

**A CULTURE OF WOMEN-BATTERING IN SEFATSA'S DRAMATIC TEXT *PAKISO*
: A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE**

**BY
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DECLARATION

I declare that: **A Culture of Women-battering in Sefatsa's Dramatic Text *Pakiso: A Feminist Perspective***, is my own work, that all the sources used or quoted have been put and recognised or accepted by means of entire references, and that this exposition was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another institution or university.

Signature: _____

Date: May 2015

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In Psalm 104 King James Version - The Holy Bible, verse 24 it says: “O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches”. (Jehovah, mesebetsi ya hao e mengata hakakang! O entse kaofela ka bohlale, lefatshe le tletse matlotlo a hao.)

Verse 27 it says: “These wait all upon all thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due session.” (Dibopuwa tseo kaofela di lebeletse wena, hore o di fe dijo tsa tsona ka nako e tshwanetseng.)

Firstly, I would like to thank God for everything, especially the strength to do this study.

Thanks to my supervisor Dr J. Seema for his supervision on my study.

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Not forgetting my spiritual mother Lady-Archbishop G.L. Maraga.

DEDICATION

Special dedication to my late grand-father Tilo Moses Makate.

SUMMARY

This research project entitled: **A Culture of Women-battering in Sefatsa's Dramatic Text *Pakiso: A Feminist Perspective***, is about violence and abuse that the Basotho women experience in society. Sehloho, a violent and abusive Mosotho man, abuses his wife and his two concubines, Mmalenka and Sofi. The study is divided into six chapters and woman-battering as depicted in the dramatic text is discussed in those chapters.

Chapter one is the introductory chapter and it presents the conceptualization, problem statement, literature review, the aims of the study as well as the contribution and challenges of the study.

The second chapter is the pillar of the study. It is the chapter that provides the study with the theoretical frame-work. As research is guided by and dependent on theory to enhance its meaningfulness, this study is guided by Feminism. Feminism helps to organize the study and provides a context in which to examine the problem of the study. It helps to gather and analyse data.

The third chapter gives a clear picture on how Sehloho the irresponsible husband of Mmadimakatso beats his wife. He beats her in front of his concubine Mmalenka. Sehloho abuses his wife emotionally, verbally and physically. He also beats his wife in front of their children. His children grow up in an environment where they develop depression and fears in their lives.

The fourth chapter discusses how Sehloho abuses his concubine Mmalenka by eloping with her by force. As she is reluctant to go with Sehloho, he beats her and

forces her to leave her house without a person guarding it. Mmalenka is forced to leave her house and her business because she is a shebeen queen. The most painful part of Sehloho's action, is when he takes Mmalenka to Mmadimakatso's house and forces both his wife Mmadimakatso and his concubine Mmalenka to sleep in the same room. Mmadimakatso does not agree to share a room with Mmalenka. Sehloho accommodates Mmalenka in the outside room.

In the fifth chapter, the study discusses how Sehloho when he is in Dithotaneng at Setinkolo's place. He is much attracted to Setinkolo's daughter Sofi. He proposes love to Sofi and tells her lies that he is still a single man. Sehloho elopes with Sofi to Mmalenka's place. He forces Mmalenka to accommodate Sofi in her hut's room but Mmalenka beats Sofi. At the end, Sehloho and Sofi sleep in Mmalenka's hut. Mmalenka decides to sleep with Sehloho's children in another hut. Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka go out and Sofi is left alone at home. She calls Sefofane and they steal from Mmalenka and Mmadimakatso.

The concluding chapter is related to the questions raised in the introductory chapter. Sofi becomes the voice of the voiceless. As she steals from Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka, Sehloho's status of patriarchal domination ceases and both Mmalenka and Sofi are released from the practice of *tjhobediso*. Mmalenka is released from an abusive marriage and she returns to her house.

The study concludes with recommendations for applying research and suggestions concerning further research

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

1.1 Introduction

The Oscar Pistorius trial and the killing of Zanele Khumalo who was five months pregnant when she was strangled by her boyfriend, are graphic reminders that women in South Africa live in a sick society. Both Reeva Steenkamp and Zanele Khumalo died at the hands of their boyfriends who claimed to love them. This culture of battering women brings with it a morbid class of patriarchy who believe that it is entitled to determine the value of other human lives, particularly female lives.

The history of South African society is one in which women have been subjected to unspeakable cruelties. McKendrick and Hoffman (1990:2570) have stated that women's relative powerlessness in the home was deeply entrenched across a variety of cultures and communities in South Africa. Mdluli (1997:42) describes the situation in which Africans live:

In the family the man was the head. The woman knew that she was not equal to her husband. She addressed the husband as 'father', and by so doing the children also got a good example of how to behave. A woman refrained from exchanging words with a man. This is one example in which women have been oppressed and abused in the home in South Africa.

The above connects well with our research because our focus will mainly be on women-battering as found in Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*. In *Pakiso* representations of the Basotho culture and womanhood are riddled with ambiguities. In writing about the oppression and abuse of Basotho women, the author draws upon an essential notion of the Basotho in an inductive manner, adding to the idea of the Basotho culture in retrospect as males use it to abuse women. The author highlights the fact that the Basotho culture has been distorted as the bait of oppression and abusing females. The Basotho tradition forbids women from talking openly about their marriage problems. Magwaza (2001:27) says the following about the problematic situation women find themselves in:

Guarding the culture is held as an important responsibility. In instances where the very culture that is guarded is to the detriment of women's dignity, respect and rights, she is not allowed by tradition to answer a man back.

Sefatsa's use of the practice of *tjhobediso* - elopement, advocates the notion that traditionally, Basotho men are viewed as superior and powerful and women as weak, inferior and sex objects. Parents have instilled a belief in their children, especially girls, that to have a bright and successful life, men have to take care of them. The important and inferior roles women took in society include raising children, managing the households and working in the fields.

Sefatsa's drama represents a generalization of oppressed and powerless women. The drama also represents the Basotho patriarchy as monolithic, oppressive and backward, and that needs to be transformed.

The author portrays Sehloho, the male character, as a wife-abuser. He also abuses the two women he eloped with. His wife Mmadimakatso, is repeatedly subjected to emotionally abusive behaviour by her husband because he wants her to accept Mmalenka as his second wife and Sofi his third one.

Feminists such as Sefatsa, are working hard to shift the paradigm of women being inferior to men. They advocate the notion of equality of all sexes and no sex should be considered superior and more powerful than the other. One of the proponents of feminism, Mariama Ba, says the following about feminist writings:

The woman writer in Africa has a special task...As women, we must work for our own future, we must overthrow the status quo which harms us and we must no longer submit to it. Like men, we must use literature as a non-violent but effective weapon (cited in Stratton, 1994:54).

Sefatsa, as a feminist, is one such writer who questions traditional cultural constructions of Basotho women. She is trying to locate an alternative identity for women in a Basotho patriarchal society, within postcolonial social space. The imbalances that exist between men and women in Sefatsa's drama, are of great challenge.

Through Sofi - the female character, the author is perpetuating the Basotho culture of oppressing women. Sofi is the representation of the voice emancipating the Basotho women who are trapped in the culture of *tjhobediso*. She frees women from being viewed as objects of men, and maintains that the women's sexuality belongs to them and not to men.

For the purpose of this research, the terms 'battering' and 'abuse' will be used interchangeably in this study. The terms wife and woman will be used to denote the female partner whereas the terms husband and man will refer to the male partner.

1.2 Definition of concepts

In order for readers to understand the abuse and problems facing women, the definitions of concepts are provided:

1.2.1 Patriarchy

According to Grieve and van Deventer (2005:150), patriarchy is a social system in which the husband is sovereign, possesses power and exercises control. The wife is expected to be dependent, loving, emotional and be a full-time homemaker.

According to Sanderson (2001:198), "patriarchy refers to the structure of modern cultural and political systems which are ruled by men. Such systems are detrimental to the rights of women".

For the purpose of our research, patriarchy will mean the male character that exerts male dominance over females.

1.2.2 Culture

According to Gerber and Linda (2010:53), "distinctions are made between the physical artefacts created by a society, its so-called material culture, and everything else which is the intangible, such as language, customs, beliefs and values that are the main referent of the term culture".

Shade and New (1993:317), state that culture is a collective approach to the world that provides a group, and individuals within that group, with a design for living. Cultural values are of great importance in the life of every human being on earth, as important as the foundation of a house.

Posner (1991:121-123) articulates the characteristics of culture as follows:

Culture as a society, meaning a set of individuals whose mutual relations are organized in a specific social institutions, as a civilization, meaning a set of artefacts that are produced and used by the members of this society, and as a mentality meaning a system of values and ideas, morals and customs.

For the purpose of our research culture will mean the customs, beliefs and practices that the Basotho nation share as their way of life.

1.2.3 Battering

Battering includes all acts of physical, sexual, and psychological or economic violence that may be committed by a person that has been an intimate partner or spouse (Markowitz, 2000:281).

Walker (1999:1) defines a battered wife as any married woman who is repeatedly subjected to any forceful physical, sexual and or psychological behaviour by a husband in order to coerce her to do something he wants her to do without any concern for her rights.

For the purpose of this research, woman battering will mean any act of violence by males that endangers a female's physical and emotional development.

1.2.4 Concubine

According to Nkomazana(2001:17), concubine or *nyatsi* is the term used for a woman who, for one reason or another, remains unmarried but engages in an adulterous affair with a married man. The wife is not expected to question the whereabouts of the husband if he decides not to spend a night at home.

Bonyatsi, the abstract form, *nyatsi* implies a relationship between already married persons for whom the liaison may be more or less long term. It does not include relationships between young unmarried people. The term *nyatsi* is not gender specific (Spiegel, 1990: 4-5).

For the purpose of this research, Mmalenka and Sofi qualify to be Sehloho's concubines. Sehloho a married man is having an extra-marital affair with Mmalenka. Mmalenka is aware that Sehloho is a married man. Even Sehloho's wife Mmadimakatso knows very well that her husband is having an affair with Mmalenka. Even though Sofi is not aware that Sehloho is a married man, but having affair with him, that makes her Sehloho's concubine. She is not Sehloho's girlfriend.

1.2.5 Feminism

A feminist is a person who is struggling to uplift women...challenging systems and structures that oppress women (Matembe, in Lihamba et al. 2007:436).

"Women's quest for emancipation, self-identity and fulfilment can be seen to represent a traitorous act, a betrayal not simply of traditional codes of practice and belief but of the wide struggle for liberation and nationalism" (Nasta cited in Singh: (2008:7).

For the purpose of this research, feminist will mean a creative writer whose intention is to give women a voice to speak about their problems and liberate them from the bondage of patriarchal societies.

1.3 Problem statement

In our society women are afraid to walk alone during the day and night. They are not even safe in their homes, because the perpetrators can be a husband, boyfriend or even a male neighbour.

The brutal killing of Anene Booysen underscores the nature of the abuse and murder in South Africa (Gouws, 2013:19).

African lesbians are abused, raped, killed and bottles are inserted in their vaginas. Grannies, young women and girls are abused, raped and killed, demonstrating that in a patriarchal society, males prey on women.

Ntombekhaya September was abused and finally murdered by her boyfriend (Mapumulo, 2014:5).

The Basotho cultural practices such as *tjhobediso*, a form of elopement, which is a practice that in the past united two families when a young man goes away secretly with a young girl in order to get married, has been distorted so that older men now abduct young girls, rape them and treat them as their wives. This constitutes a violation of human rights.

The situation of wife-battering in the form of *tjhobediso* – elopement in Sefatsa's *Pakiso*, is in need of a solution of the discrepancy between the ways things are

and the way they ought to be. This problematic situation stimulates interest and prompt research.

The question that needs to be answered in this study is the following: What is the situation of wife-battering in Sefatsa's drama *Pakiso*?

This question will be addressed by focusing on the following sub-questions:

- How does Sehloho abuse his wife Mmadimakatso?
- How does he abuse his concubine Mmalenka?
- How does he abuse his second concubine Sofi?

1.4 Aims of the study

Our research aims are generated from the main problem as well as sub-problems of the study.

The above-stated research problem and sub-questions translate into the following research aims:

- The study aims at discussing the situation of wife-battering in Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*.
- It discusses how Sehloho abuses his wife Mmadimakatso.
- It discusses how he abuses his concubine Mmalenka.
- It also discusses how he abuses his second concubine Sofi.

1.5 Methodology

Methods used in research investigations differ from field to field. This proposed research is a textual study and therefore it is a desk research. Library and inter-loan services as well as internet services will be the instruments used to collect data as opposed to interviews. Desk research, library and inter loan services will

be the tools to collect data as opposed to face to face interview and questionnaires.

1.6 Literary theory

To fully understand the battering of women and their treatment as the 'other', we will employ feminist theory. Feminist theory will be used as descriptive model for this study because it is interested in overcoming male dominance by revealing patriarchy's manifestations. Women have felt they must rewrite their stories, and by so doing, persistent inequalities are represented in their texts. One of the proponents of feminism reminds us that:

In some societies, women, like colonized subjects, have been relegated to the position of the "other", "colonized" by various forms of patriarchal domination (Ashcroft et al. 2006:233).

Feminists use strategies to analyse gender exclusion, denial and invisibility. Exclusion means in a patriarchal society, women's contributions are not considered important and that means their important roles in the community are not visible.

1.7 Chapter division

The study comprises six chapters. Chapter one is an introductory chapter, it introduces the study and identifies the problem and aims of the study. It looks at a literature review, chapter divisions of the study and concludes with the possible contribution and challenges of the study.

Chapter two gives an overview of the theoretical framework. Feminist theory forms the cornerstone of the study. It provides an explanation from literature with

regard to the nature of women-battering as well as the challenges that women face, so that they should not be treated as objects.

Chapter three is the one that serves as a prelude to critique how Sehloho abuses his wife Mmadimakatso.

Chapter four focuses on how Sehloho abuses his concubine Mmalenka.

Chapter five pursues the critique further as it focuses on how Sehloho abuses his second concubine Sofi.

Chapter six is the concluding chapter of the study. This chapter embodies a general conclusion that is informed by the findings of the study undertaken. It concludes with the suggestions and recommendations for future research on how to reveal and expose the evils of women-battering. It confronts society to find out what went wrong with African men and Basotho men in particular, who were once highly respected in their societies.

1.8 Literature review

As women abuse is becoming wide spread in all cultures, other scholars have written much about abuse and the murder of women. For the purpose of this study, a comprehensive literature review was conducted in order to know what is known about the topic of women battering, as well as what is still unknown about women battering.

What is commonly known about women battering is that it happens when males believe that they are entitled to control females. It is known that males can assault, rape and even kill females because they are powerless.

What is unknown about women battering is that eloping with a woman and not marrying her is the most painful abuse on women. The elopement in Sefatsa's drama is the cornerstone of this study. Sehloho abuses his wife by eloping with other women without paying *bohadi*- dowry money for marriage.

The following literature states that through the ages women were battered and considered the 'other' for they were objectified by the males and husbands:

Molapo (2004) in *A Christian Analytic of Marriage Through Abduction Among The Basotho People of Lesotho: A challenge for Pastoral Care Ministry*, wrote extensively about *tjhobediso* among the Basotho people. Molapo (2004:5) says the following as he once witnessed *tjhobediso*:

It was painful for me to see Basotho girls being abducted by more than one young man, i.e., those who accompany the one who had ear-marked a girl for mirage. I could hear a piercing cry of a girl who was being captured when she was crying to resist the abduction. And a young girl will always try to free herself. She could be beaten like a dog if she was persistently resisting the abductors. When this drama takes place, the Mosotho girl would definitely know that she is being forced to enter into marriage with somebody she does not even know.

The author portrays *tjhobediso* as a form of harassment and abusive violence done against the consent of the Mosotho girl, to force her to enter into unplanned marriage.

Maloka (2004) in *Basotho and the Miners: A Social History of Labour Migrancy in Lesotho and South Africa – 1890-1940*, sets out to write a history of Basotho miners from bottom up. Maloka (2004) points out how migrant labours altered the existing marriage patterns of Basotho. The author maintains that many migrants

engaged in a practice known as *chobediso* which was a form of elopement. As dowry was not paid, this left many newly married in a vulnerable position and many fled to avoid abusive husbands. In order for them to survive, they ran away and resorted to prostitution.

Muwati & Mutasa (2011) in *Representations of the body as contested terrain: The Zimbabwean liberation war novel and the politics of nation and nationalism*, shows how women recruits were raped, abused and killed by their senior commanders. The poor young women had no choice but to surrender their bodies to a military patriarchy. Senior guerrilla commanders demanded sexual services from young women guerrillas who had joined the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. Those who did not comply with the 'rules' of the corrupt commanders, were killed.

Wyatt in *Look me in the eye* (2007), makes readers, particularly women readers, aware that love addiction is as addictive as any drug. She maintains that love can make a woman stay in an unhappy, abusive and destructive marriage. She was a victim of abuse and she found herself on the street with no money, without work and nowhere to live. At the end she made a choice to survive, to learn and understand the nature of domestic violence, its roots and its cure.

Zulu in *Gender and Cultural Representations in the Sesotho Novel* (2012) examines how women are suppressed in some Sesotho novels. Patriarchy operates like colonisers. Women have been relegated to an inferior position and they are also objectified.

Adichie in *Purple Hibiscus* (2004), reveals striking correlations between spousal violence and various forms of violence involving children. The children, who

witness confrontations between parents, suffer from exposure to such violence. In the book the daughter is exposed to battering and therefore she is afraid of her father who is a priest.

The notion and thinking of the above researchers and scholars is to liberate women from the patriarchal societies. Their themes are similar in the sense that they all focused on the sufferings of females in the hands of males. Their submissions pave the way for my research because none of them wrote about the *tjhobediso* practice as a practice that males can use to abuse women.

1.9 Ethics

The ethics approval will be sought from the North-West University Ethics Committee. This is an interpretative study of texts in the public domain and no human subjects will be participating in the study. Ethics matters are therefore not complex.

1.10 Possible contribution of the study

This study will lead members of African societies to become aware of the fact that women-battering is inhumane. People are living in dangerous times where men's consciences are dead. Innocent women are abused and lose their precious lives at the hands of merciless monsters called men. This study will contribute a great deal by exposing the challenges attached to women battering. The study will argue that women-battering is problematic on the grounds that it threatens the gender equality and in the end it leads to the abuse and murder of females. It appeals to men to stop their barbarism and appreciate the life of women.

1.11 Possible challenges of the study

The textual research with regard to the theme “women battering” is very limited. This study will contribute a great deal by exposing the challenges attached to women battering and will encourage researchers to write about women-battering to expose the inhumane behaviour and irresponsible actions of men.

1.12 Conclusion

This chapter gives a clearly outlined framework of the whole research study. It gives a broad outline as to what the centre of the study is; how does Sefatsa defy and expose the evils of patriarchal control under the disguise of the practice of *tjhobediso*. Sefatsa, as a feminist, consciously recognises that certain inequalities exist in traditional Basotho societies.

In subsequent chapters, we will posit the methodology of criticism of patriarchal control of female characters suffering under brutal patriarchal oppression. The study will focus on Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso* in order to demonstrate how women who resist the artificial binary of good/evil and tradition/ modern create a space for other women to re-articulate their identity. Its main focus will be on trying to recast female subjectivity and agency by allowing women to name and expose the structure of oppression in order to resist certain patriarchal oppression within a postcolonial framework.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

It has become a prerequisite in the academic sphere these days to apply a certain literary theory when analysing a literary work of art. Our particular aim in this chapter is to develop a theoretical feminist framework that will inform the analysis of the building blocks of this study. It is important to highlight the fact that, Feminist Theory is a very broad literary field of study. For the purpose of this study, our aim is to focus mainly to those Feminists aspects that are mostly relevant for this study. We aim to pay more attention to Feminists aspects such as: The structure of the patriarchal society, objectification of women, the portrayal of female characters and transformation of society, as important aspects of the Feminist approach. Using Feminist conception of female oppression which has its roots in patriarchy, as a point of reference, this study examines how the multiple forces of cultural institutions, abuse, violence and objectification work together to form a formidable collective force causing pain and trauma to articulate the female experience.

2.2 A Feminist Approach

According to Jefferson & Robey (1991:204):

Feminist criticism is a specific kind of political discourse, a critical and theoretical practice committed to the struggle against patriarchy and sexism, not simply a concern for gender in literature.

Feminism started as a political movement and some writers have used it as a literary theory to address and highlight the injustices against women. Feminism as literary theory helps readers and critics to ask and answer questions about literary texts. It helps scholars to come up with constructive and critical arguments concerning the scholarly views of literature. As there are many conflicting approaches and arguments concerning the philosophy of feminism. Even though there are different approaches concerning feminism, their meeting point is where they define patriarchy as an unjust social system that is oppressive to women. For the purpose of this research, we intend to take feminism as our tool to analyse and discuss Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*. We don't intend to rely on one philosophy of feminism such as Black feminism or Western feminism. All different types of Feminism will be integrated into this study.

Feminism will fit in the textual dynamics of the dramatic text *Pakiso* itself. The study aims to show how feminism as a strategy of literary interpretation can reveal some new possibilities of reading *Pakiso* which are attuned to issues of condensation, displacement and symbolism.

Some feminists discard the term 'theory' because they believe that it is associated with males. Feminists castigate Freud's theories for their sexism. The assumption that female sexuality is shaped by penis-envy, is totally castigated by feminists (Selden, 1989:135). Freud's statement treats females as inferior males, which feminists do not accept at all. However feminists are attracted to Lacanian theory because it does not assert a masculine authority. It should be noted that other feminist theories will be employed in our analysis of *Pakiso*. For argument's sake, ideas drawn from a Lacanian psychological paradigm to facilitate an interpretation

of the dramatic text *Pakiso*, will be employed because the drama is so sensitive to some issues of gender. The research does not set out to be a Lacanian reading of the drama *Pakiso* but it adopts some aspects, such as power as well as language.

2.3 The notion of womanhood

Other women writers reject and have rejected the term “feminism” and they opted to be called womanists. Many scholars have attempted to define the notion of womanhood. Womanism has been culturally defined by Walker (1983) as a culture-specific synonym for Black feminism. Walker’s (1983:11) definition provides guidance on the focus of the movement when she notes that womanists are:

Committed to the survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female. Black womanhood seeks to liberate the strictures imposed on women as they are viewed as an undervalued and marginalized minority.

On the other hand Woodward & Mastin (2005: 34) maintains that the notion of black womanhood, like all feminism, is prescriptive as it stereotypes the black woman as a caregiver and a sacrificial lamb.

McHorter (2003:36) views womanhood as the state of being a woman, having passed the menarche. Womanhood is like femininity but it is associated with different views of gender roles. Feminism tries to reconstruct the idea of what it means to be a feminist. Davies says:

The term “feminism” often has to be qualified when used by most African and other Third World women. The race, class and cultural allegiances that are brought to its consideration cause the most conflict. ...as feminism is filtered through a media that is male-

dominated and male-oriented, African women recognize the inequalities and, especially within the context of struggles for national liberation, are challenging entrenched male dominance (Davies, 1996:12).

Ogunyemi (1996:6) argues that:

Feminism has been represented as offensive, and therefore no respectable African writer openly, actively, and consistently associates herself with the ideology.

Ogunyemi's argument is based on the fact that it would distort the fact if all the blame is put on the arrival of the white man in Nigeria.

2.4 The structure of the patriarchal society

The basic view of females is that society is patriarchal, meaning that it is ruled by males, be it, religion, politics, economic, social as well as in creative writings. Millett (cited in Selden, 1989:137) uses the term patriarchy to describe the course of women's oppression. Patriarchy subordinates and treats the female as an inferior male. Feminists are trying to disturb the patriarchal culture and create a less oppressive environment for women as well as women writers. Feminists proponents, such as Millett, maintain that males tend to define females by negative reference to males and as a kind of non-males by their lack of identifying male organs. Males claim to have achieved the most important works of civilization.

In Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*, the playwright highlights the fact that women suffer emotional abuse at the hands of men. Sehloho the husband of Mmadimakatso is having an affair with Mmalenka. Their love affair is known to his wife and the community. Sehloho visits Mmalenka at any time. He is not worried about his wife and the community, and he sleeps at his concubine's place for a

number of days. Lehana, who is also married and the brother of Sehloho, forces Mmadimakatso not to question Sehloho when he arrives late because, according to him, men are allowed to come home any time without explaining themselves to their wives.

Mmadimakatso furthermore is also forced to live together with her husband's mistress Mmalenka in her (Mmadimakatso's) house as a so-called second wife. Sehloho elopes with Mmalenka by force. He lied to Sofi that he is not married and elopes with her to Mmalenka's place.

Sefatsa as a feminist, reveals the patriarchal system in the drama. Men in the community praises him for the wrongs that he is doing. No man in the drama book is fighting the patriarchal domination. All the males in the drama book are portrayed as men who understand that men can do as they pleased and women have no rights but to accept that men are superior to women.

Sefatsa does not portray the female characters of Mmadimakatso, Mmalenka and Sofi as submissive to Sehloho's patriarchal domination. They are portrayed as females fighting against patriarchal domination within a feminist framework.

In Marxist terms, the order of women is conceived as a subordinate class of social classes, or as a lower caste that cuts across all economic classes (Abrams, 1985: 208). Sefatsa's female characters are in the process of their being socialised and to fight the reigning patriarchal ideology as Sehloho is forcing them to cooperate in their own subordination.

According to McFadden (1994:24), Marxist feminists hold the ideology that the specific subjection of women will end after the destruction of capitalism. This argument goes down to the dynamic social relations of patriarchy and capitalism. The pattern that emerges in Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*, is that the abuse of

women is possible since they are poor and moreover, they are vulnerable to exploitation by patriarchy and social forces such as *tjhobediso*. Mmadimakatso is constantly beaten up by her husband Sehloho, who is the bread-winner.

The playwright has shown readers that Sehloho's society is patriarchal. The perpetrator is a man, an outstanding member of the community. The playwright shows readers that men in Sehloho's community also promote patriarchy. The blame is always on the other woman. In the case of Mmadimakatso, it is understandable that it is painful to deal with the betrayal of a partner but she does not get help from the members of the community. Males such as Malefetsane condone elopement and polygamy. Malefetsane says to Sehloho: *O buretse le ka koto mosadi, mosatsana o qetelle ka ngwana*- You should strike a wife with a knobkerrie, then a young woman, and then finish off with a young girl (Sefatsa 1979:25).

The denigration of the dignity of women manifests itself in a disparaging way in which women are portrayed. Malefetsane encourages Sehloho to have sexual intercourse with *mosadi* meaning his wife Mmadimakatso, *mosatsana*, meaning his concubine Mmalenka and up with *ngwana* meaning Sofi because she is still young.

2.5 Objectification of women

Objectification occurs when the behaviour of a woman's partner indicates to her that she is viewed as an object. Sehloho treats his wife Mmadimakatso as an object because he does not regard her as a person with inner energy. He wants her to accept his ill-mannered behaviour of eloping with other women whilst she is still around. Sehloho eloped with Mmalenka without paying dowry cattle for that marriage. This is another way of abusing and objectifying the poor Mmalenka. A

man who loves his woman, pays dowry cattle for her. Sehloho also eloped with Sofi without paying dowry cattle for Sofi's parents.

Mofokeng (2014:9) maintains that *bohadi* is more than just a financial transaction between families. It presents an opportunity for a groom to declare his undying love for his woman in an act that is sweeter than a love letter.

Bohadi is still a traditional practice that the Basotho respect. *Bohadi* is paid to show that the woman is so and so's wife. *Bohadi* is also a sign of showing that the person is no longer a young boy, he is a fully grown man.

We don't have to throw the proverbial baby out with the bath water. *Bohadi* as an institution is redeemable. It does not only symbolise the unification of two families and is an indication of emotional and financial readiness, but adds accountability (Chigumadzi, 2014:8). As other communities seek to undo the excesses of patriarchy, and help women to embrace their rights and assert their freedom, characters like Sehloho continue to persist in violating women.

2.6 The portrayal of female characters

Most of the highly regarded books focus on male main characters. To cite a few examples, Ulysses, Hamlet, Captain Ahab and Huckleberry Finn, embody masculine traits and pursue masculine interests. In such books, the roles of female characters take a different direction of that to the males' desires. As such, a number of books are lacking in important female roles, and are addressed to male readers, so that female readers are forced to identify against themselves by assuming male values and ways of feelings and acting.

Over the past years, feminist scholars have been engaged in projects of recovering and reinterpreting creative writings by women. These scholars maintain that most of the females' writings are defined by being contrasted with males' writings. Most of the women's writings expose the privileges and silences of patriarchal cultures, challenging traditional writings by males

Most male creative writers have viewed women as inferior and objects that have to be submissive and obedient to men. More and more women are taking up their constitutional rights globally of receiving respect, especially from men, yet Basotho women are not respected by males. They view a woman as a person who is just there to fulfil the needs of the man and nothing else.

In Moephuli's *Peo ena e jetswe ke wena* (1982), women are negatively portrayed. Moephuli portrays Samina as a prostitute (*letekatse*), a slut, a whore who just sleeps around with whoever she meets. She is portrayed as a person who doesn't respect herself.

In K.P.D. Maphalla's novel *Botsang Lebitla* (2008), the writer portrays a female character as a person not to be trusted at all. Mmamasolomane had an affair with the reverend and she is also woman whose hatred was so vicious that she can even kill.

Agbasiere (1999:84-85) says that African literature:

Written by male writers, produces stereotypical features that portrayed women as weak and always unable to overcome their hardships. This presents a stereotypical African literature where women do not play any positive roles, but are only able to perpetuate negative images and not explore all aspects of women's experiences.

Adebayo (1996:10) argues:

Women's own attempts to cope with situations they find themselves in are regarded as a "problem" by men and a betrayal of traditions which are often confused with women's roles.

Boehmer (2005) claims:

To Third World women and women of colour these concerns speak with particular urgency, not only because of their need to resist the triple oppression or marginalization that the effects of colonialism, gender and male-dominated language create, but also because their own tactics of self-representation are often usefully adopted from older and more established nationalist politics of 'their men' (Boehmer, 2005:5).

In this milieu women have felt they must rewrite their stories, and to do so, they have to resist, recreate, and re-empower themselves. Ogunyemi claims:

African novels written by women, as counter narratives, fascinate with their inherent contradictions as they reveal strength and weakness, beauty and ugliness, ambiguity and clarity, in unfolding the politics of oppression (Ogunyemi, 1996:12).

Mariama Ba, in *So Long a Letter* (1981), shows the changing consciousness of the educated African woman writer who examines and questions women's social positions in a postcolonial society. Singh (2008:125) maintains that Dangarembga's *Nervous Conditions* (1988) demonstrates how women who resist the artificial binaries of good/evil and traditional/modern create a space for other women to re-articulate identity in newly emergent and constructed spaces.

Women writers are recasting female subjectivity by allowing women to name the structure of oppressions in order to resist certain patriarchal oppressions within postcolonial frameworks.

2.7 Transformation in society

If people want to transform the society, they must empower women. Under the burden of violence and abuse, many women are demoralised and they see no value that they can add to their society. Biko's words (cited in Runji, 2014:17) about transformation are as follows:

There's no transformation process that could bear the desired outcomes without women throwing their weight behind that change initiative, and the same holds for the nation-building process.

In sectors where males are holding power, they do not use their positions to protect and promote women. They rather use power to marginalise and denigrate women. Older men in powerful positions in workplaces are preying on young women for sex in exchange for a job or better treatment at work (Mokwena, 2013:19). According to Selden (1989:135), women have been made inferior and the oppression has been compounded by men's belief that women are inferior by nature.

2.8 Conclusion

Feminism in literature reveals how women are ill-treated by patriarchal domination. Feminism brings out many things in literature. It becomes an instrument used to explain the characters' behaviour as well as their motivations. The more one applies feminism to Sefatsa's characters, the more realistic her creativity appears. It also makes the drama appealing for readers.

In the next chapters feminism will be applied when analysing Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*. In the following chapter feminism is applied to show how Sehloho batters his wife Mmadimakatso.

CHAPTER THREE

SEHLOHO BATTERS HIS WIFE MMADIMAKATSO

3.1 Introduction

Sehloho arrives late in the evening from his concubine Mmalenka, the shebeen queen. His wife Mmadimakatso takes him by surprise. Even though she is already in bed, she is not fast asleep. She hears Sehloho knocking at the door but she pretends that she is fast asleep. Sehloho is drunk and he comes home singing. On his arrival at the door, he says:

Ke a tseba hore moleko ona wa mosadi o a be a nnotleletse ka ntle. Ke tla le raha hore a be a nne a bule - I know that this devil woman has locked me outside. I will kick it until she opens it (Sefatsa, 1979:1).

Sehloho speaks loud so that his wife can hear him. He employs the term *moleko* – devil as a metaphor to refer to his wife, Mmadimakatso. Sehloho associates his wife with *moleko* because he thinks that Mmadimakatso's idea of not opening the door for him is a devilish idea. He thinks that action is cruel and unpleasant.

Sehloho abuses his wife by his drunkenness. Gelles and Cornell (1990:18) are for the idea that if alcohol is the cause of violence, the solution of the drinking problem would eliminate the violence. Sehloho is not intending to solve his drinking problem. He uses his drinking problem to abuse his wife Mmadimakatso.

Mmadimakatso does not open the door for her husband Sehloho. She is angry with him. She speaks to herself softly and Sehloho does not hear her speaking. She says the following words whilst she is in bed, but not fast asleep:

Ke re satane e ntenne ena ya monna basadi!. Ke hore o a be a tauwe a re fu! ...Ke tla mo lokisa hona kajeno lena. Ke tla thola ke re tuu!

This Satan husband is frustrating me people! I say he is extremely drunk! Today I will put him right. I will become very silent. (Sefatsa, 1979:1).

From Sehloho's words and his wife's, there is clearly a conflict between the two. Mmadimakatso also employs a metaphor to refer to Sehloho as *satane*. Satan does not understand that what he is doing to people, is not right. Sehloho, just like Satan, does not understand that he abuses his wife when he comes home late and drunk.

He knocks at the door until he decides to go to his brother's place. On the way, he chooses to go to Mmalenka's place before going to his brother Lehana. Sehloho say:

Empa... e re nke ke boele ha Mmalenka mane hae, pele ke ya kwana ha moreso Lehana, ke yo bona hore na le yena o robetse jwalekaha a itse o se a robala, ha ke ne ke tloha mono.

But... let me return there at Mmalenka's home before I go to my brother Lehana's place, and go and see if she too is asleep as she said when I left there.

(Sefatsa, 1979:2).

On Sehloho's arrival at Mmalenka's place, just like Mmadimakatso, she pretends to be fast asleep, and refuses to open for him. Mmalenka says the following whilst she is still in her bed:

O a hlanya ke a mmona. O re o tla tla a robala ha mang a tauwe ka ona mokgwa ona oo? Ke mo leleketse bona botahwa bona ba hae. O re o tla tla a nkgela mang moo, haeka o bodile jwalo? Ha a tsamaye! Ebile nna ke tla mo hlalla kwana, ka lebaka la bona botahwa bona bo nyekisang pelo. Ke re motho wa teng o fumane e se e ka ke tshitshidi. Ke re podilekgwana e boya ka kwano!

He is mad I am aware. The manner in which he is drunk, at whose place does he think he will sleep? I chased him away because of his drunkenness. As he is rotten, who shall perceive his smell? Let him go! And so I will divorce him because of his disgusting drunkenness. I say you will find him as if he is a stinkbug. I say even a lady-bird is better than him. (Sefatsa, 1979:3).

From Mmalenka's soliloquy, one observes that Sehloho abuses her. When he is drunk, just like his wife Mmadimakatso, Mmalenka does not want to sleep with him because he smells badly. Gelles and Cornell (1990:18) maintain that it is a myth for perpetrators to blame their violent behaviour on alcohol. In the case of Sehloho's drunkenness, no one can blame his behaviour on alcohol because even when he is sober, he is still violent.

From Mmalenka's place, Sehloho goes to his brother's place. On his arrival, he knocks at the door but there is no answer even though his brother Lehana and his wife are in bed, but not fast asleep. From Lehana's place he intends to go home again but unfortunately he did not make it.

3.2 The results of Sehloho's drunkenness

On his way back home, a ghost punishes Sehloho by making him incapable of knowing and seeing where home is. The ghost also pushes him into the Tswape dam. He arrives the following day at dawn. He is trembling with cold. While

trembling like a child, Mmadimakatso sends a message to Lehana and Thuso to come and see Sehloho

Lehana, his wife Mmamohau and Sehloho's neighbour want to know why Sehloho is trembling with cold like a child. Sehloho claims that he felled into a ghost trap while he was walking during the night looking for his wife Mmadimakatso who had not been at home. He claims that on his arrival at home, his wife was not at home so he had to go and look for her and their children. Thuso wants to find out where Mmadimakatso was, as Sehloho claims that she was not at home. Thuso asks Mmadimakatso:

Thuso: *Empa ke ka lebaka lang ha a pheheletse hore o ne a batlana le wena le bana?*

But why does he insist that he was looking for you and children?

Mmadimakatso: *Aubuti Thuso, Sehloho o a tahwa. O tena a sa tsebe hantle hore na ehlile ho etsahetse jwang ka yena tjena hobane o ne a tauwe.*

Brother Thuso, Sehloho gets drunk. In the long run he does not know what exactly happened to him because he was drunk.

Thuso: *A tauwe ka Mantaha jwalo Mmadimakatso? Le hona ha ho ko bo ho thwe monna o a tahwa.*

Mmadimakatso, was he so drunk on Monday? And it is not worthy to say the man gets drunk.

Lehana: *Thuso moreso, mono teng ke paki. O fihlile ho nna mane a re fu! Ke a kgolwa le hoja ka mmotsa lebitso la hae, o ne a sa tlo mpoella lona.*

Thuso my brother, on that point I am a witness. He was extremely drunk when he arrives at my place. I doubt that if I had asked him his name he would be able to tell me who he is.

Mmadimakatso: *Tjhefu ena e mmolayang o e nwa hona mono ha mosadi eno.*

He drinks this poison which is killing him at that woman's place.

Thuso: *O bolela hore o nwa hore a se ke a tseba letho, le se mo dihetseng ka metsing jwalo?*

Do you tell that he drinks to such an extent that he does not know anything, even about what threw him into the water?

(Sefatsa, 1978: 11).

The underlying message from Thuso's language is that Mmadimakatso is to blame.

He does not fully believe Mmadimakatso that Sehloho was drunk. He doubts that Sehloho can be so drunk on Monday because Monday is a working day. He further warns Mmadimakatso not to say: *monna o a tahwa*. – a man gets drunk. He wants her to employ an euphemism such as *monna o ne a thabile* – the husband was happy. Sigh (2008), says the following about how women speak:

Women speak with particular urgency, not only because of their need to resist the triple oppression or marginalization that the effect of colonialism, gender and male-dominated language create, but also because their own tactics of self-representation are often usefully adopted from the older and more established nationalist politics of "their men" (Sigh, 2008:5).

Thuso's language emphasises patriarchal domination. He oppresses Mmadimakatso by warning her that she is not free to use language the way she wants. Mmadimakatso uses language the way she wants because she wants to free herself from male domination. She resists oppression and she wants to show males that females are not inferior as they challenge male – dominated language.

3.3 Mmadimakatso is found guilty

After few days, Lehana, Mmamohau and Thuso paid Sehloho a visit. Thuso is not satisfied because last time they visited Sehloho, they did not get enough information about what exactly happened as they found Sehloho trembling with cold after falling into the dam. Thuso feels strongly that justice is not done because Sehloho told them that he ended up falling into the dam because he was looking for his wife and children. He claims that they were not at home and Thuso believes that Sehloho is telling the truth.

Thuso: *Empa le ile la lahla taba ya Sehloho maoba le a tseba?*

But do you know that the day before yesterday you did not concentrate on Sehloho's matter?

Lehana: *Ya eng jwale monna Thuso?*

What matter is that man Thuso?

Thuso: *Ya hore o ne a ilo batla Mmadimakatso le bana. Ho bonahala hantle hore Mmadimakatso o ne a le siyo lapeng ha Sehloho a tla be a yo mmatla. Kapa e teng ntho e etsahetseng hore a tle a be a tsamaye le bosiu jwalo.*

The matter that he was going to look for Mmadimakatso and children. It seem as if Mmadimakatso was not at home as Sehloho had to go and look for her. Or is there anything that happened that caused him to wander at night like that.

Lehana: *Mmadimakatso! O tjho hore moreso ha a ka a fihla le letho feela lapeng moo maoba bosiu?*

Mmadimakatso! Do you say my brother never arrived at home the night before yesterday?

Mmadimakatso: *Aubuti, nna le a mmakatsa ka nnete. Hakere ke boletse hantle ka re na Sehloho o ntse a tsekelaka le masiu a batlang, hobane ke a tseba hore ha a le siyo o a be a le hokae?*

Brother, you people surprise me. I did tell you when I asked what is Sehloho looking for when he is roaming around at night, because I know if he is not here where he is.

Thuso: *Mmadimakatso! O bolela hore o kwaletse monna kantle bosiung boo?*

Mmadimakatso! Are you telling me that you locked your husband outside that night?

Mmadimakatso: *(A haketse) Ha ke na mosebetsi le yena nna ...*

(She is angry) I don't care about him...

Lehana: *O hana ho araba potso jwale mohatsa ngwaneso.*

My brother's wife, now you refuse to answer the question.

Mmadimakatso: *Oo! E, le jwale ... le jwale ...*

Oh! Yes, of course ... of course...

Thuso: *Ho o thusitse ka eng ho kwalla monna ka ntle? Hona ha a batlile a eshwa jwalo na e ne e sa tlo ba wena ya mmolaileng?*

...What did you benefit from locking you husband outside? As he nearly died, would it not be you who killed him?

Mmamohau: *Mmadimakatso ngwaneso, monna ha a kwallwe ka ntle tlung ya hae. Ke ho iphoqa le ho ikenya mahlo a batho ho etsa jwalo....Rona ba habo Sehloho re ne re tla o qosa le ho o hloya hoja Sehloho o ne a shwele hona jwale.*

Mmadimakatso my sister, a husband is not locked outside his house. By so doing, you are embarrassing yourself and inviting people's attention to yourself.... We Sehloho's family would have accused and hated you if Sehloho had died (Sefatsa, 1978: 12-13).

They all agree that Mmadimakatso is wrong because a woman must open up for her husband even though he is late or under the influence of liquor. Sigh

(2008:147) maintains that emotions are “culturally constructed and socially situated”. The reaction of the community toward Mmadimakatso can be understood in such terms. Readers see Thuso, Lehana and Mmamohau blaming Mmadimakatso for Sehloho’s abusive behaviour toward her. They claim that she is wrong because she refused to open the door for her husband and by so doing, she brought shame upon herself.

The playwright shows the audience that Sehloho’s society is patriarchal. The perpetrator is man, an outstanding member of the community. The playwright further shows readers that married women also promote patriarchy. The blame is always on the other woman. In the case of Mmadimakatso, it is understandable that it is painful to deal with the betrayal of a partner but no one is helping her to fight for women’s rights. Lehana and Thuso do not advise Sehloho about the wrongs that he is doing, but instead they put the blame on Mmadimakatso. Even Mmamohau does not help Mmadimakatso to fight patriarchy, she also blames Mmadimakatso as she did not open the door for her husband when he was under the influence of liquor.

3.4 Sehloho whips Mmadimakatso

Sehloho intends to harm his brother Lehana, his wife Mmadimakatso and his concubine Mmalenka. He is still bitter because none of them opened the door for him when he was under the influence of liquor. To harm Mmadimakatso, he elopes with his concubine Mmalenka to Mmadimakatso’s place. What Sehloho does, is not accepted in the Basotho culture. A married man like Sehloho is not allowed to elope with a woman. If he wants to enter into polygamy, he can do that but following the correct procedure. What Sehloho is doing is not part of polygamy, this is only the way to harm the people who refused to open the door for him.

Sehloho arrives home with his concubine Mmalenka and he expects his wife to accept that. Mmadimakatso, as a Mosotho woman does not accept what her husband is doing because that is not part of the Basotho culture. The following is the conversation between Sehloho and his wife Mmadimakatso which leads them to fight:

Mmadimakatso: *(Ka ho makala le bohale)* Sehloho, haeka o tlisitse mosadi eo wa hao ha ka moo.....?

(In a state of confusion and angry) Sehloho, how dare you bring this woman to my homestead.....?

Sehloho: *Oo! Le wena o jwalo...(a kwala monyako. Ntwa e a kupa).*

Oh! You are also like that...(he closes the door. They fight).

Mmadimakatso: *Le kgale! O ka mpa wa mpolaya. (Ba kolokotjhana).*

Never! You better kill me. (They wrestle).

Sehloho: *Oo! O manganga le ho ba manganga ee! (Tlelapa le setebele di a fapanyetsana. Meno, manala le hlooho di tlola boroko).*

Oh! You are so stubborn! (They exchange slaps and punches. Teeth, nails and head are all part of the action).

Mmadimakatso: *(Oa matha) Le kgale, le ha ho se ho thwe ke tsherehane. Mosadi e mong a tlo kengwa ka tlung ya ka ke ntse ke tonne mahlo! Letekatse le hona! Nka mpa ka shwa! Ke tla lwana ya kgumamela.*

(She runs) Never, even though I can be seen as inferior. Another wife cannot be placed in my home whilst my eyes are still open! More over a prostitute! I better die! I will fight this strenuously.

(Sefatsa, 1978:16).

Sehloho's verbal abusive behaviour goes far beyond mean behaviour. The phrase which is incomplete, as some words are not written, *Oo! Le wena o jwalo...* - Oh! You are also like that..., involves inflicting psychological violence on his wife Mmadimakatso. His verbal abuse escalates into physical abuse as he beats her. Sehloho as the abuser, refuses to understand Mmadimakatso's point of view. In fact, he objects in a violently verbal as well as physical way.

Sehloho is so violent and beats his wife for not accepting his concubine as he wants her to live with them in their house. Mmadimakatso, even though she is not so strong, fights back. The phrase: *Ba kolokotjhana* - They wrestle, shows clearly that Mmadimakatso is not folding her arms whilst Sehloho is beating her. Mmadimakatso is also fighting back.

Pagelow (1984:277) maintains that throughout the ages, violence against wives has been accepted and promoted as normal behaviour. Mmadimakatso does not accept violence that is promoted against women. She not only fights against Sehloho, but she is also the embodiment of women fighting violence and abuse against women.

Dobash and Dobash (1979:63) argue that history is replete with customs, and laws allowing women to be beaten, even tortured by their husbands. Sehloho, as the perpetrator of this form of violence is not taken to task about such acts.

3.5 Sehloho beats Mmadimakatso for *dithole*/rubbish

Mmadimakatso hates Mmalenka. When she sweeps the floor, she sweeps all the dirt - *dithole* - in the direction of Mmalenka's hut. By so doing, Mmadimakatso is provoking Mmalenka. Mmalenka reports to Sehloho that the chicken meat is being

stolen from the pot and there is a person busy sweeping dirt in the direction of her hut. The following is the conversation between Mmalenka and Sehloho:

Mmalenka: *Hela aubuti Sehloho, nna ke bona mehloho feela lapeng mona ha ke fihla ke etswa disung. Namanyane yane ya maobane ya kgoho, e neng e setse ka pitseng ka mono, ke fumane pitsa e ntse e re: "O ne o nnehileng?" Ho feta mona, ke bona le matlakala a fieletswe monyako wa ntlo mona.*

Hey Sehloho my brother, when I return from collecting cow dung, I find only surprises here at home. That little chicken meat that was left in the pot yesterday, I found the pot was empty. On top of that, I see rubbish swept towards my hut's door.

Sehloho: *Dithole tseo ke di tshethemang hodimo monyako moo, ha se wena ya di bokeleditseng teng?*

The rubbish that I jump over at the door, are you not the one who gathered it there?

Mmalenka: *Tjhe, ha se nna monna batho.*

No, it is not me, dear.

(Sefatsa, 1979, 30-31).

Sehloho confronts Mmadimakatso about the stolen chicken meat which was in the pot in Mmalenka's house and also about the rubbish that is in front of Mmalenka's house.

Sehloho: *Mmadimakatso, ke se ke ntse ke bona hore o tletse nyooko feela. Ke mang ya fieletseng matlakala ha Mmalenka mane?*

Mmadimakatso, I can see that you are full of troubles. Who swept rubbish there towards Mmalenka's hut?

Mmadimakatso: *O ne o elang masimong? Athe o ka be o ile wa sala o lebetse ntloya Mmalenka hore o tle o bone motho eo ya fieletseng matlakala monyako wa yona.*

Why did you go to the fields? You should have stayed behind to rubbish towards the hut's door (Sefatsa, 1979:31).

Mmadimakatso does not answer the questions Sehloho is asking but keeps on deceiving him. Sehloho's question to Mmadimakatso is: *Ke mang ya fieletseng matlakala ha Mmalenka mane?* – Who swept the rubbish towards Mmalenka's place? Mmadimakatso, instead of answering her husband, also asks him a question: *O ne o elang masimong?* – Why did you go to the fields? Mmadimakatso's question shows that she is not the guard who is guarding Mmalenka's place. She further tells Sehloho that had he not gone to the fields, he would have seen the person who stole the meat as well as the one who swept the rubbish in front of Mmalenka's place.

Sehloho turns to his daughter Dimakatso about the stolen chicken meat and about the person who swept rubbish to Mmalenka's door. Dimakatso denies knowing about what her father is asking about. While Sehloho is questioning his daughter, Mmadimakatso becomes furious and warns Sehloho to stop asking their daughter questions because she is not his third wife. Mmadimakatso's talk angers Sehloho and he starts whipping her. The conversation between Sehloho and Mmadimakatso involving the affair of Mmalenka does not end up without the two fighting. The following is the conversation between the two which ends in a fight:

Sehloho: *O se o nteletse ho fetang tekanyo jwale (Ba kampana). Ha o bua le nna ekare o bua le sekatana sa monna. ...Ke tla o tlenya molalanyana ona hore o ntswele. (Dipitsa kokotukotu. Dimakatso o a lla ebile o a hweletsa).*

You have disrespected me for more than enough (They wrestle).
You talk to me as if I am an inferior husband. I will throttle this

little neck so you can respect me. (Pots fall. Dimakatso is crying and she is screaming).

Dimakatso: *Jo wee! Ntate tlohela Mme hle! Ntate o bolaya Mme! Jo! Mme wee!*
Oh! Please father leave mother! Father you kill my mother! Oh! My mother!

Mmadimakatso: *(O hwataletse le yena) Le kgale. O tla tlenya ba shweleng....Le nna ke o batla hona molaleng moo (O mo loma ka mokokotlong).*

(She is also firm) Never. You will throttle the dead...I am also gunning for your neck (She bites him on his back).

Sehloho: *Itjhuu! Wa ntoma mokoto towe! (Dimakatso o tswa a hweletsa).*

Ow! You bite me, you bloody dog! (Dimakatso goes out screaming).

(Sefatsa, 1978:32).

Sehloho beats up Mmadimakatso in front of their daughter Dimakatso. She cries as she sees her father beating her mother. It is so painful for Dimakatso to see Sehloho beating her mother. Dimakatso pleads with her father to leave her mother alone. The words: *Ntate o bolaya Mme*, shows how traumatised Dimakatso is. The phrase: *Itjhuu! Wa ntoma mokoto towe!* Indicates that Mmadimakatso fights back. She uses her teeth to deliver herself from Sehloho.

Violence in the family has a negative effect on the children. Research on intra-familial violence reveals striking correlations between spousal violence and various forms of violence involving children (McKendrick & Hoffman, 1990:287). Although Sehloho beats only his wife and not his children, children as they witness violent confrontations between their parents suffer from the exposure to such

violence. Children often try to protect the victimized parent and when they do, their risk of physical injury increases substantially (Sonkin, 1987:35).

Sehloho's children, as they witness conflict between their parents, even if they are not assaulted themselves, have an increased risk of developing behavioural and emotional problems. These may include depression, anxiety and fears. In addition to the trauma of witnessing their mother being abused, they may be victims of assault, either directly or indirectly.

3.6 Conclusion

Sehloho abuses his wife Mmalenka verbally as well as physically. The alcohol is not the cause of violence and abuse. Even when he is sober he is violent and abuses his wife. The most painful abuse that he inflicts on Mmadimakatso, is that of eloping with his concubine Mmalenka to Mmadimakatso's house. Mmadimakatso refuses to accommodate Sehloho's concubine in her house and that makes Sehloho furious and so he beats her up. Sehloho's abusive action of beating Mmadimakatso in front of the children, traumatises them. Murray (2009:7) clarifies the pain of trauma: "While pain is often traumatic, trauma is not necessarily physically painful". The following phrase shows how traumatised Dimakatso is. *Dimakatso o a lla ebile o a hweletsa). Jo wee! Ntate tlohela Mme hle!* Dimakatso cries and she also screams). Dimakatso cries when she sees her father beating her mother. Sehloho is not only abusing his wife, he is also abusing his children.

Sehloho's violent and abusive behaviour towards women is in process. In the following chapter readers will see how Sehloho abuses his concubine Mmalenka. He elopes with her by force and beats her for resisting elopement.

CHAPTER FOUR

SEHLOHO BATTERS HIS CONCUBINE MMALENKA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we continue to address women battering and in particular, Sehloho's concubine Mmalenka. Mmalenka experiences some forms of abuse, such as emotional, economic as well as physical abuse at the hands of Sehloho. Sehloho does not embrace gender equality as a value, but perpetrate gender – based violence.

On a day Sehloho was under the influence of liquor and, he went to Mmalenka's place hoping his concubine Mmalenka would open the door for him. Mmalenka felt that she could not cope with Sehloho's drunkenness, so she pretended that she was fast asleep. He became bitter and planned on how he is going to avenge himself. We hear him saying:

Jwale basadi baa bona ba hanelang bobedi ba bona ho mpulela ha ke kokota bosiu. Ke hore ba hanne bobedi ba bona ee! Ha ba ntsebe. Ke tla ba bakisetsa ba bangata! Ke ilo shobedisa Mmalenka ka sheshe. Ke tla mo shobedisetsa hona ha Mmadimakatso. Ntho e so kang e ba teng bophelong. Ke tla ba lokisa....Ke re Mmalenka yena ke tla mo nyala ka sheshe ntle le dikgomo le hona (Sefatsa, 1979:14).

How can it be that both of these women are declining to open the door for me when I am knocking at night. Both have indeed declined to open, they have yet to witness who I am! They shall bear the vengeance to my wrath. I shall elope with Mmalenka forcefully. We shall elope to the home of Mmadimakatso. Something that has never been witnessed in this life. I shall

punish them... As for Mmalenka, I shall forcefully marry her and pay no dowry for her.

Sehloho is longing for the elopement and his journey to a polygamous marriage begins with the falseness of want. Lehana says to Sehloho:

Ho ya ka mo ke tsebang lelapa lena la ha Modibedi ka teng, ha ke so utlwele ya le mong feela wa lona ya kileng a nyala sethepu.

From the knowledge I have of the Modibedi family, I have never heard of any of them who once got into a polygamous marriage (Sefatsa, 1979:19).

Sehloho says to his brother: *Ke ba bakisetsa ba bangata! Ebile ke hona ke sa tla ba bakisa. Ha ke so qete ka bona* – I punish them for generations! In fact I am yet to avenge myself. I am far from finished with them (Sefatsa, 1979:18). Sehloho does not intend to be a traditional polygamist, but through his patriarchal dominance, wants to elope with Mmalenka as a sign that women are inferior to men. He is not intending to marry Mmalenka because he does not want to pay dowry money for her.

4.2 Sehloho forces Mmalenka to elope with him

Sehloho went to Makaoteng, to Mmalenka's place, but with the intention of eloping with her. He intends to take Mmalenka to his house where he is staying with Mmadimakatso, which is not allowed in the Basotho culture. The conversation between Sehloho and Mmalenka shows patriarchal domination because whatever he is saying, he wants Mmalenka to obey. He forces Mmalenka to elope with him and uses patriarchal language to force her to obey his rules. The conversation between Sehloho and his concubine is as follows:

Sehloho: *Phutha re tsamaye!*

Pack up so we can leave!

Mmalenka: *Ke phutha eng jwale aubuti Sehloho?*

What is there to pack up Sehloho dear?

Sehloho: *Ke re phutha re tsamaye monna! Ebang ha o phuthe, tswaa re tsamaye!*

I say pack up so we can leave man! If you don't pack up, get out and let us leave!

Mmalenka: *Re tsamaye re ya kae jwale*

Where are we leaving to?

(Sefatsa, 1979:14-15).

As desire and connection are created through language, Sehloho tries to represent himself through language. Mitchell & Black (1995:198) maintain that:

The idea of language is an instrument, one is forced to conclude that language should communicate knowledge, should express the subject, and should reflect reality.

On the other hand, Lacan (1988:176) points out that the subject is an effect of the signifier put in language. Lacan (1988:121) maintains that there is always a gap between the "I" and the subject. Sehloho's instructive phrase: *Ke re phutha re tsamaye monna!* – I say pack up so that we can leave man! - is a sign that Sehloho is an aggressive man. He does not respect Mmalenka as he calls her *monna* – man. He abuses her because she is not married so he associates her with a male person.

Sehloho beats Mmalenka with his hands. That beating means physical abuse. The beating caused Mmalenka to leave her house with no one looking after it because her children were not at home. We hear Sehloho saying the following whilst beating Mmalenka:

Sehloho: *O sa rekisa molomo le jwale ya bojwale (O mo babola ka tlelapa).*

Even now you are still babbling (He slaps her)

Mmalenka: *(O a Ila) Jo! helang, butle hle ke ya tsamaya, ke ...*

(She cries) Oh no! Please wait I am leaving, I...

Sehloho: *(O a mo pheta) Ke kgale ke o rapela. (O a mo jabela).*

(He slaps her again) I have been begging you. (He slaps her).

(Sefatsa, 1979:15).

Sehloho forcefully elopes with the crying Mmalenka to Mmadimakatso's place. Sehloho uses a very rude language to Mmalenka. The phrase *O sa rekisa molomo le jwale ya bojwale* – Even now you are still babbling, is a form of insulting Mmalenka. This language is abusive and shows patriarchal dominance. Spencer (cited in Selden 1989:136) maintains that: "Women have been fundamentally oppressed by a male-dominated language."

From Spencer's point of view, it is a great challenge for women to contest patriarchal control of language. Males view females as inferior therefore they also regard their language as inferior too. Lakoff (cited in Selden, 1989:137), maintains that women should adopt men's language if they wish to achieve social equality with men.

Sehloho's actions of eloping with Mmalenka to Mmadimakatso's place, falls short of the *tjhobediso* practice in the Basotho culture. Sehloho conducts *tjhobediso* –

elopement, but it is not part of the Basotho practice because he is a married man. The Mosotho married man is not allowed to take another woman to his wife's place. Sehloho wants to show both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka that they are inferior.

Sehloho batters Mmalenka for no apparent reason. *O a mo pheta* – he slaps her again. Wife and woman beating is violence that feminists condemn. He lashes out at her, accusing her that it has been a long time begging her to go with him but Sehloho is not begging her, but forcing her. Sehloho's actions of beating Mmalenka is a reminder that women live in a sick society. Sehloho's culture of violence brings with it a class of individuals who believe they are entitled to determine the value of other human lives.

Hooks (cited in Botha, 2014:15), says the following about abusive males:

The crisis facing men is not the crisis of masculinity, it is the crisis of patriarchal masculinity. Until we make this distinction clear, men will continue to fear that any critique of patriarchy represents a threat.

The above quotation explains why males keep on abusing women. Sehloho seems to fear the empowerment and advancement of Mmalenka. Mmalenka is a shebeen queen who does not depend on a male person for financial support. Sehloho fears that the status quo is changing rapidly and there is nothing that he can do about it. His violence, his anger and revenge on Mmalenka is not a good option to deal with his frustration.

Sehloho physically beats Mmalenka repeatedly slapping her. According to Walker (1999:79), physical abuse includes actions such as being slapped, kicked, pushed or burned. Sehloho's actions of battering Mmalenka give the perception that she is

less valued, and this causes the victim's feelings of deep pain and sickening shame about herself (Kirkwood, 1993:49). Mmalenka experiences fear and anxiety about her physical and emotional safety and a sense that she is in danger. The first assault

shattered the fundamental trust and physical safety upon which an intimate relationship was built. Sehloho's actions of battering, create an atmosphere of continual danger to Mmalenka and thus of continual anxiety and fear.

4.3 Their arrival at Mmadimakatso's place

Elopement is part of the Basotho traditional practice. A male person can elope with a young maid with the plan of getting married in the future. It is not acceptable in the Basotho culture for a man to elope with a woman to another wife's place. Sehloho eloped with his concubine Mmalenka to his wife's place Mmadimakatso. On their arrival, Mmadimakatso, as a traditional woman, does not accept what Sehloho is doing. In other words, Mmadimakatso does not accept Mmalenka in her house. Mmadimakatso, in conversation with Sehloho, reveals that she does not accept Mmalenka to be the second wife of Sehloho. On Sehloho and Mmalenka's arrival at Mmadimakatso's place, we hear Mmadimakatso angrily saying:

Mmadimakatso: *(Ka bohale) Ke re Mmalenka a ke ke a robala ka tlung ena ya ka!. Le a nkutlwa na? (O fofela Mmalenka).*

(With anger) I say that Mmalenka will not sleep in my house! Do you hear me? (She attacks Mmalenka).

The violence against Sehloho's concubine Mmalenka symbolises Mmadimakatso's resistance against patriarchal ideology where men can adopt polygamy. Sehloho abuses Mmalenka by eloping with her to Mmadimakatso's place. Mmalenka is

exposed to both physical and emotional abuse. By the time Mmadimakatso attacks her, Thuso, who is watching the scene, appeals for peace and convinces Mmadimakatso that Mmalenka is innocent because Sehloho is the one who brought her to Mmadimakatso's house. Thuso says the following as he tries to stop Mmadimakatso from attacking Mmalenka:

Thuso: Butle, Mmadimakatso, ha ho thuse letho ho lwantsha Mmalenka hobane ha a itlisa mona!

Stop it Mmadimakatso, fighting Mmalenka does not help the situation, because she did not bring herself here.

(Sefatsa, 1979: 16).

As Thuso is trying to calm the fighting mood in Sehloho's house, Sehloho is forcing both Mmadimakatso and his concubine to share the room and sleep in that one room. Sehloho angrily says:

Sehloho: (O tula lebota ka setebele) Ke re ba tla robala ka tlung ena ya ka ba le babedi! Ke tla ba bontsha ...

(He bangs the wall with a fist) I say that they will both sleep in this house of mine! I will show them ...

(Sefatsa, 1979: 16).

This abuse that Mmalenka experiences, is directed at reducing her sense of self-worth. On the other hand, it enhances the power and control of Sehloho over Mmalenka. This abuse also involves the erosion of her sense of self-value and instils in her the derogatory and devalued perspective of herself by Sehloho.

4.4 Dowry money for Mmalenka

In the traditional Basotho culture, the bride or daughter-in-law is not accepted in the family if *bohadi* – dowry money has not been paid. Sehloho's brother is a guardian of the Basotho culture, he confronts his younger brother about the dowry money that he must pay for Mmalenka's family, so that the Modibedi family can accept Mmalenka as their daughter-in-law. Sehloho refuses to pay dowry money for Mmalenka. Their conversation is as follows:

Lehana: *Jwale o ile wa buisana le neng le batswadi ba ngwana yeo wa batho?*

Have you spoken with the lady's parents?

Sehloho: *Ke batswadi ba eng ba hae, bao ke tlang ho buisana le bona? Ke ntse ke mo phuthile le ho mo phutha. Wena o kile wa bona kae mosadi a dula le bana ba hae feela ka tlung ho se na monna?*

Which parents are those, which I must talk to, when I have done them a great favour in offloading them the burden by marrying their daughter. Where have you seen a woman living only with her children without a husband in the house?

(Sefatsa, 1979:18).

From Sehloho's conversation with his brother, it is clear that Sehloho does not respect the culture of the Basotho, the culture or practice of paying *bohadi* –dowry money for the bride. Even though Mmalenka is no longer the young girl, the talks between the two families were supposed to take place.

Chigumadzi (2014: 8) had this to say about *bohadi*:

Lobola strengthens ties between families. In the same way the wedding ring symbolizes unity between two people, the payment of lobola is a symbol of unity between two families.

In the Basotho culture *bohadi* is important represents an acknowledgement of the role the bride's parents played in her upbringing as a woman, as a valued member of society as well as a gesture of good faith and sincerity on the part of the husband and his family.

McHorter (2003:46) maintains that patriarchy is the result of social constructions and these constructions are most pronounced in societies with traditional cultures and less economic development. In the Basotho culture patriarchy is the result of social constructions, but it goes with responsibility. The culture of paying dowry for a person is very important in the Basotho culture, but Sehloho ignores that because his intention is to abuse Mmalenka by forcing her to be his second wife. He fails to pay dowry for her because his polygamy does not help him in developing his household economy.

Mmalenka asks Sehloho to build *mokgoro* – a hut, for her but he refuses by having feeble excuses. Sehloho is playing a game of abusing Mmalenka. He does not intend to pay dowry money to Mmalenka's relatives and further-more, he does not want to build *mokgoro* for her. He is proving a point that women are inferior and are objects that can be abused.

Sisulu (2014:3) had this to say about gender equality:

True gender equality will not come from merely passing vital pieces of legislation but will materialize only when society sufficiently accepts that women are equally citizens who must be respected equally. But pivotally, women must become their own liberators.

As both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka are no longer on fighting terms, they plan to tame Sehloho. They are planning to liberate themselves from Sehloho's patriarchal bondage. They have realized, they will not be free if they don't stand up and fight for their rights. Their conversation is as follows:

Mmadimakatso: *Mmalenka ha re sa ithapisetse Sehloho, ha ho na motho ya tlare thapisetsa yena!*

Mmalenka if we don't tame Sehloho ourselves, no one will tame him for us!

Mmalenka: *Re tla mo thapisa jwang ausi, haeka ke nama e hlotseng dithipa tje?*

How will we tame him, my sister, as he is as untamed as a lion?

Mmadimakatso: *Hantle tjena! O a bona keng? Ha a fihla feela mantsibuya oo mo tshele ka tsa morokgo. Ha o bona eka ha di kene, o mo time dijo hohang.*

We will. You see, upon his arrival in the evening ask him about the mokgoro – hut house. If he shows no interest in the topic, deprive him of food

(Sefatsa, 1979:40).

Sehloho's excuse for not building a *mokgoro* for his wife Mmalenka is based on the fact that, as Thuso is mourning the death of his wife, the community is also in mourning. Mmalenka confronts Sehloho in a very strong language.

Mmalenka: *O bolela hore o ke ke wa aha mokgoro ho fihlela Thuso eo wa hao a rola thapo?*

Are you telling me that you are unable to build a hut until Thuso's period of mourning is over?

Sehloho: *O a pota jwale! Ke mang eo o mo utlwileng a bua ka ho rola thapo? O thole jwale, ke kgathetse ke ho ahlamelana le wena jwale!*

Now you are taking rubbish! Who did you hear talking of mourning period? Shut up, I am tired of talking with you.

Mmalenka: *Ke tholeleng? Ke a bua. Hape ke bua ka molomo wa ka e seng wa motho e mong?*

Why should I shut up? I speak. I am using my own mouth to speak and not the mouth of anyone else.

(Sefatsa, 1979:42).

Mmalenka's language is not inferior because it does not contain patterns of weakness. She adopts men's language because she is tired of Sehloho's abusive behaviour. She also wants to achieve equality with Sehloho.

The practice of polygamy is contrary to the principle of gender equality because it treats women as unequal and it is associated with abuse as neglect of children. *Tjhobediso* and polygamy caused Mmalenka to neglect her children. Sehloho abused Mmalenka when he was eloping with her by force. He further abuses her as he refuses to pay dowry money for her marriage. Feminists are committed to bring about social change to end injustices against women like Mmalenka.

Mmalenka is fighting for her rights. As Sehloho tells her to shut her mouth, he expects her to do as she is told. But Mmalenka tells him that she is not going to do that. Mmalenka's language tells the audience that she is fighting to liberate herself from Sehloho's abusive relationship. She is not submissive to Sehloho's patriarchal abuse. As Sehloho refuses to build a *mokgoro* for her, she also refuses to serve him food as per their plan to tame him. Sehloho goes to Mmadimakatso for the food, but Mmadimakatso too refuses to give him food with the excuse that the children ate all the food she cooked. According to McHorter (2003:41), Aristotle viewed women as "inferior to men; women as property of men; whose role in society was to reproduce and serve men in the household". Sehloho, just like Aristotle, views his wives as inferior whose duties are to serve him with food in the house.

He leaves Mmadimakatso with the report that the following day, after knocking off work in the field, he will be heading to Dithotaneng at Setinkolo's place as there is *letsema* - a company of people working for a person who gives them food and beer for their work

4.5 Conclusion

Sehloho abuses Mmalenka because he does not wish to pay *bohadi* to her family. *Bohadi* is a token of appreciation to parents who have raised a woman and Mmalenka would have brought happiness in their life. He further abuses her by refusing to build a *mokgoro* for her but he is always expecting Mmalenka to give him food whenever he needs it.

Mmalenka adopts men's language to liberate herself from Sehloho's patriarchal dominance. Both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka devise a very tight plan to tame Sehloho. Their plan of refusing to give him food, symbolizes their resistance against patriarchal ideology when Sehloho abuses them. They both came to their senses, that if they fight each other, they will be condoning patriarchal dominance in their lives. They both realized that polygamy is exploitative and it is associated with their abuse by Sehloho. They stopped rivalry because they don't want to compete for affection, but they want to overcome Sehloho's patriarchal domination by exposing its manifestations.

As both wives deny him food, he chooses to sleep alone in the *mokgoro* with the intention of causing more emotional pain for both of them, but this is to the delight of the two.

In the next chapter we will see how both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka react when their husband Sehloho elopes with Sofi to Mmalenka's house.

CHAPTER FIVE

SEHLOHO ELOPES WITH HIS SECOND CONCUBINE SOFI

5.1 Introduction

Sehloho travels from his village Makaoteng to attend *letsema* feast at Setinkolo's place. Many people supported Setinkolo at his place at Dithotaneng village. As per Basotho cultural practice, the *letsema* feast is also attended by women from the same village and from other villages.

One thing that cannot just fly away from the eye of a person without it being noticed, is that patriarchy is dominant at Dithotaneng village. At the feast the males do not appreciate the important work that the women are doing. Whilst they are serving the men with food and sorghum beer, instead of giving them a word of appreciation, the males ridicule and abuse them without any good reason. Malefetsane says to one woman serving men with sorghum beer: *Hela! Mosadi towe, tlisa jwala bono ka nqena* – You woman, bring that beer this side (Sefatsa, 1979:44). The phrase *mosadi towe* is a derogatory term that a person uses to insult or make another person feel inferior. In the Basotho culture, if a woman is not a man's wife, that man is not allowed to call her *mosadi*. He must call her *Mme*. The Basotho have a proverb: *Mosadi ke morena* – a woman is a King, meaning that a woman is respected by every-body.

At this event women are portrayed as inferior by males. Feminists claim that: "Men would call us scatter-brained. Others labelled us devils. But many wanted to possess us" (Singh, 2008: 106). Malefetsane abuses this particular woman emotionally by calling her names. His abuse constitutes a pattern of behaviour

directed at reducing the woman's sense of self-worth. This abuse enhances the power and control over his victim. The conversation between Sampoti and Malefetsane is disgusting because they portray women as inferior and as if they are objects.

Sampoti: *Yane ya tuku e tala. Bona kamoo a ahlametseng banna bane ka teng?* That one with the green doek.
Look at how she listens to those men with an open mouth.

Malefetsane: *See! Nna nka tjebela letsohonyana leno la hae kwana.*
Phew! I can smack her little hand far away.

Sampoti: *Bona hle monna o pjetletsaka le mathe feela tjena.*
Please man look, she just spits saliva in that manner!

Malefetsane: *Ke hore na ekaba o na le monna eo e leng wa hae?*
Does she have her own husband?

Sampoti: *Ha ke kgolwe! Ha a yo mosadi ya nang le monna, ya ka nnang a ahlamela banna jwalo!*
I don't believe! There is no woman who has a husband who listens to other men with an open mouth like that.
(Sefatsa, 1979:44-45).

Malefetsane and Sampoti's conversation shows that males are dominating and they do not view females as human beings. They objectify them because their behaviour indicates to women that they are viewed as objects with no inner self or needs. They objectify them as unsophisticated, unmarried women who listen to men's conversation with open mouths.

Their conversation involves the erosion of the women's sense of self-value and instil in them the derogatory and devalued perspective held by them (males). Malefetsane and Sampoti demonstrate the perception that women are less valued and even less acceptable than males.

5.2 Sehloho flirts with Sofi

The meeting between Sehloho and Sofi is artistically a masterpiece. As mentioned earlier, Sehloho's amazing journey takes him to Dithotaneng with the aim of attending a *letsema* feast, but he finds himself faced with the situation he enjoys most, that of abusing women. From Sehloho's soliloquy, the audience gets the picture of a lion preparing to attack its fat prey.

Sehloho (*O se a bone eo a mo kgahlileng. O bua a le mong*)

(He has already spotted the one who attracts him. He is talking by himself)

Ya motle enwa ngwana ditjhaba ee! Bosehlana ba hae ba ntshenya maikutlo. Banna! Ha ke eso bone botle bo tjena bophelong ba ka. Nko ke e ntjhotjho.... Mahlo ke a maphatshwana ekare a ngwana lese.

Oh! What a beautiful child of the nations. Her light complexion stirs my emotions....Men! I have never seen such a beauty in my life. The nose is prettily pointed. Eyes are black and white like those of an infant.

(Sefatsa, 1979:45).

Sehloho treats women that he encounters as the 'other'. From his above soliloquy and meditation, he focuses almost completely on the beauty of Sofi. In this case, Sehloho views Sofi as a provider of sexual satisfaction to men and to him in particular. Sehloho's description of Sofi's facial and physical appearance is very simplistic and stereotypical. He praises Sofi for the way she talks as well as for

her appealing physical qualities. In his mind, Sofi's beauty is the beauty that can benefit his sexual lust.

One of the proponents of feminism, De Beauvoir (1974:1) say

...is simply what man decrees; thus she is called 'the sex,' by which is meant that she appears essentially to the men as a sexual being. For him she is sex, no less. ...she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the subject, he is the Absolute – she is the "Other".

De Beauvoir (1974) maintains that males do not respect women. Whenever a male sees a woman, he thinks of an object that can satisfy his sexual lust. She is of the idea that males do not view women as human beings because in most cases they objectify them (women).

Sehloho gets the chance to meet and talk to Sofi. They are meeting for the first time. In Sehloho's mind, Sofi is his prey and he is preparing to bounce on her.

Sehloho say to Sofi:

Sehloho: *Ha o mpona ke le tjena, ke letsholong la ho batlana le ba kang wena tjena. Ha ke tjho jwalo, ke bolela hore ha ke o rate ke a peperana kgaitsemi...Sofi ngwaneso, ha re tsamaye hle...Ke kgale ho thwe ke nyale. Athe ke qeaqeswa ke ntho e le teng.*

As you see me here, I am on a mission to find someone like you. By that I mean I love you madly, my darling.... my dear, Sofi, please let us go...I was told to get married a long time ago. I did not know that I was being delayed by something as great as this (Sefatsa, 1979:46).

Sofi: *Ke ntho efe jwale aubuti Sello?*

Now what thing is that brother Sello?

Sehloho: *Ke itse ke Sehloho, Sofi. Ntho eo ke wena.*

Sofi, I said I am Sehloho. That thing is you.

(Sefatsa, 1979: 46).

The conversation between Sehloho and Sofi, shows that Sehloho is a pathetic liar. He is a married person who has recently eloped with Mmalenka but he tells Sofi that he is not yet married. Sehloho's statement, *ke letsholong la ho batlana le ba kang wena tjena*, - I am on a hunting spree for those who are like you, is very disturbing. He does not point to any one person that he is looking for, but the statement refers to many women that he is still looking for.

Sehloho refers to Sofi as *ntho* – thing, in other words Sehloho is objectifying Sofi as an object, and not a person with inner feelings. Sehloho elopes with Sofi knowing very well that he is a married man with children and another woman for whom he cannot afford to pay dowry money for either her or Mmalenka.

There is no transparency on the side of Sehloho because he does not tell Sofi the truth that he is already a married man who has also recently eloped with another woman. Sehloho develops an unquenchable desire to become a polygamist who cannot pay the dowry money for women he elopes with. As a male he feels that Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka do not honour him as a husband and his anger develops into having an uncontrolled desire to elope with his second concubine.

5.3 The relationship between Mmalenka and Sofi

Sofi realizes on their arrival at Mmalenka's place that Sehloho is a married man. Sehloho knocks at Mmalenka's door, and when she opens the door, Sehloho invites Sofi in to Mmalenka's house.

Sehloho: *Kena Sofi.*
Go in Sofi.

Mmalenka: *(O hlahla mahlo) Sofi ke mang jwale?*
(She makes fierce eyes) Now, who is Sofi?

Sehloho: *Ke.....ke..mosadi wa ka.*
She....she is my wife

Mmalenka: *Mosadi wa hao? Wa bokae?*
Your wife? Wife number what?

Sehloho: *Wa boraro.....*
The third one...
(Sefatsa, 1979: 47-48).

Sehloho forces Mmalenka to accept and accommodate Sofi as his third wife. He also wants Sofi to accept that he has two wives and Sofi is going to be the third one. In the words of Stratton (1994:53): "He is the active-subject-citizen. She is the passive object-nation." Sehloho excludes women from the male tradition as subjects and their objectification leads to their exclusion from traditional and cultural spaces as well.

As feminists encourage women to fight for their rights, Mmalenka fights for her rights. She does not want to accept Sofi in her house, so she beats Sofi very hard. Sofi only realizes when they arrive at Mmalenka's place that Sehloho lied to her when he promised her that he is unmarried man. The author warns women against promoting patriarchy. In the case of Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka, both do not

condone Sehloho's polygamy even though they do not beat Sehloho, Mmadimakatso encourages Mmalenka to beat Sofi. The aim is to scare Sofi and make her run away from Sehloho.

5.4 The relationship between Mmadimakatso and Sofi

Mmalenka: *Ke eo he mosadi wa boraro wa Sehloho ausi Mmadimakatso...*

Sister Mmadimakatso, there she is then Sehloho's third wife...

Mmadimakatso: *Jo! Jo! Jo! Basadi! Lefetwa? Ke moleko o fetang meleko jwale.*

Alas! Alas! Alas! Heavens! Old maid? She is a devil who is more than a devil.

Mmalenka: *Ke batla ho pepeta Sofi enwa wa hae hore a be sephara jwalo ka lekau. Tlo mona wena!*

I want to hit his Sofi until she is flat like a duck. Come here, you!

(Sefatsa, 1979: 48-49).

As Mmalenka is beating Sofi, Mmadimakatso approves the idea of beating.

Mmadimakatso says: *Mo nwe ka hloho wena Mmalenka o mmontshe hore wena o hlaha lekoitjheneng* – Butt her with the head and show her that you are from the loxion (Sefatsa, 1979:49).

As she says that, Mmalenka's head strikes Sofi's head. From Mmalenka's words, one is aware that Mmadimakatso is also in favour of beating Sofi so that Sehloho can feel the pain when he see Sofi's face covered in blood.

Both Sehloho's "wives" do not accept Sofi as one of them. According to Basotho practice, as Sehloho has eloped with Sofi, Sehloho's brother must go and report to Sofi's father Setinkolo that his daughter is married to Sehloho, but Sehloho is so poor, he does not even have a sheep as part of a dowry. The conversation between the two brothers is as follows:

Lehana: *Na dikgomo di teng tseo o tlang ho thethefatsa bohale ba Setinkolo?*

Do you have dowry cattle to soften the fury of Setinkolo?

Sehloho: *Aubuti wa tseba ha ke na dikgomo.*

Brother, you know that I have no dowry cattle.

(Sefatsa, 1979:60).

Mofokeng (2014: 9) maintains that “*bohadi* is meant to be a symbolic expression of gratitude from a man to a woman.” Sehloho fails to express his gratitude to Sofi and her parents. He eloped with Sofi knowing that he could not afford to pay the dowry cattle or money to Sofi’s parents.

Sofi is a Mosotho young woman who would like her husband to pay the bride price or *bohadi* for her hand in marriage. Sehloho make this traditional practice valueless and abuses it. The very same practice he abuses, brings regrettable consequences.

The day Sehloho eloped with Mmalenka to Mmadimakatso’s house, Mmadimakatso referred to Mmalenka as *letekatse* - prostitute. As Sehloho elopes with Sofi to Mmalenka’s house, Mmadimakatso refers Sofi as *lefetwa* – old maid. The main function of the metaphors, *letekatse* and *lefetwa*, is to portray women as objects. Stratton (cited in Singh, 2008:104) maintains that the prostitute metaphor is to reproduce the attitudes and beliefs necessary for preserving the otherness of women and hence to perpetuate their marginalization in society. Mmadimakatso did exactly as Walker and other Feminists said, that men have made women objects. But at the same time we, women can make an indirect objects of men ourselves. She said we must not allow men to do whatever they want to do with us.

Both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka do not fight Sehloho, they fight with the innocent Sofi, who does not or who did not know that Sehloho is a married man. Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka both succumbed to polygamous marriage because they live together as Sehloho's wives. This is dangerous and insidious as it does not expose Sehloho's abusive behaviour and as they are both still trapped under the traditional practices such as *tjhobediso* and polygamy.

5.5 The drastic action of Sofi

Sofi sees the evil inherent in the system of *tjhobediso* and polygamy as she is supposed to be a liberated Mosotho woman. She rejects the oppressive nature of polygamy because both her and Mmalenka are not married. She also dismisses the view that polygamy can be helpful if all the co-wives live peacefully and help one another. Through her actions, she liberates herself and both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka from their constraints and the injustices that weigh down their consciences.

Sofi sees both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka condoning polygamy by blaming it on her as they both called her by ugly names and on top of that Mmalenka bit her until she bled. Both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka failed to invite Sofi to unite with them to fight polygamy by refusing it and condemning it completely.

Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka went away and left Sofi alone at home. Sofi plans with Setsokotsane to steal from both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka. They took almost everything. We hear Sofi saying to Setsokotsane:

Sofi : *Tlotlo le wele makgwabane! Se hlole o senya nako. Phutha!*
 Shoba o thote.
 Here is plenty! Do not waste time. Grab it! Fold it and carry it out.

Setsokotsane: *(O bua a tswela ka ntle) Hase kobo mona ke tlakana le a raha ee!*
(He speaks while going outside) Here are so many blankets!
(Sefatsa, 1979:65).

After stealing from Mmalenka and Mmadimakatso, Sofi and Setsokotsane leave. When both Mmalenka and Mmadimakatso arrive home, they don't believe their eyes. They both cry as they find out Sofi has stolen their best blankets and left only rags and old blankets. Mmadimakatso also cries over the little money that Sofi and Setsokotsane stole. Both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka are confused, they do not know what to do to recover their stolen goods.

After the tragedy, the family had to meet to discuss the way forward. All the people blame Sehloho for the stolen goods. Sehloho's brother, Lehana, warned him several times that polygamous marriage is not known in Modibedi's family. Even though Sehloho regrets it, it is too late and he is crying over split milk. Their painful conversation is as follows:

Lehana: *Mona ha Modibedi sethepu ha se tsejwe.*

Here at Modibedi home, polygamy is unknown.

Sehloho: *(O Ila sello sa mmokotsane) Jo! Jo! Jo! Banna wee!*

(He cries bitterly) Alas! Alas! Alas! Men ah!

Mmadimakatso: O re jo! Banna we! Keng o sa re jo, basadi we?

You say alas! Men Ah! Why don't you say alas, women ah?

Mmalenka: *Ha ke tsebe hore ntho eo ke sa e duletseng mona ke efe*

I do not know what makes me stay here.

(Sefatsa, 1979:74).

Sofi's actions are a reflection of the voice that frees Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka from a non-traditional polygamous marriage. Sofi is responsible for changing Sehloho from a polygamous husband to a monogamous husband. Ba (cited in Singh, 2008: 109) says:

At one stage or the other, a single man would have to confront a single woman with whom he would have to forge a most individualistic and private relationship – that of the fusion of two personalities into a mystic unity.

Sofi realizes that being submissive is not going to transform cultural oppression for most women. For submissive woman like Mmadimakatso's, conditions do not change. Mmadimakatso's resistance to a system of oppression through *tjhobediso* and polygamy, by fighting Mmalenka does not seem to offer liberation. On the other hand Mmalenka's actions of beating Sofi also do not offer the solution of liberating women from oppressive patriarchy.

Sofi's resistance to patriarchy, with its practice of polygamy, leads her to freeing both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka who are trapped under the traditional practice of *tjhobediso* and polygamy. Mmalenka leaves Sehloho and Mmadimakatso's place and returns to her place and Mmadimakatso is freed from a polygamous marriage. As Sehloho is divorced from polygamous marriage, the patriarchal control of female sexuality was changing from the traditional system of polygamy to the more liberal, companionate marriage, with the promise of romantic love and mutual esteem.

5.6 Conclusion

Sofi's action reminds readers of an English proverb 'Actions speak louder than words'. The dramatist employs Sofi's actions because Sehloho is a person who will not understand words or listen to other people. He is a person who can only understand actions. Sofi's actions are parallel to the voice of the voiceless women who are battered by members of a patriarchal society. Her actions are by way of saying to Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka that women should unite and expose the abusive actions of males and husbands. Mmalenka and Mmadimakatso, instead of asking Sofi to join them and expose Sehloho, punishes her. Her actions mean women should stand up and take actions against abusive males. Sefatsa condemns traditional cultural practices such as *tjhobediso* and polygamy in her text *Pakiso*. Sofi is represented as resisting oppressive patriarchal practices and she is the voice liberating women from such practices. The next chapter gives the final analysis of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUDING CHAPTER

6.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter we will look back and reflect on what has been done in this study. Firstly, we intend to look back and discuss the chapters based on what was discovered. In the second part we will discuss what we suggest for future research and in the third part we will present our general concluding statement of the study.

6.2 Looking back

In chapter one, we indicated that the main focus of the study is based on the battering of female characters in Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*. We also defined key concepts which are the pillars of our literary theory which is Feminism. The literature review has been discussed to avoid necessary repetition and also to pave the way for our analysis of Sefatsa's text *Pakiso*.

Chapter two provided the theory of the study. Feminist theory helped to organise the study and provided a context in which to examine and gather and analysed data. The fit between the study variables and feminism were as tight as possible. The research problem was explained in terms of a feminist literary theory.

Our chapter three showed how Sehloho batters his wife Mmadimakatso through his alcoholism. When he was under the influence of liquor, his wife refused to open the door for him. The ghost troubled him and he only arrived home in the morning. He claimed that he was looking for his wife. Thuso and his brother Lehana accused

Mmadimakatso of refusing to open for Sehloho. Sehloho battered his wife for refusing to accept and share a room with his concubine Mmalenka. He further battered his wife for the rubbish she swept towards to door of Mmalenka's hut. Mmadimakatso was beaten in front of her daughter Dimakatso. That brutal violent act, left Dimakatso traumatized.

Chapter four revealed Sehloho's patriarchal dominance by forcefully eloping with Mmalenka to his wife's place. He forced Mmalenka to leave her children, her house as well as her business. He battered her in order to force her to go with him. On their arrival at Mmadimakatso's place, the fight began. Mmadimakatso wrestled with her because she would not accept Sehloho's concubine, Mmalenka, sleeping in her house. Mmadimakatso also attacked Mmalenka as a proof that she did not tolerate Sehloho's actions of eloping with Mmalenka to her house. At a later stage Mmalenka engaged with Sehloho in bitter talks because Sehloho refused to build a *mokgoro* for her. She did not give Sehloho food and that made him angry and he further abused her by eloping with Sofi to her house.

Chapter five highlighted how patriarchy is dominating in Dithotaneng. Malefetsane and Sampoti were of the notion to condemn the behaviour of women as they associate with males. They portrayed those women as if they are unscrupulous, unmarried women. Sehloho views Sofi as an object that can satisfy his sexual lust. He describes Sofi in a stereotypical way. Sehloho took Sofi to Mmalenka's house and that angered Mmalenka. She battered Sofi for yielding to Sehloho's patriarchal behaviour. Sofi stood up and became the voice of both Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka in particular. After stealing from them, their problems were solved because Mmalenka went back to her house and Sehloho appealed to his wife Mmadimakatso to start life afresh.

6.3 Suggestion for future research.

The status of African women and the Basotho women in particular, is still made inferior by males. Sefatsa's text *Pakiso* proves the point that the status of women is still inferior and women are still objectified by their male counterparts. African literature, particularly Sesotho literature, is still lacking because writers do not write about protecting the status of women. We are suggesting that as Sefatsa paved the way for female writers to write about the status of females, other female writers should also do so. As feminists claim that as long as females are not free, males and children are also not free, males should also write about the status of females. Males should also be feminists and come up with gender-equality related programmes focusing on males.

One of the proponents of feminism maintains that:

Gender equality, respect for women's rights and women's empowerment are, in my view, not contrary to the ethos of Ubuntu (Botha, 2014:15).

The above quotation explains that if males can adhere to the ethos of *Ubuntu*, they'll understand that violence should not be an option to deal with their fear and frustration. Men should stand up and shout that violent acts of abuse against women should not happen in their name.

6.4 Concluding remarks

As Lackoff (cited in Selden, 1989). maintains that in order for women to be liberated, they should adopt men's language, Sefatsa does that. She commits herself to the use of language that has been exclusively the domain of men. Sefatsa fulfils her intention to portray *tjhobediso* – elopement as the cause of the

hardships of women's lives in *Pakiso*. *Pakiso* is created as a feminist protest against male oppression exercised on an individual woman as well as on an asocial level. Sefatsa highlights how men want women live to act as independent beings, primarily through men. In the tone and actions of Sofi, which constantly undermines the law of the husband who does not pay dowry for his wives, Sefatsa undermines patriarchal values. Sofi finds herself in a difficult situation that prompts her to act in a certain way. She is forced to be Sehloho's wife but a wife who is not married in the Basotho tradition. Mmalenka is also forced to give up her house and business as she is a tavern queen, as Sehloho elopes with her but without paying dowry as per the Basotho tradition. Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka are forced to be wives in a polygamous marriage and they end up agreeing to that idea.

When Sofi steals from Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka, it is like seizing Sehloho's power. Sehloho ends up losing all the symbols of that patriarchal authority – his power, his recognition and even his wives Mmalenka and Sofi. Sofi achieves a heroine's status and her life is a complete triumph in the feminist sense. Sofi ends up solving the problem created by Sehloho. The act of eloping with women without paying a dowry, is a curse and taboo in the Basotho culture. Through the *tjhobediso* practice, Sehloho is making Mmalenka and Sofi inferior. Through this practice, he is also making his wife Mmadimakatso an object that must just listen and agree to what her husband is doing.

It remains a fact that the victim of brutality is always the females, as Sefatsa goes further in exposing Sehloho's objectification of women. Sefatsa by creating characters that are marginalised in African society, creates a space from which to

freely express criticism of Basotho society. By marginalising themselves or involuntarily withdrawing from patriarchal domination, women characters find themselves in a privileged position to be introspective about themselves and conduct elaborate analysis of their society. At the end both Sofi and Mmalenka manage to freed themselves from a polygamous marriage. Sofi is portrayed as the voice of the voiceless, the voice that brought Sehloho down to his knees. In desperation, Sehloho asks her wife's forgiveness. We hear Sehloho crying and saying these words to his wife Mmadimakatso.

Sehloho: *(A beha matsoho hloohong, a se kgitla) Jo! Jo! Jo!... Ao!*

Mmadimakatso mosadi wa ka, ntaele ke mofo wa hao hle! Ke re ke bakile hle Mme!... Oho! Mmadimakatso, mosadi wa ka, ha re mpe re qale hape botjha hle ngwaneso!

(He places his hands on his head and cries) Alas! Alas!

Alas!...Indeed! Mmadimakatso my wife, please instruct me, I am your servant! Mother, I say I have repented!...Oh! Mmadimakatso my wife, please let us start afresh my partner!

The above words of Sehloho, confirm that for most of the history of the dramatic text Sehloho is presented as a tragedy of the failure of fatherhood. The title of the dramatic text *Pakiso*, engenders a symbolic weight that had much to do with the father and it should come as something far less than surprising to see that most critical engagement with the drama focuses on it such that it has been acknowledged as a family tragedy about the failure of the patriarchal order.

Sofi decides to liberate herself and redefine her womanhood by decentring her identity from men. She takes the deconstruction of patriarchal domination to radical extremes, by asserting that Sehloho's manhood is not worth its salt. Sofi

can be considered as one of women's free-spirited articulations by being feminists who could outwit the patriarchy.

Vera (1999:1) says the following about a women writer: "A woman writer must have imagination that is plain stubborn, that can invent new gods and banish ineffectual ones". In *Pakiso* Sefatsa is presenting oppression where women want their voices back. They seek recovery and cry for those around them to help them break the chains of bondage and subjugation. Society allows irresponsible men like Sehloho to head households unsuccessfully, venting their failures and frustrations on women and children. When it is evident that it is the women who suffer the blows of the system through men, males in the community do not present a united matriarchy. Women like Mmamohau, do not provide a support network for the abused and traumatised Mmadimakatso.

Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*, gives women a stage and a speaking position that forces society to take notice. The community that is inhabited by the likes of Sofi, is the one in which woman is considerably stronger than the trauma that has tried to break her. The strength that characterises Sofi's determined action to face her crises head-on, is testimony to encourage other women who defy customs and other traditional practices to rise above oppressive circumstances and fight for their rights.

In conclusion we would like to point out that feminism has been helpful in the critical analysis of Sehloho's psychological state. Sehloho considers himself fortunate to be married to a woman who is beautiful, fascinating and certain to never make his life dull. Sofi's action of stealing from Sehloho's wives serves as the catalyst for psychoanalysing Sehloho's downfall.

Sisulu (2014:3) says the following about the struggle of women:

The struggle for the dignity and respect of women in South Africa is a struggle that women must be prepared to fight to the end. When other forms of discrimination are fast disappearing, the denigration of women still rears its ugly head in all walks of life.

Sefatsa's women characters are women in search of their liberation, but they are not proponents of feminism. Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka fail to expose Sehloho's oppressive actions, when making them polygamous women. They want to liberate themselves, but they cannot because they are not proponents of feminism. Sofi is a proponent of feminism that is why she is able to emancipate not only herself, but Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka from patriarchal authority. Sofi becomes the voice, not only of Mmadimakatso and Mmalenka, but the voice of all women who are still under patriarchal authority.

Sefatsa makes it clear to the audience that there is a feminine way of writing, of perceiving reality and of understanding life. There is a great interest in examining the feminine world to see a different side of things, and that speaks for humanity and for women in particular. There is also a view of hope especially for women who are oppressed by patriarchy. If males can hear more of what the feminine world is to say and choose a feminine way of being for all humanity that will give all the people happiness on earth.

The author highlights the fact that there are certain things that women cannot openly talk about. They cannot talk about their own intimacy, their own deepest feelings and their most hidden concerns. Things they would not tell anyone appear in their books.

The women in Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*, live by the rule imposed by tradition and patriarchal authority. They represent women we know, women we would like to know, women we admire, and women we might like to resemble. Through Sofi's voice, Sefatsa saves all women from falling into oblivion.

Even though feminism has succeeded in challenging the oppression that women are trapped in, there are women who are still trapped under patriarchal domination. I hope that my discussion of feminist literary theory and Sefatsa's dramatic text *Pakiso*, demonstrates that not all women are liberated. In *Pakiso*, characters, particularly female characters are not educated. The best weapon that women can use to liberate themselves is education. Ogunyemi (cited in Singh, 2008:26), maintains that:

Female oppression and 'the cycle of poverty might be broken, if the young girl goes to school long enough to obtain the wherewithal to sustain a fulfilling motherhood', otherwise she will be exploited and overworked.

Sehloho exploits and abuses women under the pretext of culture and traditional norms of the society. Gender-based action, violence, education, poverty and equality are some of the issues women have to tackle. Women cannot tackle those challenges alone, men need to come and help women to overcome these challenges. Men must view women as part of nation building.

The discourse of abuse, violence and trauma in Sefatsa's *Pakiso* portrays women at the vortex of that drama of trauma. This is the rationale behind the discussion in this study which explores the de-silencing and feminisation of abused women. It

notes that Sefatsa's *Pakiso* constitutes itself as a worthwhile model of analysis of women's

social realities. This exploration of the forces that cause abuse which gives rise to the perpetuation of violence and abuse, adopts the Feminist perspective in the manner in which it defines the source of women's oppression. The reason why Sehloho has dominated women, causing them pain of abuse, can be traced back to power imbalances.

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