Editor: Lahoucine Ouzgane

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Lindsey Michael Banco has a Ph.D. in English from Queen's University, Kingston, and is an Assistant Professor at the University of Saskatchewan. In addition to an interest in postcolonial studies and gender studies, he has published articles on Paul Auster and postmodernism, on Flannery O'Connor and the American Gothic, and on Hunter S. Thompson and counterculturalism. In 2009 he published *Travel and Drugs in Twentieth-Century Literature* (Routledge).

Jane Bryce was born and brought up in Tanzania, and lived in Italy, the UK and Nigeria before moving to Barbados in 1992, where she is Professor of African Literature and Cinema at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill. She was founder and Co-director of the Barbados Festival of African and Caribbean Film (2002-07), featuring prominent African and Caribbean filmmakers, and now curates the Africa World Documentary Film Festival at Cave Hill.

Marc Epprecht is a Professor in the Department of Global Development Studies at Queen's University. He has published extensively on the history of gender and sexuality in Africa including *Hungochani: The history of a dissident sexuality in southern Africa* (winner of the 2006 Joel Gregory Prize from the Canadian Association of African Studies) and *Heterosexual Africa?: The History of an Idea from the Age of Exploration to the Age of AIDS* (finalist for the 2009 Mel Herskovits prize from the African Studies Association).

Andrew Hammond is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Brighton, UK. In both teaching and research, he has pursued interests in cross-cultural representation, Cold War fiction and postcolonial writing and theory. His books include *The Balkans and the West: Constructing the European Other, 1945–2003* (ed., Ashgate, 2004), *Cold War Literature: Writing the Global Conflict* (ed., Routledge, 2006), *The Debated Lands: British and American Representations of the Balkans* (University of Wales Press, 2007) and *British Literature and the Balkans: Themes and Contexts* (Rodopi Press, 2010).

Wendy Knepper is a Lecturer in English at Brunel University where she teaches literature and theory in the fields of transnational modernism and postcolonial studies. She has published widely in essay collections and journals, including contributions to *Small Axe* and *PMLA*. She is currently editing a special issue of Brunel's *EnterText* on the work of Andrea Levy and working on a book-length study of contemporary Caribbean literature in a global context.

Justus Kizito Siboe Makokha is DAAD doctoral research fellow at the Institut für Englische Philologie, Freie Universität Berlin. He holds an M.A. (Literature) and B.Ed. (Hons) degrees from Kenyatta University in Kenya. He teaches courses on African, Caribbean and South Asian literature in the Institute for English Philology, Free University of Berlin. Makokha is the author of *Reading M. G. Vassanji: A Contextual Approach to Asian African Fiction* (2009). He has also co-edited a new volume of African literary criticism: *Negotiating Afropolitanism: Essays on Borders and Spaces in Contemporary African Literature and Folklore* (2010) with Jennifer Wawrzinek.

Tom Odhiambo studied for an MA and PhD in African Literature at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. He worked as a Researcher at the Witwatersrand Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER) between 2003 and 2007. He now teaches in the Department of Literature at the University of Nairobi. He has research interests in African popular literature, culture and media.

Lahoucine Ouzgane is Associate Professor and Writing Coordinator in the Department of English and Film studies at the University of Alberta, Canada, specializing in North-African and Middle-Eastern literature, postcolonial studies, masculinity studies, and composition and rhetoric. His publications include *African Masculinities*, co-edited with Robert Morrell (Palgrave, 2005) and *Islamic Masculinities* (Zed Books, 2006).

Najat Rahman is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Montreal, with a specialty in modern Arabic literature and culture. She has a Ph.D in Comparative Literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is author of *Literary Disinheritance: The Writing of Home in the Works of Mahmoud Darwish and Assia Djebar* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008). She is co-editor (with Hala Nassar) of *Mahmoud Darwish, Exile's Poet: Critical Essays* (Interlink Books, 2008). In addition to articles on

gender and representation in literature and in cinema, she has managed the production of the documentary *Ustura* (Legend), directed by Nizar Hassan, for Mashad Cinema and TV Productions (Nazareth, 1998). She was Fulbright Scholar to Lebanon and is currently co-chair of the Middle East Caucus, Society for Cinema and Media Studies.

Tarshia L. Stanley is an Associate Professor of English at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. She teaches courses in African Diaspora, literature, film and media studies and developed the Film and Visual Culture minor in the English Department. In addition to authoring several articles on visual representations of Blackness in Caribbean, African and African American film, she edited the *Greenwood Encyclopedia of Hip Hop Culture* in 2008. She is currently at work on a manuscript examining the work of Octavia Butler as a model for African Diaspora literature and a book length study of the images presented of young Black girls by mass media called *Mothering Our Daughters: Mediating the Messages.* Dr Stanley received the A.B. from Duke University and the M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Florida.

Katrina Daly Thompson is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Applied Linguistics at UCLA. She specializes in African languages and identities with a focus on ethnicity, gender and sexuality in Zimbabwean and Tanzanian discourse.

Contents

Introduction

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The topic of men and masculinities in Africa is only a few years old (measured in published material) but is part of a much bigger and internationally significant focus on men which has gathered tremendous pace in the last few years. Some of the emerging scholarship on masculinities in Africa includes Robert Morrell's pioneering work, *Changing Men in Southern Africa* (2001), an analysis of different forms of masculinity that foregrounds such categories as race and class during the years of political change from apartheid to democracy in South Africa. The next major work in this growing field, *Men and Masculinities in Modern Africa*, edited by Lisa Lindsay and Stephan F. Miescher (2003), turns its historical lens on men and masculinities in sub-Saharan Africa. Co-edited with Robert Morrell, my volume *African Masculinities: Men in Africa from the late nineteenth century to the present* (2005), located more in men's studies than in history, takes on a continent-wide focus and brings the story of men and masculinities in Africa to the present by addressing contemporary issues such as AIDS and globalization. In *Heterosexual Africa?: The history of an idea from the age of exploration to the age of AIDS* (2008), Marc Epprecht explores – and exposes – the various processes in academia and in public policy circles that have helped to construct a singular heterosexual identity for the entire continent. This rich and growing theoretical and analytical scholarship on men and masculinities in Africa fills a gap in the international literature on gender, especially because gender has often come to mean women, leaving men as the unmarked and unexamined category.

Men in African Film and Fiction, an analysis of the depictions in literature and film of masculinities in colonialist, independence, and post-independence Africa, explores the ways in which a serious examination of the male characters in these different genres opens some key African texts to an even greater and perhaps more obviously politicized set of meanings than has ever been the case before. Africa is enormous and internally differentiated, geographically wide-ranging, but the masculinities that emerge in the pages of

Men in African Film and Fiction are often seen as multiple, though historically contextualized and locally situated, and whose underlying presence is often marked by colonial procedures in Africa. Thus, we get to see the heterogeneity of African men's experiences, but the book also provides a sense of the collective lot of men in Africa. The originality of the volume also lies in the fact that all of the essays anchor their theoretical discussions in social, historical, or political contexts; in other words, the discussions in the essays go beyond the literary and filmic texts at hand; and the localized particulars depicted in a text are often connected to broader issues germane to masculinity studies, thereby providing a genuine engagement with the fields of cultural and gender studies.

The Essays

Man and Nation in Africa, the first section of this volume, acknowledges the fact that any study of African men cannot ignore the reality that patriarchal power is still in place across the continent. Men still, by and large, elect to exercise what Bob Connell calls the 'patriarchal dividend', chiefly at the expense of women.

In 'The anxious phallus: the iconography of impotence in *Quartier Mozart* and *Clando*,' two Cameroonian films of the 1990s, Jane Bryce analyses the ways in which the loss of potency (a theme prevalent in a range of other African films) is a metonymic device for the representation of the unstable relationship between manhood and the state, and speaks to the question, not only of gender, but of power relations in the wider sense. These films, according to Bryce, 'offer a critique, albeit in very different forms, of life under a President – who in this case happens to be Paul Biya but whose profile is replicated across the continent – whose reign implicitly contradicts inherited notions of "good leadership" and coincides with – colludes with, is a symptom of – the effects of millennial capitalism in Cameroon.' Bryce then goes on to point out that 'through representations of impotent or "feminised" men, or characters who are simply poor, socially excluded or politically oppositional, the films call into question dominant modes of masculinity and suggest the redundancy of the tyrannical leader as sexually dominant male, aggressive individualist and political predator.' Thus, while the two films offer a representation of the dangers and shortcomings of dominant modes of power and masculinity in Africa, they also speak to the problems of reconciling powerlessness with manhood in postcolonial Africa.

'The homoerotics of nationalism: white male-on-male rape and the "Coloured" subject' in Mark Behr's *The Smell of Apples*,' Lindsey Banco's meditation on the sexualized dimensions of South African nationhood, examines the ways in which Behr's 1995 novel engages with a sexualized version of South African nationalism in order to negotiate the related concepts of homosocial bonding, homoerotic and racial oppression. According to Banco, the novel presents 'an Afrikaner masculinity premised on homosocial practices, practices that are then cut off from homoeroticism through linking the white victim of a homosexual rape to the so-called coloured race. Behr's

linkage of the young male rape victim to the "inferior" feminized Other reveals the homoerotic terror necessary for this kind of South African "fatherland"; thus, the feminizing effects of the rape help inscribe the subordination of non-white subjectivity within consolidated white patriarchy.'

Sexuality, like many other aspects of the lives of colonized subjects, had been under immense surveillance and control by their colonizers. The attainment of freedoms – political, economic, social and cultural – resulted into great anticipation of and anxiety over the future of social and personal relationships in the 'freed subjects.' Sexuality and gender therefore became heavily implicated in this historic moment of the end of colonialism and the beginning of self-rule. Tom Odhiambo, in '"Wild men" and emergent masculinities in postcolonial Kenyan popular fiction,' traces the different processes through which postcolonial Kenyan popular fiction grapples with the social dynamics of the postcolonial times by narrating some of the sexual anxieties and tensions in the Kenyan male urban population in the 1960s and the 1970s. Maleness or being a man, according to Odhiambo, is thus related in an intensely sexualized manner in the stories found in the popular fiction of the time: 'A kind of masculinity which seems to be derived from a form of "wild maleness" is one of the highlights of this fiction. Men who are "sexually wild" and have insatiable sexual drives, men who are unable to form emotionally stable relationships with women, and men who are seemingly perpetually in search of self-gratification form the majority of the characters in this literature, which is also coincidentally written by men. A kind of parallel between the triumphalist liberation struggle ideals of conquest – since liberation from colonialism has sometimes been depicted in anticolonial writing as some kind of re-conquest – of the (mother) land and the masculine tendencies of postcolonial men, which desires to define itself through the conquest of women, is suggested in the fiction.' The essay argues that the "wild men" in the postcolonial Kenyan popular fiction suggests a fashioning of new masculinities as one response to a social and cultural environment where personal identities have to be reinvented.

'Unmasking shadow selves in Assia Djebar's *Ombre sultane*,' by Najat Rahman, looks at the ways in which Djebar's popular novel, ostensibly the story of two women married to the same man, raises important questions about the nature of masculinity and challenges the fallacy of equating masculinity with subjectivity. Rahman points out how this novel forces its readers to consider masculinity in terms of 'structures of masculine identity and desire', and not as masculine subjectivity. Djebar's novel, Rahman argues, 'interrogates the extent to which it is possible to have a quest for identity and for emancipation when there is a loss of subjectivity. For the anonymity of the man signals his own death, a true shade. Likewise, Isma has escaped the traditional confinement to have to contend with more internalized structures of seclusions. And Hajila finds herself between two worlds, that of Touma and that of the modern Algeria unable to find a comfortable space for the unprepared self. Clearly the active effacement of women also leads to a loss of self in man, in an increasingly modernized life.'

My essay on two other North African writers considers the processes through which hegemonic masculinities as depicted in the works of Nawal El

Saadawi and Tahar Ben Jelloun reduce the notions of masculinity or *roujoula* to virility and to endless rivalries between men that finally reveal masculinities in these texts and their social contexts as perpetually fragmented, insecure, anxious and never stable.

But the story of men and masculinities cannot be reduced to one of the power of men. The processes by which men enact their masculinities are complex and studies in Part II **Alternative Masculinities**, identify spaces for reinterpreting masculinity: masculine behaviours are not natural or unchanging; healthy (non-violent and non-oppressive) models are already emerging across the continent.

Patricia Alden's '"Coming unstuck": masculine identities in post-independence Zimbabwean fiction' explores the depictions of intimate and personal feelings in three short story collections published in the 1990s by very well known Zimbabwean writers dealing with a shared local crisis as the gender order is being reconstructed. In the fiction of Charles Mungoshi, Shimmer Chinodya and Stanley Nyamfukudza, all roughly of the same generation, that came of age during the liberation struggle and came into middle age in the 1990s, Alden finds 'certain preoccupations about the situation of men in contemporary Zimbabwe, preoccupations relating to economic and psychological vulnerabilities, aggressive feelings directed against women perceived as threatening, fear of and sometimes awe for women who seem to have more power than they do.' Of all the stories in these collections, Alden argues, 'Can We Talk?' offers 'the rawest psychological portrait of a male character struggling to define himself in a world far distant from the rural idyll of his past with its secure, albeit restrictive definitions of roles offered by parents, teachers, the bible. He directs verbal and imagined violence against an economically independent new woman and against himself. Alternative gender roles trouble his imagination; the role of adulterer is shameful, and in any case every sexual relationship is haunted by the specter of AIDS, 'that shadowy third one who now walks always beside us' ('If God was a woman', p. 125). At the end, facing 'the fresh, lipless hole gaping for the body,' he is only clear that he must keep on talking: 'Talking is the basis of self-understanding. It's the basis of understanding others' (102).'

Writing about masculinities in Zimbabwean films, Katrina Daly Thompson concurs that filmmakers in Zimbabwe are also beginning to explore the possibilities for alternative, progressive, conceptions of masculinity through male characters who do not dominate women.

In 'Imported alternatives: changing Shona masculinities in *Flame* and *Yellow Card*,' Thompson provides a close analysis of Ingrid Sinclair's *Flame* and John Riber's *Yellow Card* that challenges common notions of Shona culture as a strongly patriarchal society that posits women as its second-class citizens.

Andrew Hammond, in 'Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and the crisis of Kenyan masculinity,' examines the strategies Ngũgĩ uses in his early novels to meditate not only on the horrors of British imperialism and the importance of collective resistance, but also on the effects of that resistance on gendered relations and hierarchies. *The River Between* (1965), *Weep Not, Child* (1964) and *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), a cycle of novels chronicling Kenyan history from the 1920s to

independence in 1963, on the one hand critically investigates the links between nativist politics and hegemonic masculinities which, with their competition and aggression, repeat the iniquities of British colonials; and on the other hand, the early work which evinces a range of powerful female figures that frequently challenge male dominance and masculinist discourse. The underlying message of Ngũgĩ's complex characterisation of male and female, Hammond argues, is that there is no single, logical, and unquestionable idea of what is masculine, a point that foreshadows and dramatises the theoretical work on masculinity that emerged in academic scholarship in the 1980s and 1990s.

The next essay turns its attention to two films, *Faat Kiné* and *Moolaadé* by Ousmane Sembene, the father of African cinema, also well known for the creation of powerful female characters in his films. Tarshia L. Stanley argues that although *Faat Kiné* is ostensibly about the titular character's economic strength and power, as a female gas station manager raising her out-of-wedlock children, the film in fact provides a derisive critique of the men in Kiné's life and by extension of masculinity in post-independence Senegal. Except for Mr Jean, the men in the film are trapped in the past, crippled by patriarchal ideologies of manhood – tribal, historical, and post-colonial – and are complicit in their own failure and the failure of the society as a whole, making the plight of the men in the film the plight of the nation itself.

Asian-Africans are descendants of immigrant South Asian communities that settled in East Africa before, during and even after the twentieth-century European colonial era in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Although the presence of writing by people of South Asian descent is significantly recorded in East African history and dates beyond the 1900s, it has, until recently, been largely overlooked by East African literary scholars and commentators just as the community itself. Coming from a diasporic community that was never really part of the colonisers or the colonized, writing under the sway of postcolonial imperatives is a complicated task for Asian-African writers particularly when the issues of 'Africanness' in terms of race, cultural identity, masculinity, and nationalism are taken into consideration. According to Justus K. Siboe Makokha, in 'The eternal other: authority of deficit masculinity in Asian-African literature,' as one reads M. G. Vassanji's fiction, Jagjit Singh's poetry or even the plays of Kuldip Sondhi, one senses a strong crisis of an emasculated 'deficit Africanness', whereby the Asian-African man is recurrently revealed as being subordinate to the dominant masculine and patriarchal systems of indigenous African communities. While the essay provides a critique of the interstitial location of Asian-African masculinity – between Asian-African femininity and Black masculinity – its uniqueness lies in Makokha's decision to base his reflections on a thesis presented by Shiva Naipaul in his critical tract, *North of South* (1978) – one of the most scathing attacks on the illusory nature of African nationalism and postcolonialism. Naipaul states that the Asian African, a being caught in-between the power struggles of the Whites and Blacks in colonial and post-colonial East Africa, will remain the 'Eternal Other', always the odd one out, the perpetual scapegoat in the masculinist power politics of post-independence Africa.

In 'Recent trends in the treatment of homosexualities in literature and film by African artists' Marc Epprecht examines the explosion of writing about non-normative sexualities and gender role non-conformity in Africa, with gay characters beginning to appear in film and theatre by African directors who profoundly challenge longstanding clichés about African sexuality. Specifically, Epprecht traces 'that trajectory through key works in literature and film since the 1990s. The goal is to ask, how do these works contribute to contemporary debates about sexual rights and sexual health on the continent, bearing in mind the very significant frustrations that continue to be encountered in struggles against gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS in much of Africa?' He finds that depictions of same-sex sexuality in African fiction and film have both increased in frequency and changed in character since the mid-1980s: 'The change in tenor reflects the profound shifts that have occurred in Africa since the 1980s, including the spread of HIV/AIDS with all its attendant implications for hegemonic gender and sexual cultures, the rise of political homophobia and a gay rights movement in opposition, new historical and ethnographic research, and Africans' increased exposure to globalized culture industries.' African artists, Epprecht notes, 'do not uniformly share the view that homosexuality and bisexuality are non-existent, insignificant, or always stigmatized in Africa south of the Sahara. Nor did they agree that homosexuality is an unalloyed threat either to the African family or to African dignity.' Epprecht concludes that for a small but a growing number of artists, 'diverse homosexual or bisexual characters facilitate a powerful critique both of contemporary African society and of Western presumptions about (and prescriptions for) Africa.'

Comparing Maryse Conde's novel *Les derniers rois mages* (1992) to the film *L'exil du dernier roi de Dahomey* (1994), scripted by Patrick Chamoiseau and directed by Guy Deslauriers, Wendy Knepper's essay 'Re-membering the last king of Dahomey' examines how the re-presentation of the last king of Dahomey functions as a complex art of re-membering, a way of performing black masculinities in a postcolonial and diasporic context. From a postcolonial perspective, the king is represented as someone whose erotic experiences are negotiated through exile and displacement as he confronts the shifting constructs of black masculine potency in face of colonial imperatives. This displaced subject is imaged and imagined as prefiguring, re-presenting and engendering the shifting multiplicity of black masculinities in contemporary Africa and its diaspora. Both the film and novel, Knepper argues, use the various figurations of the king to examine the imagined African diasporic community. Condé's king seeks reincarnation in postcolonial Africa and Chamoiseau's king becomes the voice for a new kind of postcolonial warrior. In so doing, both artists reproduce the image of the king as the subject of their own desires for a new African diasporic subject, a forefather of postcolonial fantasies about identity and black masculinities in face of globalization.

Collectively, the essays in *Men in African Film and Fiction* provide space for re-thinking current theory on gender and masculinity:

1) how only some of the most popular theories in masculinity studies in the West hold true in African contexts; 2) how Western masculinities react with indigenous masculinities on the continent; 3) how masculinity and

femininity in Africa seem to reside more on a continuum of cultural practices than on absolutely opposite planes; and 4) how generation often functions as a more potent metaphor than gender.

In addition to offering new insights into the ways in which African men perform, negotiate and experience masculinity, the book is one of the first works to examine masculinities in literature and film from the entire continent. I hope the volume will stimulate further discussion and research because so much of African history and African literary and cultural productions has been read and analysed with African men as an unmarked category.

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