6

MEN IN THE THIRD WORLD

Postcolonial Perspectives on Masculinity

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This chapter examines men and masculinity in the postcolonial world, a world formerly controlled by European colonizers. It considers how men and masculinity have been analyzed using a number of different theories and literatures and suggests that the specific gender conditions of the postcolonial world require a flexible, yet syncretic, approach if their lives are to be understood and, more important, appreciated and improved.

Our starting point is that the world still bears the mark of colonialism. The World Bank, for example, divides the world into two economic categories: "more developed regions"—Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan—and "less developed regions"—the rest of the world. A further subcategory (a part of the less developed regions that includes the poorest countries of the world) is "Sub-Saharan Africa." There is still good reason to talk about the dichotomy between the metropole and the periphery and about

the developed and developing worlds. These concepts are crude, sometimes misleading, and often inaccurate. Yet they retain an undeniable truth. As a shorthand, for all its shortcomings, we shall in this chapter be using the term *Third World* to refer to the un- and underdeveloped regions concentrated in South America, Africa, and parts of Asia, an area often termed "the South" to distinguish its state from the industrialized and wealthy "North."

The differences between the First and Third Worlds can be found in the statistics shown in Table 6.1.

People in different parts of the world have hugely divergent experiences of life. We can make some generalizations that will underpin this study. Many babies never make it to their first birthdays, and those who achieve this live in poverty for much of their lives. Many will live in rural areas, with little access to the technology that people in the more developed world rely on. And the situation is getting worse: The share

Table 6.1   Differences Between the First and Third Worlds

	Births per 1000 of Population	Deaths per 1000 of Population	Infant Mortality Rate	Life Expectancy at Birth (Total)	Life Expectancy at Birth (Male)	Life Expectancy at Birth (Female)	Percentage of Urban Population
More developed	11	10	8	75	72	79	75
Less developed	25	8	61	64	63	66	40
Sub-Saharan Africa	41	15	94	51	49	52	30

SOURCE: Population Reference Bureau (2001a, p. 2).

of the poorest 20% of the world's population in, the global economy in 1960 was 2.3%; in 1997 it was down to 1.1% (Heward, 1999, p. 9). Beyond this generalization there are gender differentiations, which this chapter will explore.

The Third World is still portrayed in the mass media in ways that Edward Said (1978) explained in terms of the concept "orientalism." The (mostly) black people of the Third World were "othered." Despite the vigorous debates about such (mis)representation, the Third World is nonetheless represented as a combination of emaciated children, crying women, and men engaged in war. These gendered portrayals both reflect global disparities and gravely misrepresent them. In this chapter, we set out to see how these global inequalities can be understood in gendered terms. Following the main thrust of critical men's studies, we move beyond gendered essentialisms to examine how different masculinities are constructed and how men are positioned and act in the world. It is important from the outset to note that there has been little analysis of men and masculinity in the Third World. Anthropologists have left a rich description of the doings of men, although seldom have these been put into a conscious gender frame, and rarely have these scholars incorporated the history of colonial and postcolonial society into their ethnographic accounts (Finnström, 1997). Two works consciously working from a critical men's studies perspective provide exceptions to this generalization in South Africa (Morrell, 2001) and South America (Gutmann, 2001). It is surprising that the emergence of postcolonial theory, with a strong element of feminism in it, has done little to rectify this omission, although,

as we show in section 3 of this chapter, the general approach has the potential both to focus theoretical light on men in the periphery and to prompt new angles of research into masculinity that give greater weight to alternative paradigms (particularly, indigenous knowledge systems).

SOME HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL STARTING POINTS

Postcolonialism refers to the period after colonialism. Although the impact of colonialism is contested, we take it to refer to a phase in world history beginning in the early 16th century that eventually, by 1914, saw Europe hold sway over more than 85% of the rest of the globe.

Another meaning of colonialism refers to the political ideologies that legitimated the modern occupation and exploitation of already settled lands by external powers. For the indigenous populations, it meant the suppression of resistance, the imposition of alien laws, and the parasitic consumption of natural resources, including human labor.

Colonialism was a highly gendered process. In the first instance, it was driven by gendered metropolitan forces and reflected the gender order of the metropole. The economies of Europe from the 16th century onward were geared toward the colonies. The men who were engaged in conquest and those who were absorbed into industry producing and profiting from the subordination of large parts of the world, working and ruling classes together, were complicit in exploitative practices, the most

brutal of which was the nearly three-century-long trans-Atlantic slave trade. Europe's Enlightenment ambitions, fused with its colonial past, were based on the power and symbolic potency of the nation-state. Today the process of the transnational economy spells the decline of nation-states as principals of economic and political organization. The decline of the nation-state and the end of colonialism also marks the concomitant historical crisis of the values it represented, chiefly masculine authority founded and embodied in the patriarchal family, compulsory heterosexuality, and the exchange of women—all articulated in the crucible of imperial masculinity.

As many have argued, from one of the first Africanist historians, Basil Davidson (1961), in the 1950s and 1960s, to the historian of the transatlantic diaspora and its cultural impact, Paul Gilroy (1993), the slave trade changed the meaning of "race" and produced an equation of *black* with *inferiority*. Much of the research on race (Hoch, 1979; Staples, 1982; Stecopoulos & Uebel, 1997) is still trying to make sense of the way in which masculinities in the 20th century were shaped by the systematic elaboration of racist discourses. A derivative of recent theoretical advances has been to examine how the experience of race in the colonies (Stoler, 1989) influenced class relations and identities in the metropole (Hall, 1992) and how metropolitan ideas travelled into the periphery (Johnson, 2001). In *Imperial Leather,* Anne McClintock (1995) argues that to understand colonialism and postcolonialism, one must first recognize that race, gender, and class are not "distinct realms of experience, existing in splendid isolation from each other"; rather, they come into existence in relation to each other, albeit in conflictual ways. Others have argued before her that the Victorians connected race, class, and gender in ways that promoted imperialism abroad and classism at home, but McClintock argues that these connections proved crucial to the development of Western modernity. "Imperialism," she explains,

is not something that happened elsewhere—a disagreeable fact of history external to Western identity. Rather, imperialism and the invention of race were fundamental aspects of Western, industrial modernity. The invention of race in the urban metropoles . . . became central not only to the self-definition of the middle class but also to the

policing of the "dangerous classes": the working class, the Irish, Jews, prostitutes, feminists, gays and lesbians, criminals, the militant crowd and so on. At the same time, the cult of domesticity was not simply a trivial and fleeting irrelevance, belonging properly in the private, "natural" realm of the family. Rather, I argue that the cult of domesticity was a crucial, if concealed, dimension of male as well as female identities—shifting and unstable as these were. (McLintock, 1995, p. 5)

In his chapter in this volume, Robert W. Connell (see chapter 5) argues for the need to look beyond ethnography and local studies to comprehend how globalization is shaping gender power in the 21st century. In thisn chapter, we argue that a necessary complement to this approach is the need to recognize what anthropologists used to call "the Fourth World"— a world that policies of modernization did not touch, where life continued much as it had always done except that the ecological consequences of advanced industrialization were experienced catastrophically in climate change and attendant natural disasters. Added to this is the need to examine contexts wherein development has failed and people no longer believe in the promise of progress. In large parts of the world, people today are poorer than they were half a century ago. In most instances, the slide into poverty has not been linear but has been punctuated by moments of material improvement. There are few places in the world which still harbor the illusion that, in material terms at least, things will get better soon. Globalization has been described as another form of colonialism or imperialism. It has not "corrected" the legacies of the uneven march of capitalism or the differential impacts of imperialism (Golding & Harris, 1997). Instead, globalization has fostered media and cultural imperialism. Information technologies have disseminated Hollywood images around the world, giving an illusion of a homogenous global culture. This does not mean, as Anthony Appiah (1991) emphatically remarks, "that it is the culture of every person in the world" (p. 343). And, as Nyamnjoh contends, "globalization does not necessarily or even frequently imply homogenization or Americanization, [as] differentm societies tend to be quite creative in their appropriation or consumption of the materials of modernity" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 17; Gray, 1998). However, he concedes that the developing

world continues to bear the brunt of the risk and volatility associated with the exploitation of information technologies and markets.

Before turning to the different literatures that bear on postcolonial men and masculinity, it is important to note that the term *postcolonial* refers inexactly to a political and geographical terrain. On occasion, the term includes countries that have yet to achieve independence, or people in the developed world who are minorities, or even independent colonies that now contend with "neocolonial" forms of subjugation through expanding global capitalism. In all of these ways, postcolonial, rather than indicating only a specific and materially historical event, seems to describe the second half of the 20th century in general as a period in the aftermath of the zenith of colonialism. Even more generically, postcolonial is used to denote a position against imperialism and Eurocentrism. Although technically postcolonial, Canada, the United States, and Australia, for example, are seldom analyzed in this paradigm (although, see, as a counter, Coleman, 1998). Western ways of knowledge production and propagation then become objects of scrutiny for those seeking alternative means of expression. The term thus yokes a diverse range of experiences, cultures, and problems.

ANALYZING POSTCOLONIALISM: THREE APPROACHES

This section examines three different literatures (postcolonial theory, writings on indigenous knowledge, and work on gender and development). All are, in one way or another, a response to postcolonialism. We start out by considering the reasons for the emergence of postcolonial theory and look at the intellectual and political climate that spawned it. We then show how this new theory attempts to offer an alternative reading of agency and subjectivity and, at the same time, tackles the issue of representation and power in the periphery.

The second body of writing makes a claim for the status of indigenous knowledge. This is a type of knowledge that is site specific and claims no universal validity. Historically, it predates colonialism. It has been attacked and marginalized by the processes of colonialism, yet seldom has it been totally destroyed. It

therefore belongs to and is possessed by indigenous, formerly colonized peoples. This type of knowledge offers different ways of understanding the world and making sense of life and death. Its assumptions are normally quite different from those seen in Western, subject-centered frames. For example, human existence is understood in terms of communal and environmental belonging rather than as something intrinsically related to the fact of an individual's birth.

The claims made on behalf of indigenous knowledge have been generated by postcolonial conditions and the perceived condescension of the First World for the Third. Objecting to the imperial gaze, Third World writers, instead of using the sophisticated theoretical tools of postmodernism, have trawled the past and interrogated cultural practices in the attempt to give indigenous knowledge appropriate status in the world. Indigenous knowledge claims autonomy and independence from metropolitan knowledge. It offers new ways of understanding the world that are sometimes at odds with Western ways. It is, to use current South African and pan-African terminology, an attempt at a renaissance—to recover "old" ways of understanding and to restore "old," lost, or forgotten ways of doing. As with postcolonial theory, one of the major concerns of indigenous knowledge is to reclaim agency and black (Third World) voices.

The third body of work (the gender and development literature) engages with postcolonialism in terms of ongoing inequality between the First and Third Worlds. It responds to the challenge that this poses for an international community formally committed to human rights and equality. This literature is not so much concerned with representation as with actually effecting improvement in material life. Contributors speak from both metropolitan and Third World contexts as they collectively try to find effective ways of reducing inequality and promoting growth. This literature has been much more sensitive to debates about gender and masculinity than the first two, partly because the language of the international community (especially agencies of the United Nations) has been particularly receptive to developments in gender theory and responsive to suggestion that a gender (and latterly a masculinity) lens be used to assist the delivery of development projects.

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory is not a coherent body of writing or theorization. In fact, its realm is contested, and writers who ostensibly belong together as "postcolonial theorists" dispute its political mission and ambit. Its rise and entrenchment in academia may arguably be dated from the publication of Edward Said's influential critique of Western constructions of the Orient in his 1978 book, *Orientalism.* Its origins are diverse. It is easier to follow these if we recognize a basic split in postcolonial theory, one that Moore-Gilbert (1997) characterizes as postcolonial *theory* and postcolonial *criticism.* Postcolonial theory draws on postmodern theory to unpick the modernist project, exposing its twin nature: freedom, self-determination, reason—and yet also submission, marginalization, and inadequacy of the "other." Postcolonial theory is primarily associated with "the holy trinity" (Young,1995, p. 165): Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Spivak. What unites them is their intellectual debt to postmodern writers, their focus on the importance of culture, and their political opposition to the cultural domination of the West. All three are based in prestigious Western universities, something that has made some critics skeptical of the sincerity of their work.

The departure of their work is best appreciated by contrasting it with the work of Marxist scholars like Andre Gunder Frank (1971, 1978) and Colin Leys who, in the 1960s and early 1970s, pointed out that political independence had not ended the domination of the former colonies by their metropolitan masters but had strengthened the dependence of the former on the latter. Here the analysis highlighted ongoing material inequality. Postcolonial theory focused on the role of culture in politics. The fact that the Orient was "othered" and subjected to a Western gaze by colonial writers had consequence for the inhabitants of the Third World. They were deprived of a voice. Postcolonial theorists developed theories of race and subjectivity that opened up a new terrain of study and offered new concepts with which to analyze. Possibly the most influential was the term *hybridity*—a term developed to try and capture the fluidity of postcolonial life and the postmodern insights into the multiple identities and subject positions available. Here the debt to postmodernism—the stress on conditionality and contingency and the suspicion of absolutes and progress—was very strong.

Postcolonial theorists, and Bhabha **[Please provide complete reference]** (1994) in particular, argue that colonial identities are always about agony and transition or flux. However, Bhabha does not accept a neat black-white division but subscribes to the idea of "messy" borders, "the tethered shadow of deferral and displacement." **[Please provide page number of quotation.]** Where he detects the mimicry of white master by black subject, he argues that this actually undermines white hegemony and is therefore an anticolonial strategy. He further argues that the identity of both colonized and the colonizer are unstable and fraught. This is because of inherent instability and contradictions in the modernist project.

Postcolonial theory insists that everyone has some agency. This concept is both useful and inadequate. It is useful in the sense that it provides a constructive starting point in literary studies of representation and is very accepting of the idea of a fluid or "multiple" identity. This balances the more rigidly Marxian and structuralist perspectives, with their linear trajectories of class and power. However, postcolonial theory does not move the marginal to the center—it does not invert the historical hierarchy—it critiques the center from both the periphery and the metropolitan core (Hutcheon, 1992). Bhabha (1994), for example, says "there is no knowledge—political or otherwise—outside representation." **[Please provide page number of quotation.]** Everything is thus analyzed in terms of linguistic interchange, offering vocabularies of subjectivity. What postcolonial theory often does not do is show how subjectivities are shaped by class, gender, and geospatial context.

The emancipatory claims of postcolonial theory are contested in another way. Aijaz Ahmad (1992, 1996) and Ania Loomba (1999), particularly, have objected to the marginalization of politics and the increasingly abstruse theoretical direction taken, as well as to the decreasing purchase of this theory on Third World realities: the truths of class, race, and gender inequality. Similar concerns have also been expressed in Third World contexts (Sole, 1994). Neil Lazarus (1999) has characterized postcolonial theory as "the idealist and dehistoricizing scholarship currently predominant in that field in general" (p. 1). It is not incidental that for these scholars, feminism and Marxism remain important in understanding the world and that for them, that

which Lenin said many years ago remains true: "Politics begin where the masses are; not where there are thousands, but where there are millions, that is where serious politics begins" (quoted in Carr, 1964, p. 50).

When it comes to gender, the impact of postcolonial theory has been disappointing (Moore-Gilbert, 1997, p. 168). Spivak's concern for Third World women, particularly their cultural position and representation, is universally acknowledged, but in the study of men and masculinity, the impact has been slight, limited to one particular work (Sinha, 1995). One possible explanation for this is identified by Bob Connell:

> The domain of culture (all right, "discourse," I prefer the older language) is a major part of social reality. It defines memberships of categories, and it defines oppositions between categories; hence, the very category of gender is necessarily cultural (or constituted in discourse). But it is not constituted only in discourse. Gender relations also involve violence, which is not discourse; material inequality, which is not discourse; organizations such as firms, which are not discourse; structures such as markets, which are not discourse. So the analysis of the discursive constitution of masculinities, while often highly illuminating, can never be a complete, or even very adequate, analysis of masculinities. (Ouzgane & Coleman, 1998, point 21)

A second type of approach to the study of the postcolonial is "postcolonial criticism," which is described as a "more or less distinct set of reading practices" (Moore-Gilbert, 1997, p. 12), and which emerged within English language and cultural studies. The close examination of texts permitted a critique of colonial literary method and also focused attention on the representation of the racialized subject. Here it shared its field of study with postcolonial thought, although it was much more sensitive to the existence of indigenous critique. Among those whose writings have been acknowledged are the South African author of *Native Life in South Africa* (Plaatje & Head, 1996) and one of the founders in 1912 of the African National Congress, Sol Plaatje; Black American civil rights activist, author of *Black Reconstruction* (2001; originally published in 1934), and cofounder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, W. E. B. du Bois; the Caribbean author of *The Black Jacobins* (1989; originally published in 1938)

and theoretician of Marxism, cricket, and West Indian self-determination, C. L. R. James; and the Martinique-born resident of Algeria who became famous as a revolutionary writer, the author of *Wretched of the Earth,* whose writings had profound influence on the radical movements in the 1960s in the United States and Europe, Frantz Fanon (1963/1986).

The willingness to search for and listen to alternative narratives (penned by those subordinated by colonialism) also made possible a trans-Atlantic conversation that fed into postcolonial debates and gave access to authors as diverse as Henry Louis Gates, an authority in African-American identity studies who worked to include works by African-Americans in the American literary rights movement in the 1960s; Walter Rodney, the radical Marxist from Guyana, killed in a car bomb in Georgetown in 1980; and Patricia Hill Collins (1990) and bell hooks, prominent black American academic feminists of the 1980s and 1990s.

Race and Gender: Black Men and Masculinity

Postcolonial theory draws attention to agency and is also powerfully subversive regarding essentialisms. It is predicated on the deconstruction of the "essential." Diana Fuss (1989) says:

> [Essentialism] is most commonly understood as a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the "whatness" of a given entity. . . . Importantly, essentialism is typically defined in opposition to difference. . . . The opposition is a helpful one in that it reminds us that a complex system of cultural, social, psychical, and historical differences, and not a set of pre-existent human essences, position and constitute the subject. However, the binary articulation of essentialism and difference can also be restrictive, even obfuscating, in that it allows us to ignore or deny the differences within essentialism. (pp. xi-xii)

In the field of gender studies, reaction to essentialism can be seen in the acceptance of the concept of "masculinities" developed by, among others, the Australian gender theorist Bob Connell in the 1980s and 1990s. Elsewhere in this volume, this development is exhaustively discussed, so we now move on to examine how the critique of essentialism has played out in the analysis of black men.

How are we to understand "black men"? This is not a question that has received the attention it deserves, as the focus of gender work in underdeveloped world contexts and in terms of race has been insistently on women. An ironic consequence has been to silence or to render black men invisible. For example, Heidi Mirza (1997) refers to "Black Feminism" as anything that is recognizably antiracist and postcolonial: "the political project has a single purpose: to excavate the silences and pathological appearances of a collectivity of women assigned to the 'other' and produced in gendered, sexualized, wholly racialised discourses" (pp. 20-21).

Black men need to be understood as "multidimensional social subject(s)" (Mac an Ghaill, 1996, p. 1). The masculinity of black men needs to be considered in the "ambivalent and contradictory sites of black identity and ethnicity and their complex interaction with state institutions and racial ideologies" (Marriott, 1996, p. 185). This involves highlighting the relationship between masculinity, sexuality, and power. One approach, which centralizes race, is suggested by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1996), who guardedly suggests the path of "strategic essentialism." Trinh T. Minh-Ha (1995) personalizes the choices facing a post-colonial subject struggling with identity issues:

> Every path I/i take is edged with thorns. On the one hand, i play into the Savior's hands by concentrating on authenticity, for my attention is numbed by it and diverted from other important issues; on the other hand, i do feel the necessity to return to my so-called roots, since they are the fount of my strength, the guiding arrow to which i constantly refer before heading for a new direction. (p. 268)

The *black* man is faced with a choice and has to exercise his agency. Identity becomes a matter of choice, although it is a choice played out against the backdrop of environment and history.

Another approach is sociological—to examine collectivities of black men and the social constructions of masculinity. Black men and boys in the British schooling system develop subordinate masculinities that reflect their exclusion from hegemonic male power (Mac an Ghaill, 1994). There is a defensive aspect to this construction of masculinity that permits the creation of safe space (both emotional and spatial), but it also signals a defiance and

validates difference (Westwood, 1990). Elsewhere in the United States, a similar marginal position with regard to societal power has resulted in the construction of African American masculinities that are also subordinate to the hegemonic ideal. Such constructions include, among other things, the emphasis of physicality, a particular cultural style ("cool pose"), music (hip-hop and rap), and investment in sporting achievement. But there is a danger of essentializing black men by fixing and generalizing these choices to all black men (Majors, 1986; Staples, 1982). This has resulted in the stereotyping and demonizing of black men as either thugs or sportsmen (Jefferson, 1996; Ross, 1998).

The focus on race generally and black men in particular reflects a concern with politics and a desire for emancipation of the subject and the eradication of inequality. The foregrounding of the black subject (and race as analytical category) constitutes, according to Marriott (1996), "black political and cultural attempts to stabilize 'blackness'" and constitute "a determined attempt to retain the position and influence of race authenticity over ethnicity, gender and class" (p. 198). This approach, with its emphasis on symbolism, subordination, and resistance, has given rise to many highly perceptive accounts of the experience of colonialism. In the South African context, this approach has been used to explain apparent mental illness as a form of resistance (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1987) and has thus steered analysis away from what some considered to be a unidimensional materialist register of racial oppression. In other Third World contexts, such as India, a similar approach to the understanding of oppression has been developed to demonstrate how identities shift and develop in the interstices of society to accommodate highly unequal gender relations. At the same time, transgressive and dissenting voices emerge to challenge the patriarchal discourses centered on the family, community, and nation (Rajan, 1999).

Nonetheless, the focus on race cannot just be about emancipation because black (just like other) men are in oppressive relations with women. The strained relationship between black women and men is carefully identified by bell hooks (1981, 1990). Compassionately, she observed, "Like black men, many black women believed black liberation could only be achieved by the formation of a strong black patriarchy"

(hooks, 1981, p. 182). But she went on to point out that black men were also responsible for high levels of violence against women, as well as against other men, and cautioned against romanticizing either black men or women. Her subsequent work has been filled with hope, and she looks to self-reflective, politically conscious black men working with black women as a means of advancing an emancipatory project.

> We need to hear from black men who are interrogating sexism, who are striving to create different and oppositional views of masculinity. Their experience is the concrete practice that may influence others. Progressive black liberation struggle must take seriously feminist movements to end sexism and sexist oppression if we are to restore to ourselves, to future generations of black people, the sweet solidarity in struggle that has historically been a redemptive subversive challenge to white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. (hooks, 1990, p. 77)

In a similar vein in South Africa, Kopano Ratele (1998, 2001) has sought to combat black nationalist views that gloss over gender difference. Arguing against racial essentialism, he points out that misogyny is a deeply constitutive aspect of urban, emerging middle class, young, black men. For Ratele, black men have to face up to their masculinity if they want to live in harmonious relations with women and the broader society.

Admonitions about black men are not confined to heterosexual behavior. Jonathon Dollymore (1997) is critical of Frantz Fanon's homophobia, arguing that in Fanon's writing there are places where "homosexuality is itself demonised as both a cause and an effect of the demonising psychosexual organization of racism that Fanon elsewhere describes and analyses so compellingly" (p. 33). In attempting to explore "the racial distribution of guilt" that results from the psychic internalization and social perpetuation of discrimination between subordinated groups, Fanon (says Dollymore) deploys some "of the worst prejudices [about the sexuality of women and the heterosexuality of men] that psychoanalysis has been used to reinforce" (p. 32). Homophobia has become a feature of African nationalism, with leaders such as Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe) and Sam Nujoma (Namibia) launching witch hunts against gays (Epprecht, 1998). Among students at a Zimbabwe training college, homophobia (rather than misogyny) is one of the defining features of an African nationalist hegemonic masculinity (Pattman, 2001).

Indigenous Knowledge

The second response to postcolonialism is presented here as an organic response of indigenous people struggling to be heard. In reality, the notion of indigenous people or knowledge itself runs the risk of essentializing and fixing. We refer to indigenous knowledge as a value system that predates colonialism and was integral to, and supportive of, precolonial societies and life. Such a value system was often the explicit target of early colonization, when missionaries sought to banish heathen beliefs and replace them with the English language, English customs, and the Christian Bible. Over centuries of colonialism, much of these value systems were eroded and disappeared. Their material and social forms were often the first to feel the effects of colonialism—buildings and space were regimented along colonial lines and families shaped to meet the requirements of the colonial and, later, capitalist economies. What was more tenacious were values and rituals concerning deep existential and philosophical questions such as "who am I?" and "what is the meaning of life?" Throughout the formerly colonized world, there has been a movement to recover this value system—in Australasia, in South America, and in Africa there are now established movements to retrieve traditions and to validate alternative ways of understanding.

This development makes sense when one considers Spivak's (1996) deep skepticism about the idea of "any easy or intrinsic fit between the aims and assumptions of First and Third World, or postcolonial, feminism." For Spivak, the ostensible emancipatory project of Marxism and Western feminism "runs the risk of exacerbating the problems of the Third World gendered subject" (Moore-Gilbert, 1997, p. 77). Other postcolonial writers have gone further. Adam and Tiffin (1990) argue that "Postmodernism . . . operates as a Euro-American western hegemony, whose global appropriation of time-and-place inevitably proscribes certain cultures as 'backward' and marginal while co-opting to itself certain of their 'cultural "raw"

materials'" (quoted in Williams & Chrisman, 1993, p. 13).

On the other hand, the claim for indigenous knowledge can easily be used to justify tyranny and injustice on the basis that practices are drawn from "our culture." Indeed, the recent debate in South Africa about whether HIV causes AIDS has seen President Thabo Mbeki reject scientific evidence concerning this connection as Western arrogance and has linked his own position to a broader campaign for continental regeneration (called the African Renaissance), central to which is the restoration of indigenous knowledge to a position of respect and honor in politics and policy (Freedman, 1999; Makgoba, 1999; Mbeki, 1998; Msimang, 2000; Mulemfo, 2000).

Underpinning these weaknesses is the danger of romanticizing the past and underestimating the responses of indigenous peoples to colonialism, which altered their culture and left nothing the same. There is a constant temptation to construct an imaginary precolonial heaven to drive home the point of the disastrous consequences of colonialism (see Epprecht, 2001; Salo, 2001). In theoretical terms, indigenous knowledge runs the risk of trying to sit "outside" Western perspectives, a fruitless endeavor, according to all Foucauldian theory.

In Africa, the search for an independent voice and, implicitly, indigenous knowledge has long roots and was frequently intrinsic to anticolonial struggles. In historical literature, distinctions are often made between millenarian, backward-looking, traditionalist uprisings (which attempted to hold onto "the old ways") and modern, nationalist opposition to colonialism (which attempts to struggle for a share of colonialism's "gifts"—citizenship, employment on equal terms, access to land and public services, and so on). The defeat of first-wave anticolonial movements did not end the commitment to indigenous knowledge. V. Y. Mudimbe (1994) observes that there exists a "primary, popular interpretation of founding events of the culture and its historical becoming. . . . Silent but permanent, this discreet and, at the same time, systematic reference to a genesis marks the everyday practices of a community" (p. xiii).

The search for, and retrieval of, historical traditions has been taken up by Africanist scholars exploring questions of gender. An extreme example (Oyewumi, 1997), has cast doubt on the value of foundational feminist concepts and has asked: Is gender still an appropriate unit of analysis, or is it merely a colonial imposition with limited value? Should the concept of gender be expanded to focus on its relational component by examining African constructions of masculinities, as well as femininities? What categories of identity and personhood are more appropriate and germane to African societies?

The search for indigenous knowledge has often been accompanied by hostility toward Western feminism. Ifi Amadiume (1987), for example, attacks feminist work because of its binary use of the categories "man" and "woman" and its assumptions that men and women are different and that they therefore have fundamentally different interests. She rejects analysis that stresses the adversarial nature of gender relations. Along with others, she develops an alternative approach, which attempts to retrieve indigenous knowledge that challenges the universalist claims of Western thought. She describes gender fluidity and harmony (as opposed to fixed gender roles and gender conflict) in precolonial Igbo society (in present-day Nigeria). A similar argument is made for the Yoruba (Oyewumi, 1997). In this view, gender ceases to be the major category of analysis, becoming one of many. In this tradition, the consensual (rather than antagonistic) features of African gender relations are stressed. These writings analyze social life in ways that stress community not just in temporal but in spiritual ("ancestral") terms. In terms of these readings, gender is part of a variety of relational understandings that are subsumed under a general assumption about humanity. In this understanding, humanity is what is common among people and is what unites them. In some respects, this view is incommensurable with modern worldviews, which are distinguished by causal thinking, linear time, the idea of progress, the self as autonomous, the domination of nature, and representation as the way in which politics is conducted. A "traditional" worldview, on the other hand, has at its center a complex continuity with the past, with ancestors and spirits, and is distinguished by correlative thinking, cyclical time, the self as communal, the interdependence of people and nature, and the conduct of politics via participation.[1] The idea of adhesion, what makes people live together, is therefore the starting point. In the South African context, this can

be seen in the concept of *ubuntu* (Broodryk, 1995; Mbigi, 1995).

Ubuntu literally means "peopleness" (humanity). It has recently become synonymous with a particular worldview. *Ubuntu* is a "prescription or set of values for a way of living your life as one person" (Johnson, 1997). The meaning of "being human" embraces values such as "universal brotherhood of Africans," "sharing," and "treating and respecting other people as human beings." Centrally, *ubuntu* is a notion of communal living in society. Being human cannot be divorced from being in society, and in this respect, it is fundamentally different from Western notions, in which gender identities and other group identities are acquired individually (Johnson, 1997; Makang, 1997). Gender is an important constituent of the reality, but in the long run historically, the vast scope of the past and the challenges of living join people (men and women) in the project of life. Individuals are the unit of analysis, but they are not self-standing, being rather part of a collectivity. One obvious problem with this approach, particularly in analyses of the Third World, is that it has frequently been used to disguise the exploitation of women in African society. By concentrating on racial and ethnic oppression primarily as a result of external forces, the internal forces of gender oppression have been concealed or ignored. In this sense, there is a real danger of focuses on *ubuntu* simply reflecting or reinforcing patriarchal discourses. In South Africa, the *ubuntu* approach has been used for a variety of purposes—party political, nationalist, and gendered (patriarchal).

Impetus has been given to indigenous knowledge approaches (labelled by Williams and Chrisman, 1993, as "nativism") by colonial legacies that still divide black and white women. In South Africa, for example, feminism and the goals of gender equality have been treated with suspicion and rejected outright by some black nationalists. Christine Qunta (1987) objected that feminism was a Western, white philosophy that was irrelevant to African conditions and was designed to sow discord among black people fighting for freedom. This objection was more subtly made, and with greater sophistication, in the early 1990s as white feminists in the academy faced the wrath of black feminists "outside" (Hassim & Walker, 1992; Serothe, 1992).

Yet Although nativist approaches correctly highlight the importance of race, alternative value systems, and global location, they can lose sight of enduring gender inequalities (Stichter & Parpart, 1988). Third World and African feminism provides a corrective to give the (black) female subaltern a voice and draws attention to the diversity of experiences among women (Mohanty, Russo, & Torres, 1991; Lewis, 2001). In the process, the focus also falls on the relationship of race to subordination and marginalization. Concerns about injustice and exploitation blend with those that focus on the condition of peoples in the developing (Third) world.

Development and Gender

Postcolonial contexts are, by definition, contexts that require or call out for development. Postcolonial can refer to countries as dissimilar as Canada and the Central Africa Republic. In this chapter, the development challenges of what we earlier called Third World or underdeveloped countries will be discussed.

The challenges of development in the Third World are vast and have become greater with globalization and the spread of free-market ideology. The gap between the First and Third Worlds is getting larger, but of equal concern is the growing stratification of Third World populations as the poor get poorer and a new middle class (often associated with the apparatuses of the state) gets richer. As feminists have remarked, this process has often hit women the hardest, producing the "feminization of poverty."

The challenges of development since the Cold War period have been experienced in many different ways. Starting with a modernization paradigm, the emphasis was on a gender-insensitive use of technology to solve the supposed failure of Third World countries to convert political independence into economic growth. The failure of this First World–sponsored approach caused a change of tack, and in the 1980s, the importance of gender was acknowledged with the introduction of what subsequently came to be termed "women in development." This approach introduced women as a central element into development policy and implementation. It was recognized that not only were women critical in reproduction issues (biological and social) but that they

also did much of the work. Programs then began to focus on delivering development to women. It was recognized within a decade that this approach was flawed: It focused in a simplistic way on a set of agents (women) and ignored the context of relationships and power relations in which these women operated.

"Women in development" perspectives were part of, and contributed to, international work that focused on the subordinated position of women. Such work included, as a corrective, arguments about the hitherto neglected centrality of women in resisting globalization (and patriarchy) (Mahomed, 1998; Oduol & Kabira, 1995). In these analyses, masculinity was, for the most part, overlooked, and men all too often tacitly were regarded as obstacles to gender justice.

Thus it was that in the late 1980s and 1990s gender and development (GAD) perspectives emerged. It was now acknowledged that not all women suffered equally (that it was poor women who should be the main beneficiaries of development) and that gender inequalities required not just a liberal feminist ministering to "women" but a more sophisticated grappling with relationships that generated gender inequality. The new approach broadened the focus of development work so that even though women remained an important focus as the intended beneficiaries in the delivery of programs, it was now recognized that it was unhelpful to simply target them for "help." Attention had to be paid to context, and here the complexity of gender relations was acknowledged. Development could only be sustainable if gender inequalities were addressed. Projects designed to address this, however, soon found that attacking patriarchy head on (and casting men as the enemy) was not a solution. Such projects divided communities and undermined the goals of development. It was in this context that, in the mid-1990s, a focus on men and masculinity emerged.

The introduction of masculinity into development debates was contested. The discussions within feminism concerning the political location and purpose of feminist men's involvement in gender-emancipatory projects were also played out in the development realm. The concerns were that so much development work had historically been directed at men that they should not be reinserted into a development agenda that was only beginning to redress the legacy of neglect of women. Would men once again dominate and pervert development for patriarchal purposes? A more recent query has been about the appropriation of gender into global governance discourses. With gender becoming mainstreamed, the concern has been raised that it also has become depoliticized, and women's interests have thus become decentered and subject to marginalization (Manicom, 2001).

Two influential special issues of development journals, edited by Caroline Sweetman (1997) and Andrea Cornwall and Sarah White (2000), have done much to clarify thinking and raise the critical issues of gender and development. Developments within the United Nations— for example, the work of the U.N. International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women—have begun to insert masculinity perspectives into influential development agencies (Greig, Kimmel, & Lang, 2000).

There are two basic themes that emerge from these debates. The first concerns the politics of development and gender transformation. The key question here has been how GAD programs have actually affected gender relations and contributed to the reduction in gender inequality. Without wishing to impose a false uniformity on the debate, it would seem that a number of issues emerge. GAD has not yet fully acknowledged the importance of men in development work— men are ignored, or, as Andrea Cornwall (2000) puts it, "missing." Following from this observation, Sylvia Chant (2000) argues that GAD programs would be strengthened if they paid more attention to men and included masculinity work. She notes that such an approach could promote men working *together* with women. The importance of working with masculinity and the new acceptance that this is not a fixed gender identity also features powerfully in this work. Development initiatives should focus on men's self-image, their involvement in parenting and caring, reproductive health issues, and reducing violence (Engle, 1997; Falabella, 1997; Greene 2000; Greig, 2000; Large, 1997). Reflecting initiatives elsewhere (for example, in refocusing domestic violence work from female victims onto male perpetrators), development agencies and governments have begun to include work with and on men in their programs.

The second issue that has been raised is that of the specificity of context and the appropriateness

of the theoretical framework currently used. Sarah White (2000) has argued that the shift to work with men and masculinity is predicated on eurocentric conceptions of development and of gender. Here she has drawn on Third World feminism (itself connected to postcolonial theory) to urge a rethinking of development work in postcolonial contexts. She also begins to suggest that indigenous knowledge systems need to be taken into account in prosecuting a development agenda with gender results.

White's cautions draw on debates outlined earlier, about indigenous knowledge and postcolonial contexts. The concept of a "new man," developed first in socialist literature in the Soviet Union and Cuba and transformed by masculinity scholarship into the image of a woman-friendly man wholeheartedly committed to gender equity, is not appropriate to many Third World contexts when it is used as a model for change. The idea of the "new man" was really developed for Northern, white, middle class, urban men. It misses men in the Third World whose situations are different. This does not mean, however, that there is not something very important about developing new role models and visions for masculinity. The transformation of male roles and identities (which, in a theoretical sense, draws on the postcolonial theory described earlier) is a key part of development work. In the Caribbean, Niels Sampath (1997) shows how men are open to messages of transformation but will use local idiom to make sense of the possibilities and will attempt change within existing parameters rather than aspiring to externally prescribed norms. In Africa, the context for development work and the tenacity of indigenous value systems remain important factors.

> Traditional ordering of relations between genders and generations based on hierarchy and authority is now largely history, and more clearly so in towns than in the countryside. A moral ordering in this area survives, however, as social memory, as scattered practices, particularly important in relation to reproductive strategies, and most of all with poor urban youth, as an absence and a yearning. Poor families have less opportunities of substituting old orders with new ones, because of a situation of instability and lack of material and immaterial resources. . . . Generally speaking, modern socializing practices, such as we find them in poor sections of the cities, undertaken broadly by religious institutions, schools and

nuclear family, have not filled the real or imagined void left by the breakdown of time-honoured ways. (Frederiksen, 2000, p. 221)

In the African context, the importance of indigenous knowledge and context is made abundantly clear in the work of Paul Dover (2001), an anthropologist whose work was conducted in rural Zambia in the 1990s. Dover locates his argument (specifically about reproductive health in Third World contexts) in a context in which development is seen to have failed. Zambia is a country where hope for an improvement in the material quality of life, carried by the copper boom of the 1960s, has evaporated. People have thus turned from the optimistic Western development discourses and have sought understanding of their lives in older, indigenous discourses. Colonialism was never able to eradicate these, but now they have greater visibility and acceptance. These discourses place cosmology at the center of a person's worldview. In terms of this perspective, the body and soul are not separate, and any problem has therefore to be tackled by ministering to both. Because cosmology is gendered and particular qualities are held to reside discretely in men and women, gender roles have a fixity that postcolonial theories are reluctant to grant them. But this does not mean they are fixed. Rather, it means that there are limits to change and that these are determined by the parameters of the indigenous belief system. In other words, Dover is not saying that men cannot change. He is not invoking primitivism or essentialism. He is arguing for the need to take full account not just of material circumstances (which so tragically speak of inequality), but of culture. In the next section, we return in more detail to the implications of these views and detail his arguments.

Men and Masculinities in a Postcolonial World

It is undoubtedly the stuff of caricature, but there is also a great deal of truth in the observation that the Third World is characterized by poverty and subject to wars and violence. In 1999, Africa alone was the site of 16 armed conflicts, with 34% of countries hosting conflicts, making up 40% of global conflicts. Recent statistics show that since 1970, more than 30 wars

have been fought in Africa. In 1996 alone, 14 of the 53 countries of Africa saw armed conflicts, accounting for more than half of all war-related deaths worldwide and resulting in more than 8 million refugees, returnees, and displaced persons (Diallo, 1998; King, 2001; Regehr, 1999). Some of these conflicts lasted for several decades (such as the one in the Sudan, often called a "forgotten conflict").

The relationship of poverty to war is complex. There is no doubt that wars produce poverty and that poverty creates conditions fertile for the prosecution of wars. As wars have historically been highly gendered—declared and fought primarily by men but with civilian (primarily women) casualties an increasingly prominent feature of modern wars—it is important that we now look at constructions of masculinity in the Third World.

Approximately 33% of the Third World's population is under 15 years old (Population Reference Bureau, 2001a). Most young people (about 85%) live in developing countries. Youth are numerically the largest and arguably the most significant political constituency. They are the group most subject to the scourges of unemployment, most vulnerable to AIDS, and most likely to be involved in wars. Media images in 1999 and 2000 brought this home to the world—boys as young as 10 years old recruited to fight and excited to commit brutalities that included large-scale amputations and systematic rapes (not infrequently of family members). More than 50 countries currently recruit child soldiers into the armed forces, and it is estimated that child soldiers are being used in more than 30 conflicts worldwide (Goodwin-Gill & Cohn, 1994; Peters & Richards, 1998).

There are dangers in focusing on wars and bloodshed because this can easily distract from other less dramatic but equally important developments. There is a similar danger in limiting discussion of violence to wars alone. Violence takes many forms, and these are by no means confined to theaters of war. The rest of this section, therefore, will examine men and masculinity in three contexts: poverty, violence, and AIDS.

Poverty, Work, Family, and Identity

The changing nature of work that has been a feature of globalization in the First World and the extension of under- and unemployment in the Third World (Rifkin, 1995) has profoundly affected masculinities. Modern masculinities are centrally constructed around work. The lack of work and engaging in labor which no longer has an associated status or meaning have produced a variety of responses from men. These have ranged from middle class men protesting inroads made into their privilege (Lemon, 1995; Swart, 1998), to older men striking out at younger pretenders to enforce the power of patriarchy, to the subordination of juniors (Campbell, 1992) to passivity by men in rural areas who no longer can support their families and thus no longer command respect (Silberschmidt, 1992).

There are two cases that we briefly want to discuss. The first concerns men in employment. In much of Africa, and particularly in the former settler colonies, African men have found jobs by migrating to the places of employment. This has not only given them access to money and the power that goes with it, it has placed them outside the power of traditional chiefs, whose authority rests on patronage and kinship. Globalization has meant that men who have managed to hold onto jobs have become "big men" (Dover, 2001). They are, relative to the unemployed, well off, although this should not divert attention from the fact that, relative to the bosses, they are poor, and they probably support a great many family members on their wages. In a recent examination of contemporary migrant labor in South Africa, Ben Carton (2001) has described how African men negotiate issues of identity in this context. He looks at a poverty-stricken area and witnesses the arrival of the young men from the city. Bumptious with the power of money, they bring their urban style into this rural context. They pay only some attention to the chiefs who notionally are in charge. The tempo of rural life picks up. There is carousing and celebrating, and then they leave and return to the cities, leaving the chiefs to reclaim their positions. What makes the story interesting is that the men in employment still acknowledge their rural origins. Even if they do not fully pay the respects expected, they acknowledge the position of the chiefs, although briefly usurping it. We see in their behavior the residue of tradition and the penumbra of indigenous knowledge. We see also how they negotiate different identities—urban and rural, modern and traditional—but at the center is

the image of *adult male*. In another African context, Paul Dover (2001) identifies the different constituent components of manhood—a mature body, a wife and children, an education and labor, and the reciprocal expectation for *tsika*—respect and moral behavior (p. 156).

The second case is of those men who have failed to retain a grip on the labor market. The literature that correctly identifies the feminization of poverty unfortunately all too often neglects to examine the consequences of poverty on men. Most African men do not "have work" in the Western sense of the word (a job). This is not surprising given the shrinkage of the world of careers and jobs, which has been more severe on the periphery. There are many consequences of this; among the foremost are a rise in domestic violence, alcoholism, and suicide (Gemeda & Booji, 1998; Mayekiso, 1995).

Margrethe Silberschmidt, who conducted anthropological research in East Africa for 20 years, made it the focus of her work to examine the changing position of African men living in a rural community in Kenya. The story is of the impact of colonialism, of changes in the political economy and in local gender roles. The result is that men lose their status, power, and self-esteem, and there is heightened gender antagonism (Silberschmidt, 1992, 1999).

Colonialism came relatively late (in the second decade of the 20th century) to the Kisii district. It was not welcomed, and the area was among the slowest to embrace Christianity, schooling, and wage labor. The imposition of taxes forced men to seek work. This produced a major change in their societal roles. Before colonialism,

> Manliness was based on a father's and a husband's dignity, reflected in respect from juniors in his family, his wives and most importantly, his own self-restraint. The male head of the household was its decision-maker and controller of its wealth. . . . As long as he lived, he was the only person who could officiate at sacrifices [to] the ancestors, whose goodwill controlled the health and fertility of the whole family. (Silberschmidt, 1999, p. 36)

The advent of migrant labor produced a change in the role of men—they became "breadwinners." While men remained in employment, this change did not cause social problems, but with the postindependence slump of the 1960s, men no longer found work in the cities and returned to the rural areas. Here, cattle villages no longer existed (one of the effects of land loss and overcrowding). There was no alternative lifestyle to adopt, and men busied themselves with odd jobs and informal activity. They now earned very little, and what they did earn, they chose not to spend on their households but on alcohol and women.

The problem has three further dimensions. The economic position of women has not deteriorated as it has with men. Women remain involved in subsistence agriculture. However, households still need the involvement of all family members, and the refusal and failure of men to contribute has produced great tension. This is exacerbated by the lapsing of bride-wealth payments and the decline in marriage rates. Men are no longer bound into families as they were in the past. They thus escape responsibility, but they also lose status, because being married remains an important part of manhood. Other aspects of masculinity that have their roots in the precolonial period and are still valued are in the following list of "what a respected and good man should do":

- Takes care of his family
- Educates his children and pays school fees
- His wife does not roam about
- He marries many wives and gets many children
- He is friendly and shows respect toward his people
- He assists his people when they have problems and gives good advice
- He is generous and does not quarrel
- He respects himself (Silberschmidt, 1999, p. 53)

Most men cannot live up to these ideals, and thus their self-esteem has dropped dramatically. One response has been a rise since the 1960s in assaults and rape of women. This response has drawn on an available gender dictionary. Traditional conceptions of manliness stress "men's 'role' as a warrior i.e. men in Kisii were defined by violent deeds" (Silberschmidt, 1999, p. 36) and include "command over women in all matters, and, in particular, sexual control" (p. 70).

Thus men in Kisii have an uneasy and antagonistic relationship with women as they try to control their fertility and women resist. The men

have not responded to their problems by moving back into the family and becoming good fathers. They have sought solace in alcohol and love affairs. This is, however, not continentally or universally the case. Paul Dover's (2001) work shows that although men in Zambia seem distant and emotionally unengaged as fathers, in fact there is a widespread belief that it is best for a child to have a mother and a father. In this context, a father gives emotional succor to a child when the child is young and commands respect later on. The process of distancing that accompanies the ageing of the child is not considered to be damaging but rather is an integral and important part of the whole process of parenting (Dover, 2001, p. 139).

With the decline of work, men have had opportunities to shape their gender identities in new ways. As indicated, the response has been varied, but the option of becoming more involved in family matters has remained. Such involvement can take many forms. In some cases, it can represent a reactive response to a loss of power and involve the assertion of the rights of the father within the family. In other circumstances, it can involve greater engagement with parenting. The place of the father is, of course, a key issue in meditations about a "crisis of masculinity." First World literature has debated the absent father ad nauseam. Some have identified him as the cause of the malaise of masculinity (Biddulph, 1997; Corneau, 1991). Others have argued that "absent fathers" are but one of a number of issues which need to be taken into account in understanding modern masculinities. In terms of this view, no special status should be given to "the father."

Increasingly, work set in rural African contexts reminds us of the tenacity of traditions (Dover, 2001; Heald, 1999; Moore, Sanders, & Kaare, 1999; Silberschmidt, 1999). Within these traditions, manhood, as a concept, is not questioned. Rather, it is the content of manhood and the way men exercise their powers that have become critical issues. In exploring this, Heald (1999), in her study of the Gisu of Uganda, argues that the discourse of masculinity and its power to set moral agendas is widely acknowledged but that "this is not necessarily in a way that is comfortable for men as the privileged gender" (p. 4).

But what of black youth, particularly in urban settings or where authority structures (the state, for example) have lost their strength, who have often claimed the status of manhood by defining themselves violently *against* their fathers and against authority (Carton, 2001; Everatt, 2000)? There is a continuum, from outright rejection of family and fathers to a difficult tension held by young men between independence and a residual connection (maintained in memory or in reality by occasional trips to family in rural areas) with family and fathers. For many Third World youth, two realities exist—an urban, modern reality and a premodernist and traditional reality. They exist side by side and can operate simultaneously (Niehaus, 2000). Thus we need to explore the backward and forward effects on identity, created for example, by Gisu circumcision ritual, which is specifically designed to make the boys "tough" and "fierce" (Heald, 1999, p. 28), and urban socialization processes, by which young urban boys are initiated into gang cultures that also stress violent behavior (Mager, 1998; Xaba, 2001).

Violence and Men

This section began by noting the prevalence of wars and societal violence, which prompts the question: Is violence a postcolonial problem?

Amina Mama (1997), Third World feminist, has argued that violence in the Third World is a direct legacy of colonialism. Although the connection between historical and contemporary violence is strong, it does not alone explain the current phenomenon. There is the temptation to excuse the Third World's violence by relating it causally to poverty, which in turn can be associated with colonialism. These factors are important, but it is important to note that most Third World inhabitants are not violent, and those who sometimes are are not violent most of the time. To examine men and violence, we need, in the first instance, to reject "Dark Continent" theories about this being a normal or natural condition. In the second instance, without denying the importance of these factors, we need to note that poverty does not cause violence. In the context of Central America, it has been noted that misogyny, rather than poverty, causes violence (Linkogle, 2001). This observation takes us directly to the issue of men and masculinity.

Although there can be little doubt that the arbitrary nature of the way in which colonial borders were established, colonial and imperial meddling in ethnic and regional politics, and

subsequent international machinations and global politics have contributed to wars, in this subsection, we turn to look at the way in which constructions of masculinity have been implicated in less spectacular, if equally deadly, forms of interpersonal violence. To give some sense of this, here are some recent details from Zimbabwe. In 1993, domestic violence accounted for more than 60% of murder cases that went through the courts. Although wife battery is more common in rural areas, there are no accurate figures for the phenomenon there. In towns, wife battering occurred among about 25% of married women (Getecha & Chipika, 1995, pp. 120-124).

How can we make sense of this? As a starting point, we take Suezette Heald's (1999) anthropological study of the Gisu people in Uganda, which is unusual for its focus on men. She finds that manhood is synonymous with violence, but she does not stop there. "The attribution of violence is profoundly ambivalent. Might only sometimes equals right and, even when it does, its legitimacy and limits are open to question." She then examines

> the extreme way in which violent power is located in men, a source of their rights but also . . . a source of self-knowledge and responsibility. . . . Men fear their own violence, their own violent responses and the onus throughout, therefore, is upon self-control. The good man is one who is his own master, and can master himself well. (Heald, 1999, p. 4; see also Wardrop, 2001)

Trying, in the first instance, to make sense of Third World violence and, in the second instance, to help in reducing levels is only partially assisted by referring to the huge First World literature on families, youth, and violence (e.g., Hearn, 1998, 2001; Messerschmidt, 2000). As already indicated, it may make sense in certain contexts to promote men as fathers, but it makes less sense in societies in which the fathers (and other esteemed men, such as teachers) are among the major perpetrators of rape (Hallam, 1994; Jewkes & Abrahams, 2000; Jewkes, Levin, Mbananga, & Bradshaw, 2002).

To reflect on a postcolonial masculinity, we turn again to the work of Heald (1999) on the Gisu of Uganda in the late 20th century. She concludes

> The Gisu imagining of their identity as male citizens is deeply "essentialist" and, while it might be

thought that the strength and formation of this male character has much to do with militaristic past, its continuing salience can just as easily be related to the very loss of a warrior role. No simple anachronism, it keeps it alive as a possibility and provides the discursive justification for male claims to status. And . . . this, in turn, creates its own characteristic moral dilemmas. (p. 165)

The warrior role of Gisu men is a deeply entrenched part of ethnic identity, which is itself an expression of autonomy, of resistance to colonialism and postcolonial forces that beat at the specificity of the local and penetrate it with global goods, messages, and technologies. To criticize the warrior image is to threaten Gisu life itself. And yet this does not give rise to a situation of unbridled violence. As Heald (1999) observes,

> Gisu ethics addresses the problem of social control through the necessity for self-control. Self-assertion as the right of all men is thus coupled with restraint as the mark of the social self. This gives a particular understanding of African selfhood in the context of male egalitarianism in which the use and control of force is at the disposal of all. (p. 3)

The critical issue for Gisu society is not whether men are violent but how they use this violence. This is not just a social issue; it is a profoundly spiritual one. One can see this most clearly in the circumcision ritual (*imbalu*), during which 17- to 25-year-old men are circumcised. If one is not circumcised, one is not a man. The process is highly ritualized, very painful and frightening. The young men must stand before a large group of people while the procedure is performed. He must show no sign of "fear, pain or reluctance. . . . Failure threatens on many counts. Most evidently in the display of cowardice or fear. . . . the whole of his adult life is also seen as dependent on *imbalu*" (Heald, 1999, pp. 50-51).

The ordeal needs and nurtures two things: strength (of both mind and body, although Gisu does not distinguish along such Cartesian lines) and violent emotional energy (*lirima*), which is needed and harnessed in the process. "A good man is one whose *lirima* is strictly under control" (Heald, 1999, p. 18). *Lirima* is a "basic fact of life" and is associated with men, not boys or women. "It is not something

which can be tampered with or altered. It is inherent in the nature of men" (Heald, 1999, p. 19).

Through circumcision, all men become heroes. They are heroes because they have survived the ordeal with dignity. "Having faced 'death' he is deemed free from the fear of it and capable of taking responsibility for himself amongst other self-determining Gisu men. . . . It is thus, above all, a rite of emancipation from parental authority" (Heald, 1999, p. 52). Hereafter, a man is expected to marry, set up a household, and look after dependants. But the ritual is even more important, for, in proving their own manhood, the young men "are in effect proving the identity of all Gisu as men and validating the power of the tradition which unites them all. Caught by the ancestral power of circumcision, the boys, in effect, personify the power of the ancestors and the continuity of tradition" (Heald, 1999, p. 51).

So, for Heald, Gisu men *mus*t be violent to be men. Their violence is an affirmation of their collective being, a rejection of the modern, an affirmation of their past. Yet, and this is the key point, the violence is not unrestrained. It is not either "good" or "bad." Men have power and the obligation to use it wisely.

> This is not necessarily in a way that is comfortable for men as the privileged gender. The attribution of violence is profoundly ambivalent. Might only sometimes equals right and, even when it does, its legitimacy and limits are open to question. As already implied, in the West, as the older codes of masculinity have come under threat, a crisis of masculinity is now more apparent than one involving women. (Heald, 1999, p. 4)

Violence, then, belongs to men, but it is the source of self-knowledge and responsibility. "Men fear their own violence, their own violent responses and the onus throughout, therefore, is upon self-control. The good man is one who is his own master, and can master himself well" (Heald, 1999, p. 4).

AIDS and Men

In 1999, worldwide, there were 33.6 million people living with AIDS: 16.4 million men, 14.8 million women, and 1.2 million children under 15 years (Whiteside & Sunter, 2000, p. 36). Although these figures are contested, there is

little doubt that what started out as a homosexual, white, Northern disease has become a heterosexual, black, Southern catastrophe. Sub-Saharan Africa is by far the worst affected. In 1999, there were nearly 24 million people living with HIV in this region. The area with the next most serious rate of infection was Latin America, with 1.3 million. The adult prevalence rate in Africa is 8%. The next highest is the Caribbean (1.96%). Australia and New Zealand have a rate of 0.1% (Whiteside & Sunter, 2000, p. 38). Of the world's HIV-infected people, 70% come from an area that contains only 10% of its population. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 55% of HIV-infected people are female.

In Africa, the disease is overwhelmingly spread via unprotected heterosexual acts. Many young Africans (15-19 years old)—many more than in the equivalent age group in developed countries—have had sex. In most African countries, about 30% of boys are sexually experienced, whereas for girls, the rates vary from fewer than 10% in Senegal and Zimbabwe to more than 45% in the Côte d'Ivoire (Population Reference Bureau, 2001b). Despite the fact that boys are generally more sexually active than girls, it is the girls who, for reasons of biology and gender inequality, are more seriously affected by HIV/AIDS. In every country surveyed by the Population Reference Bureau, girls were two to three times more likely to be infected than boys (Population Reference Bureau, 2001b, p. 19).

Until recently, the focus of attention on AIDS was either on homosexual men or on women. It has only been since the late 1990s that researchers, policy workers, and AIDS activists have begun to call for the issue of heterosexual men to be involved. Mostly, these are calls for the involvement of men, recognizing that gender inequality is at the heart of the pandemic and that constructions of masculinity therefore need to be taken into account (Bujra, 2000; Foreman, 1999; Tallis, 2000).

Masculinity is constructed in many different ways. Two major concerns in AIDS scholarship is how sexuality is expressed and how this is linked to issues of gender power, especially in hyperheterosexuality contexts. Sexuality is most publicly on display as *hetero*sexuality. In Africa, this is partly an effect of high levels of homophobia and partly because in some contexts, homosexuality has no resonance in indigenous culture (Epprecht, 1998). This has

not prevented, especially in South Africa, a strong gay movement from emerging (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994). As already indicated, gay men are no longer the most afflicted by AIDS, but in South Africa it has been gay men, by and large, who have led and propelled social movements around AIDS. Zackie Achmat, Simon Nkoli, and Edwin Cameron (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, pp. 10-11), for example, declared their support for people living with AIDS while promoting messages of gay tolerance. Elsewhere in the Third World, in Brazil, for example, the gay world has also been thrust into the forefront by the pandemic, and, in the process, masculinities have publicly been problematized. The heterosexist norm has been shaken by AIDS (Parker, 1999).

And yet, in Africa, compulsory heterosexuality is a key feature of hegemonic masculinity. Numerous studies now testify to the importance among young and old men of having sex with women and having many female sexual partners. These preferences might not individually be problematical except for the insistence on penetrative sex (MacPhail & Campbell, 2000), the levels of force, and the disregard for safety that accompanies sexual transactions (Wood & Jewkes, 1997).

In three revealing studies in South Africa, the constructions of masculinity are revealed to be critical for the way in which pleasure is sought and obtained. Thokozani Xaba's (2001) study of cadres recently demobilized from the ANC's military units shows how their disillusionment with the new political order and their failure to find a place in the new South Africa drove them to crime, including armed robbery and rape. In another context, young black men in an impoverished township engage in a headlong pursuit of sex and girlfriends as they try to obtain status and self-esteem. But they are caught on the horns of a dilemma—if they all want lots of girlfriends, it will mean that they will compete with one another, and this produces homosocial tensions. These tensions are most often taken out on their sexual partners (who are assaulted), but at the same time, their predicament—no life trajectory out of intense poverty—reminds them that love is "dangerous" (Wood & Jewkes, 2001). Even among young, rising, middle class, urbanized African men, the importance of "having a girl" is central to constructions of masculinity. Although the levels of violence

associated with poorer and marginalized black men is not a feature in their relationships, the black *ouens* ("guys") are nevertheless heavily invested in the possession of women (Ratele, 2001). None of these men is concerned about inequalities in their relationships. The power of men over women is a foundation of their masculinity.

We now turn to a anthropological study that investigated HIV/AIDS in Zambia. Paul Dover (2001) starts with power—in Shona, *simba.* It can be understood as social as well as physical. It is an *amoral* force that can be tapped, although it resides, in bodily terms, in a *man'*s body in terms of vitality and potency (p. 113). In Shona thought, power is at the center of religion. It is ambiguous and can be used for good and evil. Age and ancestors are venerated because social power is granted as one moves through the (social and age-structured) system. To use power for "fighting" leads to punishment by the ancestors and "failure" (p. 115). In this system, which is rather like that of feudal Europe, (male) chiefs do not only occupy secular positions of authority, they are also people with specific spiritual powers and alone officiate in rituals that confirm the ongoing importance of tradition, the spirits, and the ancestors. And yet, "as well as achieving community or lineage positions of power, male roles are bound up with modern ideals of being the 'head of household' bread-winner" (p. 120). Thus the modern and the traditional are fused.

In Zambia, power and gender are conceived in ways that do not fit snugly into Western modes of thought. In terms of understanding HIV/AIDS, the significant points are that body and mind-spirit are not separated and that to cure a body requires ministering to the whole person, also taking into account ancestral influence. *Simba* is a male attribute, and HIV symptoms and modes of transmission are understood and treated in gender-specific ways. Calls by government and health NGOs to use condoms as the main way of reducing HIV transmission have not been successful precisely because they do not take into account indigenous gendered understandings and are therefore resisted by men.

How does one acquire masculinity in Zambia? Dover (2001) identifies a life course similar to that described by Silberschmidt and Heald. "Becoming married and having children are [also] important markers of having achieved

adulthood" (Dover, 2001, p. 136). As a boy matures, physically,

> he will increasingly be expected to help his father and other kinsmen with male tasks. He also takes on less deferential body postures to older males. At the same time a male superiority is assumed even to his mother: he sits on the stool while she sits on the floor. (Dover, 2001, p. 136)

Men have the capacity for action and agency, which is captured in the saying, "Men's hearts are different because they accomplish what they desire, but women often fail!" This is translated into all areas of activity but specifically in regard to women. Men are seen as not being satisfied with what they have; women, by contrast, are held to be "easily satisfied" (Dover, 2001, p. 146). And yet, as both Chenjerai Shire (1994) and Dover point out, women are appreciated for their capacities and play a major part in the development of masculinity. Although they may not have *simba,* this does not mean that they are powerless.

In terms of AIDS, there is nothing intrinsic to the indigenous value system that promotes non-consensual sex even though the inequalities in social power and material wealth provide reason to expect that women's voices, in the negotiation of sex, are not always heard or heeded.

As indicated earlier, the initial focus in the AIDS pandemic was not on heterosexual men, although this is changing. One of the major ways in which men are engaged in prevention campaigns is via sex education. Many of these international campaigns focus on the technology of sex (condoms) or on communication style. The transmission of information is often the central plan of programs (Varga, 2001). Dissatisfaction with these interventions, as well as a profound disillusionment with the idea of development and the promise of modernity, has produced a number of indigenous responses. In South Africa, the best known is "virginity testing" among Zulu speakers in KwaZulu-Natal. The initiative draws on an old practice conducted by women and bound up with bride-wealth practices. Young girls are physically inspected in public to see if the hymen is intact. Girls are given a certificate, which is synonymous with being HIV negative. In this process, old African women are resurrecting a role that has fallen into disuse and are asserting their power. What makes virginity testing problematic, however, is that it makes girls responsible for the spread of the disease—boys are not tested. The international focus on gender inequality and masculinity is thus left out (Leclerc-Madlala, 2001).

It is easy to condemn such local interventions on many grounds, including the violation of children's rights. Yet to do so runs the risk of negating indigenous knowledge and of preaching to the very people who are most affected and who, in these kinds of initiatives, are trying to regain control of their lives. Fortunately, there is evidence of sensitivity in many areas of gender work that suggests that in the response to AIDS, space will be made for indigenous knowledge and the people who are affected.

There are, of course, difficulties. To get men to change and be more responsive toward and respective of women requires overcoming obstacles that are rooted in men's position and power in the spheres of production and social reproduction. Yet programs that work with men have been successful. In Jamaica, 50% of urban fathers reported changes in domestic roles, including significant involvement in family life (shopping, cooking, and cleaning). In Brazil young men are far more flexible (than the men of the previous generation) in their role expectations and are much more willing to take on caring duties (Greig et al., 2000, p. 8).

For rural people who still revere "tradition," there are also possibilities. In Zambia, a program of "responsible patriarchy" has been disseminated by the church. This has been very popular but runs the risk of reestablishing male power in the home (Dover, 2001, p. 242; see also Schwalbe, 1996). It is important to remember that most African men are poor and not well educated in Western school terms. It is not easy to see how Connell's "patriarchal dividend" plays out in their lives. Yet, Paul Dover (2001) argues, "The roles of responsibility in hegemonic models of masculinity have many positive aspects, but a basic question is how to promote these without reproducing the underlying system of gender inequality" (p. 243). Turning from approaches stressing a "softer" masculinity that includes introspection and caring, Dover looks at the areas of joint interest between men and women for hope. Men and women pursue common community and political goals. They are also increasingly sharing tasks and responsibilities at the household level.

The explanation for these changes is that "women's and men's common interests are usually more important than other differences and working together gives better opportunities for achievements" (Dover, 2001, p. 244). This approach gets away from the binary, almost Manichean, view of women as victims and men as perpetrators and promotes an approach rooted in the material realities of the Third World and in local (indigenous) value systems as well.

CONCLUSION

Men in the postcolonial world face many challenges. Poverty, violence, and AIDS are amongst the most daunting. Yet, they do not face these challenges alone or without resources. Theoretical attention given to postcolonial situations shows that men already are responding creatively to their marginalization, not least by understanding what this marginalization means and how, historically, it has come about. The representation of black and postcolonial masculinity can now no longer be taken for granted as neutral. The way in which black men are positioned has become central to the ways in which we think about men in postcolonial contexts.

Postcolonial men use a variety of cultural resources to give their lives meaning and to shape their interaction with their social environment. Indigenous knowledge offers ways of understanding life in terms that are not derived from the metropole or necessarily mediated by the cultural effects of globalization. Such understanding can promote harmonious and communal living and, in this way, provide a buttress against the corrosive, individualizing imperatives of globalization.

Yet globalization undoubtedly affects the postcolonial world. It aggravates class divisions and deepens poverty. Fortunately, it also provides the possibility for new forms of collective action and politics (Hyslop, 1999). People in the Third World wrestling with the depredations of globalization have been able to take some comfort from the growth of the "third (service) sector," in which nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have proved to be critical in fostering development. In many countries, NGOs have become the primary agents for the delivery of services. Growing sensitivity in the development sector

to the importance of working with men and masculinity and to the danger of ignoring local conditions and knowledge has provided some room for cautious optimism. Initiatives are bringing men and women together to build a new future. They are helping to shape fresh and innovative ways of "being a man."

NOTE

1. These ideas are drawn from seminars delivered by James Buchanan at the University of Natal, Durban, in March 1997.

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