

Lund University
Department of Social Anthropology

SAN 504
Spring-semester 2005
Supervisor: Steven Sampson

A Minor Field Study:

The Gendered Paradigm: HIV and the Subversion of Women's Disempowerment

A Feministic Anthropological Study of the HIV-epidemic in Tanzania

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Abstract

Today sub-Saharan Africa are a continent fighting a disease which greatly affect its economic, psychological and socio-political spheres and which impacts are felt increasingly throughout the society. The rapid spread of AIDS in Africa results from a deep, multistranded crisis in political economy and healthcare where social inequalities, widespread impoverishment and the social distortions is escalating the epidemic's spread. Focusing on the HIV-problematics from an African feminist theory I will argue that the Tanzanian society is founded upon gendered structures which put women in a subordinated position. My aim with this thesis is to exemplify the complexity of the HIV-issue and empirically show how the customary ideas of male supremacy disempower women and in extension make them more vulnerable to HIV-infections.

African feminist theory, AIDS, gender, women's disempowerment and Tanzania.

Map Over Tanzania

The map is illustrated in *Tanzania. Crisis and Struggle for Survival*, 1986.
(eds.) Jannik Boesen, Kjell A. Havnevik, Juhani Koponen and Rie Odgaard.
Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.

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1. Preface

At the AIDS-conference last year Kofi Annan, the United Nation's general-secretary, said that there is a lot of talking at the moment about terrorism eliminating thousands of lives in a demarcated part of the world. At the same time one of the world's greatest continents are struggling against a disease causing the death of millions and millions of people. What is the reaction to that?

In 2004 the total number of people living with HIV (the Human Immunodeficiency Virus) arose to reach its highest levels ever. An estimated 39.4 million people are today infected by the virus, 25.4 million of them are situated in sub-Saharan Africa. The average length of life in countries like Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe is at the moment dropping below thirty-five years. The amount of orphans living south of Sahara is now reaching over twelve millions. Ten to thirty per cent of the sexually active adults in the continents major cities are HIV-infected and statistics shows that during the next two years five to six billion people will die of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) if they do not receive anti-retroviral treatment. In the core of this crises stands the AIDS-infected African woman who in many aspects bear the brunt impact of the epidemic. Globally over half of the population living with HIV are female, but in Africa, where heterosexual transmission accounts for more than eighty per cent of the infections, women outnumber men in increasing numbers. Compared to only five years ago these numbers have dramatically worsened for the female part of the population and today a striking seventy-six percent of the youth infected with HIV (aged 15-24 years) are girls (UNAIDS 2004b: 2ff).

The rapid spread of AIDS in Africa results from a deep, multistranded crisis in political economy and healthcare, and is constantly reaching new victims through trade, tourism, migration and war. Transmitted via sex and blood AIDS is surrounded by dense meanings to which cultural constructions of gender roles are central. Women are especially at risk because of their poverty, their relative powerlessness in the overall organisation of African societies and their subordinate position with respect to men. AIDS is the leading cause of adult deaths in high-prevalence areas, exceeding even pregnancy-related morbidity in women, and the long term impact of the disease in any African country are be vivid in a broad perspective, including social, economic and political aspects of society (Barnett and Blaikie 1992: 175) and the future health and survival of many millions are already compromised (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 310). During the last quarter of a decade illnesses, caused by AIDS eliminating people's immune-system, have been written as the cause of death on peoples death certificates over twenty-five millions times and still AIDS continue to reap eight new victims every second, every minute of the day.

I find the AIDS pandemic especially interesting while it confronts us with a full range of development issues in a particularly acute form. With cases reported from 162 countries; 47 of them in Africa, AIDS has evolved into an initial position for violence and insecurity for a large part of the world. For long, I believe a gendered notion have been a neglected issue in works concerning the sub-Saharan cacophony of African state's developmental issues. Many are the studies said to encapsulate the whole of society while instead their work is just a masqueraded research of men's relation to the state. The women's issues need to be put in focus and I believe in feministic anthropology's potential to contribute to the issues concerning AIDS-strategies. The gendered notion, together with other inequalities that shape people's behaviours and limit their choices, needs to be taken into account. This will, for example, prevent continued investments in ineffective aid-projects who base their agendas on presumptions that everyone is equal and free to make empowered choices, can opt to abstain from sex, stay faithful to one's partner or use condoms consistently.

In reality women and girls face a range of AIDS-related risk factors and vulnerabilities that men and boys do not – many of which are embedded in the social relations and economic realities of their societies. I believe the relationship between AIDS-prevalence and the socio-economic indicators to be highly complex. Social inequalities, layered atop widespread impoverishment, and the social distortions wrought by migrant labour systems is escalating the epidemic's impact on women in the context of profound gender, class and other inequalities. These factors are not easily dislodged or altered but, until they are, efforts to contain and reverse the AIDS epidemic are, to me, unlikely to achieve sustained success.

In the absence of a vaccine Paul Dover (2001) establish that behaviour change is the only means for people to protect themselves and others against HIV infections. Understanding the construction of gender and its relation to concepts of morality and sexual practice becomes in this sense important aspects in terms of behavioural change. What is needed then, to find sustaining solutions to pre-vent HIV from spreading, is a contextualised knowledge about the beliefs and meanings of the disease, and the motivations, social pressure, and economic circumstances that surrounds sexuality and health (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 311). Thus, this knowledge must, according to me, be based upon *African* notions integrated with the *African* feministic theory's concept of gender, a malleable future key area for interventions, to succeed.

In this thesis, my aim is to put African women's vulnerable situation into focus. The object of my concern is primarily ordinary women living in a densely settled, lower-income neighbourhood in and around of postcolonial Bukoba who have little formal education, few specialised skills and generally no access to waged employment. I have chosen to study how gendered structures are interconnected with the AIDS-problematics from an African feminist perspective approaching the dilemma of interest from three different aspects; the socio-political, the societal and the personal. By illustrating how this triangular model of integrating aspects, who both affect and are affected by each other, I want to discuss how an African woman's unequal access to resources, assets, income opportunities and social power can be of any difference concerning the continuous spread of HIV.

1.1 The Aim And the Question At Issue

In this study I will argue that the Tanzanian society is founded upon gendered structures which put women in a subordinated position. I attempt to show this by empirical examples taken from the legal, financial, social and cultural spheres of society. My aim is to examine women's disempowerment from an African feminist perspective and the question at issue is: How is the AIDS-problematics reinforced by the gendered structures of society in Tanzania?

1.2 The Theoretical Approach

As anthropologists, looking at women's roles and activities, we are confronted, from the outset, with an apparent contradiction. On the one hand we learn, from the work of Margaret Mead (1978) [1928] and others, of the extraordinary diversity of sex roles, among other things, in our own and other cultures. And on the other hand we are heirs to a sociological tradition that treats women as essentially uninteresting and irrelevant in the social and cultural structure of society. Women may, in one or another aspect, be seen as important, powerful and influential, but relative to men of their age and social status women everywhere still lack generally recognised and culturally valued authority. And it is exactly this distinction between power and culturally legitimated authority, in the midst of the ability to gain compliance and the recognition that it is right, that Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo (1974) find crucial to our study of women (p. 17ff).

According to her it is now time to create not only a counterpart and a corrective to these earlier gender-blind and gender-biased studies, but a mainstreamed gendered analysis of African women. While I aim to challenge the androcentricity of previous studies concerning the situation in sub-Saharan, as well as discuss what mechanism that have, and still are, ignoring and marginalising women's contribution to the African societies, African feminism has been a natural choice of theory. Emphasising the world's developmental issues from a feminist perspective do not just open up for a transcendence of traditional questions and problematics, it also challenge conventional constructions of significant events and explanations of social change. Hence, gender relations needs to be analysed in terms of their interrelations with other systems of stratification and vice versa and it is this recursive relationship between social, economic, political and ideological terrains (Imam 1997: 20ff) that I find especially important to emphasise.

1.2.1 The Post-Modern Point of Departure

The feminist anthropological theory is a part of the post-modern relativistic development in anthropological thinking. Post-modernism's approach grew out of a rejection to the Enlightenment's and Modern era's arrogant belief concerning the existence of objective knowledge, and already in 1887 Franz Boas concluded that civilisation is not something *absolute* but rather *relative*. His idea, concerning how our conceptions and imaginations only are true and have the same type of

meanings in societies of the same kind of philosophical tradition later became the foundation of Max Weber's theory concerning *wirtschaft* and *gesellschaft* (explanation and comprehension) (Layton 1999 [1997]: 205). A charming example of true relativism is illustrated by a humble Inuit's claim in court in 1973 when some gatherer and hunters of Cree- and Inuit-origin succeeded to obtain a legal verdict to stop the building of a dam in the Southern part of Hudson Bay until their property rights were acknowledged. During the following interrogation one of the tribe-members refused to swear the classical oath to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and after a whispering dialogue with the translator he claimed that he did not have the ability to say anything else apart from what he knew was true (Layton 1999: 208). Everywhere post-modern anthropologists praised the Inuit-witness's caution.

The post-modern approach can be divided into four parts where the first one criticise the modern era's imagined objectivity, the second question theories' ability to describe something the way it is, the third contrast the Durkheimian idea of a collective consciousness where the notion of meanings are realised in interactions between persons and the final part concern how every theory is politically constructed. The post-modernists are usually parted in one "harder" and one "softer" school. The latter, or the modern post-modern position; including Michael Foucault among others, claim that some societies shares the same kind of discourse while the former, represented by for example Jacques Derrida, state the impossibility to translate any cultural meanings at all (Layton 1999: 207).

1.2.2 The Development of African Feminism

Western feminism grew out of bourgeois individualism and the patriarchal control over women within the capitalist industrialised Western countries. As a result of the developments off demographic transitions and nuclear family structures, foremost in Great Britain and the United States of America, a concern for female control over reproduction and free sexual choices emerged. But this feministic development, with the emerge of a human rights agenda in the aftermath of World War II and the women's-rights agenda in the 1960's, can not, according to Gwendolyn Mikell (1997b), be duplicated in any country on the African continent or other third-world area. While Western women's struggle grew out of ideological ideas the African feminism origins from a resistance to the Western hegemony. Their history is shaped by "a history of a female integration within largely corporate and agrarian based societies with strong cultural heritages that have experienced traumatic colonialization by the West" (p. 4) and this contradiction to Western feminism has sustained. Today the Western feminism are much more focused on discussions concerning radical issues, essentialism and the female body at the same time as they emphasise individual female autonomy. The agenda of the African women are instead based upon culturally linked forms of public participation and apart from that the African feminism is, to a much larger extent than the Western movement, a heterosexual, pro-natal movement focused on "bread, butter, culture and power"-related issues.

Katy Gardner and David Lewis (1996) have studied anthropology's post-modern challenge and warns of the risk to make ethnocentric assumptions regarding the content of relations between men and women in different societies where someone, schooled in the Western feministic thinking, only sees "exploitation, subordination and conflict, whereas the women concerned might put more stress on cooperation and the importance of familial bonds" (p. 124). A few anthropological studies have become the platform for this critique of Western feministic notions. Their studies show how the aims of Western feminism simply are a result of the cultural logic of Western social interests, desires or social positions which lack validity outside of Europe and North America. Oyèrónke Oyêwùmì (1997) is one of the researchers that have, during her fieldwork in Yorùbáland, discovered that not even the notion of "being a woman" is a general conception.

Her study shows that the inhabitants of Yorùbáland do not even have a fundamental category of women based upon "women's" shared interests, desires or social positions prior to its sustained contacts with the West. Her studies highlights the fact that the Western social categories on which the feministic movement is based comes from an ideology of biological determinism where the conception of biology provides the rationale for the organisation of the social world (p. ix). Studying the concept of the body as a social object is a limitation of the conception of life. She criticise the whole idea of biology beeing our destiny, or better still: that destiny would be biology, and she concludes that biological explanations appear to be especially privileged over other ways of explaining differences of class, race or gender in Western thinking (Oyêwùmì 1997: ix). Foremost she finds the idea, often expressed in a chanted biblical tone, that the gendered categories are universal and timeless, "and in the beginning was gender", as untrue. How can there be a gendered notion everywhere when there are not even categorisations of women as "women" in every culture? she asks. According to her women as a category is nothing pre-cultural nor any phenomena fixed in historical time and cultural space and by way of conclusion she does neither consider the subordination of women as a universal phenomenon.

But too important to forget is the fact, here emphasised by Ayesha M. Imam, "that theories should be criticised not *because* they are Western, but *to the extent that*, having developed in cultural, historical, class, racial and gender realities in the West, they misrepresent Africans realities and observe analysis of African *sui generis*" (p. 17, emphasis in original). Nonetheless, claims Amina Mama (1997), is it possible "to discern a unifying feature of feminism, namely the political commitment to the liberation and empowerment of women, both as an end in its own right and as a means to improving as a whole" (p. 414f).

1.2.3 The Importance of a Gendered Notion

As I see it early feministic questioning of prior studies conducted by European male observer, in their strive for imagined comprehensive objectivity, have been one of the most important post-modern challenges throughout the later part of the 20th century. Today this challenge is characterised by the African feminist's critique of their Western fellow companions who, in their opinion, have underesti-

mated several aspects of disempowerment in their studies. One of these are their ignorance of African (pre-colonial) history, their misconstruction of the effects caused by slave trade, imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism together with their attempts to fit in information concerning African realities in Western-focused categories (Imam 1997: 25). For me this criticism highlight both the obvious fact that women needs to be incorporated in the studies of every society's developmental categories and approaches, but also the need for relativ-istic approaches in order to give true views of the human life-situation. A gend-ered notion can, according to me, no longer be marginalised and as Ayesha M. Imam (1997) sees it: "a social science which does not acknowledge gender as an analytic category, is an impoverished and distorted science, [which] cannot accurately explain social realities and hence cannot provide a way out of the present crisis in Africa" (p. 2).

The advantage to put the women into the discussions are many – especially when it comes to understand their situation in connection to the AIDS-crises. An African feministic analyses will, for example, illuminate the sexist knowledge that flourish around sub-Saharan women's situation, which both interiorise, subordinate them as well as it legitimates the male-dominant social order (Imam 1997: 8). Further it will put the African women's societal position in the limelight and show how this is constructed in a complex context of economic, social, cultural, medical and ideological interacting spheres. But what is exactly this meaning of a gendered notion? What does it does it look like and how can it be understood?

As I see it gender is a lived experience constantly in interplay with other alternative identities. Gender do not manifest as an absolute in pristine splendour, rather is it always present in conjunction with other systems of social and economic relationships. No phenomena can be understand totally separated from its surroundings and that is why I find it important to look at the local, the national and the transnational as a relation; affecting and affected by human lives and everyday experience. Or as Ayesha M. Iman (1997) sees it: "A woman is not 'just a woman', she is also, at the same time, for example peasant, Wolof, caste, living in the neo-colonial Senegal" (p. 20) – a fact which makes a triangular, model compromising different levels of society, useable.

According to Judith Butler (2003) gender "is what is put on, invariably, under constraint, daily and incessantly, with anxiety and pleasure. [B]ut if this continuous act is mistaken for a natural or linguistic given, power is relinquished to expand the cultural field bodily through subversive performances of various kinds" (p. 401). Biology is simply separated from culture, or, as some feminist theorist would put it: gender is the social organisation of sexual difference (Nordin 2000: 59). Simone de Beauvoir (2002 [1949]), the originator behind the classical formulation concerning womanhood as something you are not at birth but rather are made into through life (p. 325), claims that the concept of "women" is a historical idea and not a natural fact. Through this statement she clearly underscores the distinction between sex, a biological facility, and gender, as the cultural interpretation or signification of exactly that facility - a division that feminism, especially the Western kind, have based on of their basic fundamentals upon.

1.3 The Methodological Approach

C. Wright Mills once said that theory without data is empty, but data without theory is blind. Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1998 [1995]) claims that no science, possibly apart from mathematics and philosophy, relies on theory alone. For an empirical science as anthropology this relationship between theory and empirical material are crucial (p. 14) and the research is often parted in an inductive and a deductive dimension. My inductive part of this thesis is mostly based upon relevant literature and my field-work in Tanzania, while the deductive part are drawn from a triangular model based upon a socio-political, societal and personal dimension. Ayesha M. Imam (1997) states the fact that every theoretical and methodological framework of knowledge production has implicit values and assumptions about the nature of society (p. 2) and already in the early years of the twentieth century Bronislaw Malinowski (1984 [1922]) noted that there exist different kinds of facts (p. 18). Working with feminist theory, this burgeoning field, using a semi-structural interview method in combination with the literature I have chosen to read in the course of making my argument have greatly influenced the outcome of this study. An outcome that also can be seen as a result of my background, my academic schooling, my experiences and political motivation. The result, the generalisations and the conclusions that I draw in this text is, in other words, all in all coloured by me as the young, Western, white, heterosexual female I am.

Based upon Ann Oakley's (1972) results, were she during field-work found that a woman interviewing other women reached a higher form of understanding thanks to their shared experiences from patriarchal social structures, other feminists claim that it takes a woman's experience to fully understand women as a collective (Ambjörnsson 2003: 59). They also claim that male researchers' access to information concerning women, direct or indirect, are always limited or filtered through other men which makes the data produced a male-biased case (Imam 1997: 15). In a way I guess they are right, being of the same sex might create some form of unspoken understanding, but at the same time it is important to note, in a post-modern way, that it is hard, if not impossible, to fully know if you have understood the other one exactly correct. Our understandings are always highly influenced by our habitual background, Pierre Bourdieu (1977 [1972]), even though Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1999 [1993]) tells of a Western culture where urban people in Norway today have more in common with other urban citizens in Europe than rural Norwegian.

Either way, a feministic perspective and a female scientist that takes on a phenomenon earlier only studied by men will at least result in new discoveries, like Annette Weiner (1976) did when she returned to a Trobriand-village, close to where Bronislaw Malinowski conducted his studies half a decade before, and showed proof of a power within the matrilineal continuum that Malinowski had overlooked. But, according to Diane Bell (1993), the strength in feministic anthropological thinking does not lie in a total relativistic approach, while saying that no one can understand women but women would only weaken the strength of women's own pre-understanding, but rather in an understanding that deepens when the role of emotions are taken into account (Layton 1999: 209).

1.3.1 My Experiences in Field

Through out the years I have read a number of anthropological studies where authors have started to state all the mistakes, misunderstandings and misinterpretations they have made during their field-work in the introductory passage and now I join their motley crowd. In some naïve whim I thought I would succeed to escape from that embarrassment, but with no prior experiences of conducting interviews, especially not concerning such a stigmatised subject as AIDS, of course I stepped into every trap there was. While transcribing over twenty long interviews I have heard my self conducting a number of mistakes and, to be honest, quite often where these sessions both distressful and a bit frustrating. When my main-informant got ill early in my stay and was transported to the capital-city Dar es Salaam I had to reschedule my plans of action. At first I found it hard to get people to prioritise my interview-sessions and that seldom turned out the way I had planned. First of all the lack of language-skills caused a problem. I speak few words in Swahili and another few in Kihaya which left me with the problem of finding reliable interpreters. Luckily I was blessed with some very good complements to my initial main-informants who with their presence helped to loosen a few silent tongues. Because that was the second problem: the stigmatisation of AIDS as an issue; ranging of taboos like sex, infidelity, immorality and shame. Some, ususally those highly ranked in society, did not feel comfortable speaking with me because of that and quite often I saw a remarkable change in peoples relaxed body language when we had ended the interview-session and talked off the record. This I tried to overcome by approaching the stigmatised questions in a number of different ways and that was why I chose to semi-structure my interviews.

Thanks to my integrated position in the organisation HUYAWA's work (for more information see chapter 1.3.2) I easily came in contact with HIV-infected women, and men, willing to share their experiences with me. A problem hard to avoid was that these sessions often, especially when I collected many HIV-women together, where surveillanced by clan-chiefs. Nothing in the villages happens without their superintendence, especially not when a white young stranger comes strolling down their paths. After listening to the women's stories they could seldom help but to interpose annoyed comments concerning the fact that I left the men out of the picture and would not let them tell their story as usual. But sometimes I did interview men (five out of twenty-five sit-down interviews) in an attempt to broaden my understanding, but ususally they had a harder time telling me about the role of sexuality, the power within the Lutheran Church's structure and the stigmatisation of AIDS than the women. Finally every interview ended in a session where my informants got the opportunity to ask me analogous questions.

A fact I want to emphasise in the beginning of this thesis discussing HIV and AIDS is that these two represent different phenomenas. While HIV is an infection, AIDS is the disease that will eventually kill the HIV-infected. Around Bukoba few can afford medication to stop the disease to emerge and very seldom anyone stay healthy for a longer period of time. That is why I, basing my study here, unuttered equal an HIV-infection with an eventual deadly outcome in AIDS.

1.3.2 The Setting

The area where I chose to conduct my study is, focusing upon AIDS-issues, a place of great interest. This is where most of the international aid in Tanzania has been focused during the last fifteen to twenty years. This is also the place where the first case of HIV was proven in 1983, even though “[t]he description of the first AIDS cases in Kagera (...) suggested that the problem of HIV/AIDS infection (...) was long standing dating at least 5-10 years back” (Kwesigabo 2001: 26f). Since the conflict with the former Ugandan leader Idi Amin, when the Tanzanian soldier fought at the frontiers in the Kagera-region and got infected by the Ugandan girls, there have been wide variations in the level of awareness of the causes of the disease between different regions and at different points in time. Despite the fact that almost every aid-project in the region state “information, information, information” as the fundamental solution to the spread of HIV you can still find a range of syncretic explanations in this area. It is still common to hear a composite account in which the scientific and witchcraft explanations are merged (Barnett and Blaikie 1992: 43) even though no one in 2005 can have escaped the fact that HIV spreads via sexual transmission.

One of the earliest outbreaks of the disease was probably experienced in one of the small fishing villages on the Western shore of Lake Victoria, which became a smuggling port in the mid-1970s. Traders involved in this business began to fall sick and die in the early years of the 1980’s and the dominant local explanation at the time was that the traders had been involved in a major swindle with the Tanzanian traders and that the latter, coming from the district of Bukoba (well-known for its powerful witches – in particular among the Haya and Ziba people), had bewitched the Rakai traders and caused them to die (Hooper 1990: 40ff). The fact that the traders’ wives soon died too and followed their husbands to the grave was rather seen as confirming the potency of Bukoba witchcraft than information undermining the explanation. However, at the time when another trader, not involved in the original swindle, also died together with his wife, public-health education was reaching school teachers and local leaders. An alternative explanation was required; the message of the health educators was assimilated but it did not completely displace the existing explanation

It was in September last year that I returned to Bukoba, the biggest town in the region of Kagera, to participate in HUYAWA’s work once again. HUYAWA, an acronym for the Swahili phrase *huduma ya watoto* (services for the children), are a project within the Evangelical Lutheran Church which have been industrious since 1989. The organisational work is based upon an aim to provide support to, and protect the rights of, orphans, vulnerable children and widows infected by HIV/AIDS regardless of their religious beliefs and cultural background. Their vision is to implement social care, healthcare, education, legal aid and income generating activities and their clientele have fluctuated between 30.000 to 50.000 over the years. The programme operates within the Government districts of Bi-haramulo, Muleba and Bukoba rural and urban area and their plan of action is based upon an intern structure implemented on a grass-root level with field-assistants reporting to co-ordinators and administrative personnel at the office.

2. The Socio-Political Aspect

A few weeks ago Tony Blair, Prime Minister of Great Britain, published his 17-Member Commission for Africa, originally proposed by Bob Geldof. Soon before the upcoming election for Parliaments the news-coverage's pendulum between Camilla Parker-Bowles's prospect as Prince Charles's consort, and fine words about Africa's situation. The latter articles, illustrated by heartrending pictures with the classical silhouette of undernourished children in the background, made people in Britain marvel over Mr Geldof's passion for a few days, but have we not experienced this before? Remember Live Aid in the 1980's? Remember the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals in the 1990's? Remember different state-leaders, but always on similar looking podiums in similar looking suits, taking offence over the Western world's ignorance over African dilemmas? (Blair, for example, called it once "the scar on the conscience of the world" (Reitan 2005: 6)). After all, each sub-Saharan African gets just \$30 a year in aid from the rest of the world, or rather is it only \$12 after stripping out consultancy fees, debt service and one-off emergency donations. So, is there really any reason to believe that it will be different this time?

The modern Western mind has, as we all know, a short attention span. The immediate and contingent is preferred to anything long-termed and remote and a catastrophe characterised by blood, struggle and a deadly outcome does not draw that much attention unless it is an advertisement for George Lucas's last eposes in outer space. Not even the green movement, whom from time to time tend to frighten with warnings of ozone-dilution, heat-waves, drought and tempests, blows in and out of fashion on the world's front-pages. If a disease like AIDS, conflicts or poverty continue to plague Africa that will seldom have no obvious effect on most European or American lives - apart maybe from some vague fears about its terrorist breeding grounds (Wijkman 2003: 98). But in times where globalisation is a subject frequently discussed as an emancipating force or, for other observers, as something which undermines security, equity and democracy, global transmittable diseases like AIDS should stand in the locus of their discussions. For the critics the globalised movements equal an environmental catastrophe where AIDS, among other global problems like exhaustion of natural resources, excessive world population growth, nuclear holocaust, ozone depletion, spices extinction, acid rains, climate change and genetically modified food crops, threaten human survival (Aart Scholte 2000: 27).

Next to bodily and ecological security, globalisation is generally held to have far-reaching implications for economic security. Some enthusiast emphasise the gains in efficiency when the world becomes a single open marketplace. Others, however, calculate calamitous consequences for economic security and visualise the ones who are going to pay the prize for the "casino capitalism" that we all are affected by today. William Greider (1997) illustrates globalisation as something

that appears to be running out of control toward some kind of abyss, which threatens even the largest of fortunes. For many countries in the sub-Saharan area the lesson of wild fluctuations in foreign exchange rates, stock prices and other financial values have been an expensive one to learn. Globalisation and development are claimed, by the critics, to be antithetical and concurrently the pressures of global competition reduces aid flows to poorer countries. These deepening economic crises in Tanzania, among other sub-Saharan countries, appears to have increased the gendered conflict on a socio-political level as men seek to maintain control of scarce resources. According to Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (1997) there is a danger that moral panic in these times of bad economics will lead to round-ups, witch-hunting, and increased violence against women (p. 319).

From a feministic point of view it is vivid that the gendered notion permeate every aspect of the society, both on a socio-political, societal and personal level. In this chapter I want to show how over-arching structures in society, like poverty, legal structures and women's possibility of being self-sufficient affects her prospects of achieving an empowered position in the Tanzanian community. And as the situation is at the moment a woman's lack of income, profession and education gets her totally omitted to her husband, a fact that makes her life even harder when infected, and stigmatised, by HIV. Further, Tony Barnett and Piers Blaikie (1992), predicts that "the impacts of structural-adjustment policies, the mismanagement of economic policy and in some cases massive population movements and increasing problems of ungovernability and civil disorder" (p. 175), all on a socio-political level of society, will contribute to the difficulties of tackling this pandemic in a much wider extension.

2.1 The Impact of Poverty

Tanzania is a country torn between former and future prospects, or put differently: torn between colonialism, socialism and capitalism. It is ranked, according to gross economic and social indicators, as one of the world's poorest countries and even though the World Bank among others finds evidence that indicate an economic development it is still far from satisfactory (Bigsten and Danielson 2001: 100). At the moment Tanzania, among other sub-Saharan states, are being reconfigured as they struggle with the process of perceived infringements of sovereignty. All of these countries are struggling with issues concerning how global conglomerates intrude their domestic border and spheres which severely challenge their sovereignty, while global tendencies move in and out over their borders. Given all these global dynamics Gwendolyn Mikell (1997a) concludes that it is "not surprising that African states are having a difficult time configuring state and local dialogues while also dealing with intense global dialogues and pressures" (p. 340). And even though these issues concerning the global interference on local levels are problematical, in the political and economic arenas of a society it has to be stated that these areas, maybe even especially in sub-Saharan Africa, are closely aligned and overlaps the gendered issues.

Today the most tenacious obstacles to AIDS-prevention in Africa are: moralising, stigma, denial and blame casting which in the context of poverty and inequality create special risks for women and youth (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 328). Migrant labour systems have aggravated women's economic dependence on their husbands and across the sub-region income-earning opportunities for women with low educational attainment are particularly poor. The industrial sectors, in which female workers predominate (such as garment manufacturing), have been hard-hit by job losses related to changes in tariffs and subsidies and this have further weakened women's economic status, aggravating gender inequalities and possibly, heightening women's vulnerability to acquiring AIDS (UNAIDS 2004: 10).

2.1.1 The Colonial Influence

While ideologies of democracy and humanitarianism, which are so much in vogue at present, may be used for both symbolic and material gratification, so the development of illicit activity south of Sahara must be placed in the light of their particular history. In Africa the interaction between the practice of power, war, economic accumulation and illicit activities of various types forms a particular political trajectory which can be fully appreciated only if it is addressed in relation to its historical past. Today Africans are trapped between their own past and imported Western political systems, and until recently there have been difficulties integrating these two strands into their history. On the surface, Africans has the trappings of states, governments and institutions recognisable worldwide. Beneath the surface though, old networks still rule. Although almost all African countries these days have elected leaders there are no solid implementation of their politics, claims Richard Dowden (2005), and they would not have it "[e]ven without those networks and pre-colonial allegiances. (...) [Because] Africa's states do not have administrative structures that reach from the government to the people. There is simply a lack of human capacity and infrastructure" (p. 20).

The colonial inheritance helps to form our understanding of Africa as two opposing narratives. The first one tells of a continent underdeveloped and underpopulated until Europeans discovered it and opened up for trade and the benefits of science and civilisation. The other narrative focus instead upon how the continent flourished, among other positive things, until Arabs and Westerners started to impoverish Africa by slavery as well as a restructuring of the cultures and societies. The latter group of people claim that the Europeans ruled long enough to destroy or undermine Africa's own power structures, but too briefly to replace them with other political structures that united people in nation-states. Africans had had no part in creating the states that were suddenly handed to them at independence along with European-designed flags and national anthems (Johansson 1984: 13) and can not be blamed for any troubles they are experiencing at the moment. The ones that instead agree with the former statement usually compare Africa with Asia and South-America while questioning how Europe's historical impact on Africa alone could explain Africa's failure to function and prosper. According to them "no one in India or Argentina would claim that their nation's shortcomings today were a result of colonialism – not directly, anyway. They are

bigger than their history and have come to terms with their past” (Byart, Ellis and Hibou 1999: xvif). Europe’s imprint on Africa was, on the surface, quicker and lighter than in both Asia and Latin America, yet Africa is perceived to have suffered so much more. And how has, for example, Vietnam, a country that has suffered more than a bit from colonialism and neo-imperialism, succeeded to become one of the world’s most successful coffee producers, elbowing aside established African growers whose production has stagnated?

Richard Dowden (2005) outlines three possible background-explanations to this scenario were the first one touch upon sub-Saharan Africa’s uncertain climate and virulent diseases that make its societies conservative and more concerned with short-term survival than minded to take risks for long-term development. The lesson learned from this is, according to him, that Africans tend to keep to traditions and respect their elders because they have experience and wisdom. Secondly he claim family and the sense of belonging as more important than individualism while paraphrasing Winston Churchill (“No man is an island”). Thirdly Dowden concludes that Africa altogether is a more spiritual place, strongly aware of deeper forces in the world than the price of bread (p. 19).

I guess all of these elements contributes in the making of Africa to what it is today and since the financial situation in so many ways affects women’s chance to empowerment in today’s sub-Saharan Africa I agree with Ayesha M. Imam (1997) that there is always a great “need to analyse how different forms of colonialism and pre-capitalist formations have shaped the gendering process of post-colonial societies, and the multiplicity of gender discourse” (p. 12).

2.1.2 The Global Influence

But just as well as the past is an important factor in development of any kind the key to understanding Africa’s situation in a global context also lies in its relationship between its elite and the outside world of today. The fact that many of the African states’ economies were tied as appendages to the West led to an escalation of problems after the independence, when major shifts in the world-economy send shock-waves through the continent. Even today the global capital outflows affects the African economy and have brought major national economies like Korea, Mexico and Russia on their knees in a matter of days. In the East, as well as in South, global finance saddles countries, large and small, with crippling debts and other financial crises (Aart Scholte 2000: 27f) and Tanzania is not an exception. Last year the price for one kilo vanilla dropped from \$50 to \$5 and the prize on coffee (previously Tanzania’s biggest export) hardly makes it worth growing anymore. Worse still, many African countries appear to me states in name only. Their sovereignty is virtually a political fiction; their proliferation of the state salariat, frequently foreign-aid driven; their laps from public security into political violence, fostered by foreign arms dumping; their control over economic flows across their boundaries, effectively minimal; their impoverishing withdrawal from public welfare institutions, internationally sanctioned; their re-treat in practice from the populist promises of the early nationalist period after independence, often externally enforced. “Africa’s debt crisis, its increasing economic dependence,

its kleptocracies in collusion with extractive trans-nationals, the suborning of its postcolonial elites by global consumerism, all these complex realities across different parts of the continent invite the simplistic formulations of neo-colonialism. Everything comes down to the passage from territorial imperialism to neo-colonialism, or Global Americana”, says Richard Werbner (1996: 5).

In these conjunctions with economic and political crises, epidemics like HIV often appear. In many ways the emergence and spread of AIDS can be seen as a result of deepening crises that has its roots in distorted political economies and policies inherited from the colonial period. During this time most agricultural investment benefited the owners of large plantations, including local elites and multinational corporations, which have led to an exodus to cities already crowded with unemployment. At the international level oil prices have increased, neo-colonial investment policies and declining terms of trade for commodities exported to world markets have continued this drain of capital. Even though Tanzania’s financial numbers is looking better than before its internal disparities in wealth and power is still increasing, mostly thanks to the HIV-crises.

In some areas of Africa male labour migration in search of wages have intensified, separating families and delaying marriage for many young couples – all of which increases the risk for HIV to spread. In other areas prolonged low-intensity wars, civil disturbances, droughts, and insect plagues have uprooted populations and caused hunger, disease, death and despair. The result of this includes a collapse of the social infrastructure (particularly health service and education – mostly for women), soaring food prices, family disruption and increased malnutrition and sickness in both cities and rural areas (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 311f). Despite the force of globalised commerce that makes these new superficial identities clash with more deeply entrenched ones “the contemporary state crisis persist and the viability of government is challenged. It becomes obvious that there is a preexisting cultural reality that cuts through the façade of the modern state, linking it to its own past as well as linking it tenuously to many modern political forms and ideologies” (Mikell 1997a: 335) and interestingly enough the gendered empowerment is one of these things.

2.2 Women’s Role in the Socio-Political Sphere

What is perhaps most striking and surprising, says Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo (1997), “is the fact that male, as opposed to female, activities are always recognized as predominantly important, and cultural systems give authority and value to the roles and activities of men. Everywhere, from those societies we might want to call most egalitarian to those in which sexual stratification is most marked, men are the locus of cultural value” (p. 19f). From feminist theory’s angel of incidence it is easy to agree and Michael Foucault (1978) was one of those who saw the organisation of sexuality and reproduction as one of the most fundamental fields in which power is exerted in society. In the Kagera-region women’s subordination is vivid in a number of ways. In the towns these behaviours have been through a metamorphose, but out in the villages it is just as time have frozed. In

many houses women are not allowed to give any suggestions concerning anything related to the household and whenever they are in company with other men they bend their head and, while serving food, bow low. The women eat separately behind a wall, ready to be at hand whenever something is needed, and after the woman's husband has taken food, the children get their share and she is served whatever there is left. One of my female informants in her fifties says:

I think now women have suffered from violence from traditions, families and parents for a very long time. The main cause is really the problems with tradition and custom. For example here in Kagera Kihaya women can't speak loud. They say that a good woman is someone who is silent. It is tradition. But it is bad tradition and we need to get it changed. Another tradition is that man has the power. They can beat. They inherit land. And you know, coffee is the main crop but it is only men who get the money even though women and children are working. Money is only for men. Women have no influence over anything, except over beans – beans is for food. [laughs] Beans, groundnut, potato or cassava is for food. Now women are complaining about it. Because you know, education is just for men. And another bad tradition is that a woman can't make *any* decision. Even in families the boss is the man.

Most women still shoulder traditional responsibilities for providing food and other household necessities in Kagera-region. However, in both rural and urban areas, many now do so without the traditional role-complementarity provided by husbands and lineage members. Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (1997) tells of some areas where male dominance in family and community is not simply inherited from traditional social organisation, and where culturally constructed gender relations can vary widely in the region. Oyèrónke Oyèwùmì (1997) thinks it is “remarkable (...) that such women are not given the prominence that they deserve, even in the era of international women's conferences – the emphasis, erroneously, is on how tradition victimizes women” (p. xiv), but in Kagera-region that is not the case. A very few women have power as village heads, and it is no longer as in many pre-colonial societies where women held important religious and political offices, including village chief ships. In former societies women's membership in corporate kin groups protected their access to resources and influence over their means of production, while collective retaliation sanctioned men who abused their power. Later colonial institutions – the “trinity” of state, church, and employers – altered the balance of forces and elder men acquired new power over women and youth. This became, for example, vivid in cash cropping, which provided incentives and opportunities for elder men to take numerous wives who were excluded from the proceeds of their own and children's labour. Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (1997) concludes that discourses like these “of ‘tradition’ and, later, of ‘authenticity’ were invented to aid efforts to control women's labour and sexuality” (p. 313).

Four different factors have been significant in establishing this new form of gender bias: (1) Christianity, with its notion of monogamy and female domesticity and subordination; (2) Westernised education, which gave men advantages over women; (3) differential marriage systems, with Western marriage guaranteeing women access to property rights that women married under traditional rites could

not claim; and (4) alternative legal systems that supposedly acknowledged African women's independent rights, although colonial magistrates often treated women as jural minors needing male guardians (Mikell 1997b: 17). Even in areas where women had some power the colonial structure challenged her female autonomy. The new exactness in male domination over women was encountered by colonial structures and capitalist economic practices, and institutionalised in new colonial ordinances and interpretations of the Koran (Mascarenhas and Mbilinyi 1983: 324). The extent to which African women were affected by these legal interventions varied across the continent. But in most cases this combination of new religious, economic, legal, educational and bureaucratic structures gradually crystallised into a social order oppressive for non-elite African women.

The early state progressively became centralised by using its religious, ritual and corporate-model ideology, while simultaneously freeing itself from control by its traditionally kin-based jural components. In so doing, the state usually limited or abolished women-occupied positions and refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of many women's dual-sex structures. The final challenge to women's public roles was the adoption of mythical or ritual circumscriptions, or prohibitions, based on their physical characteristics (usually menstruation) or (in a reversal of original myths) their reputed "inability" to acquire new levels of skills appropriate to political leadership (Mikell 1997b: 15). Today the Tanzanian state has recognised its distance from both the Western model it inherited its alienation from and the contemporary/dual-sex models from which it historically derived its legitimacy. Despite the women's declined power Gwendolyn Mikell (1997b) states the importance not to idealise the past. Surely, she says, "the traditional corporate model contained the flaw of gender separation or blindness, which in state-organised societies periodically worked against women's interests. [But], [e]qually certain is that dual-sex structures did not give women equal participation, but they did allow women's inclusion, voice, and protest" (p. 339).

Colonial change also had had dramatic effects on women's political/legal status and in the end of the colonial liberation women ended up having no proprietary capacity or ownership over land or business. The underrepresentation of women in urban areas during the colonial period originates from the fact that women either were restricted by status, the dynamics of apartheid or the difficulty to find housing and employment. Even where colonial actions appeared to free women in domestic issues (primarily concerning marriage) this benefit was achieved by categorising women simply as men's wives - thus separating women from the larger kinship group and creating vulnerability. In both domestic and economic realms, the colonial impact and capitalist development have interacted with traditional culture to further distort the sex roles by increasing women's workloads and by creating social dynamics of individualism; an invention which clashed with the traditional communal compact and came to result in significant gender inequality for ordinary women (Mikell 1997a: 21f). However, apart from that the fact remains that the dominant cause of problem is the pressure of modern economic fluctuations in an unstable political environment on traditional residence, marriage, and parental patterns.

2.3 Women's Economic Contribution

During the last years Tanzania has experienced a widening of the income gap between rich and poor, increasing urbanisation, declining formal employment opportunities and deteriorating provision of health, education and water - all of which have significant gender implications. Defiance the fact that in most cases the urbanisation in Africa, factories and industrial production has proven to be temporary and illusory, while women's roles within agrarian familial production has remained a constant (Mikell 1997a: 341), there have not been any discussions on how to make women a participant in the financial market. This despite the fact that thinkers on both the left and right side of the political spectrum agree that the private sector is the catalyst behind modern economic development. And is it then needed to say that Africa has one of the largest private sectors, which "has attracted international attention since the 1970s as the most dynamic aspect of African economies" (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 314), in the world? If classical economic theory were right, says Moeletsi Mbeki (2005), Africa should be a hive of economic tactility and growth, with private individuals and households all trying to maximise their security and comfort. But instead the vast majority today experiences less of both and, in many instances, faces homelessness, violence and starvation every day (p. 27).

Women constitute an unexploited resource while they usually work all day without any payment. Apart from that, with most AIDS-care occurring within households (in sub-Saharan Africa, an estimated ninety per cent of AIDS care happens at home, and a recent study shows that women spend up to fifty per cent less time doing farm work when their husbands are seriously ill) women bear a disproportionate burden of those responsibilities as well (UNAIDS 2004a: 15). Women pay a price beyond the immediate toil and distress. As their time and energy are increasingly absorbed by care duties, their opportunities to advance their education, achieve some financial independence through income-generation or build skills fade. An average working day for a woman, living in a village in the Kagera-region, might look like this:

4.45: Wakes up first of everyone, 4.50: Lights the fireplace, 5.00: Breastfeeds the baby, 5.30: Walks over a kilometre to fetch water, 6.00: Makes breakfast and feed her family, she is to eat what is left, 6.30: Washes and dresses the children, 6.45: feeds the animals and give them water, 7.00: Washes up, 7.45: Wash clothes, 8.15: Breastfeeds the baby and send the children to school, 8.45: Walks to her *shamba* (the plot), owned by her husband, with the baby on her back, 9.00: Either she plants or harvest, depending on the time of year, 11.00: Goes home to prepare the afternoon meal, 11.45: Breastfeeds the baby, 12.15: Walks back to the *shamba* where her husband works to give him food, 12.45: Walks back to her *shamba*, 1.00: Garden-work, 3.15: Walks home picking firewood, 4.00: Breastfeeds the baby, 4.30: Grind corn to flour, 5.30: Fetch more water, 6.15: Lights the fire, 6.30: Prepare dinner, 7.30: Serve the family food, again she is to eat what is left, 8.30 Washes the children, breastfeeds the baby, 9.30: Washes the dishes, 9.45: Takes a bath, 10: Tidy up the house, goes to bed as the last one of the family.

All this work is unpaid and with the workload of sick relatives, or maybe even herself, in AIDS and a number of orphans to take care of all of her energy is spilled on daily routines instead of realising them into some more income-generating project. Some of the women work, especially in towns, but Ilsa M. Glazer (1997) shows how easily men, or male politicians, reinterpreted women's economic activities as something negative, primitive and illegal when it suits their interests.

This scenario is made possible when the dominant group, setting the norm, object to something that is happening without their surveillance and control. I believe that women's economic contributing factor in society is important, especially if the intention is to stop the spread of HIV. If any engagements of the long term effects of the AIDS-epidemic is going to account, I believe this work must start at a micro-financial level integrating both households, communities and governments. I believe that an empowered situation for women where they will achieve some status and the possibility of being self-sufficient possibly will change the out-come of sub-Saharan Africa's future. As it is now, few of the aid-organisations takes micro-finance into account and though some are doing it they leave out aspects of poverty, migration and the fact that the Tanzanian society is a society in change (Karlström 1991). Important to note too is that maybe the main channels for coping with the epidemic may not be a governmental structure at all.

Today women statistically outnumber men and make up for more than fifty percent of the world's population. Apart from the obvious fact of recalling to mind and insisting that account should be taken to the majority of the people, the studies of women in general and in Africa's in particular has, according to Ayesha M. Imam (1997), contributed to the breadth and depth of the theorising of Africa's realities in both a political, economic and social sense. Putting the women's situation in focus has already contributed to a demythologising of both the golden age of the pre-colonisation and the idea of Africa as the core of primitiveness and backwardness. These studies of women's pre-colonial positions in society have both showed that they neither were a happy complement to the men's roles nor any "dumb beast of burden remarked on by earlier anthropologists" (p. 7). Further on, the analyses have helped to broaden the picture of women as passive breeders to demonstrate their importance as economic agents who, in resistance and in collusion with oppression, realises new development today. It has also fundamentally challenged the tendency towards economic determination in Marxist theory, by demonstrating that ideology is historically built into production-realizations and into the definition of the economical concept. Apart from that there is the illumination of the fact that the assumed units of production and reproduction (such as the family, household, workers and farmers) are themselves gendered sites of change, conflict and contestation; not to mention power relations. Further on women's role in economic and social development strategies have fuelled the questioning of the beneficial nature of market-liberal phenomena as modernisation and capitalism in Africa. According to these studies the liberal processes have frequently resulted in a decrease in economic autonomy and a declined access to resources, state and security; all of which found women's vulnerable position of today which will be further evaluated in the following chapter.

3. The Societal Aspect

In the 1980's a critique arose among scientists and activists within the established feministic movement, emphasising the fact that women in regions outside the Western world was placed in a feministic periphery. The critique visualised a tendency to ignore differences both in, and between, women in different cultures. In the wake of this criticism it became obvious that feminist theory, both in a political as well as an economical perspective, had considered the white, heterosexual, middle-class, Western woman's comprehension and experiences as an universal subject. As a result of this women outside of North America and Europe often became characterised as paralysed victims and as a contra-response a willingness arose to analyse phenomenon, earlier characterised as symbols for a patriarchal order and oppression (like circumcisions of young girls and women's wearing of burkas), from the women's own stories and interpretations. This new improvements have, according to Fanny Ambjörnsson (2003), been a great contributor to the questioning of the early feministic movement's notions of power, oppression and subordination (p. 24f).

Another distinction within the feministic thinking that needed a renovation was the one between men and women, often discussed in univocally terms as a contradictory collective. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo (1974) studied how analyses based upon this distinction run a discernible risk to prove nothing else than a fortification of the gendered dichotomy, where women once more becomes dispatched to the divergent region; labelled as the second sex. African feminist dissociates the notion of women as a unified category asks: women everywhere, do they really have a lower rank and less power than men? Is the subordination of women truly universal? Tomas Hylland Eriksen (1998 [1995]) says that the most common answer is yes, but from an anthropological angle of incidence the question is far from problematic (p. 116). First of all there exist a significant number of variations between gender relations in different societies, secondly it is important to self-examine concepts as discrimination against women and see if equity is something desirable for everyone? Finally, it is, according to Hylland Eriksen, not entirely certain that men and women understand power and power discrepancies in the same way. Maybe is it even so in some cases that the objects considered prestigious by men is sentimental junk according to the women (Imam 1997: 12)?

In the Tanzanian society the ranking order is strictly patriarchy, another visual inheritance from the colonial era, and the women are viewed as relational, polarised and contrastive parts of society. The male supremacy, as in many age-graded patrilinealistic's pastoral societies, are vivid in a number of notions and Bukoba is just one of numerous communities of swidden agriculturalists dominated by senior men (Björklund 2000: 63). The word "patriarchy" refers to a social system where men contain the dominant part and women the subordinate. Power, ownership, and control accrue to the men while women are left with a feeling of power-

lessness, concerning both her self and other's businesses, and fewer rights to ownership. The patriarchal relations, between men and women; young and old, are justified through an ideology of men's superiority in contrast to women's inferiority. This hierarchy permeate the Tanzanian society in every aspect and is daily cemented in a number of respects of ordinary life. Actions of subjugation can be a bent head while talking to someone else, respectful greetings to the elderly or to offer the best piece of meat and the most comfortable chair to a guest higher ranked than yourself when visiting your home. Walking up the main road in Bukoba the silhouette of the town offers a constant scenery for men establishing power both in their relation to women and in-between men (and sometime in-between women). Who are offered a shameful prize at the market, who greet the other by offering space at the pavement while stepping into the road at a meeting and who is seated closest to the priest while drinking coffee after Sunday service?

Within the feminist discourse it is believed that patriarchal attitudes and practices prevent achievement of a sustainable equitable human development. Even before human rights became a subject for official discourse gender inequality and extreme poverty has been seen as important violations within the feminist theory. This convince me even more that what is needed in Tanzania is a qualitative shift in the national development paradigm so that gender equality can be recognised as a prerequisite for progress. This becomes even more obvious while studying one of the society's fundamental pillars, the Law system, and while scrutinising Tanzania's system of Statutory and Customary Laws I want to exemplify women as the subordinated participant of society throughout life both as an unmarried girl, as a married wife and finally as either a widow or a divorcée.

3.1 The Gendered Difference Between Boys and Girls

The patriarchal societal structure form an achievement of masculine ideals and in this model masculinity is perceived as being simultaneously a competitive expression of manhood and an ideological means of establishing male dominance over women (in Marxist terminology the creation of false consciousness) in which females acquiesce. But, as Paul Dover (2001) concludes, male and female relations are not just about sexual partners and there are four kinships categories of women that Tanzanian men have close and easy relationships to: grandmothers, father's sisters, female cross cousins and mother's brother's wives. Women are delineated into relations of respect and joking partners, those women who are sexually taboo and those who are sexually accessible *et cetera*. Some women will, of course, have superior status to some men, through social position, wealth or employment, shown, for example, by the respect and avoidance a son-in-law should show his mother-in-law. This fact emphasise the importance, as anthropologists, of noting that multifarious aspects of social relations between women and men cannot be expressed through just one model for gender relations in society, even if there is a general ideology of male superiority (p. 184).

The hegemonic masculinity in the Tanzanian society do not only create gender hierarchy, but it also establish a male pecking order where those who live up to

ideals of masculinity achieve not only public approval, but also social and often economic dominance (Dover 2001: 228). This ideal is vivid in the upbringing of children and Tanzanian boys and girls grows often up in households and communities that treat them differently.

While the boys are considered being permanent members of the family they have a greater social value. Later when they marry their wives are the ones who will leave their families to come and live on the men's property and when their fathers die they, and not their sisters, will inherit rights to clan land and valuable property as cattle. According to the customary law a daughter can never inherit clan land, even though her deceased father bequeathed it to her, but it will be alienated to her husband. While girls in the future are to be married and move away they do not belong to the family in the same extension as their male siblings. In this way daughters constitute wealth for their fathers, Masai and other pastoralists, who rank other men as poor when they have no cattle (SIDA 1999: 23). Since families perceive that men are more likely to obtain employment in the future sons are given preference for that reason as well and although sex discrimination in employment is illegal, males, whose labour is abundant and cheap, are preferred by employers (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 313). While growing up girls seldom have any direct power or influence over their lives at all, and in an interview with one of my informants I was told that among the Buhaya's one custom among the fathers, or their brothers, while drinking with his friends is to offer one of his daughters for their pleasures on behalf of the family.

From an early age girls are instructed to do housework while the boys instead are encouraged to sit together with the older men and participate in their discussions. When I visited the villages I was always, as a guest and foremost a Westerner, allowed, and expected to, eat as the only woman among men. Quite often the boys' behaviours were an obvious mirror-image of their fathers' boasting and nonchalant manners as they model the male behaviour. Once, on our way to church, I joked with a young boy, around four or five years old, and I said: Maybe you should stay at home and cook lunch for your father. And he laughed loudly and said: "But don't you know that it is not men who cook?" Instead their work tasks are to either hunt, be in charge of the animal husbandry or build houses.

3.2 The Role of Marriage

Contemporary African women are sometimes seen as walking a political/gender tightrope. On one hand, they are concerned about the sea of economic and political troubles facing their communities and on the other hand they are grappling after a way to affirm their own identities, while transforming societal notions of gender and familial roles (Mikell 1997b: 1). Today marriage is not an incidental construction of their identity, on the contrary: it is central to it. Or as one of my informants told me: "Without a man a woman is really considered being nothing. Without a man a woman is not even considered being a woman".

The ambiguity of marital status enables the woman "to maximise her chances for obtaining respect and respectability, and for becoming a proper woman in the

eyes of her community” (Ogden 1996: 176). Girls are expected to get married when they are around fifteen years old, while the idea of an independent and “free” woman is improper and rather threatening. Comments about a single woman living alone often state that “what she likes is what she does” (*kyayagara kyeyekolera*). Her behaviour is thought to be unpredictable and probably immoral, and is assumed to include trying to steal other women’s husbands (Ogden 1996: 176). Young men on the other hand can nowadays stay unmarried until their late thirties without causing that much objections from his societal surroundings (Haram 1999: 7).

The key to urban marriage today is a demonstrated commitment to a long-term, permanent relationship. On the wife’s part this implies sexual fidelity and the core reason why marriage gives a woman respectability is because it implicates a necessarily constrained behaviour. Female virtue is in other words represented in the domestic sphere, which is illustrated in the popular saying: “A good wife is like a second mother” (Dover 2001: 197); indicating a man’s movement from his mother’s care in the natal home to the care of his wife. In this sense a man is dependent on a woman for his status as an adult in charge of his own compound, while an old man without a woman is not considered a proper man. And this is interesting: the fact that the image of male authority can only be created through women and female acquiescence gives her in fact some kind of power. While women ideally represent the order and affection of the home she embody the continuity of tradition. This might be particularly important in times of rapid social change and hardship which at the moment torment the Tanzanian society. But at the same time as women represent these central values, they also threaten them. The marriages were, and still are in the Kagera-region, characterised by the husbands enjoying exclusive sexual rights to their women while the wives only have the right to expect sexual intercourse with their husbands on a regular basis (Glazer 1997: 147f). In some places the main HIV risk-factor for a woman is just this that she is faithful to her husband. A husband with previous or current other sex-partners. A recent study, concerning 15-19 year old girls in sub-Saharan Africa, even shows that there is a higher prevalence of HIV-infections among sexually active *married* young women than among the sexually active *unmarried* (Lorentzi 2004: 88).

3.2.1 Bridewealth

Under customary law women are under the control of their extended families and communities and generally traditional marriages are often arranged by elder members of the extended family. This exchange do not necessarily require a woman’s consent and child betrothal is still common. The transfer of women, from their families of birth, occur in exchange for bridewealth which has a significant monetary value among patrilineal groups. It is supposed to compensate for the loss of women’s work and reproductive value to their original families (Maddox Toun-gara 1997: 55) and, according to one of my informants, usually agreed upon without the girls knowledge. She, a woman in her forties, tells me:

The girl is informed a few days before getting married and she is not allowed to give her own opinion. After the marriage there is a period of seclusion for about a year, or nine months, well around that. During this time the mother-in-law teaches the girl, or woman, how to please her husband. She is simply raised as a child once more and she is not allowed to say *anything* or come with any suggestions. Slowly, slowly she walks around with her head bent. She stays all this time in a dark room until the end of the seclusion-period when her mother-in-law gives her permission to work. The mother-in-law says: the rest is now over, go and work for your husband.

The bridewealth symbolises a done deal and while women are sold as property, as the common saying in Tanzania goes, “property cannot own property” (SIDA 1999: 12), women’s lack of ownership rights is thereby justified. This is especially true in patrilineal communities where women live most of their lives among their husbands’ relatives and works on behalf of their husbands’ kin- groups (Maddox Toungara 1997: 55). In general, customary laws validates male superiority and, in a broader sense, justifies a man’s right to control everything in his family, including food use and preparation; tasks which a women everywhere are expected to undertake. Among the Buhaya a woman told me that a wife are not allowed to give her children food from the cooking pot which contains the husband’s share until he comes home. The children and their mother simply have to wait for the man to return which amusingly enough sometimes resulted in an ironic paradox for the unveiled father when the mothers woke her children up in the middle of the nights for late suppers.

3.2.1 Conceiving Children

One of the reasons why the African feminism have alienated themselves from the Western movement is the fact that the problems for women take different outlooks in sub-Saharan cultures than in Europe or North America. Africans tend, for example, to fuse nature and culture in their traditional conception of a woman’s role and this fusion is evident both in how Africans describe the supernatural and in the way men and women structure their households and the social, political and economic arenas. According to Gwendolyn Mikell (1997b) many Western feminists are troubled with the fact that African women take their reproductive tasks so seriously. All over the continent the pro-natal aspect of African culture is vivid and many women strive to bear and bring into maturity at least six children while still being economically active (p. 8). Today we are aware that education and national development can result in lower female fertility-rates but despite earlier predictions data suggests that although educated women have marginally lowered the numbers of offspring the majority of the African women have not (*ibid*). So the alternative nature-culture fusion among African women is not, as Mikell sees it, likely to disappear even though it may weaken slightly over the next few decades in combination with an economic decline.

Today the harsh reality is this: in the year of 2005 the most common death-cause for women in Africa is that she becomes pregnant. Every minute twenty-four seven one woman dies of pregnancy-related causes but despite this, a Tanza-

nian woman's value is for the most part based upon her ability to conceive descendants, the central feature in the construction of female selves. A childless woman is not only diminished in the eyes of others but also in her own. Because she does not consolidate the kinship lineage, while having no children to name after her, she drops from the genealogical immortality conferred by positional succession, which for many individuals is tantamount to reincarnation (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 322). When a woman assumes the role of motherhood her whole identity change and she is referred to by her child's name: like *Mama Daniel*. This title draws a stigmatising line between the women who has conceived and those who have not. Before you are "a Mama" you are not considered being a grownup and in one of my interviews a woman told me about her housemaid, a woman who left her parents house and became self-sufficient in her late teenage but did not give birth to her son until she was in her mid-thirties. Despite this the reaction among the villagers when she conceived her son was: "What a relief! Now she does not have to run to her parents for help anymore!" Even if this child was born out of wedlock, which does not give her the same respect like a married mother, she was then, finally, seen as a grown-up.

The gravity of motherhood is, according to Jessica A. Ogden (1996), most apparent in three central aspects of a woman's existential life. These are: the construction of the self as a woman on the basis of motherhood; the personal security derived through childbearing; and the prestige, social esteem and respect which motherhood confers upon a woman whose children are born within marriage (p. 176). In the Tanzanian society the loss of virginity before marriage is not seriously disapproved of (maybe because the boys need to get experience from someone) but pregnancy and the bearing of a child in circumstances not socially authorised are. Still today, young unmarried girls who gets pregnant outside of marriage are morally stigmatised and are not allowed in church to take part in the holy communion. Her boyfriend is though welcomed, while the church, as far as the church-leaders sees it, the father of her child could be just about anyone: which leave her to take the blame all by herself. From a feministic perspective this is just another example of the gendered structures founding Tanzania's societies. That a woman then statistically only has one chance out of five to survive her pregnancy, in connection to the numbers that show that eleven million babies (twenty every minute) every year dies of easily treated diseases such as diarrhoea, measles, pneumonia, malaria and HIV, makes it even more disturbing when the outside world's reaction is numb.

3.2.3 Divorce

Even though I interviewed some girls in town who claimed that they would never marry ("who in their right mind would accept problems"), many girls dream of becoming someone's wife. Despite the fact that they know what a vulnerable situation wives in Tanzania often are in, they still long to move into a house and have their own *shamba*. One of my main informants, a woman in her thirties (I), told me how she fell in love with a co-worker, resigned and moved with him to

the other side of Lake Victoria. When they arrived she realised that he already had a wife, a wife she knew nothing about.

(Maricka): How did you feel when you found out?

(I): It wasn't much I could do, we where together. And then I had quit my job and asked for a transfer to Terinne, so there wasn't much I could do. We were married.

(M): But how did the first wife react? Had she got a letter or something from her husband or was she as surprised as you were?

(I): I think he had send her some letter, but it just is like this. A man can have several wives, it is common.

(M): And who were ranked highest in status, you or the other wife?

(I): The woman doesn't have that much to say about anything. It is the man who has all the power. He just separates the wives in different houses.

(M): And how did you feel when he went to this other woman?

(I): [laughs overcome] It's not easy, but what can you do? It's not much you could do here.

After she had deceived their third child and her husband had married yet another woman she fled from the village to never return. She describe her role as a wife as a tractor who took care of everything while her husband did not contribute to anything. Secretly she had saved money for many years which paid the ferry-ticket for her and her children and while fleeing she was scared that he would catch and kill her with the machete. Later she and her children could return to her father's house in Illemera. Today she has build her own house, are self-sufficient while working as a house-keeper and has been able to send all her children to school.

Tanzania is a country where circumstances, marked by glaring gender inequality, most often gives men the chance to hold the upper hand and where social norms and legal frameworks often brace that hand. Customary law is important in understanding Tanzanian gender relations. It provides a rationale for patriarchal ideology and practice, while it validates male superiority. What is today called customary law is not traditional in any pre-colonial sense, rather is it founded upon colonial misunderstandings. During the colonial era diverse customary practices of the eighty per cent of Tanzanian ethnic groups, which were patrilineal, were codified and modified to incorporate European (mis)understanding of custom as well as their own patriarchal biases about men as heads of household. The formerly matrilineal societies, mostly located along the coast and in the south, follow patrilineal practices today and thanks to the colonial imposition of capitalist relations, which introduced Europeans patriarchal ideas, men are today seen as the "breadwinners" while the women ensure household maintenance (Mikell 1997a: 29).

1984 the Bill of Rights where added to 1977's Constitution which guaranteed all peoples' equality before the law. Despite the fact that sex and gender are not mentioned as any specific categories for which discrimination is prohibited, a man said that: "the source of the whole problem [changes that threaten men's privileged position] is the national Constitution because it states that women are equal". Despite this man's critique the laws that deal with gender relations are not

unified, neither are they consistent, which allow unequal treatment of men and women in practice. Women's vulnerability to HIV is further exacerbated by unequal property and inheritance rights (UNAIDS 2004a: 16) and it is not uncommon that courts discriminate against the claims to property of women who were not in waged employment during the marriage. When the Law of Marriage Act passed in 1971 it was considered being a milestone for women while it constituted a woman some specific rights, including the property right they had acquired during the marriage, in case of divorce. But in reality the law do not make much difference when the court, despite valid claims, seldom believe them, but tend to favour the man's property claims. Beyond this, public opinion often blames the woman for behaving "inappropriately" according to patriarchal ideology; she has simply dared to claim her right before the court (SIDA 1999: 11). Tanzania's three legal systems: customary law, religious law and statutory law were often viewed by the women I met as fairytales of some sorts ("Do you know that there is a law that can actually help me to keep my children/my house/my cattle?"). The courts are experts in delaying the proceedings and few are the women that can both afford and handle the critique they get from their societal surroundings. While speaking to some of my younger male informants who are in their thirties they talk of men of their age who today travel far to distant villagers to find wives where "the girls do not know much about the law".

In the Tanzanian culture a married woman's refusal to sexual services is a ground for divorce (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 323) and if the husband is mis-treated in any way the woman is forced to leave her children and house behind. A cynical proverb from Kondoia illustrate the wife "like a walking stick which is always replaceable" (SIDA 1999: 8) and during my interview-sessions I even heard about men who had beaten their wives, caught cheating, to death without any legal actions taken. But still in a way, a women's virtue is central to the society's withholding moral discourse - even though some men rather view women's power like this old man: "The wife is the most important implement in the house. You are supposed to use it intelligently and wisely" (*ibid*). So, what happens when the women are left alone after a divorce? She usually has no money, usually no income, usually no property, usually no custody over her children and it is often problematic to return to the family of her own as my informant, in her forties, tells of:

Your parents feel that you have not honoured them. The community fears and despises you. You can only get support from others in your own situation. As a single mother you are not accorded full status as an adult woman, and men just approach you as if you are a prostitute. You also get chided by other women. Although you are a parent, it is as though you do not know how to do things properly in the home. For example, if some neighbours are cooking communally for someone's funeral, they will make a point of not asking you to join. You are made to feel that because you don't have a husband you cannot cook nicely. They say that when you don't have a man, you can just do what you like. They also fear that you will take their husbands.

Some families consider their daughters as gone and refuse to take care of them once more, which means that most of the divorced women end up marrying a Muslim and becomes his third or fourth wife. Some women stay single, but usually they do not get much respect - especially if they are unemployed.

3.3 To Be Left a Widow

The sense that the widow is anomalous – that she, rather than the ghost of the dead person or some other close kin, must bear the weight of a loss – are elaborate in these societies in which a woman is defined exclusively in and through her male relations. It is often said that a woman should pray to die before her husband, because if he dies first she, as an outsider, is apt to be suspected as the mystical source of his demise (Ortner 1974; Ogden 1996). “When these poor women, who have been excluded from any social role of their own, are widowed, they in fact become social anomalies, without meaning or place. Other see them as pariahs, as evildoers and poisoners, they are despised and feared” (Zimbalist Rosaldo 1974: 33f). AIDS has left tens of thousands of widows and orphans in areas of high prevalence like Kagera-region, straining the coping capacity of families and communities. In this case women are especially vulnerable economically, since property accumulated during marriage is often seized by the deceased husband’s relatives (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 324) and the widows are left with nothing.

Under customary law a woman is prohibited to inherit land or other valuable property, such as a house or cattle, from a deceased husband. If a widow chooses to remain with her in-laws (whether she agrees to marry a relative of her deceased husband or not) she will have the right to continue to use a portion of their clan land, but this right she holds only through her sons. If she is childless or only has daughters her rights are not secured. As a widow the woman often ends up at an imaginary crossroad where the choices are limited to three evils. Either she can be inherited as a wife to a new husband, or she can return to her people (but “who are these”, Magdalena K. Rwebangira (1996) question), or she can live where her children have decided – assumed she gave birth to at least one son. All of which, these options requires her to be a dependent - irrespective of the number of years she prior has lived in holy matrimony with her deceased husband and contributed to her family’s wealth (SIDA 1999: 35).

I argue that poverty robs women of the ability to fulfil their socially designated responsibilities and thus debases them, often forcing them into prostitution. And since the 1980s, “AIDS had transformed what was once a survival strategy into a route to early, painful death” (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 314). The lack of marital property rights is deterrent to marriage for some women, and the vulnerability of widows and divorcées. What is needed is a reformation of the law, passing new bills and creating commissions to discuss these items. But more importantly something need to be done which enables people to understand, respect and use their rights. In a situation where AIDS reap thousands of lives, and leaves just as many widows behind, it is for me obvious that aid-organisations around the world can not just leave them too but needs to put the societal aspects on their agendas.

4. The Personal Aspect

At the annual AIDS-conference, last year held in Bangkok, there was a great difference compared to the previous conferences during the past fifteen years. For the initiated who have followed the progress of these events the conferences have tended to look strangely similar one year after another. In a way these get-togethers have become an institutionalised arena where HIV-issues are highlighted, opening up to a possibility to put pressure for action on the political leaders of the world. Their spectra of participants have always ranged from activists to scientists, the annual theme this year was similar to the previous, the speeches were just as analogous to the last ones and while the celebrities tend to fluctuate the pressure from the pharmaceutical industry is always rigid. So, what was the difference, then, in 2004?

Previously an urge for more investments have twined like a red tread through the program, as well as through the demonstrators slogan's outside the air-conditioned auditoriums, but that is no more. After twenty years of monotonous proposals for economic support to moderate the international epidemic, the aid-organisations actually today do have financial resources. Approximately around \$6 billion. The money has streamed from sources like the United Nations, the European Union, the World Bank, Bill Gate's foundations and the governments of the United State's of America, Canada, Great Britain, Japan and Australia (Atterstam 2004: 17). Considering the past twenty years of continuous fight for financial contributions for HIV-prevention and consoling, today's economic funding is a miracle in it self and it seemed as if the goals the HIV-conference had strived to attain were on its way to realisation. But instead this economic support have illuminated new problems, one of them being the HIV-issue that have gone beyond the medical discussions to become a political bat to achieve power and international influence with. So, 2004 was the year when the medical-expertise left the building, the scientists started to use other forums to discuss their concerns, and left behind on the conference's arena are only the aid-organisations who combat against each other for more funding.

At the moment the European Union contribute with less than five per cent of the Union's total health-sector-aid (Wijkman 2003: 94). The United Nations contribute with approximately \$300 million every year while the United State's of America last year decided to fund \$15 billion every year until 2010. As a result of this founding the United State's have a great deal of influence regarding the future situation in sub-Saharan Africa, but to last years conference the United States of America only send a very small delegation. An act interpreted by the assembled world press as an accentuated protest as a result of their inability to affect the outcome of the conference's agenda. While a third of their funding is earmarked for actions of prevention like temperance, they are not, according to Barbara Lee; member of the American Congress, interested in discussing contraceptives like

condoms. They simply, supported by Yoweri Museveni; president of Uganda, promote sexual abstemiousness, a statement that caused great commotion at the last conference. Barbara Lee is highly critical of her government's way of using ideologies instead of scientific facts against the spread of HIV and says that "[i]n an era where five million people around the world are infected by HIV every year, and where women and girls all too seldom have the right to relinquish from sex, a program promoting sexual restraint is not just irresponsible, but in-human. Their [the women's] only chance to avoid HIV-infections is to use condoms" (Atterstam 2004: 17; my translation).

4.1 Female Power in Relation to Sexual Practices

For the African women these discussions about contraceptives, or the option to restrain sex, does not affect their situation on any personal level. For a Tanzanian woman, sexuality "is always and already under constant and unlimited negotiation" (Turner 2000b: 100) and as I have stated before in this thesis: a majority of the Tanzanian women do not have the power to control their life-situation, neither on a socio-political, societal or personal level. While she is still young and unmarried she is the property of her father and his kin and later through marriage her sexuality and child-bearing resources are transported to her husband's kin (Haram 1999: 2). And for the women who, for one reason or another, lives on her own without any male protection, she "become easy prey of men who notoriously see the unmarried woman and single mother to be, as they say 'any man's woman' and thus sexually available" (Haram 1999: 163). Rape does not exist in either the Swahili or Haya vocabulary, despite the fact that a re-cent survey by Community Development survey showed that ninety per cent of women and girls have been abused. Despite that talk of sexual violence is topical even in Tanzania, today an important feministic progress when violence and co-ercion tend to mark girls first experiences of sex (Day 2003: 172; Harvey and Gow 1994: 4). When trauma causes tears in the vaginal skins it allows HIV to enter, and sadly this often occur at first coitus, particularly in the case of girls and young adolescents being penetrated by mature men. The condition of the vagina is also a factor in adult trauma when it, in many cultures, are common that men pre-fer intercourse in a tight, dry vagina and therefore may omit erotic foreplay. The women Brooke Grunfest Schoepf (1997) have met explain that without lubrication; "Men feel as though they are penetrating a virgin" (p. 315). In cultures like these where these practices are "traditional", and among others to which they are spreading, women say that they are ashamed of what they perceive as a vagina widened by successive births or with copious secretions; which may cause a wo-man to be mocked for "liking sex to much" (*ibid*). In the presence of high levels of background infection, these conditions all help to explain the high suscept-ibility of young females.

Other girls and women are driven by poverty to transactional sex and use it as a commodity for goods, services, money, accommodation, medication or other basic necessities; often with older male partners. Fear of AIDS have propelled some men to seek very young girls who they believe are more likely to be free of

infection. In Bukoba few dared, or were to ashamed, to speak of this occurrence, especially when male school teachers were reported to either let their pupils be dismissed from obligatory tasks in exchange for sexual services or simply claimed sex as a fringe benefit of their poorly paid profession. Some of my informants also told of cars of businessmen and government officials that could be seen parked at the school-yard gates, waiting for girls to emerge. All of this reflect men's superior economic position and access to power resources, women's difficulties to meet their basic needs and the cultural value placed on men having multiple sexual partners (UNAIDS 2004a: 10).

Bryan S. Turner (2000a) describes an African woman's sexuality as something "always and already under constant and unlimited negotiation" (p. 100). In this chapter I want to emphasize the relationship between the spread of HIV, women's vulnerability in reference to the sexual impact in the Tanzanian society, the lack of education and the stigmatisation of the disease. All these factors interplay with each other and form, on a personal aspect, proof to why a gendered discussion concerning HIV is so important. The reason why women and especially young girls today in increasing numbers are infected by HIV is not because they nowadays have an increased risk-behaviour, neither is it because they sleep around any more than the boys (Lorentzi 2004: 87f). Instead I believe the female part of the population is at the top of every statistical chart thanks to gender inequality. They do not have the power to demand safe sex, and in this respect the campaigns for preventive measures I mentioned earlier seems merely ironic, but certainly unjust. Apart from that, the advice to stay faithful to one partner might just be as impractical for many as misleading for those whose partners already are infected.

4.2 Preventive Measures

Sexual health has always been an explosive issue and in many of the sub-Saharan countries people's previous knowledge was sketchy and misinformation have during these last twenty to twenty-five years been very common. Fluctuating rumours has despite later disclaimers continued to spread and people in Bukoba still cite the most astounding stories (like the one implying men to put *piri-piri* (an extremely hot chilipepper-fruit) on condoms during sex). Advice about safer sex has been, until recent years, extremely limited in the public domain of Tanzania and in media today the exhortation to "avoid prostitutes" are often heard. But just who is a prostitute? Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (1997) claims that not all women with multiple sex partners consider themselves prostitutes while some are mistresses regularly supported by married men of means (p. 317). One of the earlier mentioned preventive measures that still is, and have been, highly controversial is condom-use. In Tanzania the Lutheran Church's influence is rigid and they have for a long time prohibited contraceptives like condoms while they do not want to encourage adultery (instead religious leaders have been heard to tell women that if they are "innocent" – that is, faithful to their husbands – they are not at risk for AIDS (p. 318). Condom-use might also be synonymous with sexual misconduct and the breakdown of marital fidelity while they suggest "one's main partner [a]s

tantamount to admission or suspicion of ‘outside’ sex, both of which seriously jeopardise whatever semblance of conjugal harmony and trust there may be in the union” (Ogden 1996: 185).

Condoms are linked to control issues, and like always the constructions of risk and attribution of responsibility follows existing patterns of power and control. Just as with other forms of contraceptive technology, men claim that wives who have access to condoms will be free to men when they no longer fear pregnancies. In that respect condoms becomes not only a political issue that surround the entire question of their introduction and use, but also an issue of exercising power. Another aspect why condoms are difficult to use in HIV-preventive measures concerns the circumstances of poverty and overcrowding while they require a degree of forethought and sexual leisure time which is a rare phenomena in the poor areas of Africa’s cities and countryside. These difficulties of introducing them as part of family-planning programmes in many parts of the world should be a warning to anybody who thinks that they are a simple, straightforward solution.

Other problems with this preventive measure is linked to ordinary prejudices, like the one implying that condoms reduces men’s virility (Sachs 1980; 2002). Semen is often considered being the very essence of maleness and to leave body fluids like sperm, nails, sweat, saliva, tears and urine among other things outside of the body is often considered dirty, “matter out of place” or even dangerous when it opens up closed entrances into the body (Douglas 1980 [1966]). Opening up to someone’s intentions is especially important for men, who always are in hierarchal or rivalising relations to other men, to avoid (Jacobson-Widding 1984: 7). This makes men, especially in areas where the beliefs in witch-craft is powerful, to cause distress or even mortal danger when challenging moral settings (Couto 2002 [2000 Po]: 58), reluctant to collect their semen in condoms.

The position of women in society and the relationship between women and men is a central issue in the fight against the spread of AIDS – not only in Africa but also more widely. Earlier I have argued that the social and economic position of women, as well as the social and economic context of the relationship between men and women (Barnett and Blaikie 1992: 163), is a crucial variable in understanding the way in which the AIDS epidemic has developed in sub-Saharan Africa. These aspects of society also influence a woman’s private situation in life concerning her sexual life. Information about sex have in Tanzania raised awareness but seldom have this lead to a widespread change of sexual behaviour to reduce risk for infections or to protect partners in complex motivated social behaviours. Propelled with erotic desire, culturally constructions, frightened by moral values and often silenced: sexual relations are among the most complex societal phenomena we are living with (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 311). Due to these above stated socio-cultural norms, in combination with religious practices, it constitute the foundation of unequal power relationships based on gender and age. Encouraging sexual abuse, which is usually exacerbated by the marginalisation of women and sometimes even sanctioned by cultural traditions, increases their vulnerability to sexual victimisation and HIV infection.

4.3 The Sexual Impact

There is tremendous variation in time and space with regard to the social and cultural meaning of sexuality and reproduction, and the way people organise and regulate the sexually active population in different socio-cultural contexts. Apart from that sexuality, and sexual practices, is often a field enmeshed in a variety of taboos and restrictions, circumscribed by private and often secret relationships where people “do not appear to confront love as a situation of risk, in both the physical and cultural sense” (Turner 2000a: 31).

Much of the research concerning sub-Saharan societies have, according to Liv Haram (1999), “revealed that sexuality in small-scale, kinship-based societies, like the Meru [a tribe in Northern Tanzania], is not a ‘thing in itself’ for the individual to give freely. Rather, sexuality and reproduction, male and female – and the notions thereof – are deeply embedded in formally structured systems of kinship and marriage, economics and politics” (p. 2). In most of the societies heterosexuality is as an institution, an order of power and norm that reproduce specific hierarchies (Ambjörnsson 2003: 14), while “love and sex have always been risky for women because our attitudes about them are often a result of our culture’s social inequality” (Abraham 1993: 5). Cultural politics make the issue of sex a sensitive subject. Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (1997) concludes that racist constructions of African sexuality have been elaborated in Western discourse about AIDS in Africa, where Zairians, especially, have represented the group of people too fond of sex, too poorly educated, too primitive and too irrational to protect themselves from AIDS in the Western press (p. 316). Further more she claims that there is no evidence that Africans are more “promiscuous” than other peoples. “Not everyone is at risk. Some couples have followed Christian tenets to the letter, married without prior sexual experience, and remained faithful to one another. Some men are polygynous but do not seek women other than their wives. [But] [n]evertheless, [she says], numerous constraints related to sex, gender, and power impede HIV infection” (*ibid*).

4.3.1 The Power of Male Sexuality

Women remain vulnerable in Tanzania, as elsewhere, not only because of the legal and customary framework that restrain their lives, but also because of the attitudes of men whose identities are closely connected to their perceptions of their own sexuality (Barnett and Blaikie 1992: 165). Men’s sexuality is seen as an expression of male power and a man with several partners are given prestigious names stressing their virility and strength, and above all, their wealth (Haram 1999: 12). The men I meet talks about their “hot blood” and a sexual desire they can not control over themselves. Male and female desire is perceived as quite different while men’s “natural” desire is said to make it hard for them to control themselves. Sexual abstinence is seen as harmful to male potency, as well as psychic balance and one younger man tells me of how his seamen risk to rise and attack his head [brain] if he does not have sexual intercourses three times a day. According to Paul Dover (2001) men also tend to consider themselves as needing sexual variety and having the right to seek it; though infidelity is a vague notion

in cultures where polygamy is about tradition rather than immorality (Mankell 2003: 73), and this is a muted area of understandings outside of public moral. Female sexual desire is downplayed and women are mainly characterised as tempting men to have sex because they greed for presents, or because of poverty (p. 236f).

In Central Africa sexuality is strongly interconnected with reproduction and the man's role to deliver sperm represents, and is a symbol of, his self-esteem. Kajsa Ekholm-Friedman (1993) tells that on a higher level, an ideological level, the man is literary seen as the Creator of life in the word's most solemn meaning. Exaggerating this image and you could say that sex in the Western world has been reduced to an entertainment while it in Central Africa is a phenomenon of an almost cosmic nature (p. 484, my translation). A hardworking, strong man will want to "meet" with a woman and "[m]ale sexuality, in contrast to women's, is perceived as a physical need for release, an emptying and filling up of power. Ejaculation is expressed as 'giving the woman your power'" (Dover 2001: 209). According to Dover these kind of ideas on male sexuality would appear quite cross-cultural and are no doubt linked to male physical experience of sexuality (*ibid*). By constantly adding more sperm via sexual intercourse the men's new contributions will make the child grow strong in the woman's womb and until the child is born it is important that the man "fill her up" with sperm. This train of thought is also found among the Congolese women which, according to Kajsa Ekholm-Friedman (1993), often results in her having a lover apart from her husband to make sure the child is not born defected (p. 485f).

Another aspect of the spread of HIV is the interconnection between sex and power/money. This symbiosis can be seen in a man's amount of mistresses or the food he eats. If someone can afford to eat good food he will also have the strength to be sexually active (Haram 1999: 61). The foundation of HIV-infections is in this way incorporated in the structure of the sub-Saharan societies. These pictures of greedy women and lust-filled men in the Tanzanian culture not only conveniently ignore female sexuality, but they also tend to lose the nuances of female strategies and interests (Dover 2001: 236f). While some people do not view the women as passive participants, but rather as someone fully aware of their sexual and reproductive value, it is obvious that female sexuality is connected with power in some way. Because, just as it may be harmful to men, not only because immoral women may intentionally employ sexual techniques as a means to control and dominate them, it may also, and perhaps more importantly, be that female sexuality, regardless of women's intentions, is intrinsically dangerous for men (Abraham 1993: 326) while challenging their pride and manly-hood.

4.3.2. Illiteracy and How it Affects the Spread of HIV

Viewing all this information, concerning women's disadvantaged position in a number of different concerns it is, in a retrospect, obvious that a gendered set of information is needed. The plight of women and children in the face of AIDS underlines the need for realistic strategies that address the interplay between inequality – particularly gender inequality – and HIV, and women in Tanzania.

While women usually have had much lesser education than men there is no doubt that they also lack this adequate knowledge (Dover 2001: 198f). This causes problems related to HIV-infections, especially when the social and cultural norms impose a dangerous ignorance on girls and young women; who often are expected to know very little about sex and sexuality (Gaise, Cross och Nsemukila 1993: 13). A recent UNICEF survey found that up to fifty per cent of young women in high-prevalence countries did not know the basic facts about AIDS and they also claim the lack of information as surprisingly low around the world. A study among rural married women in Uttar Pradesh, India, last year found that seventy-one per cent of the women knew nothing about how sex occurred when they began cohabiting with their husbands and eighty-three per cent did not know how a woman became pregnant (UNAIDS 2004a: 9).

There are an uncountable number of examples of misunderstandings concerning information campaigns concerning HIV where people neither have acted on the medical and experimental knowledge of the infection, nor the chances of catching it. One of them is the belief that the act of marriage itself makes the partners immune from infection another is the belief that a pregnant and seemingly healthy woman cannot be HIV-positive (Barnett and Blaikie 1992: 45). Further, some men have been reported to seek plump women, since they knew weight loss to be a sign of AIDS, while others sought women from the peripheral neighbourhoods since they believed AIDS to be an urban disease (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 317). In Karagwe, a town north of Bukoba, an information-campaign caused confusion while the posters, pictured with a condom, was subtitled with words no one understood apart from one: AIDS. After that a long period of time went without anyone daring to use condoms. Henning Mankell (2003) tells of another story where a European nurse spoke of preventive measures in a distant African village while putting two fingers in a condom to show how it was supposed to be used. Later, while making love to their women the villagers folded condom on their fingers instead of their penises.

Jokes like this, on both anonymous aid-workers and Africans behalves, is according to Mankell racial and as far as he sees it this example is not based upon stupidity, but rather on a tradition the European implemented and the colonialism stated in stone: don't think, do! (p. 58). The illiteracy and lack of knowledge is a huge problem and already are scientists stating that some regions south of Sahara will collapse in the upcoming future if the spread of HIV continuous with today's speed. Their predictions tells of a future where the foundations of societies will break, where money will be replaced by former material exchanges and where communities will be founded upon child-labour since there are no one but them, and the elderly, left alive. As a result of this the whole of the African intellectual inheritance are threatened to disappear when no one no longer is motivated to study (Mankell 2003: 67). Education, information and critical thinking is, to me, the mainstay to a more hopeful future for women in societies where they continue to be disadvantaged through custom, through law or through both, and are thus unable to take any effective action to change their lives (Barnett and Blaikie 1992: 166; Rugalema, Weigang and Mbwika 1999: 36).

4.4 The Stigma of AIDS – and Women

A desiccation of the concept of culture has for long been characterised by a set of different ideas, notions, values and views upon the world. But culture is not merely a set of ideas anymore. Rather has it become an embodied notion imprinted on, expressed through and experienced by the body. But while the body is gaining a broader scope in the late modern human's consciousness a number of sensitive issues are actualised in our globalised world constituted by cultural diversity extending the ideal, normality and deviation (Magnusson 2000: 5). In anthropological thinking it is common knowledge that bodily fluids, like blood, and occurrences as sexuality, sicknesses and diseases are marginal phenomena imbued with powerful and dangerous meanings. Anthropological research have found several frequent distinctions used in societies around the world to determine what is accepted and what is not, like health and illness or men and women, and often the negative meanings are connected to femininity and the world of women.

The stigmatisations of both HIV and AIDS has its grounds in the fact that they are transmitted via sexual behaviour, because while diseases that available biomedicine services cannot cure are categorised by many as "African diseases" (believed to be caused by spirits, cursing or sorcery), diseases believed to be sexually transmitted are surrounded by special moral stigma in both traditional and Christian religions (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 319). Women are usually seen as more contaminious than men, while they, so to speak, embody dirt and contagious diseases in their self (Douglas 1997: 219). When men are infected, their wives are suspected of infidelity; when women are infected, they are assumed to have had multiple partners. Liv Haram (1999), while discussing how Haya men and women have responded to AIDS, goes even further and argues that "men are simply susceptible to the potentials of these actions, while women are held responsible for their consequences" (p. 208).

According to Lisbeth Sachs (1996) societies, imprinted by complex cultural systems where the borders between what is in contra outside of the bodies, have a great need for rigid distinctions on an *idée*-level. No one can never be satisfied without the tiniest glimpse of control (p. 131) and each culture has its own special risks and causes that generates problems. This notion, concerning bodily margins and their effects, depends on what situation the body is mirroring. According to Mary Douglas study's (1997 [1966]; 2003) our deepest fears and desires will always, ironically enough, take expressions with some kind of witty aptness. Every human are constantly categorising things in norms of right or wrong; nor-normal or abnormal, good or evil and it is this subtext that constitute our common cultural base from where we, subconsciously, take part in our society and understand its habitual languages and codes (Sachs 1996: 152). It is a known fact that creating our own identities we tend to set up a stereotypical dichotomy between ourselves and "the other" - maybe in an attempt to compensate for some lack in ourselves, who knows? This is, for example, how the picture, envisioned of the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie, about the Orient and Africa came to contain sexualised overtones (Gerholm 2000: 11f), and this is also how the HIV-infected women of Tanzania is stigmatised today. In Tanzania, as in most countries, the ideal is to have a strong, healthy and fertile body. The fact that a virus has penetrated the body's de-

fensive system is sometimes seen as a sign of fragility and weakness and is a threatening proof of how sudden the power-balance, both within and outside the body, can be changed. But diseases does not only affect the physical body but also the “social body”; the relationship between people. As with any other illness AIDS makes people dependent, less able to play their part in their family or household, as well as it put them in a condition of socially de-fined “impurity” (Douglas 1966: 3). According to Mary Douglas (2003), who vi-ew the human body as an image of a social system, it is just as important to keep the society, as the body, healthy. Dangerous behaviour are punished to keep the community safe (p. 202) and that is why infected women, especially women dying of HIV, are stigmatised by society.

The scientific explanation of AIDS rest on an established chain of causality between the symptoms of illness and the ways in which the virus compromises the human immune system. Rational responses to this knowledge involves breaking this chain of causality at some point – within the body (impossible at the present time as there is no cure) or between bodies. When people do not act in accord with this line of reasoning, it is not necessarily, according to Tony Barnett and Piers Blaikie (1992), the case that they are acting irrationally and denying the validity of the scientifically established chain of causality. Instead they may be acting in accordance with another explanations, like “chance”, “luck”, “witchcraft”, “sorcery”, “sin”, “morality” or punishment for moral misdemeanour (p. 42). My informant, that got diagnosed with HIV in 1993 and who was the only HIV-infected person that I met in 1998 who were still alive when I returned in 2004, tells me of a life where she had to quite her job as a bank cashier and where everyone turned their back against her, apart from her mother, when her husband died. According to her the stigmatisation of Tanzanian women was founded upon the Lutheran Church’s notion that the infected where immoral Christians.

The church they said no: the people who have HIV they are sinners, and nobody was helping them to talk about it. So nobody was helping them to understand what was going on. Only a few years back when somebody was dying of AIDS they did not have a normal, Christian funeral. They just threw them in a hole because they were sinners... Society rejects you. When you die you will not even be missed because you have died of a shameful disease. They will say that this woman has strayed.

Today the stigmatisation has a lot to do with the fact that the Government are silent and still no one has gone public saying: I have AIDS. When I visited Tanzania last autumn a song called *Kwa heri, kwa heri* (Good bye, good bye) was constantly played on the radio. The video displayed a young man regretting that he had not used condoms while making love and this was the first sign that I saw of taking the HIV-issue into the public arena. Whenever someone highly official suddenly disappear from the public arena media does not speculate in the cause of absence. The public ignorance of AIDS-related issues is one significant factor among all the others I have taken up for discussion in this text and it goes to show that this public silene do not give an arena to state any of their rights.

5. Analysis/Epilogue

Much of the creativity of anthropology derives from the tension between two sets of demands: that we explain human universals, and that we elucidate cultural particulars. By this canonised duality, woman provides us with one of the more challenging problems to be dealt with. The secondary status of women in society is one true universal, a pan-cultural fact. Yet within that universal fact, the specific cultural conceptions and symbolisations of women are extraordinarily diverse and even mutually contradictory. Further, the actual treatment of women and their relative power and contribution vary enormously from culture to culture, and over different periods in history of particular cultural traditions (Ortner 1979: 67). Using gender as a principal element in those issues and considerations that automatically should be considered and taken into account is not all that unproblematic. Merely by analysing a particular society with gender constructs, Oyèrónke Oyêwùmì (1997) claims, create gender categories where “scholars necessarily write gender into that society. Gender, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder” (p. xv). As anthropologists it is especially important to be open to different gendered constructions of various kinds, such as female husbands and male daughters among the Igbo in South-east Nigeria and in other East African countries. Thus, using gender structures as a conceptual tool in analysing the HIV-issue in sub-Saharan Africa, and not just “add” women into the discipline, is immensely important and will confront the conceptual and analytical inadequacies of disciplinary theory.

Drawing my conclusions from African feminist theory puts the woman inevitable in the lime-light of discussion. In viewing the AIDS-situation in Tanzania, or rather the Kagera-region in North-western Tanzania, it becomes vivid that the epidemic not only strains inadequate health resources and adds to the hardships of families, but its economic, psychological, and socio-political impacts are felt increasingly throughout the society (Grundfest Schoepf 1997: 310). All of these different societal, economic, cultural, social, medical and political aspects adds up in the making of the HIV/AIDS crises that torments the sub-Saharan population. With all of these aspects taken together it is obvious that they impose a situation of pervasive disempowerment for women. The question of issue throughout this thesis have been how the AIDS-problematics are reinforced by the gendered structures of society in Tanzania and this I implied to discuss by basing my empirical material on a triangular model in retrospect to socio-political, social and personal aspects of a Tanzanian woman’s life.

Tanzania has been fighting three major enemies of development since independence: poverty, ignorance and disease, and in the Kagera-region all three elements have been increasing drastically during the last years. The region, internationally boarded by Rwanda and Burundi on the West and Uganda in the North, is isolated from the capital city Dar es Salaam by 1500 kilometres, a fact that combined with the influxes of the multitude of refugees from neighbouring countries

and the war conducted in the late 1970's against Idi Amin's intervention, all have had a severe impact on its socio-economic situation. Today the per capita income of the inhabitants of Kagera is extremely low, \$156, compared to the national figure of \$600, and statistically it is now among the four poorest regions in the country. This multifaceted socio-economic, socio-cultural and environmental factors expose females, either young or grown-up, to the vulnerabilities of HIV/AIDS more than their male counterparts. Men is instead rather encouraged by the prevailing norms of masculinity encouraging them to be sexually adventurous or even predatory, exposing them and their partners to the risk of infections. Traditional gender roles like these are still widely supported and construct a major barrier to women's advancements in society. At a micro-level this is shown in terms of access to and ownership of resources like land, credit, education and health.

While focusing upon women's disempowerment in the lime-light of discussion I have wanted to, on the one hand, state the complexity of the HIV-issue and, on the other, show how the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV infection not simply stems from ignorance, but from their subordinated position in society. This pervasive disordering of women has been illustrated in a number of ways throughout this thesis while it tells of the shame, the hard work, the vulnerability and the unfairness of the legal system a woman has to bear throughout the different phases of her life. Life, such a serious, fundamental business for Africans, that vicissitudes so much in the Tanzanian woman's face (Adebayo 2005: 33).

In the socio-political chapter I emphasised how the economical situation, in collaboration with the HIV-epidemic, affects the women's life and work and create her vulnerable position. Unable to support her self, the dynamics of micro-finances, that could empower her and make her less exposed for infection, are withheld from her in a number of ways. Foremost her daily work consist of supplying the family with a variety of work which leaves her with an eighteen-hours-day with no income, no influence and no respectability. Further I wanted to show how poverty, influenced by yesterday's colonial and today's global impact, conspire to women's role in the socio-political sphere. A disempowered role that helps to lay the fundament for continuous spread of HIV when sex, for millions of people, can be one of the few valorised forms of capital at their disposal. Supplementing all these factors is also the Tanzanian women's absence of legal protection. The Statuary Law's influence is undermined by the Customary Law, a law that constitute all of the traditional laws where men have the upper hand concerning every aspect of inheritance, custody and legal rights. On top of that the traditions of the Tanzanian society by-pass women while they, despite being considered a source of labour, do not have much to say in decision-making, either in families or communities where their opinions seldom are given due consideration.

In the societal part I discussed woman's vulnerability to the processes of society from a different angel: the one based upon the notions and values the society's inevitable put on her throughout life. In Tanzania, the division between different comprehensions that fundamentally constitute what makes a woman good or not is rigid, and the scrutiny under which these women live out their days is intense. "What an individual does, when, with whom and in what manner is general neighbourhood knowledge. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are strong ides

about what constitutes a good or a bad neighbour, a good or a bad woman, and that most people work hard to make their behaviour and the ideals appear to match” (Ogden 1996: 169). In this chapter I wanted to show how women are omitted to men’s ideas in every aspect of her life, both as unmarried, married, divorced or as a widow. Every phase of life is, in some way, stigmatised in its own way and a women’s exposure to sex, and sexual relations, to become accepted increases the likeliness of AIDS even more.

In the ending chapter I entered deeper in the question concerning female power in sexual relations and discussed the impact of sexuality, the role of sexuality for men, taken together with illiteracy *among* and the stigmatisation *of* women, on the continued prevalence of AIDS. When the unequal terms on which African women have to conduct their lives are to be taken into account, the personal unequal gender relations, marked, for example, by the much frequent sexual risk-taking girls and young women are enforced to do, is just as important. In Tanzania sexuality is a statement of power and women’s vulnerability to HIV/AIDS is stated in the prevailing norms of femininity which encourage women to be complaint and submissive with regard to sexual relationships, including in marriage, and her inability to negotiate for safe sex. (Sexual) violence and abuse are related to customary ideas about male supremacy, which afflict women and children in all economical and social strata. The role of stigmatisation is great, both concerning AIDS, women and, in particular, women diagnosed with AIDS. Men are often said to believe that they are “AIDS free” and never see risk as something to which they expose casual extramarital partners, but put their fears and blame squarely on women (SIDA 1999: 28). The stigmatisation and uneven power relation between women and men is also sustained thanks to low educational rates, where girls are positively de-valued.

As I see it the gendered structures of the society of Tanzania reinforce the AIDS-problematics in several ways, on several levels and in several different aspects of life. The fact that Tanzania’s human welfare indicators have worsened during the past decade, in association with severe poverty and the state’s inability to fund social services at previous levels, has increased the women’s disempowerment even more. As long as the human value of being a women is closely connected to her male counterparts this gendered paradigm will continue to prevent her of being in control of her own life-situation. The realisation that the HIV-issue are this complex and needs to be handled in reference to that is an important lesson to learn and, according to me, this failure to understand both the complexity and the gendered structures influence has lead to the epidemic’s massive spread of today. Preventive activities need to take into account the unequal terms of which most women have to conduct their lives, while boosting women’s economic opportunities and social power should be seen as part and parcel of potentially successful and sustainable AIDS strategies. Today eight persons living in the sub-Saharan Africa are infected by HIV every minute. Most of them are women with no choice or power of their own to protect themselves. As I see it this is a crime against the humanitarians laws and rights the United Nations’ have implemented and precursory actions is needed to be taken right this moment.

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