoka*.

Affirming Butlerian theory of performativity, Kezilahabi does not perceive hegemonic masculinity and gender relations as rigid, stable and unchanging in the two novels but he sees it as a fluid space constantly under construction and reconstruction. According to Butler:

> Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts (Butler, 1990:179).

Kezilahabi affirms Butler's views by destabilizing the regular conventional notion of power in a traditional system whereby leadership positions are assumed to be occupied by men only. He depicts both women and men occupying administrative positions in the novels. Through the portrayal of central male and female characters in *Nagona* and *Mzingile,* a woman is portrayed as a powerful leader who performs the duties of a director. In *Nagona* for instance, a woman is the immediate assistant to the king and she gives orders and directions to men who are in search of Paa, the saviour of the nation (29). This woman familiarizes these men with the environment and informs them about the consequences of failing to perform the tasks assigned to them. She tells them how to deal with the King, the girls in the castle and the Paa herself. She encourages them when they seem to lose hope. This woman's depiction illustrates how a woman contributes in constructing men's masculinity because it is her directives and the courage she gives to these men that strengthen them and enhance their masculinity. Implicitly, she contributes in building a new nation, for this Paa is meant to go and free these men's nation from annihilation.

A pregnant woman is another female figure who holds political power in the community. The government in her community trusts her and assigns her the duty of keeping and protecting community assets which hold the community power: a bow and arrows. Babu tells Mimi: "…*Lakini (wazee) hawatakupa (mikuki na upinde) wenyewe mkononi.*

Utavipata wakati fulani na mahali fulani (kwa mwanamke mjamzito)...” (But (the elders)

will not hand them them to you (a bow and arrows). You will get them at a certain time

and a certain place (from the pregnant woman)…(Kezilahabi, 1990:12). We later see the

pregnant woman giving a bow and arrows to Mimi;

> *"Vyote hivyo (mikuki na upinde) viliandaliwa kwa ajili yako. Vichukue na ufuate nyayo hizo. Unachotakiwa ni kumshika huyo paa mikononi, umjue….Huo upinde na mshale ni ishara yako. Usivitumie ovyo…Nenda . Fuata nyayo. Nitaitunza mishumaa isizimike mpaka utakaporudi”* (Kezilahabi, 1990:25).
>
> Those (a bow and arrows) were prepared for you. Take them and follow Paa's footsteps. What you are supposed to do is to have the Paa in your hands, you have to know her…the bow and the arrows are your identity. Do not misuse them…Go. Follow the footsteps. I will take care of the two candles to make sure they do not blow out until you come back.

This depiction demonstrates that men are not solely performing their masculinity but they

do it under women's support. Both, the girl in the castle and the pregnant woman in

Nagona, guide and give knowledge to men, whichenable them to achieve their individual

and societal goals. The fact that the intention of the journey is to seek freedom that can

only be achieved by bringing the savior of the nation home, it is evident that women in

this context perform the masculine role of building the nation and assist men in

constructing their own masculinity.

The female masculine performance is also observed in *Mzingile* where a nameless

woman is expected to serve and rebuild the community by bringing back humanity, hope

and peace. Although people kill her, the author mentions that she was the only hope of

the community and people believed in her. The woman's death worries the elders and

brings sadness to the community (12). The elders' anxiety suggests that the woman's

presence is important to the nation. This implies that men trusted and depended on her. It is the death of this woman that spurs Mimi's journey to the mountain to inform Mzee about the death of a second savior.

From Kezilahabi's portrayal of his female characters we can argue that the body is a neutral surface onto which social constructions are placed. Our argument affirms Butler's notion of gender when she regards the body as a mere object that can be transformed in the presence of societal discourses. The process of acting out these discourses and repeating them is what enforces their naturalness. In *Nagona*'s case, leadership skills can be attached to both female and masculine bodies and these bodies may change depending on one context or culture. This is revealed through the female characters, Paa and the nameless pregnant woman who perform various tasks in different contexts. From this understanding, female and male bodies can both be culturally and politically constructed.

The idea of a body being an object that can change according to societal discourses is further illustrated by Kezilahabi through his portrayal of the pregnant mother. Kezilahabi depicts this female character as a woman who displays multiple roles that are influenced by her being a woman and being responsible for the protection of community. We see a pregnant woman in *Nagona* performing her essential feminine role of motherhood; giving birth to a child but in doing so she also performs a masculine role. The child she is carrying symbolically elevates the power of this mother as she is carrying and protecting the hero of the community, who is also expected to free the community from massive problems so as to rebuild the ruined community (24). We thus recognize her first, as a

female and then as a leader: she "comes into existence as a person and she then acts" (Connell, 2000, 12).

The case of a woman playing multiple roles and displaying her feminine position is also brought out in *Mzingile* where a woman is not only playing a leading and a protecting role, but also serving him. Kezilahabi depicts a woman carrying a water gourd throughout the journey and offers Mimi water to drink and wash his face (7). She also uses her *khanga* to prepare Mimi's bed. In this case, a woman is portrayed as a female character who performs what are assumed to be predominantly feminine roles such as serving her husband, and masculine roles such as freeing and protecting her country from problems. This portrayal demonstrates that problems of the society have given women a new status and recognition, because they have to perform their gender according to the circumstances. They have to be arrogant and aggressive when the situation forces them and retain their femininity when it is necessary to do so. This portrayal affirms how gender roles have become more flexible in *Nagona* and *Mzingile*.

In *Nagona* and *Mzingile*, female characters are not the only ones who challenge male power but also men. As Mimi travels for the purpose of freeing the community from massive problems, he encounters many tests and trials, both physical and mental, before returning to his homeland. The King gives Mimi and the four men he meets on the way three difficult tasks that they must perform and pass in order to get the Paa in *Nagona*. These tasks include moving the mountains, tilling a dry piece of land, and retrieving the King's lost pipe from a distant place (29). These challenges motivate Mimi and the four men to keep moving and endure, no matter the circumstances. These struggles are important to men as they help them to prove and maintain their masculinity. The

important thing to note here is that though these men attempt to maintain power, they do not escape the feminine influence that strengthens their masculinity.

Through Mimi's journey Kezilahabi reveals further the power of the woman in guiding, controlling and assisting a man to maintain his masculinity. This journey depicts the woman in the fore throughout, while Mimi remains behind. Traditionally, a man is expected to be leading a woman because he is assumed to be fearless, brave and confident therefore he can protect a woman in case of danger. On Mimi's journey, a woman takes this masculine role and reverses the traditional definition of gender roles. Mimi acknowledges this situation when he says:

> *Miaka ilipita bila kupunguza umbali kati yetu (mwanamke akiwa mbele). Tulipumzika tulipochoka. Usiku na mchana. Safari iliendelea hivi hadi tulipofika mahali palipokuwa na njia panda* (Kezilahabi, 1991:24).
>
> Many years passed without reducing our distance (the woman at the front). We rested when we were tired. Day and Night. The journey continued this way until we reached a junction.

This inversion of gender roles suggests that the woman has crossed the bounds of femininity, leading men on the way and protecting them. Leading a man the entire journey implies that this woman is brave and confident. Furthermore, since Mimi journey intends to free the community from massive problems, the woman in this case plays the role of leading a man when struggling for national freedom. Mimi and the nation totally depend on her. This portrayal affirms Butler's views on female masculinity. According to Butler:

> "[Women] maintain the power to reflect or represent the 'reality' of the self-grounding postures of the masculine subject, a power which, if withdrawn, would break up the foundational illusions of the masculine

subject position . . . women must become, must 'be' (in the sense of 'posture as if they were') precisely what men are not and, in their very lack, establish the essential function of men" (1990: 45).

In Kezilahabi's depiction, the woman appears masculine as she displays the dominant masculine qualities such as strength, bravery and competitiveness. These qualities lack in Mimi. The woman challenges the conventional masculine subject position. In this context, the woman complements what lacks in Mimi's masculinity and together, they achieve their goal. This depiction therefore emphasizes that femininity complements masculinity.

Kezilahabi further demonstrates woman's power over men through the portrayal of Paa, Mimi and the four men on their way home from the castle in *Nagona*. Paa takes the leadership role as soon as they leave the castle and starts to impose her power over the men, who are depicted celebrating their success of winning Paa and taking her home. These men count themselves as national heroes. However, Paa does not allow them to express their excitement at their achievement. When they try to ignore her and continue praising themselves, she calls them liars. She accuses them of making up stories (34) and tells them to remain quiet and follow her instructions (35). They obey and remain silent until they reach their destinations. Paa's performance over these men illustrates her power and control. She shuts the men down, mutes them, controls their feelings and deflates their bloated ego by calling them liars.

 In this episode Paa limits men's freedom of speech and their independence. Her character and performance defies the traditional concept of patriarchy whereby men are expected to always dominate, oppress and exploit women. In this depiction, Kezilahabi

reverse this gender hegemony and reveals that women too can sometimes aggressively lead and control men.

Kezilahabi gives more evidence on how a man's masculinity can be determined by female masculinity. He illustrates the way a man operates under a woman's control so as to accomplish his goal. For instance Mimi admits that a woman often controls him as overtly (re)presented in *Mzingile,* and he has to obey her instructions. He states:

> *Kwa mkono alinionyesha mlima...halafu haraka akageuka akaanza kukimbia...Mimi pia nilijikuta nakimbia...*(Kezilahabi,1991:9) *aliniashiria kwa kidole nimfuate. Niliamka...Aliongoza njia…*(56) *Nilifanya kama alivyonielekeza... 'Sasa nifuate'… Nilimfuata.. Aliniongoza hadi bondeni … 'maji hayo hapo. Yaoge'. Nilianza kuyaoga...* (63)… *Aliniongoza hadi kwenye kibanda* (64)...*Amka twende kwenye chemichemi. Nilitii…* (68)

> Using her hand she showed me a mountain… she then turned quickly and started to run…I found myself running as well…Using her finger she gave me a sign to follow her…I did what she instructed me… 'Now follow me'…I followed her…She led me to the valley 'Here is the water. Bathe'…I started bathing…She led me to the hut… 'Let us go to the spring water'. I obeyed…

The woman's instructions and Mimi's responses above reveal a woman's masculine position and Mimi's femininity. This portrayal affirms Butler's idea of gender that reminds us that "[g]ender is always a doing," it is not something one *is*; it is something one *does*, an act, or more precisely, a sequence of acts (1990:25).

Kezilahabi further illustrates the importance of a woman in Mimi's life when he portrays him as a man who is ignorant of important things while the woman seems to know a lot. We learn this through a number of events in *Mzingile*. For instance, Mimi forgets his own house while the woman recognizes it and shows it to him (62). He also fails to recognize his wife until she proves to him that she is the one he has been with (63). This

explains the extent to which this man's world relies on this woman. His ignorance

enhances the woman's masculinity because it gives her power to make decisions for him.

Mimi's lack of knowledge is also revealed through the portrayal of his and the woman's

conversations in the episode in which they burn the ruined church and mosque. Mimi

asks her many questions and relies on her decisions. In this performance, they burn the

Bible, Quran and an old dictionary, but before they burn them, Mimi asks about the

significance of the books and her views on their function in the world. He asks:

> *'Tutafanya nini navyo?' Nilimuuliza mwenzangu.*
> *'Vitabu vyote hivi sasa hivi havina maana. Kinachojengeka juu ya kikuukuu si kipya'*
> *Utasema nini juu yetu sisi na ulimwengu? 'Sisi tumetakasika pamoja na ulimwengu huu tuliomo. Mvua zilionyesha zilifanya kazi hiyo. Sisi ni watu wapya ingawa bado tunazo kumbukumbu za ulimwengu uliopita. Tusiruhusu kumbukumbu hizo kututawala'* (68-69).

> 'What will we do with them (the Bible, Quran and dictionary)?' I asked my companion.
> 'These books are now meaningless. A new thing cannot build on the old (foundation).'
> What are you going to say about us and the world? 'We are cleansed together with the world that we live in. the rains have done that task. We are new although we have the memories of the past world. Let us not allow those memories to rule over us.'

This conversation portrays the woman as active and analytical, while the man on the

other hand is rendered as irrational and inchoate. The woman, however, is delineated as

domineering and her ideas dominate their discussion and actions. The recurrence of

Mimi's dependency confirms that the woman is more powerful than him. This is

consistent with Butler's theory of performativity that avers that "performative acts are

forms of authoritative speech: most performatives, for instance, are statements that, in the

uttering, also perform a certain action and a binding power" (Butler, 1993:225).

Kezilahabi presents a similar image of an intelligent and competent woman who exhibits multiple talents in *Nagona*. Through this woman Kezilahabi defies the conventional definition of masculinity and femininity that assumes men are always confident and competent. She challenges men in what are conventionally called men's games. Kezilahabi enables us to see the woman's ability when she competes with men in *bao* (mancala game). Before they start the game, the King reminds Mimi that Paa is very competent in this game and no one in the Kingdom has ever defeated her (33). *Bao* is a traditional mancala board game that is normally played by men. It is a very complex game and needs one to be very strategic to win it. This portrayal of Paa challenges an essentialist's perception of a woman that assumes that women are not intelligent and competent.

Something important to note in this portrayal is that a woman's competition in *bao* is crucial in constructing men's masculinity. In this case a man's masculinity is attained through winning or losing the game. This means the only way they can take this saviour home or to free their nation from disasters is to win the game. Kezilahabi, in this instance, insinuates that a man's masculinity is determined by cultural practices. Winning the game here indicates a man's victory and elevates his masculinity while defeat effeminates him. This projection of gender affirms Butler's notion of gender as she points out, "the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence" (Butler, 1990: 34).

Kezilahabi offers another illustration of how a woman becomes a factor in the (de)construction of man's masculinity. He depicts Mimi's attempts to perform his masculine role as a husband failing because Paa does not allow him to do so. She challanges him to a wrestling match as a prerequisite to sexual intercourse. This imperative becomes a major challenge for Mimi as Paa throws him during the wrestling match. Despite Mimi's struggle to win against Paa, he ends up getting hurt and loses the match. Mimi is annoyed and irritated by being defeated for a woman and intends to fight like a man: *"Sasa nilitaka kuonyesha uhodari wangu wa kiume"* (I wanted to show my manly competence) (Kezilahabi, 1990:37) but Paa defeats him.

Wrestling, like *bao,* is a primal men's game. Arguably, Paa's ability to compete and defeat men in what are predominantly perceived as male games suggests a rethinking of essentialist masculine and feminine categorization. Through this portrayal, Kezilahabi symbolically challenges the conventional idea that men have power over women's bodies and can freely use their masculinity for sexual conquest but in this case we see Mimi failing to quench his sexual desire because Paa does not allow him. In this context, Mimi appears weak and inferior in contrast to Paa who is portrayed as strong and confident, active and superior. Kezilahabi's portrayal of Paa affirms that "gender reality is created through sustained social performances" (Butler, 1990:180). Through several instances we witness that female masculinity indeed constructs males' masculinity.

Further, through Kezilahabi's portrayal of Paa we are made to understand that females do not only contribute in constructing men's masculinity by enhancing their courage and patriotism in building the new nation but they also become important in validating man's

masculinity, which is actually connected to their sexual potency. Since sexual access to women's bodies invest men with power, the female rejection of male conjugal right poses a threat to male power. The threat signifies that women are controllers of men's sexual roles, a state that challenges men in marriages or sexual relationship. A woman who manages to remove herself from the ties of sexual contracts like Paa, places herself outside of male power and eliminates the link between the female body and men's access to power. By doing so, she becomes a controller of her own access to sexual power and affects man's masculinity. We see how Mimi is frustrated after failing to assert his power over Paa's body. His anxiety and frustration offer a clear example of female masculinity's influence on the construction of men's masculinity.

5.4 Women's Role in Men's Downfall

In *Nagona*, Kezilahabi also shows that a woman can help a man to restore lost masculinity. He illustrates this point through the depiction of Mimi when he loses Paa because of his personal interests. He follows Paa's orders to fulfil his own desire and fails to focus on his nation's mission to bring the savior home so as to free his nation from disasters. By blowing out the candle that he was warned not to, Mimi loses the stature of a national savior (38). This way he is seen as a coward since he betrays himself and the community that had put its trust on him. He has lost his dignity and what would most probably define him as a hero. Through the depiction of Mimi, Kezilahabi seems to suggest that credibility and stability are important traits in maintaining a man's masculinity. Again, it is a woman that legitimates his masculine status.

Symbolically, Mimi's failure to control Paa signifies his failure to maintain the freedom that he has struggled to achieve. This means the nation has failed to achieve the freedom it has been longing for. And this is caused by the incompetent leader who has lost his sense of patriotism because of personal selfish interests. Linking this idea to *Ujamaa* ideology, Kezilahabi emphasizes that the nation can only achieve its total freedom if individuals privilege the interests of the nation and not their own selfish interests. It is in this regard that sense of commitment and patriotism become pertinent in constructing man's masculinity and in the very project of building the new nation.

From a gender perspective, Kezilahabi affirms that a man can only maintain his masculinity if he can overcome the challenges he encounters. In this case, Mimi fails the test of masculinity because he loses Paa and only regains his lost masculinity with the support of the woman. We encounter the pregnant woman encouraging him after losing Paa (38). She assures him that they have another chance and considers Mimi's downfall as a prerequisite for the creation of a space for a new leader. This space gives room to the new child she is carrying, who symbolizes a new beginning and continuity. Although Mimi has failed to rescue his community, this woman intends to do it through the child she is carrying, who is the second savior (62). The implication of the pregnant woman's performance in this case also insinautes that women are not only expected to perform essential reproductive sex role such as giving birth but also perform masculine roles like nurturing leaders of the community.

From the portrayal of Mimi and the pregnant woman we realize that during the time of restoration of the lost freedom and/or men's masculinity, Kezilahabi clearly demonstrates

how females play a great role in restoring the lost freedom/masculinity. This means that to be masculine in a nation where women are inclusive largely means to be flexible and accommodative of feminine performances. This means that in the contemporary society, it is important to allow more flexible sexual boundaries than would be expected in a traditional setting.

From the foregoing discussion it is obvious that building a new nation requires mutual relationship and understanding between men and women. It is important to note that the pregnant woman, who is trying to restore Mimi's masculinity, is the same woman who gave him the tools and conditions that were to assist him on his journey. After losing Paa, which signifies his downfall, the pregnant woman does not leave him to his own designs; but, assists him to regain his masculinity. It is this woman who suggests an alternative way of rescuing the nation after the initial failure. From this portrayal, it is clearly apparent that the woman is a key actor in the deconstruction and reconstruction of Mimi's masculinity.

The importance of the interdependence of masculinity and femininity is also mentioned in *Mzingile*. Kezilahabi illustrates this when Mimi and the woman agree to be part of their venture on the basis of mutual understanding (65). Different from the wrestling match in *Nagona* that makes Paa run away, in this particular case the wrestling match is a friendly one: "*Tulianza mieleka na tulipoangushana tulikumbatiana*" (We started wrestling but when we fell down we embraced each other) (Kezilahabi, 1991:65). We however note that, it is the woman who initiates this relationship as we see her instructing Mimi to bathe in order to cleanse himself so that they can understand each other better.

The act of cleansing Mimi's body symbolically means disabusing him of deeply held notions of gender which make him assume that there are distinct gender roles. In this portrayal Kezilahabi reveals that Mimi and his wife perceive gender differently and suggests that unless they think the same, they cannot have a mutual understanding. Kezilahabi illustrates this position metaphorically through Mimi's body which had dark spots but now glitters like a woman's body after bathing; this implies a transformation in him. After this transformation, the woman minimizes the distance she kept throughout the journey and allows Mimi to come closer. Mimi's transformation affirms the possibilities of gender transformation that Butler contends. According to Butler:

> The possibilities of gender transformation are to be found precisely in the arbitrary relation between such acts, in the possibility of a failure to repeat, a de-formity, or a parodic repetition that exposes the phantasmatic effect of abiding identity as a politically tenuous construction (Butler, 1990:179).

After Mimi's transformation, we note a firm bond between him and the woman. They perform everything together: they wash and carry one another (64) and start putting in place strategies of building a new nation together. They both agree to create a new nation, forget the past and ensure that the new world remains clean (65). Kezilahabi illustrates this mutual relationship further in a metaphorical way as he depicts them walking across the valley, climbing mountains, holding hands and playing games together. They teach each other new songs. Kezilahabi terms this song as the song of a century (65). This depiction emphasizes that a new nation is built through combining the efforts of men and women.

Through the relationship between female and male characters in *Nagona* and *Mzingile*, the author suggests reformulation of the concept of gender relations and hegemonic masculinity by demonstrating how females play a significant role in constructing man's masculinity. The portrayal reveals Kezilahabi's ultimate vision of gender. He seems to posit that the only way to build a new nation is to revisit gender relations and neutralize hegemonic ideologies. This means conventional gender theories have to shift to suit the contemporary world because gender is not static. It is socially and culturally determined and changes according to societal change.

5. 5 Woman: The Icon of the Nation

In *Nagona* and *Mzingile* Kezilahabi presents a close relationship between the nation and women. He describes a woman's pride as a nation's pride and thus, a woman's insults are the nation's insults. This means there is a relationship also between a hegemonic nationalism and hegemonic masculinity, and both reinforce each other. In the two novels we see the nation setting roles for men and women. A woman is represented as a mother and the nation itself. As a mother she protects the nation as we see the pregnant mother carrying and protecting a child who is expected to be the second savior of the nation in *Nagona*. She also protects community assets that assist Mimi to bring the savior home. As the main savior, Paa is the nation's protector as she is expected to free the nation from annihilations. On the other hand, Paa is protected by men because her existence assures the stability of the nation.

Similarly, in *Mzingile*, the woman is portrayed as a savior and hence a protector of the nation. As such when men insult and eventually kill her (12), the nation is also insulted as we see it suffering from massive problems associated with her death. Kezilahabi reveals

how people suffer because of the misfortune they have caused. In *Nagona* and *Mzingile*, Kezilahabi affirms that the nation is comprised of females and males whose "performativity" constructs not only their own gender identities but the identity of the entire nation as well. Similarly, a gendered nation constructs females and males' gender. *Ujamaa* ideology and building the new nation in Tanzania have therefore changed the notions of masculinity and femininity as well.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the way female masculinity's influence the shifting definitions of hegemonic masculinity and gender relations. We have discovered that female masculinity acts as a catalyst in constructing male masculinity. Through the portrayal of female and male characters in *Nagona* and *Mzingile* Kezilahabi's overarching vision of gender is revealed. He seems to argue that *Ujamaa* ideology and the project of building a new Tanzania have altered our understanding of the notions of masculinity and femininity as well. He calls for a review of the conventional notions of gender because some do not suit the contemporary perspectives of gender performances. Kezilahabi has helped us to understand the complexity and function of gender relations in Tanzania. He has enabled us to understand the connection between masculinity and femininity and how they complement each other in the project of building a new nation. Kezilahabi appears to suggest that for a country to build a new nation and ensure materialization of *Ujamaa* ideology and principles, the hegemonic ideologies and gender relations have to be tampered with and then be reformed. For him, masculinity has to be tempered with the malleability of femininity.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Conclusion

The analysis of Kezilahabi's novels: *Kichwa Maji, Gamba la Nyoka, Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*, *Nagona* and *Mzingile* has revealed that masculinity is not static but a fluid subject. It is constructed within a specific socio-cultural and historical moments and changes according to circumstances. There are complications and contradictions in defining masculinity as it changes according to circumstances. The study has demonstrated that women have a considerable role in constructing men's masculinity. It has shown the ways in which women often surpassed men and encouraged bravery and patriotism in men. Anchoring our analysis on Connell's perspective of masculinity as a performed social construct and Butler's idea of the performative aspect of gender, the novels have affirmed that masculinity, just as much as femininity, is a social construct and not a biological male trait. It is also a position that both men and women can occupy.

The construction of masculinity in Kezilahabi's novels is deeply connected with individuals' ideologies, like Western and patriarchal ideologies. For instance, to be masculine in the modern era, one has to largely copy the modern life. On the other hand, in traditional patriarchal societies, men have to conform to traditional laws and customs and those who fail to do so, are rejected by the society. We note that, the novels have become a site of contestation where Western culture conflict with African culture, the younger generation contradicts the older one, and those who live in urban areas contradict

those living in the country side. These aspects: culture, generation and cosmopolitanism are fluid contradictory structures and influence the definition of men.

Further, Kezilahabi presents the notion of intra-gender masculinities whereby men mistreat other men to ensure perpetuation of dominant masculinity. This situation is revealed through the portrayal of patriarchal, political and religious leaders who impose their masculinity over other men in the novels. This presentation of masculinity has demonstrated that power is the key attribute in (de)constructing and (re)defining men's masculinity. In the novels, state institutions such as schools and the armed forces and religious centers like churches are sites for negotiation of masculinity and play a great role in determining the hierarchies and structures of masculinity.

The other significant issue revealed from the analysis is Kezilahabi's rejection of the performance of masculinity that is against accepted social norms because it does not enhance societal morals. He proposes that those who go against society's morals should be punished. Through his novels Kezilahabi suggests that men should not use education, position and modernity to impose their masculinity over others and destroy morals and values of the society. He also condemns patriarchal ideologies that perpetuate negative masculinity that disrupts society and suggests its elimination. From the performances by his characters, Kezilahabi sees masculinity as a social-cultural fact though constructed. He is more sympathetic to rationalism, objectivity and performances that seem to support and enhance socially and culturally accepted.

Another idea that is observed in the analysis of Kezilahabi's novels is the ways in which he has challenged and neutralized the conventional patriarchal ideology and the definition of conventional masculinity through the reversal and reinvention of gender roles. His representation of gender destabilizes and deconstructs the conventional notions of gender roles or sexual identities that are determined by dominant sexual ideology. This representation interrogates the static and stereotypical representation of men and women in conventional patriarchal perspectives and defies gender perception that assumes men are always the protectors and producers while women remain passive and dependents.

Another key issue revealed from the analysis is the significant role of women in constructing men's masculinity. In his novels, particularly *Gamba la Nyoka*, *Nagona* and *Mzingile* Kezilahabi displays women's leadership capabilities when leading men in solving problems and their abilities to enhance men's courage and patriotism. Women are depicted as guides, decision-makers and protectors of men like Mimi and are seen struggling to assist them to attain freedom for their society after facing massive problems. The novels show that the position of power and authority in building *Ujamaa,* a new nation, is no longer reserved for men, and women are no longer expected to be wives solely and mothers. This demonstration contradicts the conventional patriarchal ideology that considers men active participants in social development and women passive.

There is a journey motif in *Nagona* and *Mzingile* that signifies the actual implementation of a gendered developmental vision that involves the participation of Tanzanian men and women. The problems that men encounter in this journey symbolize the challenges that people faced during the implementation of *Ujamaa.* Through the representation of male

and female characters in these novels, Kezilahabi argues that for a new nation to be built, women and men have to participate fully and overcome challenges that they encounter together. Kezilahabi validates this argument further through the portrayal of women leading the journey and rescuing men when they lose their focus and strength in freeing their nation from annihilations. This portrayal deconstructs biological determinism which links women's reproductive sex roles to gender roles.

Metaphorically, Mimi's journey is a journey towards gender transformation as we have observed gender relations undergoing a profound change from conventional hegemonic masculinity and femininity practices to a more fluid representation of the two notions in the novels. In the course of this journey, male characters like Mimi in *Mzingile* change radically through the assistance of a woman. He gains an understanding of the issue of man and woman interdependency and discovers his true self by the end of the journey. Through this transformation, woman and man agree to forget the past and reform their life by setting new principles that suit their new world. Through Mimi and a woman's agreement Kezilahabi suggests rethinking and reformulation of conventional hegemonic gender notions.

Through this transformation, Kezilahabi calls for a change of gender definitions and conventional patriarchal ideologies that do not suit the contemporary world. It is a call for recognition of women's contributions in the society. He emphasizes this point through the depiction of a pregnant woman who symbolizes hope and continuity of a new nation. The depiction of the unborn child, the second savior, also signifies Kezilahabi's proposition for an alternative perception of gender issues.

Kezilahabi gives much emphasis to this contention in his last chapter of *Mzingile* through the portrayal of Mimi, a woman and the twins, a boy and a girl holding their hands on top of the mountain. These four people represent old, young and future generations and metaphorically underline the need for men and women to join forces in building a new and future nation that considers gender equality. In this new nation none of the gender is superior to the other. This implies that femininity and masculinity are not separable entities in the building of the new and peaceful nation. From this depiction Kezilahabi suggests that the peace of a new and future world is influenced by the societal understanding of gender subject.

Throughout this study, we have illustrated the mutable nature of masculinity in Kezilahabi's five selected novels, and more importantly we have highlighted the agency of women in the construction of men's masculinity. Kezilahabi's novels have illuminated the need for change of our notions of gender. He has enabled us to understand that although in the traditional patriarchal societies women's contributions or even their role in society were silenced as suggested in *Kichwa Maji*, through the rest of his novels women have been noted as active participants in the wellbeing of their families and nationalistic struggles and have contributed greatly in men's masculinity and the nation. In these novels, Kezilahabi strongly suggests the need for female-male gender complementarity to cope with the contemporary world**.** He thus contests the conventional patriarchal system and emphasizes that in order to encourage the participation of women and recognize their contribution in constructing men's masculinity and building a new nation, the society should reconsider the socio-political, cultural and economic status of women in the contemporary world. This also suggests rethinking of the definitions of

masculinity and femininity and proposes the definition that complements masculinity to femininity. Kezilahabi thus emphasizes that building a new nation is only possible when gender relations are revisited and hegemonic ideologies are neutralized.

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