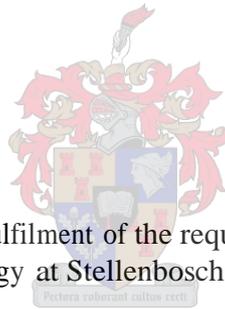# Patriarchal Inscribed Bodies:
A Feminist Theological Engagement with Body and Sexuality in the 'Worthy Women Movement'

By Sunelle Stander

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Theology at Stellenbosch University

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March 2016

Declaration

By submitting this thesis/dissertation electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

March 2016

i

Abstract

Gretha Wiid is the female leader of the Worthy Women Movement in South Africa. Wiid's discourse promotes female subordination and male headship. Her teachings seem to suggest that when wives submit to their husbands, husbands will be enabled to take back their rightful and God-given position as head of the household. Through a feminist theological lens, Wiid's discourse can be categorised according to the following themes: Female submission and male headship; Gender identities; and the female body and sexuality. Despite the oppressive nature of Wiid's discourse, with its patriarchal and for*men*ist overtones, the Worthy Women Movement is highly popular and attracts thousands of women to yearly conferences. When approaching the question with regard to the reasons behind the popularity of the movement, the context of a post-apartheid South Africa that is in transition, as well as the intersections that exist between gender, class and race (more specifically whiteness), seem to play a significant role. Although internalised oppression might play a role in the popularity of the movement, themes of patriarchal bargaining can also be detected. With all of these factors taken into consideration, it seems as if Wiid and the followers of the Worthy Women Movement are bargaining with female subordination in exchange for a utopian future of a faithful and loving husband, as well as more stability and security in the post-apartheid South African context.

Opsomming

Gretha Wiid is die vroulike leier van die *Worthy Women* beweging in Suid Afrika. Wiid se diskoers bevorder vroulike onderdanigheid en manlike hoofdyskap. Wiid onderrig die vroulike ondersteuners van die beweging dat vrouens deur middel van onderdanigheid hul mans instaat kan stel om hul posisies as hoof van die huishouding in te neem. Deur middel van 'n feministies teologiese lens, kan Wiid se diskoers volgens die volgende temas gekategoriseer word: Vroulike onderanigheid en manlike hoofdyskap; Geslagsrolle; en Die vroulike liggaam en seksualiteit. Wiid se diskoers wat patriargale en *formenistiese* (*formenist)* ondertone bevat, kan as onderdrukkend teenoor vrouens beskou word. Ten spyte hiervan is die *Worthy Women* bewegginguiters populêr met duisende vrouens die jaarlikse konferensies bywoon. Met betrekking tot die vraag na die rede vir die populariteit van die *Worthy Women* beweging, blyk dit dat die konteks van 'n post-apartheid Suid-Afrika wat tans in oorgang is, asook die interseksies tussen *gender*, ras (meer spesifiek witheid) 'n rol speel. Alhoewel geïnternaliseerde onderdrukking wel 'n rol kan speel, kan temas van patriargale handelsdryf (*patriarchal bargaining)* in Wiid se diskoers geïdentifiseer word. Met al die genoemde faktore in ag geneem blyk dit asof Wiid en die ondersteuners van die *Worthy Women* bewegingonderhandel met vroulike onderdangheid ten einde 'n utopiese toekoms van 'n betrokke en liefdevolle eggenoot behels, asook 'n meer stabiele en veiliger situasie binne die post-apartheid Suid Afrikaanse konteks.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the Church of Sweden's Gender, Health and Theology pilot program initiative and financial support.

Thank you to my supervisor Dr. Dion Forster and co-supervisor Dr. Charlene van der Walt for their guidance.

Thank you also to my mother, Elda Stander, and my father, Johan Stander, for their endless love, support and encouragement.

Thanks is also due to Brian Lays for creating a space in which I was able to not only write about love, mutuality and reciprocity, but to also live and experience it.

Table of Contents

1 Introduction to the study and Research proposal

1.1   Context of the study

Before giving an introduction to this thesis, it is important to note that this study forms part of the Gender, Health and Theology pilot program launched by the Church of Sweden in partnership with the University of Stellenbosch, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, TUMA University Makumira in Tanzania and the Ethiopian Graduate School of Theology. The program was launched with the aim of creating a basis for theological study on themes relating to the Millennium Developmental Goals aimed at addressing the problems of maternal health and the high child mortality rate. One of the main focus areas of this program is therefore the wellbeing of specifically women in Africa.

According to Olivier and Paterson (2012:26), the WHO's charter redefined 'health' in 1946 to include "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". "Well-being is a complex construct that concerns optimal experience and functioning (Ryan & Deci 2001:141). This view of health as referring to the overall wellbeing of persons can be linked to the feminist notion of 'flourishing'.

The term 'flourishing' plays an important role in feminism with a variety of meanings attached to it. Kelsey (2008:2) points to the difficulty of defining flourishing. Serene Jones writes in her book, *Feminist theory and Christian theology: Cartographies of grace,* that "when feminists 'do theory,' they look at individual and collective thought processes and ask about the grounding assumptions, order, and rules that actively but often invisibly contribute to both the oppression and the ultimate flourishing of women" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "What theory offered..."). When referring to 'flourishing', she highlights the different aspects that this term includes: "respect for their bodily integrity and creativity as well as social conditions and relations of power marked by mutuality and reciprocity" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "The discussion of interlocking...").

Serene Jones notes that "within the scriptural story, the theme of community is sounded repeatedly" (Jones 2000: Chapter 7 at "The women in the group..."). She writes about Calvin's view of the church and notes that God invites "humanity into the society of Christ. This society is where humanity flourishes, where God's creatures live adorned in faith, hope and love" (Jones 2000: Chapter 7 at Calvin draws yet another"). With this view of the church, the definition of health as the overall wellbeing of persons and feminism's aim of creating

contexts in which women can flourish kept in mind, it becomes clear that the church has a significant role to play in the flourishing of human beings. This information also suggests that a clear intersection exists between gender, health and theology.

With the context of these intersections between gender, health and theology kept in mind, flourishing in the context of this thesis refers to the overall well being of women – this includes the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of women - and therefore, of society as a whole. Oppressive perceptions and notions of gender inequality and female subordination deny women the right to achieve overall wellbeing, and therefore to flourish. One of the aims of this thesis is, therefore, to highlight the ways in which Gretha Wiid's discourse[1] denies women the right to flourish, and therefore their ultimate well-being.

1.2   Introduction

The last decade has seen an uprising in social movements within the South African context that propose discourses of male headship and female submission. These movements seem to base their discourse on the conviction that the God-given order of families entail that husbands should take in their rightful place as head and master in the family, while wives should fulfil the role of subordinate helper. Angus Buchan entered the scene with his Mighty Men Conferences, which started in 2004 (Coan 2009), with the Worthy Women Movement, held by Gretha Wiid, arriving on the scene five years later in 2009 (cf. Wiid 2015). Although Buchan and Wiid have two separate movements and despite Buchan refusing to associate his movement with the Worthy Women Movement, Wiid sees her Worthy Women Movement as the mirror image of Buchan's Mighty Men Conference (Beyers 2009).

According to Angus Buchan (Shalom Ministries 2015), God told him to mentor young men to be prophets, priests and kings in their homes. Prophet, according to him refers to "the man who leads his family" (Shalom Ministries 2015), priest to "the man who heads up his home spiritually" (Shalom Ministries 2015), and king to "the man who is the primary bread winner of his home" (Shalom Ministries 2015). In Wiid's perspective, "mighty men should have worthy women" (Jackson 2009). She therefore shapes her discourse around the same themes that seem to be operative in Buchan's discourse, but shifts the focus of her discourse to the

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[1] According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 'discourse' refers to "a long and serious treatment or discussion of a subject in speech or writing" (Oxford Dictionaries 2015). When referring to Wiid's discourse, her treatment or discussion during her conferences, on her DVD's and the written text in her book is meant. Wiid's discourse, as will be seen throughout this thesis, focuses on, amongst other things, gender identity, gender roles, sexuality, female subordination and male headship, etc.

role of women within the household. According to Wiid, all men have the need to have the question "Am I man enough" (Wiid 2008b) answered.

It seems as if Wiid proposes that only when wives help their husbands to answer this one fundamental question will they be able to take up their roles as prophets, priests and kings in the household and only then will they be 'mighty men' and women, as a result, 'worthy women'. She postulates that women can achieve this in various ways. This include referring to their husbands as kings (even in times when their husbands are not deserving of it) (Wiid 2008a), making their husbands feel desired and wanted through sex (even when they don't feel comfortable to have sex) (Wiid 2008b) and boosting his ego in front of other people (Wiid 2008b). When women fail to do this, Wiid seems to imply that it is justifiable for men to seek affirmation of their manliness somewhere else – particularly from other women and at work – and that women can prevent this from happening if they fulfil their husbands need to feel manly (by having sex with him and looking after his emotional needs, even when this entails a need for husbands to have a trophy wife) (Wiid 2008b; 2009b). When this happens, Wiid appears to suggest that it is because wives didn't put in enough effort to fulfil their husbands' sexual and emotional needs.

The discourse of Gretha Wiid will form the main conversation partner in this thesis and will be brought into dialogue with feminist theological perspectives on female subordination and male headship, sexuality, masculinities and female agency. Although it might, at first glance, seem obvious that Wiid's discourse is oppressive to women and advocates a relationship between husband and wife that will lead to women's subordination, a deconstruction of her discourse is needed in order to obtain a better understanding of the basis and perceptions behind her teachings. Wiid continually refers to men and women having certain in-born, God-given, natural traits, so that an essentialist approach to gender seems to be operative in her discourse on gender identities and roles, as well as sexuality (Wiid 2008b, Wiid, F 2009, Wiid 2012:132).

The questions that therefore need to be attended to include the following: With the feminist theological aim of enabling women (and society at large) to flourish (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "From my perspective, this...") taken into consideration, in which ways do Wiid's discourse promote life-denying customs and perceptions that are oppressive to women? What are the underlying assumptions and perceptions that influence and form Wiid's discourse on gender identities and relationships between men and women, as well as sexuality? In which ways are these assumptions and perceptions oppressive to women? Wiid's discourse on

gender identities and roles will therefore be approached through a feminist lens to highlight the oppressive consequences that her discourse may lead to in the lives of the followers of the Worthy Women Movement.

Despite what seems to be a blatantly patriarchal and oppressive approach to women and the relationships between men and women, Wiid's Worthy Women Movement is extremely popular. Her movement has in fact gained so much popularity over the years that it has recently also expanded to the point that two, instead of one, major Worthy Women Conferences were held in both Pretoria and Cape Town in South Africa in the year 2015 (Nienaber 2015). Not only does the fact that Wiid's patriarchal discourse, presented in a palatable form (Nadar & Potgieter 2010a:50), is advocated and promoted by a woman come as a surprise, but also the astounding amount of female followers who attend her talks, follow her Facebook page and support her discourse. The first part of the thesis, which will focus on the oppressive nature of Wiid's discourse, forms a spring board for the second part, in which the reasons behind the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement will be explored.

The varied experiences, contexts and oppressions that form part of women's lives are fundamentally important from a feminist perspective. Every human being, and therefore, every woman, is unique, with a unique history, unique circumstances, unique contexts, unique cultures, etc. The diverse contexts and culture in which women operate therefore need to be taken into consideration when practicing feminist theology. For this reason it is also important to ask questions with regard to the history, context and unique circumstances of the female followers of the Worthy Women Movement. Although each individual woman is unique, some contextual factors that may influence their support of the Worthy Women Movement can be identified. As a result of the pervasiveness of patriarchy, a woman's position in society is often influenced by the position of the men in their lives (like their fathers and husbands) (cf. Frye 1983:225, in Steyn 2001:19).

The transition that has been taking place within the South African context after the country's first democratic elections in 1994 and the abolishment of apartheid therefore need to be taken into consideration when approaching the lives of the mainly white followers of the Worthy Women Movement. The influence that these transitions has had on the lives of white individuals, and white men in particular, will be explored. According to Van Wyngaard (2012:47), whiteness in South Africa has been experiencing a crisis after the abolishment of apartheid. Tied to this is a crisis in masculinity, which a lot of white men, specifically Afrikaner men, have been experiencing (Nadar 2009:557). These men are going through a

crisis of whiteness, which will be elaborated on in chapter 5 of this study. Closely tied to it, they are also experiencing a masculinity crisis. In many cases, these men are the husbands of the followers of the Worthy Women Movement. A question that therefore needs to be asked is: What influence does the current context in South Africa have on Wiid's discourse? In what ways are the lives of the female followers of the Worthy Women Movement affected by the whiteness crisis and masculinity crisis experienced by many white, specifically Afrikaner men, in South Africa? Can this whiteness crisis and the masculinity crisis experienced by these men have an influence on the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement?

According to Mahmood (2005:6), women should not always be seen as passive victims within an oppressive situation. Mahmood therefore suggest that an understanding is needed of women's role in "subverting the hegemonic meanings of cultural practices and redeploying them for their own interests and agendas" (2005:6). Although it might at first glance seem as if the female followers of the Worthy Women Movement are passive victims of a patriarchal culture and society, the relationships between subordination and agency should be further explored. This will help to obtain an understanding of the agency of the mainly white female followers of the Worthy Women Movement within the context of a country in transition and a society in which white, Afrikaner men are not only experiencing a crisis of whiteness, but also of masculinity.

1.3   Research Methodology and goals

A qualitative content-analysis approach will be used to study primary data in the form of DVD's and books produced by Gretha Wiid. Feminist critical discourse analysis will be utilised to understand, expose and ultimately resist the gender inequalities and oppression of women produced and maintained through the discourse and views proposed by the Worthy Women Movement. An attempt will be made to deconstruct this discourse and views, with a specific focus on elements concerning the female body and sexuality. Furthermore, an attempt will also be made to understand the popularity and support that the Worthy Women Movement receives from the very subject who fall victim to gender inequalities and oppression. A qualitative feminist study on the current South African context and the influence this has on whiteness and masculinities will be conducted, after which the relationship between subordination and agency and the power dynamics at work within a patriarchal society will be studied.

1.4   Aim of the research and research questions

The aim of this thesis is to highlight the oppressive nature of Wiid's discourse on gender identities and roles, as well as sexuality and the female body and to obtain a better understanding of the rationale behind and popularity of the Worthy Women Movement.

The following research questions will be used in order to reach these aims:

1. How can a feminist theological approach contribute to the deconstruction of the views and discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement?

2. How do the views and discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement contribute to, maintain and promote a context in which the female body "is inscribed by patriarchal culture"?

3. What is the reason for women maintaining and supporting a movement and culture in which they themselves, as well as other women, are oppressed?

1.5   Proposed Structure of Study including literature survey

1.5.1   Chapter 1

This chapter will serve as a general introduction to this study and consist of an introduction to the themes that will be discussed, as well as the research proposal. A general overview of the themes, the aims of the research, the research questions, as well as the proposed structure of the study will be included in this chapter.

1.5.2   Chapter 2

The aim of this chapter, entitled *The Worthy Women Movement: Background, content, critique and popularity,* is to introduce the main conversation partner, Gretha Wiid, to the study. The goal of this chapter also entails to provide an extensive overview of Wiid's discourse and the Worthy Women Movement. In the first section of this chapter, an overview of the background and history of the Worthy Women Movement will be given.

The next section will focus on the narrative of Gretha Wiid's turbulent relationship with her husband, Francois, which motivated her to start the Worthy Women Movement. The focus will then shift to the content of the Worthy Women Movement, where Wiid's discourse and theology will be discussed. With the help of a femenist theological lense, the following themes can be identified in Wiid's discourse: Female submission and male headship, gender identities, and the female body and sexuality. This chapter will also offer an overview of critique from churches and the media that was aimed against various aspects of Wiid's

discourse and the Worthy Women Movement, as well as Wiid's response to this critique. The last section of the chapter will be devoted to giving the reader an idea of the popularity of the movement.

1.5.3 Chapter 3

The aim of this chapter will be to firstly ground this study within the broader framework of feminist theory and more specifically, feminist theology. The first section of chapter 3 will therefore be devoted to providing an overview of the goals, meanings and approaches of feminism, specifically feminist theology. The aim of this chapter however also includes engaging Gretha Wiid's discourse through a Feminist Theological lens. The meanings and pervasiveness of patriarchy, as well as the definitions and strategies of the palatable patriarchy and for*men*ist approach will therefore be discussed, before bringing the theory produced into conversation with Wiid's approach to women and the relationships between husbands and wives.

Different approaches to gender identity formation and the influence this has on women's (and men's) lives will then be discussed. This section will specifically focus on the essentialist approach, with its links to determinism and complementary views of the relationships between men and women. This theory will then be used to engage Wiid's discourse on gender identities and roles between men and women to show how her essentialist approach to gender can contribute to the oppression and subordination of women, when defining female gender identities in relation to and as complimentary to the male gender identity, which is seen as the norm. The constructivist approach will be discussed as an alternative to this approach.

1.5.4 Chapter 4

This chapter can be seen as an extension of chapter 3, so that the focus is still on a feminist theological engagement with Gretha Wiid's discourse. The main theme of this chapter, however, is on sexuality. The first section of this chapter will focus on a Christian sexual ethics. Elements that can be regarded as contributing to a sound Christian sexual ethics, with a focus on just relationships that reflect love, mutuality and reciprocity will be discussed. This approach to sexual ethics will then be contrasted to a legalistic approach, in which the focus is on the external and perhaps legal status of a relationship between couples as either married or not, rather than on a relationship of mutuality and respect as safe space for women

(and men) to engage in sexual relations. The findings of this section will then be used to engage Gretha Wiid's approach to sexuality within marriage relationships.

A second aim for this chapter is to show how current views of sexuality that can be regarded as oppressive to women have Christian routes. Current perceptions of sexuality, specifically women's sexuality, have the teachings of the early Christian church fathers, and specifically Augustine and Tertullian's teachings on sexuality as its root. It is suspected that these social sexual scripts are also operative in Wiid's discourse on sexuality so that her teachings are perhaps not her own unique creations, but rather a reflection of existing perceptions of sexuality. Essentialist approaches to sexuality and the Madonna/Whore Complex/Duality is particularly important in this section.

1.5.5   Chapter 5

With the theory discussed in the previous chapters taken into consideration, the next two chapters will take on a different direction, while still building on the work done in chapters 1, 2 and 3. In this chapter, the focus will shift to an attempt to answer the third research question: What is the reason for women maintaining and supporting a movement and culture in which they themselves, as well as other women, are oppressed? Before attending to this question, it is important to take the culture, context and history of the female followers of the Worthy Women Movement into consideration, before an attempt can even be made to truly understand the power dynamics at work in gender relations.

The focus of this chapter will be to highlight some of the intersectionalities that exist between race, gender and class and to point out the influence that the interplay between these intersections has on the lives of the mainly white, Afrikaner followers of the Worthy Women Movement. An investigation into the influence of the transitions that have been taking place since the first democratic elections in South Africa and the abolishment of apartheid on gender relations and identities will also be conducted. The influences of these transitions on identities of whiteness, as well as masculinities, are here of particular importance. The findings of this chapter will therefore form the basis for an attempt to explain the popularity of the oppressive discourse of the Worthy Women Movement.

1.5.6   Chapter 6

With the discussion on aspects of the contexts, cultures and history of the female followers of the Worthy Women Movement that was discussed in chapter 5 kept in mind, this chapter takes the final step in an attempt to explain the reasons for the popularity of the Worthy

Women Movement. The aim of this chapter is therefore to attempt to formulate a possible answer to why women would support and perpetuate discourse and customs that are not only oppressive to themselves, but to women in general. The complex nature between subordination versus agency will be explored to avoid a simplistic approach to this question. The first section in this chapter will therefore be focused on the complexities of the feminist subject 'woman' that is often addressed and approached in a simplistic one-dimensional manner, which can lead to the exclusion of women who do not identify themselves with feminist assumptions and goals. The aim of this section will be to take up Mary McClintock Fulkerson's suggestion in her book *Changing the subject: Women's discourse and feminist theology,* to broaden the feminist subject 'woman'. The next section will focus on the complex nature between subordination and agency. Louise Kretzschmar's (1998:173) definition of 'internalised oppression' will be explored, before taking a step in the direction of moving beyond the assumed dichotomy that exists between subordination and resistance. The complexities of the reasons to why women support oppressive movements will therefore be examined. Deniz Kandiyoti's (1998) work on patriarchal bargaining will be one of the main voices introduced here.

The context of female subordination and the oppression of white Afrikaner women will also be discussed to show how the South African context has been marked by patriarchy and perceptions of female subordination. These perceptions have not only been a part of the history of these women, but still form a part of their lives today. With all of this information taken into consideration, the question that needs to be asked therefore is: How are the mostly white Afrikaner followers of the Worthy Women Movement influenced by these factors and in which ways do they perhaps strategise within the confines of a patriarchal society.

1.5.7   Chapter 7

This chapter will aim at giving a short overview of the findings and flow of the thesis as a whole. Suggestion for a further study will also be made.

With the context, aims and objectives laid out in this chapter kept in mind, the focus will now move to creating the basis for this study and introducing the main conversation partner, Gretha Wiid. Wiid's discourse will, in the subsequent chapter, be engaged from a feminist theological perspective.

2   The Worthy Women Movement: Background, content, critique and popularity

2.1   Introduction

Gretha Wiid is a white, Afrikaans, South African woman and the founder of the Worthy Women Movement. Her stylish clothing, blonde hairstyle and expensive jewellery stand out when she hosts her conferences and talks right across the country. The Worthy Women Movement is an all female movement aimed at establishing the correct hierarchical order in families and as a result at motivating South Africa to turn back to God. This hierarchical order entails that men would take back their rightful place in the household as king, prophet and priest and that women would honour their husbands according to these God-given roles.

This chapter will form the point of departure for the entire thesis. It will also form the basis of answering the first and second research questions in chapters 2 and 3 through a feminist theological and Christian sexual ethical engagement with Wiid's discourse. The information in this chapter will further also form the basis for answering the third research question with regard to reasons for the popularity of Wiid's discourse and the Worthy Women Movement as a whole. In this chapter, an account of Wiid's background and her motivation for founding the Worthy Women Movement will be given. An overview of the content of Wiid's discourse will also be discussed. This content will, with the help of a feminist theological perspective, be divided into the following themes: Female submission and male headship, gender identities, and the female body and sexuality. The critique that Wiid has received over the years from various platforms, as well as her response to this critique will also be discussed, before giving an account of the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement.

2.2   Background and history of the Worthy Women Movement

Nortjé-Meyer (2011: 1) shows that Gretha Wiid and Angus Buchan have "established themselves as the moral gurus of the Afrikaner Christian community with their 'Worthy Women' and 'Mighty Men' mass conferences" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011: 1). Angus Buchan started his very successful Mighty Men Conferences in 2004 (Du Pisani 2013, cf. Thamm 2009). Wiid sees her Worthy Women Conferences as the mirror image of Buchan's Mighty Men Conferences (Beyers 2009). According to Wiid, "mighty men should have worthy women" (Jackson 2009). The fact that only men are allowed to attend Buchan's conferences and the absence of someone to deliver this "complementary message to women" has led Wiid

to start her Worthy Women Conferences (Jackson 2009). She is, as a result, often referred to as South Africa's female-Buchan (Beeld 2009, De Villiers 2009a).

The Worthy Women Movement has often been sold as the female equivalent of the Mighty Men Conferences, despite Buchan's refusal to be associated with it (Rapport 2009b, Thamm 2009). Buchan acknowledges that Wiid met with him on his farm, but denies any connections between the Mighty Men Conference and the Worthy Women Conferences (Rapport 2009b). Buchan does not oppose Wiid's ministry, but feels that he does not have enough information about the movement to support it (Rapport 2009a, Rapport 2009b).

Wiid has since 2009 hosted her Worthy Women Conferences, focusing specifically on the lives of women, marriage relationships, sexuality and women's personal relationships with God. Wiid also often features on television programs and radio talk shows to discuss her views and understandings on relationships and sexuality. Her ministry has also produced various books and DVD's about sex education, gender roles, marriage relationships, affairs, etc. Wiid claims to base her views and interpretation on the Bible[2] and personal revelations from God, despite her not having any formal theological training (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2).

2.3   Gretha Wiid: The narrative behind the discourse of the Worthy Women Movement

According to Wiid, she would never have guessed that she would someday be able to inspire other women (Beyers 2009). The reason for this is that her husband cheated on her, they were sequestered, her husband watched pornography, she suffered from panic attacks and they came close to divorce (Beyers 2009).

Wiid has a diploma in family- and sex education and used to be an English teacher. She left her career years ago, however, when she got married to her husband, Francois (Beyers 2009). Wiid and her family lives in an exquisite housing complex in the North Eastern part of Pretoria. Their spacious house is filled with expensive furniture and art. She drives a black BMW and wears tailored suits. Her hair, makeup and jewelry represent that of a successful business women. Wiid describes herself as a "go-getter" (Rapport 2009d). She sees her

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[2] The justification of Wiid's discourse and views rely heavily on her use of Biblical texts. Nortjé-Meyer shows that Wiid's interpretations of sex and sexuality "is infused by heteropatriarchal biblical discourse" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011: 1). According to her Wiid "following in the tradition of lay preachers... refers randomly to biblical verses from the Old and New Testament to support her views and arguments" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011: 3).Although references will be made in various sections of this thesis to Wiid's use of Biblical texts to justify her discourse and teachings on gender identities, sexuality and female subordination and male headship, a more extensive discussion on Wiid's biblical hermeneutics can be found in: Nortjé-Meyer, L. 2011. A critical analysis of Gretha Wiid's sex ideology and her biblical hermeneutics. *Verbum et Ecclesia* 32(1), Art. #472.

husband, Francois, as good looking, and because he is her strength and the head of her household, she refers to him as her "king" (Rapport 2009d, cf. Wiid 2008a). This picture of a 'happy family', however, has not always been the reality of the Wiid's household and life. The movement, discourse and views proposed by Wiid did not just appear out of thin air. She herself was once a victim of an abusive marriage relationship, while being married to Francois. He also had various affairs in a time before Gretha and Francois truly knew God and before Wiid had "a vision about how to be a better wife" (Thamm 2009).

Wiid and her husband enjoyed great wealth in the early years of their marriage. This was in a time when Francois was successful and at a young age he was regarded as one of the top thirty insurance brokers in South Africa. He earned a large amount of R150 000 to R200 000 per month (Wiid 2008a, Vroue wat glo 2014). Wiid tells about the beautiful house they owned and that they had enough money to afford to go on holiday at any time when things got too stressful. The couple thought that money could truly buy happiness, until Francois' company went bankrupt in a time when many banks in South Africa went through crises. They lost their house, their cars and boats. They couldn't afford to buy their children new shoes when the old ones became too small to fit their feet and at times even struggled to put food on the table, so that the church often brought them food packages on Fridays. Wiid gives an account of the difficulties of being hungry and poor, after a life of wealth and riches and describes this period of financial ruins as "the first shock" ("die eerste skok") (Vroue wat glo 2014, Wiid, F. 2009).

"The second shock" ("die tweede skok") (Vroue wat glo 2014) came when Francois started working at another company and became involved in an affair with a woman who worked with him. According to Wiid, Francois has always had a longing to be acknowledged and worked as an insurance broker because of the success he achieved and the acknowledgement he received because of it. Francois thought that the worth of an individual could be measured by the amount of success the individual achieved. This led to the sequestration of Francois's company, having a negative impact on his manhood. Wiid contends that the affair that Francois had with another woman was as a result of her failure to make him feel man enough during a time when he was at an emotional low point. As a result of the financial crisis they went through, as well as one of their children being sick, Wiid followed her "survival instinct" (Vroue wat glo 2014) to focus on their children, while the other woman was busy boosting Francois' manhood. Although the affair that Francois was involved in was not physical at first and started off with mere encouragement, support and acknowledgement, it

soon evolved into a sexual relationship that went on for months (Vroue wat glo 2014). Wiid also describes how they watched pornography together as a couple. She also started to fear Francois when he would get aggressive and would bump things around in the house (Rapport 2009d). The combination of the financial crisis that the Wiid's went through, as well as the secret affair that Francois was involved in, led to him gradually withdrawing from Gretha until they eventually made the decision to divorce (Vroue wat glo 2014).

Although both Francois and Gretha were regular church goers, they did not, according to Wiid, have a personal relationship with God. Gretha made the decision to come to conversion on a specific day, when her mother invited the couple to attend a prayer course (Beyers 2009). It was here that a woman with a prophetic ministry told them about God's plan to turn their marriage around. God would then also use the Wiid's marriage to help other couples to transform their marriage relationships. Despite the fact that they were on the verge of getting a divorce, this gave Gretha hope and something to fight for. She also came to a radical conversion at this event. Francois did not share her sentiments, however, and did not even finish the course (Vroue wat glo 2014).

Gretha now perceived life, herself and God through a new lens and decided to actively fight for her marriage. Despite Francois continually distancing him from Gretha, she never ceased to have faith and started to pray for their marriage (Vroue wat glo 2014). She started to anoint Francois' clothes with canola oil on a daily basis; everything from his underwear, to his belt and shoes (Beyers 2009). She used Bible verses and notions to contradict mean and loveless comments Francois would make towards her. An example of this was when Francois told Gretha that his heart was as hard as stone towards her. Gretha responded to this by declaring in silence that God Himself said that he would change a heart of stone into a heart of flesh (Vroue wat glo 2014).

Gretha found a Biblical text in the book of Luke that read that stones will scream out the Name of the Lord in times that we fail to praise Him. Based on this, Gretha started to write Bible verses on garden stones to use in times when she was not able to openly pray in front of Francois. She believed that, despite her not being able to pray out loud, the stones would scream out the truth. She placed these stones everywhere in their house; under their bed, in Francois' wardrobe, in his car and even in their flower pots. According to Wiid, this was her way of living out her faith, prayers and hope in a practical way (Vroue wat glo 2014).

Another significant event that happened in her life was when a woman approached her in the time before her conversion, advising Wiid to pray for Francois. The advice the woman gave was based on a dream that she had about Francois being tied up in a prison. When the woman told Wiid that she should therefore pray for Francois' victory and freedom, at first Wiid assumed that the woman was referring to a physical prison. She only realised later that the prison in reality represented a spiritual prison that Francois was tied up in. She continued to pray for Francois for months on end, without knowing exactly what it is that he needed to be freed from (Vroue wat glo 2014, cf. Wiid, F 2009).

At a later stage, Wiid went to another course at a church. Francois decided to go with her and on their way home after the course, told Wiid that God had shown him that certain items in their house had to be removed. Upon arrival at home, Francois started to remove pornography magazines, DVD's, and even certain toys that were, in his opinion, occultist from their home (Vroue wat glo 2014, Beyers 2009). He then poured petrol over the items and set it on fire. When they walked back into the house after burning the items, Francois told Wiid that he now knows that he is free. He opened the Bible at Acts 16:25 that read (Vroue wat glo 2014, Bible New International version): *"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose".* Francois spent the whole night alone in the presence of God. He then realised that he would need to tell Gretha about the affair that he is involved in if he ever wanted to be able to truly live (Vroue wat glo 2014).

According to Wiid, God was at the same time also preparing her for the devastating news that Francois was about to share with her. God told Wiid that she has, over the years, been putting a hold on Francois with her tongue by telling him that it would be impossible for her to forgive him for having an affair with another woman. Francois felt extremely guilty and cried uncontrollable when he told her about the affair the next morning (Vroue wat glo 2014, Beyers 2009). She told him, however, that she is ready to hear whatever he has to tell her and could afterwards see that her husband was free (Vroue wat glo 2014).

From this experience, Wiid learned that forgiveness does not result in the perpetrator being innocent, but rather in the victim being freed. She also learned that the degree of remorse felt by the perpetrator determines the degree of forgiveness from the victim (Vroue wat glo, Beyers 2009). She notes that Francois' sincere feelings of remorse immediately generated a feeling of mercy in her heart. Wiid set both Francois and the woman he had an affair with

free. She regards her decision to drive to Francois' work place to tell the woman this, as the best thing she could have ever done for herself. This decision also set her free (Vroue wat glo 2014).

Wiid and Francois went on a weekend break away with friends to share their hearts with their friends (Beyers 2009). When the Wiid's started to share their story of both hurt and healing with other couples, they came to the realisation that despite the silence about the subject, many couples are affected by adultery. Wiid's talks about the Biblical responsibility of women to respect their husbands by being submissive soon started to attract large numbers of women. According to Wiid, the word 'submissive' does not refer to a general subordination of women to men, but rather to women's duty to behave respectfully towards their husbands. Francois now also often accompanies Wiid to her talks, where he sits in the back row, listening to her testimony about his struggles with pornography and adultery (Rapport 2009d).

2.4   Content of the Worthy Women Movement: Gretha Wiid's discourse and theology

Nortjé-Meyer (2011: 2-3) indicates that Gretha Wiid shares the vision of Angus Buchan to restore the 'order' in South Africa. According to Wiid and Buchan, the correct order in the family must be restored for their vision to be realised. This restoration of the family will only be possible when the man, "as husband, father and master, takes back his rightful place as the head of the family and as the representative of Christ" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011: 3).

As stated on her website, Wiid's heart desire includes helping people to re-evaluate their priorities. This implies that people should stop playing "church-church" ("kerk-kerk") (Wiid 2015) and return to God's Word. People cannot afford to wait until the next Sunday to hear what God has to say, but should rather hear God's word for themselves. Individuals should also strive towards being in a personal relationship with God, rather than having a relationship with God via the church or pastor. God should therefore play an integral part in every aspect of individuals' lives, including in their work, parenthood, money, social lives and even their intimate lives. Wiid also motivates individuals to prioritise their relationships with their spouses and children above their careers, money, social lives and television and to be more focussed on the simple things in life (Wiid 2015).

Wiid features on various platforms – television, radio, books, conferences, morning teas, DVD's, school talks, sex education, her personal website, etc. to advocate her views and

discourse. Despite using different themes for her talks, Wiid rarely comes up with new and fresh information so that she often repeats her train of thought and even the wording and jokes in her talk shows across various platforms. Her message and theology has therefore shown little growth or change over the years. In summary, her message mainly entails the view that husbands are the heads of households and in dire need of confirmation, respect and power. Throughout Wiid's teachings it is clear that the essence of her message also revolves around the idea that the God-given, main responsibility and duty of wives is to make their husbands feel 'man enough' and to boost their male ego and manliness. Women should, according to Wiid, make sure to focus on their husbands' physical and emotional needs and make sure that they feel 'man enough' with their wives. This can be achieved through sex, by referring to their husbands as kings, affirming their manliness in front of friends and colleagues or through being submissive (Wiid 2008b). As long as wives ultimately make their husbands feel 'man enough', they live up to Biblical expectations for wives and can therefore be regarded as 'worthy women' of God.

Wiid's discourse and views can, with the help of a feminist theological lens, be divided into the following categories:

2.4.1   Female submission and male headship

"If Gretha Wiid had one wish, it seems, it would be that we return to a time when men were heads of their household and women tittered around worrying about nothing more than their make-up and how sexually attractive they are to their husbands" (Thamm 2009). The discourse maintained by Wiid and the Worthy Women Movement entail that the husband should be seen as the "king, prophet and priest in the family" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:5). According to Wiid, wives should honour their husbands according to these God-given roles and submit to them as the heads of the house (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:3). She tells her audience that women should reclaim both their marriages and their husbands for the kingdom of God. By doing this, Wiid suggests that women will by implication also be reclaiming their children for the kingdom. This will then also lead to the transformation of a generation, so that South Africa will become a Christian country where "we" will say: "In this country we worship God" ("In hierdie land dien ons God) (Wiid 2008a). Wiid notes that the realisation of this vision starts with each woman in her audience (Wiid 2008a).

The views and discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement therefore promote the inherent superiority of men over women (Nadar & Potgieter 2010, Nortjé-Meyer 2011),

where Wiid advocates that it is in accordance to the will of God that women should submit to their husbands (Wiid 2008a). Wiid adds, however, that subservience to husbands is only possible when husbands stand in the right relationship with God. If this relationship entailing headship and subservience had to be practiced outside of the confines of a relationship with God, it can lead to damaging effects (Jackson 2009).

In her DVD '*Eva se lyf*' ("Eve's body") Wiid defends her discourse by describing the struggles that she herself initially had with this view of female submission. She ascribes her initial doubt to a lack of knowledge and misunderstandings, when she thought that the submission of wives implied the silence of women and men having free range to do whatever they wanted (he can mistreat the children, because of his status as king of the house etc.) (Wiid 2008a).

After her conversion, however, Wiid felt the need to understand these views and, as a result, started reading the Genesis texts about Eve. According to Wiid, God also blessed her with someone (of whom she cannot recall the identity) who showed her that the original Hebrew manuscript for this text was interpreted as follows: "And then God created man an armed warrior, a shield, the stronger one in a time of need, a protector" (Wiid 2008a). Wiid explains that "when the Bible said a woman was her husband's helper[3], it actually meant that she was his warrior. She was the stronger one in times of crisis; she was his protector" (Jackson 2009). God realised that Adam needed a shield to protect him against attacks from Satan (Beyers 2009).

Wiid notes that this interpretation not only changed her view with regard to the subordination of wives to their husbands, but also helped her to identify with the view that women were created as helpers for their husbands. She explains how God showed paradise to Adam and told him, that He wants Adam to rule as king. God saw, however, that Satan was in paradise and that Adam is an open target (this is what God communicated to her) and therefore God

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[3] The Hebrew word עֵזֶר (*ēzer*) first occurs in Genesis 2:18, as the LORD God decides to make one for the newly created human. The word *ēzer* is usually translated as "helper," for the *ēzer* is created in order to somehow correspond to the first human; "It is not good for the human to be alone" (Gen 2:18a). Although the word "helper" in some English uses can connote some sort of subservience, or secondary importance, to the one who is helped, any notion of subordination is impossible in Hebrew because *ēzer* refers most often to God. The word *ēzer* occurs 21 times in the Hebrew Bible (other than as a proper name), and 14 times refers to YHWH or to that which YHWH sends (Kohlenberger & Swanson 1998:). For example, Psalm 70:6 reads: "You are my *ēzer* and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay."

The word *ēzer* nowhere means "shield," although in poetry it is often coupled with the noun shield (מָגֵן, *māgēn)* to indicate protection from God. For example, Psalm 33:20 reads: "We wait in hope for YHWH, he is our *ēzer* and our *māgēn*." Similar usage occur in Deuteronomy 33:29 and Psalm 33:20; 115:9,10: "Both terms stand metaphorically for God" (Botterweck, Ringgren & Fabry 2001:16.).

created Adam an armed warrior; He created Eve (women/wives) to protect Adam's (men's/husband's) kingship (Wiid 2008a).

Wiid uses 2 Corinthians 11:7 to show that "a woman is the reflection of her husband's glory – a woman will reflect her husband's godliness" (Wiid 2008a). This is however clearly a misreading of 2 Corinthians 11:7 – the possibility exists that she confused 2 Corinthians 11:7 with 1 Corinthians 11:7. From this reading of 2 Corinthians 11:7, she draws the conclusion that the moment when men take up their rule - take up their position in God's order - women begin to reflect godliness and glory (Wiid 2008a, Beyers 2009). She goes further to say that the issue is then no longer for women to submit to their husbands, but rather for women to submit to God's vision and kingdom. In this way, women are not submitting under force, but rather because they want to fight for their husbands' kingship. According to Wiid, Eve was created to protect Adam's rule. Women should therefore empower their husbands to take up their rule by submitting to them. In this way women can also be safe in paradise (Wiid 2008a).

Women, Wiid states, have physical and emotional indicators to measure their development to becoming women. Men, on the other hand, do not undergo similar changes and only become stronger and bigger through their development. From this observation, Wiid makes the assumption that men's identities are therefore affirmed through their fathers and wives (Wiid, G & Wiid, F 2011). Even though she admits that submitting to your husband's kingship does not always come easy – especially in times that you feel he doesn't act like a king – she nevertheless goes on to defend all men's kingship by using the story of Samuel going to the house of Jesse to anoint David as king. Jesse reacts to Samuel's request to anoint the king by presenting all his sons to Samuel except for David. Despite Jesse's failure to see the qualities of a king in David, Samuel anoints "insignificant" David as the king of Israel. According to Wiid, in a similar way, men can often not take up their kingship because of uninvolved, critical fathers that fail to build their sons' self-esteems (like Jesse). Despite David's failure to act like and reflect the qualities of a king, God still regarded him as the king of Israel (Wiid 2008a). Many men have 'issues' from their childhoods, because of the fact that their fathers were uninvolved and did not do a good job of affirming their sons worth and manliness – they did not make their sons feel 'man enough' (Wiid, G & Wiid, F2011, Wiid, F 2009, Wiid 2008b).

Wiid motivates women to, like God, see the king-like qualities in their husbands and treat them like kings, despite their husbands not acting like kings. Women should therefore submit

18

to their husbands as kings even when they do not reflect the qualities of kings. In times when Wiid refused to submit to her husband as king because of his behaviour, God showed her how he gave His Son to die for her on the cross, despite the fact that she did not deserve it. God therefore expects of women to not only submit to their husbands when they deserve it, but to always treat their husbands like kings, even in times when they do not act like kings (Wiid 2008a).

Wiid advocates that it takes "a dynamic and strong woman to be part of the order or hierarchy of God" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:4) (a hierarchy where men are perceived as superior to women). This statement therefore implies that "women who do not submit to this order are weak and to be blamed if they are abused" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:4). The aim of Wiid's discourse is to construct a "power inequality within the group 'women'" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:4).

2.4.2   Gender[4] identities

Wiid's message also entails that men have the duty to make their wives feel beautiful and loved, while women have the duty to acknowledge their husbands' power and to make them feel respected (De Villiers 2009b, Beeld 2009). According to Wiid, men and women (boys and girls) are in essence created differently (Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b). She acknowledges the ability to debate with regard to whether young girls get taught to wear makeup, like pretty dresses and wear high heels from the examples of their mothers or not. What is, however, not deniable in her opinion, is the fact that girls draw hearts on letters etc. from a young age without anyone teaching them to do so. Wiid holds this as proof that God put love in girls' and women's hearts. Young girls who twirl around in dresses are also seen as proof that they (and by implication older women) have the desire to feel beautiful (Wiid 2008b).

Based on this information, Wiid makes the assumption that all women want to know that they are beautiful enough and worthy of their husbands' love and therefore desire assurance from their husbands. A husband telling his wife that his heart belongs to her and that she belongs to him, as well as the assurance she gets when he makes her feel like "the most beautiful thing" ("die mooiste ding...") (Wiid 2008b) forms part of the essence of what it means to be a woman. Taking this essence that God made a part of all women into consideration, Wiid detects a correlation between the essence of women and God's commandment that husbands

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[4] "Gender is distinguished from the term sex, which refers to the physiological differences between men and women. In contrast to sex, gender refers to culturally constructed systems of meaning that identify various things – persons, ideas, gods, institutions, and so – according to the binary categories of "women/men" of "feminine/masculine" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "On of the most significant...'"').

should love their wives. Wiid even goes as far as to say that wives would (most of the time) even gladly pick up their husbands' clothes off the floor, if men could only grasp this information and grasp what it is that forms the essence of their wives (Wiid 2008b).

Wiid quickly reminds women that they are not the only ones with desires, however, and that men also have specific needs and desires. Contrary to women (girls), who are often shy of their bodies and bodily processes, she shows that men (boys) are naturally proud of their bodies, bodily processes and functions. In her view, men are naturally in constant competition with one another and start comparing themselves to other boys from an early age. One of the primary questions that men often ask themselves in the presence of their wives and when comparing themselves to other men is "Am I man enough?" ("Is ek mans genoeg?") (Wiid 2008b, Wiid, F 2009). For this reason, it is important for men to occasionally spend time alone with other men; it provides them with opportunities to measure themselves against other men (Wiid 2008b, Wiid, F 2009).

According to Wiid, power, money, and sex are the main measurements that men use to compare themselves to other men. It is therefore the duties of wives to let their husbands know that they have power. One way in which women can communicate this to their husbands is by asking them for advice. When women react in a negative way when their husbands offer them advice, however, wives are taking the power away from their husbands and making them feel like a 'lesser men'. Wiid tells the story of her husband's struggle with adultery after he was sequestrated to illustrate to women how men's manliness is affected negatively when going through a financial crisis. Wiid states that her husband cheated on her because of her lack of showing him how "great" (Wiid 2008b) he is; in a time where Francois was at a low, she (by her own account, because she was also under a lot of stress as a result of the financial crisis they were going through) reminded him that he was at a low, while his mistress made him feel like 'something' (Wiid 2008b). Her story should therefore serve as a warning for women to always make their husbands feel like 'something'. A man can, after all, be tempted to cheat on his wife merely because she tells him that he is "stupid" (Wiid 2008b) before he leaves for work. The danger of a man having an affair also exists when a woman at work makes him feel better about himself than his wife does (Wiid 2008b). Wiid therefore implies that women are to blame when their husbands are being unfaithful and that if wives made their husbands feel good about themselves and submit to their kingship, they can prevent their husbands from being unfaithful. The implication of this view is that men are

not to blame for being unfaithful, but rather that it is the responsibility of women to keep their husbands happy and by implication, faithful (cf. Radloff 2010).

Women should honour their husbands for their money. She notes that when men work hard (referring to husbands spending more time at work than at home), it is the result of him feeling 'man enough' (Wiid 2008b) at work, instead of feeling 'man enough' at home. When he starts to receive acknowledgement at home, however, it will lead him to increasingly crave this acknowledgement. Consequently, he will start spending more time at home (Wiid 2008b). Based on this information, women should, in Wiid's view, therefore always take care of their husbands' emotional needs and always keep in mind that men have the need to have the question "Am I man enough?" (Wiid 2008b) answered. The essences of men's needs are thus, according to Wiid, the acknowledgement that they are 'man enough'. Although men can live without sex, they die without respect and in situations where their wives don't make them feel 'man enough' (Wiid 2008b). Wiid therefore once again insinuates that women are to blame for absent and uninvolved fathers and husbands, because they are not fulfilling their husbands' essential emotional needs.

2.4.3   The female body and sexuality

Wiid shows how people were brought up with a confusing and mixed message that sex is both sinful and holy. It is therefore important for people to talk about sex more often (Wiid 2009a). According to Wiid (2012:124), it is pleasing to God when a husband and his wife have fantastic sex. She sees sex that takes place between a husband and his wife as the deepest form of a covenant (Wiid 2012:122). She also suggests that "men and women have different sexual needs" (Wiid 2010:129). Women react primarily on the basis of their emotions when it comes to having sex. Their primary yearnings include experiencing certain elements of a relationship; the acknowledgement that she is desirable, interesting and sensual enough. She even goes so far as to say that women who deviate from these prescribed experiences of their sexuality are "cheap, randy and stupid" ("goedkoop, jimpel en simpel") (Wiid 2012:129).

Even though Wiid and her husband talk openly about sex, they are, according to Wiid, in actual fact very conservative in their approach. They warn people against pornography, adultery, sex outside of the confines of marriage and numerous other temptations, which Wiid and her husband struggled with themselves before being converted (De Villiers 2009b). Many tips that are given to people to spice up their sex lives fall, Wiid indicates, outside of

the will of God (Wiid 2009a). Wiid also warns couples against masturbating alone. In her perspective, "any sexual exploration done before or outside of marriage is wrong" (Radloff 2010). Women are therefore only allowed to stimulate themselves sexually when they are firstly, already married, and secondly, when their husbands play an active role in their stimulation (Radloff 2010).

At one of her Worthy Women Conferences, Wiid tells women who are living with men to get married and is of the opinion that these women are busy ruining their own biggest dream. She tells women that men are supposed to fight for them. The moment that women live with men before marriage, they are busy ruining their own biggest dreams and should therefore get married (Rapport 2009c). Debates took place within the Dutch Reformed Church about the possibility to revise its policy on unmarried couples living together, as well as engaging in sex outside of the confines of marriage (Willemse 2009). Both Wiid and Angus Buchan reacted negatively towards these debates and still see couples who live together before getting married as sinful (Huisgenoot 2009). Wiid responded to this by saying "if the Dutch Reformed Church has to decide to justify living together and sex before marriage, it will most certainly mean the final collapse of the truth" (Willemse 2009). Despite the opinions of church bodies and leaders, she believes that "marriage is sacred, and that sex before marriage can only be harmful" (Willemse 2009). This decision will, according to her, also lead to further moral decay and result in an increase in broken and hurt adults in the world. Wiid warns that "the people who are going to be deciding about living together and premarital sex should know that they will have to account for their decisions one day. And they will" (Willemse 2009).

God will, Wiid states, only form a part of your sexual relationship when it takes place within the confines of marriage and therefore forms a covenant with God. Wiid even goes as far as to say that God will abandon an individual that has sex outside of a context that is proper and fitting for a sexual relationship in her view (Wiid 2009b). She is not only against sex outside the confines of a marriage relationships, however, but is also homophobic and makes it clear that when people with a homosexual orientation truly believe that God will help them, He will change their sexuality (Beyers 2009).

Despite the conviction that some marriages are stable and not under threat, all marriages are in reality under constant threat of attacks from Satan (Wiid, G & Wiid, F 2011). A spirit of lust is often to blame for married men who become involved in affairs. Several factors can play a role in "opening a door to a spirit of lust"; this includes sex outside of marriage,

pornography, sex with prostitutes, etc. This spirit of lust can also be carried on from one generation to the next. This can, according to Francois Wiid, even be the reason why many women in one family have been molested. Only when men have the Holy Spirit living inside of them can they be freed from lust (Wiid, F & Wiid, G 2011, Wiid, F 2009).

Wiid tells individuals who have spouses that have cheated on them to forgive their partners. This, however, would only be possible when God is in your heart. Forgiveness should not be seen as a feeling, but rather as a conscious decision that has to be made. She also advises people to keep quiet about the fact that their spouse has cheated on them; they should therefore not share this information with any family or friends. When this information is shared too soon it might lead friends and family to become suspicious of your partner and open the door for Satan to break up your relationship again. It is only once God has brought healing to their lives that they should share their story as a testimony. Even after you have forgiven your spouse, you should still wait some time, however, because Satan will again try to come between you and your partner. Wiid also advises women to not ask for detail about the affair their husbands were involved in. Satan will, according to her, wrongly try to convince you that you will be able to find peace sooner when you have more information. This is of course a lie. Wiid therefore advises women to not ask for detail, seeing as this will only cause them more pain and heart ache. Women are also warned not to use the facts of their husband's affair against them or to manipulate their partners with this information (Wiid, G & Wiid, F 2011).

Furthermore, Wiid shows how men are targeted (tempted?) by lingerie advertisements and soft pornography in both the media and society at large (in malls, lingerie shops etc.) (Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b). In her opinion, wives therefore need to take "the sex thing" back. Men and women both have specific, but different sexual needs ("sexual things that work") (Wiid 2008b). Women desire to lie next to their husbands and for their husbands to talk to them in loving and caring ways, while men seek visual stimulation. According to Wiid, men are not only naturally more analytical and less verbal about their emotions than women, but can also essentially be seen as visual beings (Wiid 2008b) and hunters; not only were they created to provide meat for their families, but also to react to objects that naturally catch their eyes. She refers to women as "antelope" (to be hunted by men?) (Wiid 2012:132) and is of the opinion that "women should just get used to the fact that men are driven by pure instinct and can't help that they are hunters and therefore need to conquer things" (Thamm 2009, cf. Wiid

2009b). Wiid therefore advises women to make sure that they visually attract their husbands' gazes to them (Wiid 2009b, Wiid 2012:132).

She compares women in an objectifying manner to cars, when noting that some men have an emotional need to have a trophy wife and to be able to brag towards other men about his "trophy" (wife) (Wiid 2008b), in the same way that he wants to brag about his new car. She motivates women to fulfil this emotional need of their husbands and to be a 'trophy' if that forms part of what their husbands need emotionally to feel 'man enough' (Wiid 2008b). In her DVD 'Eve's body' ('*Eva se lyf*'), she challenges the women in her audience by asking them how visually stimulating they are for their husbands (Wiid 2008b). Although Wiid mentions that both men and women should look after themselves, she emphasises the appearances of women. According to Thamm (2009), Wiid told women attending a breakfast in Centurion that "if they wanted to keep their men happy they had to do the following: brush their hair and put lipstick on before their husbands came home from work as well as never say 'no' to sex". It is important for women to adjust themselves, to wear the appropriate clothes and underwear, to apply the needed make up, to make sure the hair on their legs are always shaven and conduct themselves in a manner that will be attractive and appealing to their husbands (Wiid 2012:132, Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b). Wiid also specifically motivates women who are more pious to use their shavers, underwear and telephone conversations to seduce their husbands (De Villiers 2009b).

Time and again, Wiid (2008b) refers to other women, who she regards as threat and temptation for husbands to be unfaithful to their wives (like her husbands' mistress), in objectifying ways as "cheap" or "things" (Wiid 2008b). "Women, she suggested, should view all other women as enemies and potential rivals for their husband's bounty" (Thamm 2009). Wiid warns women about the existence of a whole world full of lustful women who are trying to focus their husbands' gazes on them. She therefore advises women to be sure to present themselves in the correct manner and to imitate an attractive image for their husbands. In this way, they can ensure that their husbands' gazes will stay on them (Wiid 2012:132, Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b).

In Wiid's view, women are actively wounding their husbands' manhood when they don't react to their husbands' sexual needs. She notes that it has a very negative influence on a marriage when only one partner in a marriage experiences sexual satisfaction. Wiid therefore insinuates that women will be the cause of marriage problems or an unhealthy marriage when they resist having sex with their husbands. She also tells women to make sure that their

husbands feel 'man enough' while being intimate with them – including in emotional and spiritual dimensions - even in times when their husbands don't deserve it. She states that the fact that men often don't feel 'man enough' forms the root of many marital problems, such as pornography (Wiid 2012:132).

According to Wiid, men want to feel desired (Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b). They want to feel that their wives desire sex as frequently as they do. Men therefore want women to sometimes initiate sex, because this makes them feel wanted and 'man enough'. She indicates that this means that women sometimes have to have sex with their husbands even at times when they don't want to. She tells her audience that the brain is the biggest sex organ. Women should therefore mentally prepare themselves throughout the day to make sure that they would also want to be intimate when their husbands want sex. She even goes so far as to say that women who are not always in the mood to have sex with their husbands "should have their minds read" (Wiid 2008b). Wiid advises women to make sure that they don't come across as being negative about having sex while being intimate with their husbands and to continually communicate to their husbands that they are man enough. The knowledge that wives make their husbands feel wanted and man enough should serve as motivation for women to have sex with their husbands (Wiid 2008b).

Wiid insinuates that she herself was the one to blame for the fact that another woman could "take" (seduce) (Wiid 2008b) her husband. She tells her audience that after your husband has cheated on you the first time, you (as a woman) will never make that same mistake again. You will then do anything in your power (even in times when it is inconvenient for yourself) to imitate an attractive and appealing image for your husband. She gives women various tips in this regard of how to make sure to look presentable for their husbands. The price of new underwear, she indicates, is even irrelevant when it comes to making sure that you look attractive for your husband. She also encourages women to shop at different clothing stores when buying clothes and to ask someone for advice about how to dress. She even tells women that they are warriors and therefore *need* their war paint (make up) (Wiid 2008b).

Thamm (2009) writes that Wiid motivated women to "use sex as a means to an end and that if you want your husband to buy you something ..." to use sex as a bargaining tool. It seems as if Wiid not only insinuates that a lot of money is needed to ensure this attractive image for your husband, but also that women have the right to buy attractive underwear and spend money on the needed items to look attractive. She encourages women to dress in a presentable way and even notes that women can use their appearances and looks to climb the

corporate ladder and become successful. She justifies this manipulation by telling women that when they make sure they have the right appearance before going to work, they are in actual fact dressing for their husbands and not for their bosses (Wiid 2008b). This seems contradictory, given that Wiid speaks in objectifying and derogatory ways about other women who dress in ways that would catch her or her audience member's husbands' gazes. Despite Wiid's focus on the visual appearances of women, she also discourages women to say anything negative about the appearances of their husbands (for example about his grey hair, about his weight, about his clothing etc.), insinuating that this will make him feel like a "lesser man" and even motivate him to be unfaithful when other women give him compliments (Wiid 2008b).

In her DVD "Eve's body" ("*Eva se lyf*") Wiid motivates men and women to become more adventurous in their love lives. Wiid also notes that women should play along with their husbands' fantasies and make sex adventurous. By doing this, women can ensure that sex won't merely become a boring routine (Wiid 2008b). Wiid's website includes numerous practical tips for couples to use in their intimate lives, which include the following: 1) She motivates wives to surprise their husbands by waiting for them in the garage when he arrives back from work, telling them that there is nothing as "delicious" ("heerlik") as a "warm (car) bonnet" (De Villiers 2009b); 2) She motivates women to brush their teeth while wearing nothing more than underwear and stiletto's. She also states that the action of bending over to rinse your mouth over the basin will leave your husband in awe; 3) She advises women to walk around nude in the house, only covering themselves up with their night gowns. Wiid then tells women to purposefully do something to make their husband realise what they are wearing (or not wearing). She adds that when the children are around, you become the so-called forbidden fruit to your husband (De Villiers 2009b). "God wants to bless you with a great orgasm!" (Wiid 2009b). She ends one of the articles on her website with the words: "Is it not wonderful to know that all these ideas are in line with God's will?" (De Villiers 2009b).

2.5   Critique against Wiid's discourse: Reactions from churches and the media

After Wiid was named the female Angus by the media, not only did her fame increase, but also the critique against her (Rapport 2009d). Not only has the church critiqued Wiid for her views on the relationship between husband and wife, but critique has also been flowing in from various other platforms, including a public outcry accusing Wiid of sexism and covetousness.

Angus Buchan has often been accused of sexism with his Mighty Men Conference. He has especially received negative response because of his view that husbands should take up their God-given positions as heads of households and that women should accept their roles as subordinate home makers. People have also critiqued Buchan because of the fact that only men are allowed to attend his gatherings (Beeld 2009). It is ironic that Wiid plays into the exact same narrative, where she advocates the same principles and views as Buchan. Similar to the exclusionary approach of Buchan, only women can attend Wiid's Worthy Women Conferences, so that men are the ones who are excluded in this case. One of the reasons given by Wiid for this approach is to allow women to laugh together in the absence of men (Beeld 2009, Nienaber 2015).

Wiid's discourse is particularly concerning when taking the context of a country with extremely high levels of domestic and sexual violence into consideration. The messages that Wiid conveys to women who find themselves within situations of abusive marriage relationships are also highly problematic. Wiid's discourse can be seen as a step backwards from ground that has been gained over the past few years in the fight against institutionalised sexism in South Africa (Beeld 2009).

Both the Dutch Reformed Church and the Reformed church in South Africa have spoken out against the discourse promoted by Wiid, claiming the equal position of men and women in both marriage and society (Thamm 2009, Radloff 2010). Ds. Nelus Niemandt (the former moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church since 2011) also said that there "was no biblical injunction ... that aspects of marriage were designated to be either male or female. Their roles are complimentary. Couples can decide for themselves how they would like to live out various roles" (Thamm 2009). The Dutch Reformed Church accepted the ordination of women twenty years ago and already then found that men and women are equal. According to Niemandt, it is logical to then also assume that no Biblical evidence exists for certain aspects of marriage to be assigned to women and others to men. Their roles should rather be seen as complimentary, where partners can decide how these roles should be divided between husband and wife (De Villiers 2009a).

The Reformed Church strongly opposed the idea of the husband being the head of his wife. According to Dr. Gerhard Lindique, editor of the Reformed Church's official newsletter, the *e-Hervormer*, the view that husbands should rule over the wives are in actual fact an extension of the fall and was therefore made obsolete through Jesus. Both Lindique and his wife, Karien, commented on the issues of gender roles that came up as a result of Gretha

Wiid's Worthy Women Conference. They commented on husbands that are seen as the head of the household and the motivation that women should anoint their husbands as king. In their view, it rather seems as if the Biblical writers wanted to convey the message that God created men and women as equal partners before the fall, as representatives of His image. They cite Genesis 1:27, which states that "God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Bible, New International Version). They also mention numerous other Biblical texts that mirror men and women as equal creatures − Genesis 2: 18 and Genesis 2: 23 are examples of this (De Villiers 2009a).

The situation also changes after the fall, however, where the relationship between men and women are now shown in a different light. Genesis 3:16, for example, states that: "To the woman he said ... Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you". Through grace, however, Jesus changed this broken relationship. This is why Paul begins his address in Ephesians 5 to both men and women, with the words "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Bible, New International Version). Within the context of a Christian marriage, any evidence of headship, like that of a king that rules with power, disappears so that husbands and wives give their lives to each other. In a relationship where God is seen as King, subordination, respect and love is a virtue that should be present in the lives of both husband and wife (De Villiers 2009a).

Wiid is also often criticised for colloquial, idiomatic language that people perceive to be distasteful and obscene, as well as covetousness because of the price of the tickets for her events and conferences (Wiid 2015).

2.6   Wiid's response to critique

Wiid makes it clear that critique does not get her down. Despite her flesh taking a beat, her spirit stays strong (Rapport 2009c). When comparing the primary sources produced by Wiid in the form of DVD's and books, with her responses to critique against her, it is clear that she gives a more nuanced account of her views and discourse when responding to the media. Despite her not having any formal Biblical/Theological education, according to her the messages that she conveys are inspired by the Holy Spirit. She also insinuates that some of the critique against her is a result of individuals who do not choose and understand the Spirit (Wiid 2015). Wiid responds to critique from the church by saying that it is sad to see how children of God react with intolerance towards each other (Rapport 2009c). On the one hand, Wiid often falls back on this claim of being inspired by the Holy Spirit or receiving a

revelation from God when responding to critique and on the other hand, accusing others who critique her of being 'without' the Spirit of God.

Wiid has dedicated a section on her personal website to respond to critique against her. These responses are, however, in her perspective not an attempt to defend her views. She simply wants to use the platform of her own website to offer her account and interpretation of what was said during interviews between her and the media. According to Wiid, the majority of critique against her is because of her views on the subordination of women and sexual intimacy within marriage relationships (Wiid 2015). Her goal, however, is to help women to understand that the concept of subservience is there to remind them of their worth. While God created man to be the head of his household, women were created to be protector, helper and spiritual warrior (Beyers 2009).

She defends herself by saying that her views are in actual fact very conservative, despite the colloquial language she uses. People have often accused Wiid of being a sex addict, who's views entail that women not only *need* to have sex with their husbands, but also that women have to make themselves cheap to ensure that their husbands stay with them. This is, however, according to Wiid, a result of individuals who are misinformed. Although she regards sex as a very important part of a marriage, she is aware of the fact that many couples are happily married despite their inability to have sex (as a result of medical reasons or old age). The opposite is also true, namely that despite many couples having active sex lives, their marriages fall apart. In her view, couples do not need sex to experience intimacy. Contradictory to her message to women in her DVD's, she defends herself by saying that if a woman needs to use sex to keep her husband faithful, she will enable him to abuse, control and misuse her (Wiid 2015).

In response to an article where Wiid is accused of spreading the message that women should use sex to manipulate their husbands, Wiid says that individuals often take her words to directly and too seriously. She responds by writing: "No, we are not prostitutes. We are our husbands' partners. We are allowed to tease them, to seduce and play with them. It is not manipulation, it is a relationship" ("Nee, ons is nie prostitute nie. Ons is ons mans se maats. Ons mag hulle terg, verlei en met hulle speel. Dis nie manupilasie nie, dis verhouding") (Wiid 2015). In her opinion, women are worth a lot more than that. "We as women are worth more than our bodies and breasts and should stand up and say: 'We are not just sex partners, we are not just mothers who have to change diapers and make food'" ("Ons as vroue is meer werd as lywe en borste en ons moet opstaan en sê: 'Ons is nie net seksmaats nie, ons is nie

net ma's wat doeke moet ruil en kos moet maak nie'") (Wiid 2015). The fact that people make the assumption that she regards sex and help around the house as bargaining tools, tells more about the writers of these articles' bitterness towards their husbands than her views, she states. She sarcastically adds that if you don't want to use her advice to get your husband to help out around the house in a playful manner, have a serious conversation with him about his laziness or wait until the day that you need to go see a therapist (Wiid 2015).

Wiid notes that if she spread the message that you need to have sex with your husband to get something from him, she would also be humiliating herself and that it would be nothing less than prostitution. Sex is an important aspect of marriage – one without which a marriage cannot survive - but it should never be the main ingredient of a marriage. Both women and men are worth more than that. In her response she also notes that marriage entails more than just outward appearances, sex, money, communication, quality time, respect and faith. Anyone accusing her of saying that marriage is about only one of these elements are telling a lie. Marriage, she contends, is rather about a combination of all of these elements (Wiid 2015).

Wiid has been criticised numerous times for her language use that implies headship and subordination. According to Wiid, she only uses these terms when quoting Bible verses form Ephesians 5. She has also never been granted an opportunity to share what these words personally mean to her. She goes further to explain that she has, in actual fact, never used the word 'subordinate'. She acknowledges that she has used the word 'submissive' and even though many people would think that these two terms convey the same meaning, in actual fact they carry different meanings, so that the one refers to a relationship of inferiority, while the other refers to a relationship where one partner serves the other (Wiid 2015). When Wiid tells women to be submissive, she is not implying that husbands are the boss of the household. Men should, as head of the household, however, carry the responsibility of protecting and taking care of his family (Beyers 2009). Ephesians 5 teaches us that we have to submit to each other – this means that we have to respect and honour our partners and be willing to put their needs above our own. Men therefore also have to serve their wives. She agrees that this can be a confusing subject. She testifies, however, that God communicated to her that this is a part of his will for a marriage relationship between husband and wife (Wiid 2015).

Wiid acknowledges that the word 'submissive', however, can cause women an immense amount of pain if their husbands do not serve God with their whole lives. Although husbands

and wives have different functions, it does not eliminate the fact that they need each other. They are therefore not unequal in worth, but rather different with regard to their calling. Husbands and wives are a team, but when it comes to being responsible to God for the family, the responsibility is that of the husband. Wiid also adds that she is not the one who decided that husbands should be the king of the household. God decided this and therefore she has to be obedient to God. Kingship, however, she states, has nothing to do with headship, but is rather a place of responsibility. It is not only husbands who should be regarded as kings of their households. Wives should also be regarded as queens of their household, so that husbands should also keep the crown on their wives' heads and serve them. When husbands and wives feel like kings and queens with their spouses, it will be marriage utopia. According to Wiid, no one, however, ever quotes her on this information (Wiid 2015).

Journalists do not always give a true account of her views and simply write their own interpretation of her views and what was said during interviews, she further indicates. Her words are often misused and twisted to communicate a different message than what was intended. Wiid, for example, responds to an article in the Beeld newspaper ("Gretha Wiid gooi die slaapkamerdeur oop!" translated as "Gretha Wiid opens the bedroom door!") by saying that the topic of sex or intimacy was never even addressed during the interview, despite the clear sexual connotations suggested in the heading of the article. The journalist that wrote the article even branded her as vulgar and perverted. She notes that individuals reading articles in the media react to secondary sources and take what they read and hear in the media as the full truth, instead of taking the original source into consideration. She also critiques the media for not granting her with opportunities to respond to their critique (Wiid 2015).

To allegations of covetousness because of the high prices that women have to pay to attend her conferences, Wiid responds by saying that the price of her tickets are based on the price of the food that the participants receive to eat (from Woolworths), the artists performing, as well as the hiring of the auditorium where her conferences are held. Each woman attending also receives a bottle of oil to anoint her husband, as well as a prayer book written by Wiid. She makes it clear that both she and her husband have been freed from covetousness and worldly plans with regard to money. They know that God is their provider (Wiid 2015).

2.7   The popularity of Wiid and the Worthy Women Movement

Wiid acknowledges that neither she nor Francois have any formal degree in marriage counselling. She states that they only have a "QBE-degree" – a "qualified by experience" degree (Beyers 2009). Despite this and the critique from various platforms against Wiid, the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement cannot be denied. Wiid has built up a successful ministry around workshops where men and women are taught to approach all aspects of marriage – including the intimate aspects – in a holy, yet adventurous fashion (De Villiers 2009b). Despite critique against Wiid, she receives more positive feedback from people who thank her for talking about sex in an understandable manner (De Villiers 2009b). The tickets for her conferences also sell out very quickly (Beyers 2009). The fact that Wiid's Worthy Women Movement is seen by some as the female equivalent to Angus Buchan's Mighty Men Conferences further adds to her popularity, so that many women attend Wiid's conferences because of their husbands' attendance of Buchan's Mighty Men gatherings (Rapport 2009c). Wiid hosts various marriage seminars, school camps, weekend marriage camps, marriage preparation weekends, morning teas and talks. Her calendar for the rest of the year has at least one event every week, with most weekends fully booked. Wiid travels throughout South Africa to talk at schools and churches and leaves women lyrical about her advice and tips afterwards (Wiid 2015, Gretha Wiid Facebook Page 2015).

Wiid held her seventh Worthy Women gathering with the theme 'Bride of Christ' on Saturday, 19 September 2015. The Dutch Reformed Church Morelettapark in Pretoria-East was fully packed with over 7 000 women attending the occasion (News24 2015). She also extended her conference for the first time in 2015, where a gathering was also held in Cape Town at the His People-church in Goodwood. According to Wiid, this extension was motivated by the popularity of her conferences and the fact that there are always Capetonians interested in attending her conferences (Nienaber 2015). Some women were so impressed by Wiid after her last conference that they immediately booked their tickets for the following year's conference. Wiid has over 80 000 followers on her Facebook page, with a visible increase in likes around her latest Worthy Women gathering. There is also a whopping 8,435 people on Wiid's 'talking about this' section on her Facebook page, which refers to the number of people that was active on her page within a seven day period (this includes any activity on a Facebook page, for example likes, comments, shares, RSVP's to events etc.) (Gretha Wiid Facebook Page 2015).

2.8   Conclusion

From the discussion above, it seems as if Wiid's discourse did not just appear out of nowhere, but rather that her own experience of a broken and abusive marriage had a strong influence on her teachings and views. Wiid's discourse has a strong focus on gender roles/identities, as well as the female body and sexuality. Wiid's discourse, however, has not been accepted in all spheres. She has received strong critique from various church groups and the media as a result of her language, views on the relationship between husband and wife, sexuality and covetousness. It became clear, however, that despite this critique, Wiid's discourse and the Worthy Women Movement have gained popularity since its start in 2009. With this chapter as basis, the following chapter will aim at engaging Wiid's discourse from a feminist theological point of view.

3   A feminist theological engagement with the discourse used in the Worthy Women Movement: Gender identities and Patriarchy

3.1   Introduction

In the previous chapter, an overview was given of the history and content of Gretha Wiid's ministry. It was seen that female submission and male headship, gender identities, as well the female body and sexuality are emphasised in her discourse. The aim of this chapter is to engage the discourse explored in chapter 2 from a feminist theological point of view. An overview of feminist theory and feminist theology will be given in an attempt to place this thesis, as well as the feminist engagement with Wiid's discourse that will be conducted within the broader feminist and feminist theological field.

Wiid's discourse covers a wide variety of topics that need analysis from a feminist theological point of view. The nature of this thesis, however, does not allow for all of these topics to be explored. The aim of this thesis is therefore not to do a complete feminist theological engagement with Wiid's discourse, but rather to identify certain topics in Wiid's discourse that can be seen as oppressive to women. The themes of patriarchy and for*men*sim, as well as essentialism versus constructionism will be used as lenses to engage Wiid's discourse and teachings[5].

Within the first section of this chapter, a broad overview of the meaning, content, as well as the life enhancing goals of feminist theory and feminist theology will be given. The focus of the next section will be placed on providing an overview of the meaning of the oppressive and life denying notions of patriarchy and for*men*ism. Wiid uses essentialist language when referring to the gender identities and behaviour of both men and women, when she states that men and women were made in specific, complimentary ways by God. A theoretical overview will therefore be given on the essentialist approach to gender identities, before engaging Wiid's discourse to highlight the impact and pervasiveness of this approach in Wiid's discourse. A feminist critique towards this approach, as well as alternative approaches to gender identities will also be discussed. The life enhancing feminist theological goals, the negative impact of patriarchy and its palatable form of for*men*ism and the essentialist approach to gender identities will then be brought into conversation with Wiid's discourse to

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[5] Sexuality, which also forms a part of the larger feminist theological enterprise, will be discussed in chapter 4.

show how overtones of these oppressive notions are visible in her approach. This chapter will contribute to answer the first and second research questions[6].

3.2   What is Feminist Theology?

Before giving an overview of the enterprise of feminist theology, it is important to understand the broader framework of feminist theory.

3.2.1   Feminist theory

"A feminist discursive analysis draws on critical discourse studies and feminist theory and deals with a critique of a hierarchically gendered social order that is maintained through a particular discourse, or 'language realised in speech or writing'" (Thompson 1984:133 in Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:144-145). The term 'feminist theory' emerged in the 1970's as part of the larger field of Women's Studies in North American Universities. It refers to texts with common objectives, practices and norms. Despite focusing mainly on texts, feminist theory also focuses on the individual women whose conversations give life to texts. Although feminist theory can be applied to most academic fields, it is not limited to the academic sphere and can be practised by anyone, anywhere (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "What is feminist theory?").

Denise Ackermann (1993:24) explains the meaning of feminism as:

> The commitment to the praxis of liberation for women from all that oppresses us. Feminism does not benefit any specific group, race or class of women; neither does it promote privilege for women over men. It is about a different consciousness, a radically transformed perspective which questions our social, cultural, political and religious traditions and calls for structural change in all these spheres (Ackermann 1993:24).

"The modern ideology of the two-gender system" (Fiorenza 1999:150) that are taken for granted as common sense knowledge, reduces the uniqueness of individuals to "a naturally given, metaphysically determined, or divinely ordained essential difference" (Fiorenza 1999:150). Ruether (2002:3) explains feminism as "a critical stance that challenges the patriarchal gender paradigm that associates males with human characteristics defined as

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[6] 1) How do the views and discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement contribute to, maintain and promote a context in which the female body "is inscribed by patriarchal culture"?

2) How can a feminist theological perspective on the female body and sexuality contribute to the deconstruction of the views and discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement?

superior and dominant and females with those defined as inferior and auxiliary". Feminism therefore explores "the experiences and questions of women in a male-defined culture and patriarchal society" (Schüssler Fiorenza 1986:21) and seeks to make the voice of women, who have for years been silenced, heard. Oduyoye (1986:121) emphasises the importance of women's experiences when she argues that the life experiences of women should be considered when defining what it means to be human. Feminism "highlights the woman's world and her worldview as she struggles side by side with the man to realise her full potential as a human being ..." (Oduyoye 1986:121). Oduyoye therefore highlights the importance of both male- and female- experience when striving towards fullness and flourishing for humanity as a whole. In her perspective, neither the male nor the female expression of humanity can be left out when striving to shape "a balanced community within which each will experience fullness of Being" (Oduyoye 1986:121).

Feminist theory therefore strives to emancipate and empower women, and can be applied to various oppressive situations. Although the main focus of feminist theory is on the emancipation of the group 'women', it is important to keep in mind that the liberation of women does not take place in isolation with the rest of creation. Despite feminism's focus on the lives of women, the task of feminism goes further to include a strive to make all people and groups of people who have been marginalised, silenced and cast into the unfavourable position of *the other* visible and heard. Therefore, "the fate and future of women can never be separated from the fate and future of all persons and of the planet as a whole" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "This preferential option for..."). Feminism is therefore not only focused on the emancipation of women, but rather on eradicating any form of oppression and marginalisation and making all voices that have been silenced heard.

The oppression women experience, however, are often so pervasive that women are silenced to the point where they don't regard their own voice and expression as legitimate[7]. Isherwood and McEwan (1994:11, 12) therefore points to feminism's aim of helping women to regard their own experiences and expressions as legitimate within an unequal society. The concept of 'flourishing' plays a vital role within feminism so that the following aspects within the lives of women are highlighted: "respect for their bodily integrity and creativity as well as social conditions and relations of power marked by mutuality and reciprocity" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "This discussion of interlocking..."). David Kelsey points to the general meaning

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[7] More information on this will be given in Chapter 6, when Louise Kretzschmar's notion of 'internalised oppression', is discussed.

of the term 'flourishing' in the Oxford English Dictionary, in which it refers to "'to blossom or 'to thrive'" (Kelsey 2008:2). The term flourishing can however carry a variety of meanings:

> Theologically speaking, 'to blossom' is to manifest the type of beauty of which a given life is capable by virtue of God relating to it... 'To blossom,' in a metaphorical sense, is also to be on the way to providing both fruit, on which contemporary others' flourishing may depend for nurture and support, and seed, on which a subsequent generation's life may depend. These senses of 'flourishing' as 'blossoming' may be used metaphorically to characterize a certain type of human life. But, 'to blossom' and 'to bloom,' used metaphorically, may also connote maximal good health (Kelsey 2008:2-3).

When referring to 'flourishing', the overall well being of not only persons, but generations and societies are therefore implied. Women and people's flourishing are inhibited, however, not only through their oppression by other individual people, but also by social structures and systems. According to Jones (2000, Chapter 1 at "This discussion of interlocking..."), one of feminist theory's main tasks is to identify and transform social structures that perpetuate the oppression of women. Feminism therefore aims to redefine common language, culture and society as a whole so that the lived realities of women are also taken into consideration (Schüssler Fiorenza 1986:21). Language is not only the words we speak, but helps us to make sense of our realities and, in doing so, shapes our realities and our understanding of our realities (Ackermann 1993:19). Ackermann (1993:19) emphasises the complex nature of language when she says: "The more language and its use are examined, the more apparent it becomes that making meaning through language is no simple task. The fact that meaning is made in a certain way has profound implications for how we see the world" (Ackermann 1993:19). The language used by feminism, as well as the redefining of common language as referred to by Schüssler, is therefore a complex task that is of crucial importance when doing feminism.

Oppression is therefore clearly reflected in various spheres of life and community. Feminist theory was included in the women's movement with the goal of identifying different forms of oppression that shapes women's lives and to envision and build a future without oppression. The difficulty of identifying forms of oppression soon became apparent, however, because of the fact that "oppression makes itself invisible, distorts vision, and twists thought" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "To understand these tools..."). The term 'conscientisation' is here

particularly important and refers to an individual becoming aware of oppression. "This term literally means 'making conscious' and alludes to a process of discovery of self as oppressed which leads to the desire for change and the search for affirmation and wholeness" (Ackermann 1993:22). The difficulty of imagining a new future within a context of oppression also became clear. The women's movement therefore included feminist theory to help to analyse "thought processes involved in naming oppression and imaging a new future" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "What theory offered to...").

Feminist theory is not only practiced within the academic context, but also operates within "the most personal dimensions of everyday living" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "While it may seem trivial..."). Feminists are aware of the intersections that exist between the oppression of women with different forms of oppression, for example "racism, poverty, exploitation, heterosexism, ageism, and discrimination against children" etc.[8]. (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "The preferential option for...", cf. Hooks 1984:31). The complicated nature of oppression must therefore always be kept in mind when dealing with the various forms of oppression that women (and men) fall victim to.

3.2.2   Feminist theology

Despite the fact that an exploration of 'feminist theory' was conducted in the previous section, an exploration of feminist theology is also needed. This chapter is therefore not only approached through a feminist lens, but more specifically, through a feminist theological lens. Feminist theology "takes feminist critique and reconstruction of gender paradigms into the theological realm" (Ruether 2002:4). Feminist theology developed as a grassroots movement that challenged traditional perceptions of women and their role in society and religious circles (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "When I use the term..."). Feminist theology, however, does not have one fixed definition, but is rather a concept that carries different meanings in different contexts and for different individuals, so that its meaning is contestable. When referring to the manifestation of feminist theology in her own South African context, Denise Ackermann describes feminist theology as a theology that focuses on "the lives of women, their stories, their hopes, their beliefs, and their experiences of oppression and liberation" (2006:255).

Isherwood and McEwan (1994:9) show that feminist theology is comprised of two disciplines, namely 'feminism' and 'theology'. 'Feminism' should here be understood in its

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[8] A more in depth exploration on the complex nature and intersections that exist between gender, race and class will be conducted in Chapter 5.

broadest sense; it not only demands an equal position for women in an unequal society, but also reflects the social inequality that forms part of the daily lives of women. Theology, on the other hand, refers to a reflection about the essence of God and the implications this will have for society (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:9). It can therefore be said that a combination of feminism and theology refers to the implications of the nature of God for a society in which women are oppressed and occupy an unequal position relative to men.

Ackermann draws on the work of Cannon et al. (1998:23-27) to refer to the conditions for feminist theologians:

> ... first, *accountability*, which means that theologies of praxis[9] are done in the interest of groups of people who experience oppression and discrimination. Second, praxis is conceived in *collaboration* with others whose aims are similar and with other disciplines. Third, all research, learning, and teaching begin with our own *lives-in-relation.* We cannot do theology as isolated individuals but rather as members of particular communities. Knowledge is born in dialogue with others and is contingent on the difference it makes to our lives and to others. Fourth, the *diversity of cultures* is a condition for feminist theological praxis. No theology can be applied universally, as women learned when men's experiences were given universal significance. The last condition is *shared commitment,* because feminist theological praxis is strategic and action-orientated (Cannon et al. 1998:23-27 in Ackermann 2006:227).

As a result of the complicated nature of oppression, as well as the intersections that exist between different types of oppression, the focus of feminist religion is to explore a diversity of themes. These include "gender, sexuality, women, men, social structures, cultural regimes of knowledge, modes of knowing, and the contours of disciplines" (Peskowitz 2001:29), as well as the intersections of these themes with "nations and regions, racial and ethnic communities" (Peskowitz 2001:29). Feminist theology therefore not only uses "scripture, tradition and the Spirit" as sources, but also "social theory, economic analysis and psychology" (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:12).

Ackermann uses the notion of 'a feminist theology of praxis' to highlight the importance of the relationship between feminist theory and its contextuality:

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[9] "Praxis describes the inseparable relationships between reflecting and acting, between what I think and believe and what I do to achieve the goals of my beliefs. Praxis is not the opposite of theory. It is opposed to separating theory and practise ... Any theology... which is praxis-based is theology in the making because the goals of liberation and justice are expressed in the very act of doing theology" (Ackermann 2003:35-36).

> A feminist theology of praxis begins with the critical analysis of a given context and a particular focus on how gender roles are understood and lived out. It then seeks to engage contextual situations with liberating and transformative praxis in order to encourage human flourishing, undergirded by the belief that such theology is done in service of furthering God's reign on earth (Ackermann 2006:227).

Isherwood and McEwan point to the importance of feminism "to highlight the disgraceful way in which women are treated in religious traditions" (1994:11-12). The body has often been vilified as "sinful and wicked" (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:12), which has led to women not realising their worth and having low self-esteems. Jones (2000:Chapter 1 at "What makes this specifically...") explains feminist theology in a positive sense as theology that brings the "lives of women, their stories, their hopes, their flourishing and failures, and their multi-layered experiences of oppression" (2000:Chapter 1 at "What makes this specifically...") into dialogue with the Christian narrative. It also explores the ways in which women's "experiences of hope, justice, and grace" (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "What makes this specifically...") are grounded by the Christian message (Jones 2000:Chapter 1). According to Schüssler Fiorenza (1986:21), feminist theology is also concerned with exploring the meaning of women's personal relationships with God (to understand women's "religious and spiritual self") (Fiorenza 1986:21). "It is a theology that articulates the Christian message in language and actions that seek to liberate women and all persons, a goal that Christian feminists believe can not be disentangled from the central truth of the Christian faith as a whole" (Jones 2000:Chapter 1 at "What makes this sepcifically..."). Ackermann sees feminist theology as the best articulation of a "total and active commitment to the infinite value of women's lives in every sphere of life" (2003:32).

Ackermann also refers to the words of Dorothee Sölle when she notes that "all true theology starts with pain. It is concerned with the very stuff of life, our questions, our experiences of alienation, our search for meaning" (Ackermann 2003:27). Feminism has women's experiences of oppression at its heart and is critical of unequal, patriarchal views. Feminism is also focused on turning history around and working towards a better future for the whole of creation. It is an egalitarian political and social movement that is aimed at transforming a sexist society. Consequently, feminism is therefore always focused on any form of oppression of or discrimination against women. Feminism "seeks justice" (Ackermann 2003:32). Ackermann emphasises the importance of the practical implications of feminism so that each feminist should work out what the meaning of feminism within her "political, social, and

religious" (2003:32) context entails. "Feminism is therefore an umbrella term for active political involvement with women's liberation in a great diversity of circumstances, often in very specific ways". (Ackermann 2003:32). The aim of feminist theology is therefore to create practical solutions to problems in the everyday lives of men and women. This is done by firstly applying its critique to the problems that women experience in their daily lives and by then making an attempt to offer solutions for these problems by using its own methods (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:10).

Although a lot has been done in terms of the change of legislation (for example that marital rape is now seen as a crime that is against the law), the attitudes, practices and beliefs of individuals often still reflect a deeply patriarchal society. The gains made by these changes can however still not be denied and contribute to changing attitudes "on a level we could call spiritual" (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:11). We need to obtain an understanding of structures that operate to constrict us, before practical solutions to transform society can be formulated (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:10). The aim of feminist theology, however, is not to only work towards a society with equal access for all, but also to envisage a utopian future where the duality of patriarchy no longer exists (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:11). "Feminism has always been sustained by the belief that things can get better" (Jones 2000:Chapter 1 at "One final comment about...").

The history of feminism has not always been marked with success and the movement experienced difficulty and criticism in its earlier years. It originated amongst white middle-class women who thought that all women have universal interests, problems and views. The early years of feminism was therefore marked by a failure to acknowledge the different experiences of women from different cultures, races, classes and contexts. The initial dream held by these white middle-class feminists "was not only false, it was also riddled with imperialist assumptions" (Ackermann 2003:31).

Women do not always share the same perception of history. A romantic understanding of history are often embraced in which all men are seen as evil, while are women are seen as innocent victims. Even though the view that women are treated badly and that all women have experienced some form of subordination in certain spheres of their lives is without a doubt true, it is not true that all women are mere victims who can under no circumstances be held responsible for shameful events in history (Ackermann 2003:31, Lerner 1986:234). Lerner (1986:234) and Jones (2000:Chapter 1 at "This discussion of interlocking...") state

that feminists therefore regard women as both subjects and active agents and victims within a patriarchal society. A more detailed discussion of this idea will be given in chapter 6.

Feminist theology does not only focus on offering practical solutions for the oppression of women. An important aspect of the academic enterprise of doing feminist theology is "to provide critical reflection on its own praxis" (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:10). Ackermann refers to the notion of a feminist theology of praxis to describe "the inseparable relationship between reflecting and acting, between what I think and believe and what I do to achieve the goals of my beliefs. Praxis is not the opposite of theory. It is opposed to separating theory and practise" (2003:35). It is therefore important when doing feminist theology to not only listen to critique from outside sources, but to also apply critical reflection on its own practices (Isherwood & McEwan 1994:11).

It seems logical that feminism would more easily eradicate sexism if 'women' could be united as a group. Despite numerous efforts over the period of the past century, however, feminism has continually failed to unite all women. This can be seen as a result of various factors, including the fact that no single group 'women' with identical views and experiences exist (Ackermann 2003:31). It is therefore important for feminist theory to recognise the varied circumstances, cultures, races, classes and histories of women and to listen to the diverse experiences of all women (cf. Jones 2000:Chapter 1 at "The discussion of interlocking..."). An extensive discussion of this topic will be given in the next section, where essentialism versus constructionism will be discussed.

3.3 Feminist theological theory: An exploration of patriarchy and for*men*ism, as well as essentialism versus constructionism

With the definition and goals of feminist theology taken into consideration, the focus will now shift to a discussion on specific feminist theological themes. After studying the material produced by Wiid, various patriarchal themes and undertones can be identified. The nature of this thesis, however, does not allow the time and space to cover all of these aspects. The themes of patriarchy and for*men*ism, as well as essentialism vs. constructionism will be explored. The aim of this discussion is to create a theoretical basis for a further engagement with Wiid's discourse.

3.3.1 Patriarchy and For*men*ism

'Patriarchy' in its literal form means "rule by the father" (Ackermann 2003:30). Today, patriarchy is understood as a system that operates in all societies where women are oppressed

and seen as subordinate to men. Within a patriarchal society, men are privileged and reality is defined through male experience, which then forms the norm for the whole of society (Ackerman 2003:30). Isherwood and McEwan (1994:148) define patriarchy as "seeing the world in dualism and through the hierarchical values that are created by it". Another term that needs explanation is 'sexism', which refers to the view that "men are superior to women simply because they are men" (Ackermann 2003:30). Sexism can also be seen as the foundation for heterosexim, which is based on the perception that male headship and female subordination "is compatible with the will of God" (Heyward 1994:29). Heterosexism also results in any deviation from this perception being viewed as sinful (Heyward 1994:29).

Nadar (2009:555) uses the insights of Whitehead and Barett to show how Angus Buchan with his Mighty Men Conference uses "'soft' statements about men's power" (Nadar 2009:555) in the discourse he proposes. Whitehead and Barett show that there are three ways in which masculine power is maintained: 1) "The first is ... power as brute force, such as physical violence" (Nadar 20009:555); 2) "The second is power as relational and positional – belief systems that promote hierarchical ideologies which makes it obligatory for men (as opposed to women) to be the heads of homes, leaders of organisations, directors of companies etc." (Nadar 2009:555); and 3) The third is "maintained through 'discourses of power'" (Nadar 2009:555) - everyday language used to keep binary oppositions with regard to the nature of men and women in place (for example men that are seen as strong and women as weak; men that are seen as rational and women as irrational/emotional). The language used here is often also used to appeal to a 'higher authority' to legitimise the claims being made. Angus Buchan's appeal to God can be seen as an example of this. Strong elements of the second two categories mentioned above can be detected in movements like the Mighty Men's Conference (and the 'Promise Keeper' in North America) (Nadar 2009:555).

Masculine power, like that described by Whitehead and Barrett, is also maintained through what Nadar (2009) has labelled *Palatable Patriarchy* and Nadar and Potgieter (2010b) as For*men*ism. They show that there are movements that overshadow feminist successes in South-Africa and present their "anti-feminist and brazenly patriarchal" (Nadar & Potgieter 2010a:46) nature under the guise of *Palatable Patriarchy* and For*men*ism (Nadar & Potgieter 2010a:46). It was seen in the previous section in the work of both Ackermann and Jones that women cannot always be seen as innocent victims within a patriarchal society, but are at times also seen as active agents and protagonists. This phenomenon is reflected in the term For*men*ism*:*

For*men*ism, like masculinism, subscribes to a belief in the inherent superiority of men over women, but unlike masculinism it is not an ideology developed and sustained by men, but an ideology designed, constructed and sustained by women... As its phonetics suggests, this is a concept *for* men – that is to say, men are the chief beneficiaries of the hierarchical social position that it advocates...Whereas the aim of feminism has been to deconstruct the ways in which patriarchy oppresses women and to reconstruct a more equitable society, for*men*ism seeks to entrench and romanticize patriarchy as a system of 'natural order' that does not harm women and indeed betters their lives. Contrary to feminist beliefs that female submissiveness leads to oppression, the for*men*ist position suggests that submission will actually lead to women's liberation and to lifelong happy marriages (Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:143).

Nadar (2009:554), Nadar and Potgieter (2010b:142) and Pillay (2011:188) agree that the Mighty Men Conference led by Angus Buchan can be seen as an example of a movement that uses palatable patriarchy. Gretha Wiid also uses palatable language when giving advice to couples and individuals through her online advice column (Nadar & Potgieter 2010a:50). Nadar makes the observation that "the idea of men taking responsibility is 'hardly unpalatable'" (Nadar 2009:554). These forms of palatable patriarchy are often used within religious circles to maintain male headship. She notes, however, that "... if 'taking responsibility' means asserting dominating and coercive measures... to maintain power, then our justice antennas have to be tuned in, so that we are not deceived by this palatable patriarchy, masquerading as 'restoring masculinity'" (Nadar 2009:554).

Nadar and Potgieter (2010b:146) draw on the work of Foucault in his book, *Discipline and Punishment,* in which he shows that all individuals hold some form of power. The construction of a particular discourse, and therefore the construction of a form of knowledge, results in people having power. Foucault then draws a distinction between two modes of power; sovereign power and discipline power. The first refers to the control of individuals through the sovereign - through force. The latter refers to people attempting to control themselves and others, as well as allowing individuals who are seen as experts to control them (Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:146). When considering the fact that men are the chief beneficiaries of a patriarchal society, one would assume that the patriarchal, life-denying, sexist discourse that supports these societies would be advocated by men. Angus Buchan is a good example of this. It comes as a surprise, however, that the discourse produced and advocated in the Worthy Women Movement has a female leader. In this case, discipline

power is therefore at work. Nadar and Potgieter (2010b:145-146) therefore derive from Foucault's discourse on power that Gretha Wiid can be seen as an expert who exercises power over other women.

According to John Stuart Mill, a nineteenth century philosopher, men are not merely interested in having a wife, who is obedient. Men are more interested in a wife who would willingly serve them, than someone who has to be forced to serve. Jones (2000:Chapter 2 at "Feminist constructivists explain that...") shows how the school system and other spheres of society shape children to take on the behaviour of either 'boys' or 'girls' and therefore make them into gendered persons. The school system has also been used by men to keep women in their subordinate position. While other oppressors have used fear as means to keep the oppressed obedient, men have been using education (Mill 1869:26, 27 in Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:146) to indoctrinate women from a young age and make them believe that their ultimate (often God-given) purpose is to take on an identity and traits that are seen as the opposite of what has essentially been defined as masculine: Therefore "not self will, and government by self-control, but submission, and yielding to the control of others" (Mill 1869:26-27, in Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:146). Society tells women and girls that they are essentially nurturing and that it forms part of their nature to put their own desires and needs second. Societal norms also tell women and girls that their worth lies solely in their relations with others, rather than in themselves (Mill 1869:26, 27, in Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:146). The sex education produced by Wiid can be seen as an example where young girls and boys are taught to play into the dominant discourse of a patriarchal society (cf. Nortjé-Meyer 2011:3, 5). Wiid often also hosts camps for children of various ages where she discusses sexuality and gendered related topics[10].

As was shown in chapter 2, Wiid has received critique from various platforms, including the media, the public and various church leaders. When engaging Wiid's discourse and views from a feminist theological perspective, the problematic and dangerous, life denying nature of Wiid's discourse can also be seen and therefore critiqued. Feminism strives to identify different manifestations of oppression that structures women's lives and it is aware of the fact that oppression often makes itself invisible and almost impossible to detect (Jones 2000: Chapter 1 at "To understand these tools..."). With the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement taken into consideration, it is therefore important to make visible and highlight the

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[10] For more information on Wiid's sex education, the following books, written by her, can be seen: *Lyfslim vir seuns: Oor seks, meisies en die dinge daar onder* and *Lyfslim vir meisies: Oor seks, seuns en die dinge daar onder.*

problematic nature of Wiid's discourse, with the aim of leading to the conscientisation[11] of women.

Wiid's discourse is based on the view that it is the responsibility of women to enable their husbands to take up their God given roles as "king, prophet and priest in the family" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:5). She motivates women to be subordinate to their husbands and to honour their husbands as the heads of their households (Wiid 2008a, Beyers 2009). Despite Wiid's claims that she does not regard husbands and wives as unequal partners within marriage relationships and that husbands are not their wives' bosses (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2), the advice she gives to women tend to point in the opposite direction. Her discourse is also entrenched with the use of the language of subordination, so that men are in reality seen as superior to women. It is therefore clear in Wiid's approach that she promotes the subordination of women and that her views and discourse reflect an already patriarchal system and society. When considering the fact that feminism is against any form of subordination of women, including subordination justified through what is seen as natural/essential gender traits, or through a divine mandate, as well as the fact that feminism, firstly, strives to achieve flourishing and equality for all and, secondly, to eradicate any form of oppression, Wiid's discourse can be seen as life denying and opposed to the feminist notion of flourishing. Wiid's discourse also do not reflect the feminist aims of mutuality and reciprocity within marriage relationships[12].

As was seen previously, feminism is open to critique both from outside the feminist circle and from within and aims to avoid any universal approach when it comes to the lives and experiences of women. Feminism regards a simplistic approach to women's lives as dangerous because it does not take the complex nature and workings of oppression, as well as the cultural and social context of women into consideration. Gretha Wiid, however, refers to all women in a simplistic way, as if to assume that discourse, advice and analysis of women's experiences can be applied to all women, despite women's unique circumstances and experiences. Wiid therefore wants to create the illusion that all women, despite their diverse backgrounds and contexts, can simply follow her 'recipe' (cf. Wiid 2012:17) to make their marital problems disappear. This approach that Wiid follows, however, is dangerous and

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[11] The term 'conscientisation' "literally means 'making conscious' and alludes to a process of discovery of self as oppressed which leads to the desire for change and the search for affirmation and wholeness". The term is used to describe the empowerment of oppressed women and helps women to explore their own unconscious collaboration and role in the maintenance of a patriarchal society and sexism (Ackermann 1993).

[12] The importance of mutuality and reciprocity for Christian sexual ethics will be discussed in chapter 4.

irresponsible, especially considering the high levels of sexual and gender violence in South Africa[13]. The negative effects that can be caused as a result of her advice to women to hand over their sexuality into the hands of their husbands and to submit and call their husbands king, even in times where they are undeserving of it are self evident; especially when considering the fact that some of the women might already find themselves within abusive and life-denying situations. Wiid, with her simplistic view of the lives and experiences of women, therefore clearly goes against the attempts of feminism to take the complex and varied experiences, social contexts and cultures of women into consideration.

Wiid's discourse also reflects the last two of Barrett and Whiteheads' categories for the ways in which masculine power is maintained, namely through belief systems that promote men's headship over women and discourses of power, that operates through language (Nadar 2009:555), when she continually refers to men having to take back their rightful and God-given position as head of the house (Beeld 2009, Nortjé-Meyer 2011:5, De Villiers 2009a, Beyers 2009). Wiid, like Buchan, therefore uses 'God-language' to make her patriarchal claims and discourse legitimate. Wiid's language is also entrenched with overtones of female submission and male headship (Wiid 2008a, Beeld 2009, Nortjé-Meyer 2011:5), which can be seen to create discourses of power.

According to Nadar and Potgieter (2010b:146), it is easier for women to submit to their husbands when they do not feel forced, but are rather convinced through religion that their subordinate position in society are seen as positive and morally correct in the eyes of their religion and, in the case of Worthy Women Movement, as part of God's plan. Wiid therefore uses discipline power to get women to buy into her religious convictions and to submit to their husbands "willingly" (Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:146). In an interview with Nadar and Potgieter, Wiid made it clear that wives should not submit to their husbands under force, but rather willingly and "lovingly" (Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:146). Another example of this was mentioned in chapter 2, where Wiid refers to 2 Corinthians 11:7 to tell women that they are not, in fact, submitting to their husbands, but rather being obedient to God's vision and kingdom. She goes further to say that women are therefore not submitting under force, but rather because they want to fight for their husband's kingship and submit under God's kingdom (Wiid 2008a).

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[13] For a discussion on the problem of gender based violence in South Africa, see: http://www.anc.org.za/docs/discus/2014/genderz.pdf

Gretha Wiid's language operates as a "discourse of power" to keep women subordinate to men and the binary view of men and women's nature in place. Wiid, like Buchan and the leaders of the Promise Keepers Movement in North America, makes an appeal to a higher authority – God – to legitimise her views and discourse when she claims that God should form an integral part of every sphere of individuals' lives, including their relationships with their husbands and children and their intimate lives (Wiid 2015). She encourages people at various occasions to return to the Word of God. Furthermore, Wiid claims to base her views on various Biblical texts and what "Jesus and God tell her" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2). In her response to critique, Wiid accuses individuals who do not agree with her views and thought system of not understanding or choosing the Holy Spirit (Wiid 2015).

When considering this palatable language, as well the similarities between the discourse proposed and sustained by the Worthy Women Movement and those proposed by the Mighty Men Conference, it seems as if the discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement can also be seen as palatable patriarchy, or as Nadar and Potgieter (2010b:141) and Nortjé-Meyer (2011:2) describe it, as *formenism.* Gretha Wiid uses palatable patriarchy or for*men*ism to promote her discourse under the mask of female liberation (cf. Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:144). She also uses a utopian view of successful and happy marriage relationships and families, as well as a transformation of South Africa (cf. Nortjé-Meyer 2011:3) to make her social and religious construct of male headship and female submission sound palatable and attractive to her audience.

3.3.2   Essentialism versus constructionism

An exploration will now be done of the different approaches to gender identity formation.

Essentialism

The first approach to gender formation that will be explored is 'essentialism'.

The feminist movement has made a significant contribution to the study of gender, which is one of the main areas of feminist analysis. Gender can be seen as a binary category that intersects with many other social systems, like race and sexuality[14] (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:3, 4). Gender divides society into the categories of male and female and organises the entire world and the lives of individuals (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:1) - with every government form that gets filled in, each visit to a public restroom, and every baby born and

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[14] A more detailed analysis of the intersections that exist between race, gender and class will be conducted in chapter 5.

immediately classified as male or female. Gender plays such an enormous role in our daily lives that it is hard for us to imagine a world without gender and the distribution of power that is paired with current hierarchical views of gender.

Different approaches to gender exist. The first approach that will be discussed is 'essentialism'. Essentialism generally refers to "inherent and unchanging qualities or essences" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "To unravel the multiple...") of objects. These qualities are seen as universal, so that its presence is guaranteed under all circumstances. 'Universalism' and 'essentialism' are therefore often seen as synonyms. When 'essential identity' is applied to women, it therefore leads to the view that certain unchanging essential traits can be applied to all women; these traits can be either biological or dispositional to include "every aspect of our beings" (Ackermann 2003:31, cf. Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "What happens when 'essential identity'...").

The definition of essentialism/universalism when applied to the lives of women can be seen as "any view of women's nature that makes universal claims about women, based on characteristics considered to be an inherent part of being female" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "Feminists note something..."). The result is that certain traits like "passivity, instability, emotionality, and nurture" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "What happens when...") are labelled as essentially feminine traits (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "What happens when...", cf. Pillay 2011:187). This approach therefore sees the nature of women as a fixed state, which is unchangeable.

Individuals defending the differentiation of "social roles, talents, capabilities, etc." (Pillay 2011:187) see a social structure that is grounded on sexual differentiation as justifiable through 'nature'. In this sense, women are naturally seen as "irrational, weak and in need of" (Pillay 2011:187), while men are naturally seen as "rational and strong in order to provide for and protect 'their' women" (Pillay 2011:187). The gender traits attached to women also include the views that women are "more relational, nurturing, and emotional than men, while also less mechanical, self-confident, and individuated than their male counterparts" (Tolbert 2000:99). Males are also often seen as territorially and sexually aggressive and women as sexually passive (Tolbert 2000:99, cf. Jones 2000: Chapter 2 at "Daly is not the only..."). "The view that men are 'biological aggressors' or a 'natural rapist'; the idea of 'metaphysical difference; the idea of 'women as nurturers that must save the world from male wars and technology'" (Connell 1987:67) can all be seen as essentialist perceptions.

One form of essentialist thinking is referred to by feminists as 'the sex-gender scheme'. This form of essentialism refers to "a tendency in Western thought to also identify sexual difference with both biological/physiological dimension (sex), and dispositional/psychological and social characteristics (gender)" (Jones 2000, Chapter 2 at "Feminists refer to another..."). The universal biological traits assigned to women refer to physical attributes assumed to be present in all females. These traits include "chromosomal structure ... hormonal makeup and cycles ... the structures of the brain, heart, and nervous system" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "Feminists refer to another..."). These 'natural' contributions assigned to women are often used to justify female subordination.

Two terms that are also closely linked to essentialism are 'naturalism' and 'determinism'. The dichotomy between male and female are presumed by many to be the natural order and therefore, the limit for all subsequent conversations and debates (Connell 1987:66). Within feminist analysis, gender was traditionally understood in relation to sex (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:3). This points to the essentialist view, according to which gender is seen as the social correlative and elaboration of sex[15] (Tolbert 2000:99, Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:3). This belief in "a fundamental biological difference between men and women" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "Traditional forms of essentialism...") forms the basis of society. From a feminist perspective, it is important to note that according to naturalism, female traits are therefore assumed to be natural and not as a result of "cultural training, learned conventions, or social expectations" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "This belief in an...").

The relation between the essentialist traits of men and women are represented in a variety of ways: 1) As binaries (men as autonomous and women as relational); 2) As complimentary (men as rational, women as emotional); 3) According to a hierarchical relation (men as physically superior to women); 4) Defined by "absence or lack" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "As feminist theorists chart...") (men have a penis, while women don't); and 5) As a matter of degree (women are better with children than men). Essential traits are therefore not only assumed for women, but also for men, so that female essential traits therefore often also assume and rely on male essential traits (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "As feminist theorists chart..."). Gender can be seen operating in society in one of the following three ways: 1) Where male and female are seen as equal, but opposite, known as a 'complementarity

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[15] "Sex is a theory about human beings which divides them into two biologically based categories – male or female" (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:7).

relationship'; 2) Where the female is defined as more important than the male; and 3) Where the male is seen as more important than the female (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:2).

These 'natural' sexual differences have traditionally been used to define the essence of women by its deviation from the essential nature of men, which is seen as the norm[16]. Even when some women do not acknowledge these essential natures ascribed to them, these essences are still perceived as "'inborn','innate','native,''instinctual', or 'pre-social'" (Jones 2000: Chapter 2 at "This belief in an unchanging...") and are believed to constitute "the authentic woman" (Jones 2000: Chapter 2 at "This belief in an unchanging") or "the true inner woman" (Jones 2000: Chapter 2 at "This belief in an unchanging..."). Gender therefore does not only function to classify people into either one of the male or female binary categories[17], but also to divide the world and people into a "set of hierarchically arranged roles" (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:1-2, cf. Connell 1987:66) so that the one gender (mostly male) are privileged over the other (mostly female) (cf. Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2). Young also notes that: "Oppression has often been perpetrated by a conceptualization of group difference in terms of unalterable essential natures that determine what group members deserve or are capable of ..." (1990:47, cf. Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2).

According to Butler (1990:35), the "production of 'nature' operates in accord with the dictates of compulsory heterosexuality". Linked to this belief is the view that the relationships between men and women are predetermined by sexual difference. Men and women are therefore seen as naturally oriented towards each other through their biological differences (hence individuals are seen as essentially heterosexual (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "Traditional forms of essentialism..."). This approach to the nature of men and women can therefore be seen as a contributing factor to the formation of a heteronormative society.

"Heteronormativity can be defined as heterosexuality[18] and heterosexual relationships that are perceived and presented by society as the only 'natural, healthy, universally socially and

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[16] Men have however not, as one would expect, been the only ones to assign essentialist traits to women. Despite agreeing that the majority of traditional perceptions of women and gender are problematic, some feminists embrace the idea that women are essentially different to men and "advocate a separatist stance for women" (Ackermann 2003:31, cf. Jones 2000).

[17] For more information on the way in which the world has been divided according to the binary categories of gender through history, see: Cranny-Francis et al. 2003. *Gender studies: Terms and debates*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 2.

[18] It is important to avoid reducing both heterosexuality and homosexuality to single unitary entities. Lilly-Nortjé Meyer points to this when she writes that "... we should rather speak about homosexuali*ties* and heterosexuali*ties* ... when talking about the system, the institution, we need a unitary concept, but when talking about identities, practices and experiences, we can embrace diversity" (Nortjé-Meyer 2010:144).

morally acceptable expressions of adult sexuality'" (Dunne 2003:60 in Nortjé-Meyer 2011: 2). It is "the process of socially constructing a privileged heterosexuality and its related binary understandings of gender, over unconventional presentations of gender and gender-related issues" (Nortjé-Meyer 2010:141). To critique heteronormativity in terms of social structures entails two elements: 1) "It is a critique[19] of the normative status of heterosexuals, which renders alternative sexualities as 'other' and 'marginal'" (Nortjé-Meyer 2010:144), and 2) "It is also a critique of what can be called 'hetero-patriarchy' or 'hetero-oppression'. That refers to a system of systematic male dominance. A critique of heteropatriarchy should then pay attention to its use of gender in terms of its divisions and hierarchy. Compulsory heterosexuality and therefore patriarchy keeps women *in* (within its gender and sexual confines) and *down*, namely subordinate" (Nortjé-Meyer 2010:144).

"Institutionalised heteropatriarchy and heteronormativity as social totalities refer to the systematic and systemic power and control men have over women" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2). Individual women and women as a group are therefore oppressed through the patriarchal conduct and views of both individual men and men as a group. The hierarchical power dynamic that exists between men and women therefore makes them "unequal in the system" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2). Accordingly, Chitando and Chirongoma (2012:6) point out that:

> The biological fact of being male places men in privileged positions. This has been termed 'the patriarchal dividend' – the benefits that all men enjoy simply as a result of an accident of biology (Chitando & Chirongoma 2012:6).

Chitando and Chirongoma (2012:6) state that "not all men have power, and some men have more power than others, but it remains true that men tend to be socially constructed as more powerful than women". According to Nortjé-Meyer, it is exactly this social construction of men as more powerful than women that lead to all men within a heteropatriarchal society having "power over all women, regardless of whether they choose to exercise that power or not" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2). All men have the choice of using power that are socially and culturally supported and that are always available to them within a heteropatriarchal society (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2). Whether or not men choose to exercise this power, women are therefore always at a disadvantage, because of the constant awareness of the possibility of this use of power against them. An example of this is that "all acts of violence against women are beneficial to all men and strengthen their power over all women" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2).

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[19] "Questioning heteronormativity has ... not been done from uniform perspectives, but from mainly two theoretical and political agendas, namely, queer theory and feminism" (Nortjé-Meyer 2010:143).

"Gender divisions in the family are tied to heterosexuality as institutionalised and hegemonic, as organising the division of labour and, more specifically, household labour (Ingraham 1994:209). Binary gender divisions are dependent on normative heterosexuality to maintain the power relations that exist between men and women.

A feminist response to essentialism

Many feminists[20] oppose the essentialist view of gender and see it as a means to oppress women (and men) (Jones 2000, Chapter 2 at "Given this description of..."). Before giving an account of the constructivist view of gender, however, it must be noted that not all feminists support this approach and that an essentialist approach to sex and gender have also been used by feminists to fight for the emancipation of women within patriarchal societies[21]. These feminists hold the opinion that universal feminist traits, when embraced, can be used to unite the group 'women'[22] and "provide common ground for worldwide political movements and networks devoted to the liberation of women" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "There are other reasons..."). Butler opposes this view and shows that "the presumed universality and unity of the subject of feminism is effectively undermined by the constraints of the representational discourse in which it functions"[23] (1990:6). Work done by various feminists such as Elizabeth Spelman, Adrienne Rich, Audre Lorde, and Maria Lugones emphasise that any universal, essentialist view of women will lead "to the exclusion of some women as 'unwomanly'" (Tolbert 2000:100). When it comes to "representational politics", the historical present should be seen as the point of departure to "formulate ... a critique of categories of identity that contemporary juridical structures engender, naturalize, and immobilize" (Butler 1990:7).

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[20] Except for some approaches to feminism, queer theory also rejects essentialist notions to gender and sexuality. "... queer theory challenges and disrupts the traditional notions that sexuality and gender identity are simply questions of scientific fact or that such concepts can be reduced to fixed binary categories such as 'homosexual' vs. 'heterosexual' or 'female' vs. 'male'".

[21] Not all feminists are negative about essentialist representations of women as naturers. Although they do acknowledge that essentialist interpretations are often inaccurate and have been used to oppress women, according to them the problem is not the binary gender scheme itself, but rather the fact that many of the essentialist female traits have been seen as subordinate and inferior to the corresponding male traits. Certain traits that are associated with women should, instead of being dismissed, be embraced and celebrated.

[22] For further reading on the development away from an essential description of "woman", see: Tolbert, M.A. 2000. Gender. In: A.K.M. Adam (ed.). *Handbook of postmodern Biblical interpretation*. St. Louise: Chalice Press.

[23] It does not come as a surprise that the very group that feminism is supposed to represent (women) often reject it, because of the limits that this approach places on women's identities. The claim that these universal and essentialist approaches are taken for strategic reasons are also misguided, because of its inherent danger to lead to exclusionary practices and misrepresentation. These feminists are also critiqued for its attempts to colonise and to make forms of oppression experienced by women in the West seem universal (Butler 1990:5- 7).

Both Connell (1987:67) and Butler (1990:6) point to the troublesome nature of the term 'women' and challenge the assumptions of the essential sexed and gendered differences between men and women. In her book, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity,* Judith Butler shows that no uniform group/identity 'woman' exists (1990:4). While modernist thought supported the essentialist/naturalist view of gender as discussed above, postmodernist thought uses, amongst other approaches, feminism to contests essentialist views (Tolbert 2000:9). This postmodern perspective on gender is included in the notion of constructivism within feminist discourse. Jones gives the following definition of feminist constructivism: "Feminist constructivism can be defined as a theory that focuses on the social, cultural, and linguistic sources of our views of women and women's nature" (2000: Chapter 2 at "Butler's position is not new..."). During the 1970's, when feminists started to contest the 'biology-is-destiny' view, gender was viewed as "the universal ascription of unequal social power relations, allowing one gender to dominate and requiring the other to be subordinate, on the foundation of relatively minor biological distinctions" (Tolbert 2000:99). The view of the 1970's feminists included that all women were disadvantaged by this approach, while all men were privileged by it[24] (Tolbert 2000:100).

When viewing gender relations through a feminist lens, the essential traits assigned to men and women are therefore clearly problematic. Essentialist naturalism "makes women's historical subordination to men seem like a natural fact rather than a cultural product" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "Given this description of..."). Essentialist determinism is also problematic in so far as it makes it difficult to "imagine radical social change to work towards an egalitarian society, where men and women are seen as equals" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "Given this description of..."). Essentialist perceptions also often lead to female traits being perceived as a "function of masculine identity" (Jones 2000:Chapter 2 at "Given this description of...") and women to be presented as *the other*. When the feminist view of gendered traits as contextual and fluid are taken into consideration, the problematic nature of essentialist traits are emphasised because of its failure to take the complex and diverse realities of women (and men) into consideration. According to the essentialist approach, women's natures are therefore clearly often misrepresented (Jones 2000: Chapter 2 at "Given this description of...").

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[24] As will be seen in Chapter 6, the concept of 'patriarchal bargaining' contests the view that all women are disadvantaged and all men are privileged by patriarchal notions, of which the essentialist view of gender can be seen as an example.

In an attempt to move away from the 'biology-is-destiny-formulation' attached to gendered traits, a distinction was originally made between the notions of 'sex' and 'gender' to show that despite the 'biological intractability' of sex, gender is influenced and constructed through various contextual practices. Assuming that sex is fixed[25], gender is seen as fluid (Butler 1990:8). Connell challenges this assumption that "the biological makeup of our bodies is the 'basis', 'foundation', 'framework', 'essence', or 'mould' of the social relations of gender" (1987:67). Gender can also not be seen as a natural extension of sex, so that female/male genitals will *naturally* result in feminine/masculine behaviour or traits. The sexed body can therefore, as a result of different contexts and cultural influences, have various gendered expressions, so that a discontinuity exists between "sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders" (Butler 1990:9). The assumption of a binary gender system that keeps the assumption of a connectedness between gender and sex in place, as well as the assumption that only two genders exist are therefore also questioned (Butler 1990:9, Tolbert 2000:102).

A diversity of views in different contexts, cultures and times with regard to what is seen as appropriate gender behaviour is also acknowledged in arguments aimed at moving away from an essentialist approach to gender, so that cross-cultural research gave way to the postmodernist perspective in which gender is seen as a social construct (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:3, Tolbert 2000:99) that has "deep political roots" (Tolbert 2000:99). Rather than seeing essentialist/natural traits as biologically determined, it is viewed as a result of continual reinforcement through recurring gendered performance that may result in certain traits being perceived as natural. Although many postmodern theorists still associate certain gendered traits with sex, the biological determinist nature of these traits are questioned "by recognizing it too as a fluctuating social and cultural construction written on the body" (Tolbert 2000:99).

"As a sociological or anthropological category, gender is not simply the gender one is, that is, a man or a woman, but rather a set of meanings that sexes assume in particular societies. The operation of gender in our society takes up these sets of meanings, organises them as masculinity of femininity, and matches or lines them up with male and female bodies" (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:3). Human behaviour is influenced and motivated by social and political processes and is therefore not constituted "by context-free individual predispositions" (Connell 1987:67-73). The contexts where individuals find themselves therefore have an influence on their gender identity, so that the intersections that exist

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[25] The binary distinction of sex can also be questioned and seen as a cultural construction. A further explanation on this will be given in a later section.

between gender, race, class, ethnicity and sexual identities play an influential role (Butler 1990:4).

The view that gender is a cultural construct, however, seems to suggest "a certain determinism of gender meanings inscribed on anatomically differentiated bodies, where those bodies are understood as passive recipients of an inexorable cultural law" (Butler 1990:11). In these cases, it is easy to fall back to the same deterministic interpretations as under the 'biology-is-destiny formulation' (Butler 1990:11); in this case, however, culture becomes the determining factor, instead of biology. Does this therefore imply that gender is still a fixed state, so that agency and transformation are eliminated (Butler 1990:10, 11)?

The meaning of (cultural/social) 'construction' can be questioned, however; is it a matter of free will or determinism? The body can therefore either be seen as "a passive medium on which cultural meanings are inscribed or as the instrument through which an appropriative and interpretive will determine a cultural meaning for itself" (Butler 1990:11, 12). Although the distinction between biologically determined sex and contextually formed gender has been used to emphasise a constructivist approach and to argue against essentialism, some feminists see sex and gender as "overlapping constructs that differ in emphasis, where our understanding of biological sex is likely to be shaped by our culture's notion of gender" (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:3). Butler serves as an example where she points to the possibility that sex[26], like gender, should be seen as a cultural construct. The possibility therefore exists that the distinction made between sex and gender has been false all along, so that 'sex' has been 'gender' all along and that gender therefore, in fact, forms the basis for a binary view of sex. "As a result, gender is not to culture as sex is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which 'sexed nature' or 'a natural sex' is produced and established as 'prediscursive,' prior to culture, a politically neutral surface *on which* culture acts" (Butler 1990:9, 10).

When looking at the question with regard to where the beginning of gender is and the relation between the subject or the self and the construction of gender, two approaches can be identified. The first argues that "gender is a set of roles and cultural meanings acquired in the course of ego formation within family structures, and that significant changes in child-rearing practices and kinship organisation can alter the meaning gender and close the hierarchical gap between the genders of man and woman" (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:4). Advocates of the

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[26] For more information on the historical development of the binary view of sex,:see Cranny-Francis et al. 2003. *Gender studies: Terms and debates*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 5.

56

other approach (Freudian-derived French Lacanian psychoanalysis) on the other hand, argue against the existence of a body or biological sex prior to gender; that is, that "in becoming human, one is always already gendered" (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:3). In this case, sexual difference "appears to constitute the very matrix which gives rise to the subject itself" (Cranny-Francis et al. 2003:4). Attention should therefore be given to the ways in which gender should be reconstructed to incorporate "the power relations that produce the effect of a prediscursive sex and so conceal that very operation of discursive production" (Butler 1990:10).

As a result of the extent to which our social contexts influence our experience, we are unable to differentiate between what is 'natural,' 'given,' or 'essential' and what is not (Jones 2000, Chapter 2 at "Feminist theorists in recent years..."). Butler's (1990:83-93) view on gender reflects the view that individuals are not passive receivers of gender traits, but rather active in the process of acting according to certain gendered traits[27]. She refers to 'performativity' and 'drag' to explain this view (Butler 1990:190). She explains that:

> ... there is neither an 'essence' that gender expresses or externalizes nor an objective ideal to which gender aspires, and because gender is not a fact, the various acts of gender create the idea of gender, and without those acts, there would be no gender at all. Gender is, thus, a construction that regularly conceals its genesis; the tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions is obscured by the credibility of those productions... the construction 'compels' our belief in its necessity and naturalness (Butler 1990:190).

When Butler (1990:34) therefore says that gender is performative, she means that it is "constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to preexist the deed" (Butler 1990:34). Using Nietzsche's work *On the genealogy of morals* as her basis, Butler accordingly states that: "There is not gender identity behind the expression of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its result" (1990:34). Gender identities are therefore formed and reinstated by the expression of gendered performance in everyday life.

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[27] Research on the possibility of the theory of performativity to be applied on matters of race has been conducted by many scholars, such as Sadiya Hartman, Lisa Lowe and Dorinne Kondo.

57

Gender, sex and women are therefore the result of the interrelated relationship of culture and convention. Consequently, gender should be seen as performances in which individuals act according to assumptions about gender, sex and body that are culturally generated. The roles individuals take on as men and women are therefore "socially inscribed" (Jones 2000, Chapter 2 at "The reading that provoked..."). Simone de Beauvoir's famous quote that "one is not born, but rather becomes a woman" (Butler 1990:11) also reflects this view. While assuming the cultural construction of gender, her formulation seems to imply that an agent, "who somehow takes on or appropriates that gender and could, in principle, take on some other gender" (Butler 1990:11) is involved in the formation of a specific gendered identity. It should also be noted that De Beauvoir never refers to the "one who becomes a woman" (Butler 1990:11) as female. Constructionism therefore refers to the fact that being a man or a woman is not a fixed state. It is a "process, a becoming" (Butler 1990:33). This understanding of gender arrangements is also true for men. Both genders are therefore reinforced by the re-enactment of feminine or masculine traits (Jones 2000, Chapter 2 at "The reading that provoked...").

This discussion about the formation of gender identities therefore suggests that an essentialist approach to gender (and sex) is over simplified. As was evident in the discussion above, a complimentary and essentialist approach has been used through the years to also oppress and subjugate women to their male counterparts. The theory explored seems to suggest that Wiid's discourse can be categorised according to the essentialist assumption that "biology determines gender". Without taking the individuality of women into consideration, Wiid therefore seems to regard certain feminine traits and desires as universal to all women and as essences, rather than socially formed behaviour.

This is evident in her repeated reference to women's behaviour and essences as being explainable through nature. Wiid, for example, tells followers of the Worthy Women Movement that little girls' have a 'natural' tendency to draw heart shaped figures and twirl around in dresses. She uses this as 'proof' that all women have the desire to feel beautiful and worthy of their husbands' love (Wiid 2008b). According to Wiid, a wife has a natural desire for her husband to assure her that his heart belongs to her and that she is beautiful (Wiid 2008b). These assumptions made by Wiid seems to suggest that it is true to girls and women's natures to express 'feminine' traits and act according to what would socially be defined as 'ladylike', for example the desire to feel beautiful and acknowledged. Wiid assumes that women naturally want to feel desired and worthy of their husbands' love. Wiid

58

(2008b) also seems to suggest a natural dependency of women on men for their self worth when she draws on 2 Corinthians 11:7 (which is clearly a misreading of the text, so that the possibility exists that she might be referring to 1 Corinthians 11:7) to tell the followers of the Worthy Women Movement that women are also dependent on their husbands' rule to be able to reflect godliness and glory (Wiid 2008a, Beyers 2009).

An essentialist view of gender regards the masculine as the norm and superior to the feminine. This is evident in Wiid's discourse, where she describes the role of women as complimentary and supportive of the God-given role and responsibility assigned to men (cf. Wiid 2008b). The masculine are therefore seen as the norm, so that the essential feminine traits assigned to women are derived from what Wiid claims that the essential traits of men; wives roles are derived from their husbands' roles, and not the other way around. Examples of this that can be found in Wiid's discourse include the ironic representation of women as weak and in need of their husbands' protection, despite her telling women that they are their husbands' (spiritual) protectors and warriors (Wiid 2008a). She describes wives as their husbands' shields, so that women have to protect and support their husbands to enable them to take up their roles as king in the household and kingdom of God (Wiid 2008a).

Wiid also insinuates that if women don't make sure that they are visually attractive to their husbands, it is in actual fact their own fault if their husbands are unfaithful to them (Wiid 2008b, Radloff 2010). By claiming men to be visual beings, Wiid therefore justifies men's unfaithfulness as out of their control and blames women for not affirming their husbands' manliness (Wiid 2008b). Men who are absent from home often are also seen as a result of women's failure to give their husbands acknowledgement and recognise their husbands' natural need to feel man enough (Wiid 2008b). Blaming women for their husbands' lack of support and unfaithfulness therefore further plays into a patriarchal status quo and 'keeps women in their (subordinate) place'.

Pillay notes that "increasingly powerful religious (and cultural) groups are encouraging the idea that concepts such as gender equality are incompatible with traditional Christian values" (2015:69). Wiid, similar to these religious groups, teaches the followers of the Worthy Women Movement that their subordinate position in the family is in line with the will of God (Wiid 2008a). According to Nortjé-Meyer, the binary categories according to which men and women's gendered identities are defined forms the basis of Wiid's discourse; as was shown in the exploration of the essentialist approach to gender formation, these categories lead to men being seen as superior when compared to women. Although Wiid declares "that the

husband is not the 'boss' of the wife, she maintains that he is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Christian community (cf. Eph 5:23-24), and therefore has supremacy over the wife" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:2). With the discussion on essentialism taken into consideration, it seems as if Wiid uses an essentialist approach as justification for her hierarchical approach to men and women when she claims that God naturally made women and men in certain ways (Wiid 2008b). Wiid therefore not only justifies her view of the binary differences between men and women by referring to nature as 'proof' (naturalism), but also uses God language to suggest that the opposite and complimentary natures of men and women were predetermined by God. This can also be seen in Wiid's reference to a correlation that, in her view, exists between women's essences and God commanding men to love their wives (Wiid 2008b).

The theoretical exploration on essentialism also revealed that essential traits connected to females, by implication also assumes essential traits for men. This also seems to be evident in Wiid's discourse when she not only refers to women as having certain essential, natural, God-given traits, but also claim that men have certain essential traits, such as naturally being visual beings (Wiid 2008b). In contrast to girls who are shy of their bodies, according to Wiid, boys are naturally proud of their bodies and bodily functions and therefore compare themselves to other boys from an early age. Wiid shows that men have the natural tendency to be in competition with one another, while they strive towards answering, what Wiid sees as the single most important question for all men: "Am I man enough?" (Wiid 2008b, Wiid, F 2009). The effects that this may have on masculinities will be discussed in chapter 5. Wiid's essentialist approach is therefore not only applied to the lives of women, but also to men. Her approach seems to suggest that women are less important when compared to men so that it is expected of wives to support and enable their husbands to "feel man enough" (Wiid 2008b) and to fulfil the role of protector of their husbands kingship (Wiid 2008a).

It is clear that Wiid sees the essential natures of men and women as part of God's bigger plan for God's people and kingdom. Wiid clearly fails to take the influence that society and culture have on the gendered traits of men and women into consideration. As a result, she perpetuates the traditional discourse of the complementarity of the sexes, as well as the binary opposition of men and women. Although some feminists use essential traits to fight for the emancipation of women and to unite the group 'women', Wiid's essentialist approach can be seen as negative and oppressive for women. Wiid uses what she regards as essential male and female traits to subordinate women to their husbands and to cast them into the role of the inferior sex. Through her essentialist approach, Wiid not only reinforces men's' often

oppressive and objectifying attitude towards women, but also motivates women to behave in ways that perpetuate this unequal status quo and to buy into an unequal power dynamic. Wiid's approach can therefore be seen as a simplistic, oppressive, patriarchal approach to women's lives and experiences.

3.4   Conclusion

From the overview on feminist theology in the first section of this chapter, specifically its aims and critique of patriarchy and its more palatable form of for*men*ism, it seems as if Wiid's discourse does not lead to liberation and life giving circumstances as the context in which the followers of the Worthy Women Movement can flourish. The theory discussed above rather seems to suggest that Wiid's discourse promotes, sustains and reflects patriarchal perceptions of women and their role in the household in the form of for*men*ism. After comparing Wiid's discourse on gender identities and the essentialist approach to gender identities, certain similarities are noticeable. The feminist critique against an essentialist approach to gender identity can therefore also be applied to Wiid's discourse. This feminist engagement with her discourse seems to suggest that Wiid's essentialist approach to women and men's gender identities are oppressive to women, when their gender identities are seen as inferior and complimentary to men's gender identities. From the discussion above it also seems as if Wiid has an oversimplified view of the subject 'woman' so that she does not take the complexities of gender identity formation in different context and periods in history into consideration.

The next chapter can be seen as an extension of the feminist theological engagement with Wiid's discourse. The focus in this chapter will shift, however, to a discussion on sexuality and the female body. As a result of the complicated nature of sexuality, an entire chapter will be dedicated to this discussion. Chapter 4 should therefore be seen in the light of the broader feminist theological overview that was offered in this chapter.

4   Madonnas and whores: Human sexuality and Christian sexual ethics

4.1   Introduction

In the previous chapter, an overview of feminist theory and feminist theology was presented. This chapter can be read as an extension of the previous chapter, with the aim of engaging Gretha Wiid's discourse from a feminist theological perspective. The focus of this chapter is on Christian sexual ethics. With the contested nature and the complexities attached to the meaning of sexuality kept in mind, the aim of this chapter is not to represent the whole range of Christian thinking about sexuality. Specific texts and topics on sexuality will be used with the aim of highlighting the problematic and oppressive undertones in Wiid's discourse on sexuality.

Sexuality is one of the focus points in Wiid's discourse. As was discussed in chapter 2, Wiid regards sexuality as one of the main areas where husbands need reassurance from their wives to answer the question "Am I man enough?" (Wiid 2008b, Wiid, F 2009). In what follows, a broad, non exhaustive overview of sexuality, more specifically, Christian sexual ethics, from a feminist perspective will be given. The way in which social movements like the Worthy Women Movement reflect oppressive social sexual scripts in the form of *mentalités* will also be discussed. The Madonna/Whore Complex/Duality will then be discussed as an example of this.

4.2   Introduction to sexuality

This section aims at giving a short introduction into the complexities and fluidity of meanings attached to sexuality.

Sexuality is a recent term that was developed in the 1860's by the medical profession (Thatcher 2011:5). A lot of confusion and differing meanings exist with regard to the definition, development and approaches to sexuality. Many different meanings have been attached to it since the development of the term. While in the past, sexuality was regulated so that only "churches and states ... the medical profession ... poets and novelists" (Weeks 2010:1) could speak about it, the scene has changed so that today a variety of voices from different spheres in society can be heard speaking about it: "through the globalized media, on television in chat shows, confessional programmes, soap operas, reality shows, documentaries and advertisements; on the web in chat rooms, social networks, blogs and vlogs; and in the myriad forms and intimacies of everyday life. We can all claim to be experts today, true to our selves in our own fashion" (Weeks 2010:1). Gretha Wiid's teachings on

sexuality therefore forms part of a wide variety of discourse on sexuality and can be seen as one voice amongst many.

Despite these developments and the enormous amount of work done in the field of sexuality, sex and the body remains a source of anxiety for many. This may in part be because of the difficulty people experience when trying to define what sexuality and the erotic truly entail (Weeks 2010:2). White et al. (2000:11) highlight the ambiguity of the term 'sexuality', which can be used to refer to various phenomena, "including sexual identity, sexual preference, and sexual behavior. Depending on one's theoretical perspective, sexuality may be defined in physiological, intrapersonal, or interpersonal terms" (White et al. 2000:11).

People experience sexuality subjectively and therefore attach a variety of meanings to it – what some might experience as intimate and positive, might cause anxiety and fear in others. The fluidity of meanings attached to sexuality "makes it a peculiarly sensitive conductor of cultural influences, and hence of social, cultural and political divisions" (Weeks 2010:2). Often, sexuality is, in an oversimplified way, connected to pure genital pleasure and procreation. Sexuality, however, carries a richer meaning and should be understood in its broadest terms. Sexuality does not only refer to what we do, but also to who *are* as body selves (Nelson & Longfellow 1994:xiv).

A wide variety of definitions and views with differencing emphasis on sexuality have also been developed from religious and Christian circles[28]. In the Christian history, sexuality has often been linked to "the nature of virtue and truth" (Weeks 2010:3). With reference to the connection between sexuality and procreation, a theological contemporary perspective to sexuality may hold that while sexuality includes the God-given capacity to procreate, it should also be understood as an invitation to the Divine to become a part of deep relationships (Nelson & Longfellow 1994:xiv).

Despite our sexual relationships not forming the whole of who we as individuals are, it has an influence on our daily experiences. "Through their sexualities, individuals are expected to find themselves and their place in the world" (Weeks 2010:3). Nelson and Longfellow (1994:xiv) hold a holistic view of sexuality when they describe it as follow:

> ... it is who we are as body selves – selves who experience the ambiguities of both 'having' and 'being' bodies. Sexuality embraces our ways of being in the world as

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[28] For examples of definitions of sexuality from Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches in the United States of America, see Thatcher (2010:4).

persons embodied with biological femaleness or maleness and with internalized understandings of what these genders mean. Sexuality includes our erotic orientation − our attractions to the other sex, to the same sex, or to both. Sexuality includes the range of feelings, interpretations, and behaviours through which we express our capacities for sensuous relationships with ourselves, with others, and with the world. While sexuality is always rooted in our bodily realities, it is much larger than these, always involving our minds, our feelings, our wills, our memories, indeed our self-understandings and powers as embodied persons... (Nelson & Longfellow 1994:xiv).

Our sexuality forms the basis for our ability to enter into life-giving relationships in which individuals can grow into God's intended vision for their lives: "fulfilled, integrated, sharing and free recipients of the divine love" (Nelson 1979:6). The question should therefore be asked with regard to "what it means that we as body-selves participate in the reality of God" (Nelson 1979:20).

It is therefore clear that sexuality is a wide term with different meanings attached to it. One should, however, avoid an over-simplified approach to sexuality, in which it is only connected to something that we as human beings do, as something connected to genital pleasure. Sexuality should rather be seen as part of our beings − of who we are and our capacities to form relationships with those around us, with the world and with God.

4.3   Christian sexual ethics

The question with regard to the possibility of formulating Christian sexual ethical claims will now be explored.

As was mentioned in chapter 3, feminists aim at taking the real life experiences of a wide variety of unique women into consideration when theorising. Ryan (2007:4) shows that the same is true for feminist ethics. The critique that feminism received as a result of its universalising tendencies have led to contemporary feminist method becoming "both self-consciously and irreversibly 'bound up with the historical, the particular, the situated, the contingent" (Ryan 2007:4). As a result, feminist theologians and feminist theorists in general have had to ask the question whether it has not become impossible to identify "common elements of human experience that suggest what is needed for a good life in community, to posit essential features of humanity that are everywhere worthy of protection" (Ryan 2007:4)? With the wide variety of experiences and contexts of women taken into consideration, as well as the many voices speaking about sexuality, the question should

therefore be asked whether it is possible to make a claim for a feminist Christian sexual ethics.

Feminist theology is however convinced that there are "theological truths ... so fundamental to the life of faith that, while we may recast, reconstruct, and even revolutionize them, we may not finally relativize or dismiss them" (Jones 2000:Chapter 3 at "Having noted the constructivist..."). Therefore, "feminist theological ethics has retained a commitment to a realistic epistemology in some form, to the belief that we can experience morality's claim on us in the context of lived relationships, and to the possibility of discovering shared moral convictions across cultural and geographical boundaries" (Ryan 2007:5). Before engaging Wiid's discourse and approach to sexuality, it is necessary to explore what a just and sound Christian sexual ethics entails. The question should be asked with regard to what a relationship looks like in which good and just sexual ethics can operate.

Gender, as discussed above, can be seen as a primary element for our understanding of human experience and therefore fundamental for Christian ethics (Ryan 2007:2). Feminism has played a fundamental role in the area of gender and sexuality. The contributions made by feminists in the area of sexual ethics include:

> Feminists have called into question interpretations of sexual difference that provide the foundation of doctrines of gendered complementarity; they have exposed narrow or one-dimensional understandings of the ends of sexual expression such that potential for union, intimacy, pleasure, and mutuality is lost in the elevation of procreativity; and they have insisted that the lens of justice be brought to bear on considerations of the morality of sexual relationships, not only as it concerns the character of sexual union, but also as it extends to the social institutions (religious community as well as marriage and the family) within which sexual relationships are set (Ryan 2007:7).

According to Armour (1991:162), "sexuality is core to rationality, mutuality, intimacy". "The longing for relationship is a human characteristic, an inescapable aspect of our sexuality ... Affection and intimacy are essential to humanity ..." (Kretzschmar 1998:69). Cahill (2007:32) comments on the work of Margaret Farley in the book *A just and true love: Feminism at the frontiers of theological ethics: Essays in honor of Margaret Farley,* where she writes that Farley's sexual ethics "are not concerned primarily with disputes over old rules or the development of new ones. Most of all, she begins from a stance of compassionate

respect for persons and places sexual behavior in the context of social institutions guiding or controlling sexuality" (Cahill 2007:32).

Over the years, Christianity saw a committed relationship (covenant) as the correct context for sexuality (Farley 2006:322). Women's "sexual and reproductive roles" within these relationships (covenants), however, have often been seen as constituting the essence of what it means to be a woman and have been used to oppress and subordinate women under the control of male headship (Cahill 2007:24). Despite the patriarchal and heteronormative nature that many of these marriages have reflected over the years, Farley is of the opinion that a committed relationship can still be seen as a norm for a Christian sexual ethics. Although sexuality, as well as the meaning attached to sexuality, can take on a variety of forms, many are of the opinion that when sexual desire takes place outside the context of intimate love, it "leads to disappointment and a growing disillusionment" (Farley 2006:224).

Dominian (1977:61) asks the question how marriage relationships can be defined. In his view, a marriage relationship is a relationship "of love which aims to foster sustaining, healing and growth ... these characteristics need continuity, reliability and predictability, in other word permanency. Within permanency, the couple attempt to reach the whole of each other as persons and to do so in a manner that serves their realisation of their potential, their movement towards perfection" (Dominian 1977:61).

The title of Farley's book, *Just love: A framework for Christian sexual ethics,* reflects her focus on the presence of love and justice in sexual relationships as the basis of a Christian sexual ethics. Farley defines justice as "to render to each her or his due" (2006:208) and translates this definition of justice into a formal ethical principle: "Persons and groups of persons ought to be affirmed according to their concrete reality, actual and potential" (Farley 2006:208). As was seen in the discussion on gender in chapter 3, no one universal reality or experience can be applied to the lives of all persons. When we therefore approach individuals' concrete realities, it is important to take their different contexts into consideration, as well as our own interpretations of "their needs, capacities, relational claims, vulnerabilities, possibilities" (Farley 2006:209).

In order to avoid a universalising and over-simplified approach to individuals' concrete and shared realities when formulating an approach to Christian sexual ethics, the following therefore needs to be taken into account:

Each person is constituted with a complex structure – embodied, inspirited, with needs for food, clothing, and shelter, and at some point usually a capacity for procreation; but also with a capacity for free choice and the ability to think and feel. Human persons are also essentially *relational* [emphasis in original text] – with interpersonal and social needs and capacities to open to others, including God, in knowledge, love and desire, as well as all the emotional capacities that we experience, such as fear, anger, sorrow, hope, joy. Persons exist *in the world,* [emphasis in original text] so that their reality includes their particular *history* [emphasis in original text] and their *location* [emphasis in original text] in social, political, economic, and cultural contexts ... And the reality of persons includes not only their present *actuality* [emphasis in original text] but their *positive potentiality* [emphasis in original text] for development, for human and individual flourishing; as well as their *vulnerability* [emphasis in original text] to diminishment. Finally, every person is *unique* [emphasis in original text] as well as a common sharer in humanity (Farley 2006:210).

Cahill writes in her work, *Feminist theology and sexual ethics,* dedicated to Margaret Farley, that "feminist ethics is based on 'the principle of equality', and on individual rights and freedom, but it is equally committed to the 'participation of all in human solidarity'" (2007:22). Farley's sexual ethics takes the justice towards individuals and the society as a whole seriously when considering what it means when "sexual behavior is integrated into the common good" (Cahill 2007:32). The embodied experiences of men and women, as well as the social and contextual influences on individuals can therefore not be denied when it comes to ethics (Ryan 2007:2).

"Equality, mutuality, and reciprocity" (Cahill 2007:24), as well as freedom, are elements that should form part of the essence of all interpersonal relationships. This would therefore mean that hierarchical approaches to gender must be eradicated to make way for more just relationship (Cahill 2007:24, 26). "To the degree that it is free from the distortions of unjust and abusive power relations, we experience our sexuality as the basic eros of our humanness that urges, invites, and lures us out of our loneliness into intimate communication and communion with God and the world" (Nelson & Longfellow 1994:xiv).

Sexual behaviour and practices should serve both the personal good of individuals, as well as the needs of society, before it can be seen as contributing to the common good and regarded as just (Cahill 2007:32). Farley (2006:210-211) identifies autonomy and relationality as "obligating features" (Cahill 2007:311); that is, features that obligate us to respect individuals

as "ends in themselves" (Farley 2006:212) instead of "as mere means" (Farley 2006:212). Farley therefore argues for the regard of individuals as ends in themselves and of unconditional value from the basis that God created them that way. She also argues that because God loves us in this way, we have the responsibility and mandate to treat one another with the same love as ends and not as mere means (Farley 2006:212).

She firstly points to individuals' capacity for *"free choice"* and *"self-determination"* (Farley 2006:212) as motivation for her view of all persons as ends in themselves. Individuals in this sense have agency and the capacity to decide what it is that they like and love, what their future holds, and therefore, to a certain extent, their destiny. "Hence ... to treat another person as a mere means is to violate her insofar as she is autonomous; it is to attempt to absorb her completely into my agenda, rather that respecting the one that is her own" (Farley 2006:212).

Nelson (1992:36) explains sexual ethics when he writes that sexual ethics is:

> ... ethic grounded in the centrality of love. Such an ethic is based on the conviction that human sexuality finds its intended and most profound expression in the kind of love that enriches the humanity of persons and expresses faithfulness to God. Such an ethic cannot guarantee freedom from mistakes in the sexual life, but it aims to serve and not to inhibit the maturation and human 'becoming' of sexual persons (Nelson 1992:36).

In accordance with Christian theology in general, "Farley sees love, intimacy, and care as central moral meanings of sexuality" (Cahill 2007:23). Cahill (2007:23) notes that the following can be seen as needed to establish just sexual relationships in the light of Farley's sexual ethics: 1) "Free and responsible choice" (Cahill 2007:23); 2) "Justice in the social institutions" (Cahill 2007:23); and 3) Shared basic moral values across various contexts. The element of "free and responsible choice" (Cahill 2007:23) enhances "equality, mutuality and respect" within relationships. For these values to be realised, just social institutions (like marriage and the family) are needed. Moral values with regard to sexual relationships should be shared across contexts (Cahill 2007:23).

Farley (2006:207) further shows that the difficulty in developing sexual ethics does not lie in determining which sexual acts can be seen as morally good in the abstract, but rather when sexual expression is "appropriate, morally good and just, in a relationship of any kind" (Farley 2006:207). With this kept in mind, the question with regard to motives, circumstances, and forms of relationships that can be seen as "good, true, right and just"

(Farley 2006:207) for us to "render our sexual selves to one another" (Farley 2006:207) should be asked. This is particularly important when approaching Wiids' discourse on sexuality. The question should therefore be asked whether Wiid's approach to sexuality and the relationship between husband and wife can contribute to a Christian sexual ethics. Can the relationship that she prescribes for husbands and wives be seen as an appropriate, morally good and just context for sexual expression? Does Wiid's discourse promote a context for married couples where husbands and wives can render their sexual selves to one another in ways that are good, true, right and just?

4.4   Legalistic ethics

When approaching sexual ethics, it is easy to fall into the trap of what Nelson (1992:35) refers to as "legalistic ethics" in his list of the seven deadly sins. James B. Nelson re-interprets two lists that arose early in Christian history, namely 'the seven deadly sins and the seven virtues'. He names "seven deadly sins through which the Jewish and Christian traditions have contributed to our sexual alienation" (Nelson 1992:29, 30). "Many adherents of both Christian and Jewish faiths have fallen into more legalism about sexual morality than about any other arena of human bahavior" (Nelson 1992:35). Legalism can be defined as "the attempt to apply precise rules and objective standards to whole classes of actions without regard to their unique contexts or the meanings those acts have to particular persons" (Nelson 1992:35). According to Foucault (ed. 1978:83), "power is essentially what dictates its law to sex". Power leads to the placement of sex in one of two binary categories: "licit and illicity, permitted and forbidden" (Foucault ed. 1978:83). Power can therefore be seen as repressive of sex, so that the relation that exists between power and sex can never be seen as positive. It always leads to "rejection, exclusion, refusal, blockage, concealment, or mask" (Foucault ed. 1978:83). Sexuality is often used as a means to assert power and to confirm domination or submission within relationships (Harrison & Heyward 1994:133).

When reading about the historical development of the understanding of sexuality, it becomes clear that it is highlighted by relationships of power, and often relationships where power is abused – situations where "people historically have or have not embodied our capacities for mutually empowering relationships" (Heyward 1994:10). When it comes to sexual ethics, power inequality manifests itself in various ways; for this thesis, the most important of which is interpretations of gender roles. When inequalities in power are present, sexual relationships are inappropriate and unethical, because it leads to "unequal vulnerability, dependence, and limitation of options" (Farley 2006:322). When this link between eroticism and power are

69

taken into consideration, it becomes clear that there are often a domination-submission dynamic at play in relationships with strong sexual desires. This leads to sexuality often being experienced as "a dynamic of conquest and surrender rather than as power in mutual relation" (Harrison & Heyward 1994:133).

Wiid's discourse on sexuality can also be seen as a reflection of this legalistic approach in which she gives certain rules for all married couples and women to follow, without making any reference to the unique situations of the individual women who support the Worthy Women Movement. As will be seen in the next section, Wiid's approach to sexuality follows a complimentary approach, in which female sexuality are defined as complimentary to that of male sexuality. The power dynamic at play in Wiid's discourse and legalistic approach therefore leads to the unequal distribution of power between husbands and wives, in which the laws that she communicates to her followers are formed to benefit men.

As in the case of Wiid's discourse, legalism is often applied to sexual morality, with "masturbation, homosexual expression, and nonmarital heterosexual intercourse" (Nelson 1992:35) frequently targeted for "religio-moral absolutes" (Nelson 1992:35). Wiid, for example, warns couples against masturbating alone and that "any sexual exploration done before or outside of marriage is wrong" (Radloff 2010). Women are therefore only allowed to stimulate themselves sexually when they are firstly, already married and secondly, when their husbands play an active role in their stimulation (Radloff 2010).

This legalistic approach also justifies "unloving and exploitive sex *within* marriages by insisting the rightness of sex is measured not fundamentally by the quality of the relationship but by its external form" (Nelson 1992:36). The fact that legalism is still often applied so strictly to the areas of sexuality and the body can be seen as a result of the fact that the body is so often still a source of anxiety, which individuals want to control (Nelson 1992:35-36). Wiid also seems to justify sex within marriage relationships not based on the quality of the relationship, but rather on the legal statuses of the marriage contract between a man and a woman. She tells people that even when they are engaged it does not mean that they can have sex and that they should wait until after being married (Wiid 2009b). Wiid also insinuates that women should make their husbands feel like kings even when he doesn't deserve it (Wiid 2008a, Wiid 2012:132). At a later stage, she also tells women to have sex with their husbands even when they do not feel like it. This can therefore be interpreted as a motivation to women to have sex with their husbands in order to make him feel man enough (like a king) even when he is not deserving of this (Wiid 2008b).

Wiid therefore does not use the quality of a relationship and the safety of individuals within marriage relationships as criteria for the rightness of sex. Couples' marriage statuses seem to be more important in her discourse than loving, mutual, reciprocal relationships, like that referred to within Farley's Christian sexual ethics. Wiid's discourse promotes the view of sex as a way in which men should be reminded that they are "man enough" (Wiid 2008b). Women are also encouraged to buy into a system where they are seen as mere means for the gratification of the uncontrollable male lust and egocentrism associated with men (cf. Wiid 2008b). This seems to suggest that women are seen as mere means to an end instead of ends in themselves. Wiid's discourse also seems to deny women free choice, which is identified as fundamental to the Christian sexual ethics in Farley's work, when she suggests that women hand over their sexuality, their bodies and their sexual decisions completely into the hands of men" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:5). This is also contradictory to Farley's identification of free choice as a prerequisite for Christian sexual ethics.

Homophobia often forms part of the scope in legalistic ethics, as well as a part of Nelson's seven deadly sins referred to earlier. Legalistic ethics is therefore negative towards union of same-sex partners (Nelson 1992:36). Although homosexuality is less hidden in contemporary times it is still "subject to the minoritizing forces that excluded it in the first place" (Weeks 2007:12). Although the nature of this thesis does not allow for an in depth exploration of the subject of homosexuality[29], Wiid's discourse seems to reflect homophobic assumptions and approaches. This becomes clear when she tells her audience that people who are attracted to people from the same sex can be changed if only they truly believe in God's capability to do so (Beyers 2009).

A legalistic approach to sexuality and ethics can have negative effects on the lives of individuals and marriage relationships. A move away from this type of approach to sexuality and sexual ethics are therefore needed. The approach to Christian sexual ethics discussed in the previous section is therefore clearly a step away from the legalistic approach that can be detected in Wiid's discourse. The focus of this approach is not placed on the 'legal' status or the external form of a relationship, but rather on the quality of the relationship between two

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[29] Within the controversies attached to homosexuality, it is important to take into consideration the large scale negative effects of homophobic attitudes. For further reading on the controversial nature, definition, prevalence, causes, moral judgment, Biblical approaches and modern day debates on homosexuality see: Kretzschmar, L. 1998. Human sexuality and ethics. In: Kretzschmar, L. & Hullee, L. (eds.) *Questions about life and morality: Christian ethics in South Africa today*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 63-67.

people and the possibilities for individuals to grow into the image that God envisions for them.

4.5   Social sexual scripts: Mentalités and the Worthy Women Movement

The difference between male and female sexual scripts that are often used to oppress women will now be discussed. As will be shown, these scripts are also reflected in Wiid's discourse.

When approaching the topic of sexuality, it is important to keep in mind that sexuality is often used to hurt and oppress others. Nelson (1979:26) points out that "the same physical act can have a whole range of different meanings, depending on the contexts of those acts. Genital intercourse in one setting can be not only immensely pleasurable to both partners but also the bearer of the richest meanings of covenantal love. In a different setting, genital intercourse can be exploitive and dehumanizing. The physical act is the same, but the syntax and context are different" (Nelson 1979:26).

It is therefore important to note that "the patterns of female sexuality are inescapably a product of the historically rooted power of men to define and categorize what is necessary and desirable" (Weeks 2010:41). Sexuality does not only mirror power dynamics between men and women, but are also essential to its construction and maintenance (Weeks 2010:41). Adrian Thatcher (1993:12) identifies patriarchy as an oppressive system with negative influences on sexual experience. Women have therefore often been on the receiving end of the oppressive use of sexuality. Female sexuality "is one of the arenas in which cultural beliefs about women and mandates for women's behavior permit men to exercise power over them without their consent" (Kurth et al. 2000:323).

It was suggested in the previous chapter that Wiid's discourse is entrenched with for*men*ism and patriarchal overtones. With the oppressive influence of patriarchy on sexual experience and the fact that women are often the ones most affected by it, it is therefore important to engage Wiid's discourse on sexuality through a feminist Christian sexual ethical lens.

Feminists indicate that what is often seen as gender differences in individuals and relationships "may be explained largely on the basis of differences in status of power that are embedded in gender" (Kurth et al. 2000:326). Kane and Schippers point to the fact that "beliefs about gender and sexuality are situated at the intersection of two issues that have received substantial attention in feminist scholarship: the social construction of meanings surrounding gender and the role of sexuality in structuring gender inequality" (1996:650). Although power is sometimes used consciously and at other times unconsciously (cf. Lorde

1994:75), Heyward (1994:10) shows that the meaning of sexuality cannot be understood from a historical perspective without considering its position within the context of the power relations that exist between genders. According to Foucault, "sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of 'natural given' which power tries to hold in check ... It is a name that is given to a historical construct" (ed. 1978:105). "Norms governing sexual morality, for example, both draw from and legitimate social orders and relations of power (so that) accepted norms become increasingly dangerous to the degree that they 'naturalize' gendered inequality or protect as 'private' various forms of domestic and sexual violence" (Ryan 2007:11). Just personal relationships can only be achieved when just social practices are also in place; "just personal relationships realize and concretize the common good as a social-ethical concept and criterion" (Cahill 2007:29).

It is important for feminists to be aware of the complex cultural dynamics and history that have an influence on sexuality and to acknowledge that sexuality operates within societal power dynamics and relations, for example "institutionalized heterosexism, racism, and cultural imperialism" (Harrison & Heyward 1994:133). Not all sexual relationships are mutually empowering, so that injustice often also forms part of sexual relationships. Carter Heyward notes that "our sexual relations, indeed our sexual feelings, have been shaped by historical forces – the same contingencies, tensions, politics, movements, and social concerns that have shaped our cultures, value systems, and daily lives" (1994:10). It becomes evident how individuals often exercise relationships of "power-over" (Heyward 1994:10) that has "shaped our capacities and incapacities to act mutually" (Heyward 1994:10). Michel Foucault, Jeffrey Weeks, as well as feminist liberation theologians such as Sharon Welch and Beverly Harrison, have pointed out that "no experience of power, sexual or other" (Heyward 1994:11) forms a part of the nature/essence of an individual or relationship, but that all power-relations are rather socially constructed. Sexuality is therefore also socially constructed (Heyward 1994:11).

In an article, *Neo-institutionalism, social movements, and the cultural reproduction of a mentalité: Promise keepers reconstruct the Madonna/whore complex,* Bronwyn Kara Conrad (2006) writes about The Promise Keepers Movement, an "all-male organization of evangelical Christians" (Conrad 2006:306) in the United States of America. This movement centres around teachings on sexuality and reflects a dominant cultural discourse where "women's 'good' and 'bad' sexual behaviors'" (Conrad 2006:306) are contrasted to "men's unruly sexual drives" (Conrad 2006:306).

"Social script theory points to the fact that much of sexual behavior seems to follow a script ... social scripts instruct members of a society as to appropriate behavior and the meanings to attach to certain behaviors. In Western cultures, scripts for sexual activity are markedly different for males and females"[30] (Wiederman 2005:496). The concept of a script points to the learned, social features attached to sexuality that guide individuals' behaviour (Kurth 2000:329). Conrad borrows the term 'mentalités' from Tarrow (1992:196) to refer to hegemonic cultural scripts that form societal perceptions of sexual nature. Social movements are, according to Conrad, not mere creators of meaning (i.e., culture producers); but are rather carriers of *mentalités;* that is, "long term, unfocused, and passive popular beliefs about existing society [that] are not oriented toward action in the public arena" (Tarrow 1992:181 in Conrad 2006:306). These mentalités are heterosexist and reflect present-day perceptions about gender (Conrad 2006:310). As will be seen, the Worthy Women Movement is also a carrier of *mentalités,* the biggest of which seems to be derived from essentialist notions attached to male and female sexuality.

According to Moore and Travis (2000:36), "it would appear that popular culture wishes to attribute much of sexual behavior in humans to biology". This approach is over-simplified, however, and ignores any variation "in sexual and related gender relationships" (Moore & Brown Travis 2000:36). It therefore seems as if "the appearance of science has been used to add credence to a number of expectations about sexuality and gender roles. Cast in the language of biological science, 'bio-proof' has been offered for what are believed to be immutable differences between men and women" (Moore & Brown Travis 2000:36).

Moore and Brown Travis refer to these beliefs as "popular myths" that "derive from political agendas that are camouflaged as natural science" (2000:36). Sexist expectations of gender and sexuality are often based on assumptions made by means of this 'bio-proof' approach. Hubbard, Henifin and Fried (1979, in Moore & Travis 2000:36) point to the costs of this approach: "To the many women, past and present, who have constricted their aspirations to fit within what they were told, were the limitations of their biology"[31].

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[30] "Whether men and women differ in their sexuality is often less controversial than the proposed causes of such male-female differences. The two general explanatory camps might be described as polar ends of a continuum. One end is anchored with inherent, biological, or evolutionary explanations and the other with socialization, cultural, and learning explanations" (Wiederman 2005:496). As became evident in chapter 3, essentialism is however often used to oppress women and should be approached with suspicion.

[31] When considering the negative effects of this approach, it is important to note that "the constriction of our roles have the potential to affect men and women alike" (Moore & Brown Travis 2000:36).

Women's sexuality, contrary to that of men, is defined "in relation to and against the natural sexual aggression and prowess of a man" (Conrad 2006:310). Conrad (2006:310) describes the definition of women's sexuality by saying that a woman's "body and sexuality are passive objects, the bait on a (story) line that revolves around the fishing expeditions of men" (Conrad 2006:310). "The differentiation of masculine and feminine and the elevation of maleness over its counterpart" (Conrad 2006:310) can be seen as an example of what Conrad refers to as a mentalité. These mentalités lead to the masculine being viewed as the norm, so that everything feminine, "including the female body and female sexuality" (Conrad 2006:310, cf. Whitford 1991:150), is defined as 'other'. This view of the relationship between male and female are used to reproduce the gender order (Conrad 2006:309).

De Beauvoir sums this mentalité up when she writes that "[woman] is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is Subject; he is the Absolute – she is Other" (De Beauvoir 1952:xvi, in Conrad 2006:310). The definition of women's sexuality against men's sexual aggression leads to a binary view of female sexuality, where women are either seen as *good girls* or *bad girls*. These opposite possibilities include that "'good girls' submit themselves to a male-defined double standard that says women should not consummate a sexual relationship too often, too quickly, with too many men, or under the wrong circumstances, while 'bad girls' proudly defy this standard, only to find they have been played as pawns in a sexual game conceived and controlled by men" (Conrad 2006:310).

This stereotyping of women is often referred to as the Madonna/Whore Complex/Duality. "The ideal feminine sexuality is the Madonna sexuality that promotes virginity, marriage, purity, innocence, receptivity and sexual ignorance or naivety. Alternatively, the 'whore' sexual identity is constructed as promiscuous, dirty, used and bad. This feminine identity is regarded as inferior" (Moolman 2004:120). The Madonna/Whore complex has, in part, the work of Rosemary Radford Ruether in her book *Religion and sexism: Images of woman in the Jewish and Christian tradition* as its basis. Ruether (1974 in Conrad 2006:310) shows how Western cultural discourse about sexuality relies on Christian thought "which has fused ideas about sex and the body with essentialist notions of gender from the start" (Conrad 2006:310). The creation narrative in which Eve is seduced by the snake is an example. Satan exploits her moral weakness and awakens her longing for carnal pleasure. In turn, Eve then also seduces Adam. God punishes Eve directly in Genesis 3:16, while Adam gets punished indirectly (Conrad 2006:310).

Augustine's theology had a major influence on theological thinking, including thinking about sexuality (Nelson 1979:53). Augustine, Jerome and other church fathers blamed the fall of human kind onto Eve and all other women who can be identified with her (Johnson 1985:122). Augustine, reflecting on the famous image of Adam covering up his genitals, emphasises the uncontrollable nature of sexuality. Tertullian, on the other hand, focuses more on Eve and has the following to say about women in general: "She would carry herself around like Eve, mourning and penitent, that se might more fully expiate by each garment of penitence that which she acquired from Eve – the degradation of the first sin and the hatefulness of human perdition... You know that you are also an Eve?" (Nelson & Longfellow 1994:xiii).

By means of a fusion of the Genesis text with 1 Corinthians 11:3-12, Augustine integrates this male/female dichotomy with the religiously justified body/soul dualism[32], which results in the formation and maintenance of a perception of woman as inferior and subordinate to men, as well as an emphasis on the association of women with fleshliness and body (Ruether 1974:156). Augustine saw this as a part of the natural order and essence of women (Ruether 1974:156). This body/soul duality forms part of what Nelson (1992:30) refers to as the "seven deadly sins"[33] through which the Jewish and Christian traditions have contributed to our sexual alienation" (Nelson 1992:29-30).

'Dualism' "refers to the radical separation of two elements that essentially belong together - a rupture which sees the two coexisting in uneasy true or in open warfare" (Nelson 1992:30). Spiritual dualism has its origins in the Hellenistic Greco-Roman culture (Thatcher 1993:33, Nelson 1992:30). According to spiritual dualism, the two antagonistic elements of life carry the following meanings: spirit, which is seen as good on the one hand and flesh or matter, which is seen as "temporal, corruptible, and corrupting" (Nelson 1992:30) on the other. In this sense, the sexual aspects of the human body are seen as the "locus of sin" (Nelson 1992:30), so that escape from bodily life through control by the spirit is regarded as central to religious life. This view of the body as inferior to the soul has far-reaching negative

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[32] From Plato to the present, there has not been consensus about the relationship between the body and the soul; that is, whether "they are different aspects of the same entity ... or whether the soul is reducible to bodily properties" (Thatcher 1993:30). Dualists are likely to think that the immaterial mind and the material body are two separate entities and that the mind is unaffected by bodily decay. While the body is therefore seen as "perishable", the mind is seen as "imperishable" and therefore the true 'me'. This view of the soul as the true person also led to the body being seen as inferior to the soul (Thatcher 1993:30).

[33] James B. Nelson re-interprets two lists that arose early in Christian history, namely "the seven deadly sins and the seven virtues". He names "seven deadly sins through which the Jewish and Christian traditions have contributed to our sexual alienation" (Nelson 1992:29, 30).

implications. To this day, there exists a suspicion of both the body and its pleasures in many Christian communities (Nelson 1992:30).

Nelson sees sexist or patriarchal dualism as the second deadly sin. "The systematic and systemic subordination of women is the counterparts of spiritualistic dualism, for men typically have defined themselves as essentially spirit or mind, and men have defined women as essentially body and emotion. The logic of course is that the higher reality must dominate and control the lower" (Nelson 1992:32, cf. Nelson 1979:46, cf. Whitford 1991:149). Women were also associated with flesh as a result of their sexual appeal to the male gaze and the connections made between women and childbirth (Johnson 1985:123). The result of this is the perception that woman is seen "ethically, as dangerous to the male" (Ruether 1974:156). This dualistic thinking has therefore in the past also been used to reinforce the subordination of women to men (Thatcher 1993:31). In Christianity, patriarchal dualism has been used to pair male control of women and body denial (Nelson 1992:32).

Augustine distinguishes between the real natures of women, as "rational spirit" (Ruether 1974:158) equivalent to men, on the one hand, and on the other hand the "subjection of body to spirit in nature and that debasing carnality that draws the male mind down from its heavenly heights" (Ruether 1974:158). Augustine, however, argues that the way in which women are perceived by men and therefore what they symbolise define their essential nature, rather than their rational spirits (Ruether 1974:158). While women are associated with fleshliness, men are not associated with the carnal, the only exception being the penis. Augustine saw the uncontrollable nature of the penis (in response to the bodies of women of which "the sole purpose ... is sensual pleasure") as a result of sin (Ruether 1974:162). This view of the sinfulness of male erections, however, was soon translated into the sinfulness of women, who were seen as the cause (Ruether 1974:163).

One of the reasons for the origin of sexist dualism may be the fear "which men have felt about the biological powers of women. While the common prejudiced, buttressed by Freud holds that the woman envies the man's strength, and particularly his penis, a persuasive argument points in quite the opposite direction ... Historically, if women were seen as creatures with special supernatural gifts, two types of responses appeared open to men: adoring the woman as divine or treating her as demonic" (Nelson 1979:60).

Sexual intimacy within marriage relationships was, however, justified for the sake of procreation (Cahill 2007:32, cf. Nelson 1979:53). Women's bodies were therefore either seen

as an object with its sole purpose being the gratification of men "in a masturbatory way" (Ruether 1974:163) or as a "baby making machine" (Ruether 1974:162) that is under the control of the "male as head" (Ruether 1974:162). Women are therefore in both cases objectified and not seen as another individual to whom men can relate. This objectification of women can be seen as a result of the integration of "the male-female relationship" (Ruether 1974:163) with "the soul-body relationship" (Ruether 1974:163), which leads to a "subject-object relationship between man and woman" (Ruether 1974:163).

This objectification of women and the resulting relationship between men and women leads to three possible images being associated with women: 1) Woman as whore; 2) Woman as wife; or 3) Woman as virgin. As whore, women symbolise the image of "revolting carnality" (Ruether 1974:164) and temptress that leads the mind to give in to fleshly desires. Women are seen as whores who are revolting against its head and use both natural and artificial charms to deny the correct ordering between mind and body (Ruether 1974:164). In this case the woman is regarded as "a second-class citizen, her power limited to sexuality. But the 'female power is regarded as dangerous and malevolent if it is not exercised in conjunction with the male and under his control'" (Kumari 1988-89:23 in Isherwood & McEwan 1994:19).

The image of woman as wife entails the association of a woman with her body, but contrary to the 'woman as whore' image, where women are seen as temptresses revolting against its head, the wife is seen as being under the control of its head and therefore obedient. Wives have no control over their bodies and stay obedient to their husbands even in abusive and unhealthy relationships. The wife receives no pleasure from a sexual relationship, but is seen as providing her husband with sexual pleasure whenever he demands it. The sole purpose of the wife is therefore seen as to please her husband and for procreation. The view was therefore that "if she must sink to the lowest position short of outright evil and become a 'mere wife,' she is exhorted to be totally meek and to submit herself, mind and body, totally to her husband, who is her 'head' and has completely proprietary rights over her body, even to the point of physical abuse or death" (Ruether 1974:165). For obvious reasons, however, virginity is again seen as essentially superior to getting married, as is demonstrated in the Marian tradition (Ruether 1974:165). The elevation of celibacy can be seen as a result of the uncontrollable nature of sexuality (Cahill 2007:32). In the words of Johnson (1985:127) with reference to the idealisation of the Virgin Mary: "The highest peak of the history of female sexuality is its non-use" (cf. Ruether 1974:165). Mariology can be seen to emphasise

virginity and motherhood. It points to "two common strands in the persisting male attitudes toward women: purity and the capacity to reproduce children for their men" (Nelson 1979:61).

The categorisation of women according to "their degree of removal from carnal knowledge" (Conrad 2006:311) on the one hand and "their degree of obedience to male authority" (Conrad 2006:311) on the other, therefore leads to a duality between the 'Madonna', "whose grace derives from her marital chastity" (Conrad 2006:311) on the one side and the 'Whore' on the other, "who, as an unmarried woman, exudes sexuality" (Conrad 2006:311). The whore can be seen as the living example of carnality rebelling against the (male) head (Conrad 2006:311). "The Madonna-whore syndrome ... enables men to love and respect their ideal of women in Mary but to ignore or dominate concrete real women with impunity and with immunity ever from the searchings of their own conscience" (Johnson 1985:124).

The view of Augustine with regard to male/female relations has played a major role in our understanding of sexuality. Despite women, like men, having both a spirit and body, when compared to men, women are regarded as representatives of "body *vis-à-vis* male spirit" (Ruether 1974:156). These essentialist and complimentary approaches to sexuality can still be seen to operate in male and female sexuality. In this sense, "gender roles may encourage sexual exploration more for boys than for girls. Masculine gender roles dictate general independence, assertiveness, and exploration; feminine gender roles are based more on ideals of behavioral restraint and personal control" (Wiederman 2005:497). Women are often also expected to fulfil the role of "sexual gatekeeper in most male-female relationships" (Wiederman 2005:497). Wiederman (2005:497) explains the differences between male and female sexual scripts as follows:

> ... among young men, sexual activity with a partner is "goal directed (toward self-pleasure and tension release) ... females who take such a view run the risk of being labelled deviant. To be too sexually interested or aggressive, especially outside the context of an intimate relationship, implies masculinity, or desperation, or some other flaw. The female runs the greater risk with regards to ... damage to her social reputation ... For females, many sexual partners represent either wilful deviation from the traditional female sexual script or lack of success following that script. If a woman follows the traditional gatekeeper role but has sexual experience with many men, the implication is that she must have lack proper restraint or had poor judgment by giving her sexually to men who ultimately did not invest in an on going relationship The

female's task is to show enough sexual interest to communicate to the male that he is special to her, possibly warranting the risks that come with sex, but that she is not the type of female who engages in sexual activity indiscriminately ... Sexual eagerness may cast doubts to her femininity and her character (Wiederman 2005:498 - 499).

A complimentary approach to male and female sexual scripts can be detected in which "the female role frees males to adopt and maintain a relatively unrestrained approach to sexuality in relationships" (Wiederman 2005:497). It is seen as the women's responsibility to "limit sex, for both participants' own good, so the male is free to focus on outwitting her defences to the extent necessary to achieve sexual activity. That females' standards typically present a barrier each male must overcome fits well with the competitive and achievement-oriented aspects of masculine gender roles[34]" (Wiederman 2005:497). "The cultural images of femininity, masculinity and female-male relationships have an enduring quality. Indeed, the portrayal of men as powerful and women as powerless and constantly trying to 'entertain, please, gratify, satisfy and flatter men with their sexuality' (Millett 1970:81, in Kalof 1993:640) has historically been a consistent theme within the popular culture" (Kalof 1993:640).

Mentalités are so pervasive that boys are taught to play into these cultural discourses from an early age. "This script is so pervasive that by the time a boy begins to learn about his body, he already knows that to successfully traverse the rite of passage that will make him a man, he must discard his virgin status by 'actualizing' his sexual potential and skill" (Conrad 2006:310). Boys learn that to be 'man enough' they have to not only become sexually active at a young age, but also prove their skill and potential publicly. Boys are also taught to link their social status with the amount of sexual activity that they engage with. "Finally, the narrative is given a biological basis: his unruly desire and his many conquests are reducible to and explainable by raging levels of testosterone, which renders his sexual aggression *a natural fact*" [emphasis in original text] (Conrad 2006:310). What started off as cultural discourse is therefore soon translated into the view that all men are by nature/essence sexually aggressive and unruly (Conrad 2006:310).

These essentialist and complimentary views of women's sexuality that are derived from the Christian tradition and reflected in society can also be detected within Wiid's discourse on sexuality. Wiid's discourse not only approaches sexuality through an essentialist lens, but

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[34] The competitive nature of masculinities will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 5.

also reflects a view that women can be placed within one of the categories as either *good girls* or *bad girls*. Wiid's discourse also reflects a conviction that women's sexuality needs to be under the control of their husbands (cf. Nortjé-Meyer 2011:5).

Wiid's discourse also holds the view that "men and women have different sexual needs" (Wiid 2010:129). In her discourse on sexuality, women react primarily on the basis of their emotions when engaging in sexual activity. Women therefore yearn to experience elements of a relationship that includes the acknowledgement that she is desirable, interesting and sensual enough. She even goes so far as to say that women who deviate from these prescribed experiences of their sexuality are "cheap, randy and stupid" ("goedkoop, jimpel en simpel") (Wiid 2010:129). This view of women's sexuality therefore reflect the Madonna/Whore complex, where women who engage in sexual activities for other reasons than to experience the elements of a relationship mentioned by Wiid are described with derogatory labels.

Wiid also seem to categorise women into the categories of virgin, wife or whore, as was described by Ruether (1974:164). Wiid's categorising of women into the category of virgin can be seen in her condemnation of pre-marital sex (Wiid 2009b). In her view, the only appropriate place that any form of sexual activity may be engaged in is in a married relationship (Wiid 2009b), so that any women who are sexually active should practice her sexuality under her husband's control. Although Wiid states that a good sexual relationship is only possible within the confines of a good emotional relationship (Wiid 2009a), she "suggests that women hand over their sexuality, their bodies and their sexual decisions completely into the hands of men" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:5). This therefore seems to suggest the view that women's sexuality is only 'safe' when under male control. Wiid describes women who fall outside of these in derogatory terms, suggesting that they are lustful and temptresses (Wiid 2012:132, Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b). These women therefore seem to be cast into the unfavorable category of whore.

Wiid also uses derogatory language when referring to women who Wiid sees as a threat to steel husbands' gazes away from their wives and in this manner, places them in the category of whore. These women (like her husbands' mistress) are described in an objectifying manner as "cheap" (Wiid 2008b) or "things" (Wiid 2008b). "Women, she suggested, should view all other women as enemies and potential rivals for their husband's bounty" (Thamm 2009). Wiid warns women about the existence of a whole world full of lustful women who are trying to focus their husbands' gazes on them. She therefore advises women to be sure to present themselves in the correct manner and to imitate an attractive image for their husbands. In this

way they can ensure that their husbands' gazes will stay on them (Wiid 2012:132, Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b). Wiid therefore reinstates the view that men have an uncontrollable lust and that it is the responsibility of women to, on the one hand, not tempt husbands, and on the other hand, that it is the responsibility of wives to act 'sexual enough' and to accommodate his sexual desires to keep him from giving in to his natural male desire. As was shown with regard to societal sexual scripts, Wiid reflects the view that women are therefore responsible, not only for her own sexual decisions, but also the sexual decisions of men.

These *mentalités* and sexual scripts can be seen in Wiid's view that wives should make their husbands feel man enough by means of sex (Wiid 2012:132). It is therefore expected of wives to put their own sexual needs second and to adapt to what is seen as the natural sexual needs of men, in order for him to feel man enough. Women should therefore, according to Wiid, have sex with their husbands even when they do not feel like having sex with him. Wiid tells women that men have a need to feel desired and that it is the duty of wives to fulfill that need (Wiid 2008b).

Wiid's discourse on sexuality also reflects these oppressive *mentalités* and essential gender scripts when she refers to certain behaviour of men and women as *natural* facts. In Wiid's perspective, men and women were "made in different ways" ("is verskillend gemaak") (Wiid 2009b). Boys and men are, for example, described as being naturally proud of their bodies and bodily processes, while girls are often shy of their bodies (Wiid 2008b). Wiid also refers to men as naturally visual beings whose eyes are naturally attracted to attractive women (Wiid 2008b). It is also insinuated in Wiid's discourse that men have a natural need to conquer women when she refers to men naturally being made hunters by God, who react to objects that catch their eyes, while women are referred to as antelope (Wiid 2009b). According to Thamm, Wiid promotes the idea that "women should just get used to the fact that men are driven by pure instinct and can't help that they are hunters and therefore need to conquer things" (Thamm 2009).

It is therefore clear that while Wiid does not create her own discourse on sexuality, she reflects and reinstates views of male and female sexuality with a long history and that are already present within societal sexual scripts. Wiid therefore seems to play into oppressive essentialist and complimentary approaches of society towards male and female sexuality, in which women are cast into the categories of virgin, wife or whore.

4.6   Conclusion

In this chapter, an overview of sexuality and the variety of fluid meanings attached to it was given. The possibilities of a claim to Christian sexual ethics was also discussed, after which elements of a relationship in which just and good sexual ethics can be manifested was explored. The focus in this section was on just and loving relationships as criteria for determining whether sexual relations are safe and ethical, instead of a legalistic approach, like that reflected in Wiid's discourse, which focuses on the outward legal status of marriage relationships to justify sexual relations. The negative effects of the misuse of power relations within sexual relationships was also discussed to point to the negative effects that sexuality can have on the lives of individuals in general and women in specific.

An overview was also given of the essentialist approach that are reflected in the social sexual scripts, according to which men and women are expected to act, as well as the *mentalités* reflecting these sexual scripts that are evident in social movements like the Worthy Women Movement. These sexual scripts not only have an essentialist approach but also a complimentary approach, according to which the sexuality of women are seen as complimentary to the sexuality of men. Women's sexuality is therefore defined in accordance to men's sexuality. The history of the development of the Madonna/Whore Complex/Duality and the categorising of women into the categories of virgin, wife or whore was also discussed. It was then shown that Wiid's discourse seems to reflect these categories, so that her discourse can be seen as oppressive for women.

The research done in this chapter and the engagement of the theory that was discussed with Wiid's discourse therefore suggest that Wiid's discourse on sexuality are oppressive and life-denying to her followers and women in general.

5 South Africa, a country in transition: Whiteness, class and masculinities

5.1   Introduction

In the previous chapters, Gretha Wiid's discourse with regard to the relationship between husband and wife was engaged through a feminist theological and Christian sexual ethical point of view. There it became clear that Wiid's teaching are problematic because of the fact that it contributes to an oppressive discourse that operates in society, where women are seen as naturally subordinate to men. It was also seen that Wiid's teachings to couples in general and women in particular with regard to their sexuality and sexual decisions are opposed to the elements identified as important for Margaret Farley's just Christian sexual ethics and consistent with the deadly sins identified by James B. Nelson. Despite the oppressive nature of Wiid's discourse that promotes the submission of women in South Africa, her popularity is growing with an increasing amount of followers attending her gatherings and conferences. Against this background, the aim of this chapter, together with chapter 6, will be to contribute to answering the research question: "What is the reason for women maintaining a system and culture in which they themselves, as well as other women are oppressed?"

The aim of this chapter is to give an account of the complex nature of the post-apartheid South African context, where Wiid and her followers operate and live. The followers of the Worthy Women Movement are mostly white Afrikaner women, married to mostly white Afrikaner men, who are currently experiencing an identity crisis in the form of a crisis in masculinity and a crisis in whiteness as a result of changes that have been taking place since the abolishment of apartheid and the first South African democratic election in 1994. These events led to a redistribution of power from the hands of the white Afrikaner minority into the hands of black individuals. The resulting redistribution of power and other transitions will be explored and analysed to determine the effects this has on the lives of the wives of these men.

Before moving to a specific focus on the South African context and white Afrikaner men and women living in the post apartheid era, it is firstly important to have a look at the complexities of perceptions and expressions of masculinity.

5.2   Towards an understanding of masculinity

The study of masculinity operates within the larger field of gender studies. "The proverbial wisdom has been that 'all men are the same'" (Chitando & Chirongoma 2012:5). Although people often assume that masculinity exists as a fixed state and that it proceeds naturally from men's bodies, studies on masculinities follow a constructivist approach that rejects the view

that masculinity is "fixed and true"[35] (Connell 1995:45). Queer theory[36], for example, therefore "seeks to disrupt modernist notions of fixed sexuality and gender" (Schneider 2000:206). Writing with a specific focus on the African context, Morrell and Ouzgane (2005a:8-9 in Chitando & Chirongoma 2012:6) show that this is also true in the African context when they write that "masculine behaviours in Africa are not natural or unchanging".

"Social practice ... that relates to the structure of gender, generated as people and groups grapple with their historical situations, does not consist of isolated acts. Actions are configured in larger units, and when we speak of masculinity and femininity we are naming configurations of gender practice" (Connell 2000:27-28). The emphasis is therefore on the "*process* of configuring practice" (Connell 2000:28) so that masculinity and femininity is seen as configuring practice that takes place over time and is visible in all spheres of the social order. Gender configurations take place through individual practices and collectively through culture and ideologies – in schools, through language and within institutions, like the state etc. (Connell 2000:28). The configuration of gender roles that takes place within these institutions, combined with the patterning of gender through culture and individual lives results in gender being seen as "historical products and subject to change in history" (Connell 2000:29). Gender is "a way of structuring social practice" (Connell 2000:29) so that it intersects with various other social structures, such as race and class. "Masculinities are configurations of practice within gender relations, a structure that includes large-scale institutions and economic relations as well as face-to-face relationships and sexuality. Masculinity is institutionalized in this structure, as well as being an aspect of individual character or personality" (Connell 2000:29).

When attempting to define masculinity, it is important to keep its complex nature as a social construct in mind (Connell 2000:5, Morrell 2001b:7). "Masculinity ... refers to a specific gender identity, belonging to a specific male person that can be explained as "a configuration of gender practice" (Morrell 2001b:7). It "*refers* (emphasis in original text) to male bodies (sometimes directly, sometimes symbolically and indirectly), but is not *determined* (emphasis in original text) by male biology" (Connell 2000:29). It is therefore possible to refer to "masculine women or masculinity in women's lives, as well as masculinity in men's lives" (Connell 2000:29). Attempts to define masculinity should be focussed on the "processes and

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[35] For a more extensive discussion on the essentialist versus constructivist approach when it comes to masculinities, see: Kimmel, M.S., Hearn, J. & Connell, R. W. (eds.) 2005. *Handbook of studies on men and masculinities.* London: Sage Publications.

relationships through which men and women conduct gendered lives" (Connell 1995:71). "Masculinities refer to the social roles, behaviours, and meanings prescribed for men in any given society at any one time. As such, the term emphasizes gender and the diversity of identities among different groups of men" (Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:503). "'Masculinity' ... is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture" (Connell 1995:71). Masculinity is therefore not situated within an individual's genes or programmed to persons through social structures, but rather the result of social interactions between people so that it is "actively produced, using the resources available in a given milieu" (Connell 2000:218).

New social research points to the fact that no single "pattern of masculinity" (Connell 2000:10) exists. Research has highlighted that various ways of being a man exists (Chitando & Chirongoma 2012:5). It is therefore more accurate to refer to 'masculinities' in its plural form (Connell 2000:10, cf. Chitando & Chirongoma 2012:5). The plural form does not only refer to the variety of meanings attached to the term, but also to individual differences amongst people (Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:503, 504). Differences do not only exist between men and women, but also "*among* men or *among* women" (Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:503). "With growing recognition of the interplay between gender, race and class it has become common to recognize multiple masculinities: black as well as white, working-class as well as middle-class" (Connell 1995:76). This, however, does not mean that only one white masculinity or one working-class masculinity exists. These masculinities are in relationship with one another, so that gender, class, race etc. intersect (Connell 1995:76).

When considering the constructivist approach to masculinities, it is logical that the formation of masculinities take place in varied ways and changes over time and within different contexts and cultures. An individual is influenced by the "gender norms and power arrangements of his society" (Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:504). Therefore, it can be said that "men are susceptible to change" (Chitando & Chirongoma 2012:5). A variety of masculinities and definitions of masculinities will therefore co-exist in a multicultural society (Connell 2000:10, Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:503, 504) so that masculinities can be seen as temporal and contextual. The meanings of masculinity differ: 1) Across cultures; 2) In a given country over time; 3) Over the course of an individual's life; and 4) In a given society over time (Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:503). Amongst other aspects, "industrialization and urbanization, position in the larger world's geopolitical and economic context, and ... the

development of new technologies" influence the definitions and expressions of masculinities" (Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:503).

With this information taken into consideration, it is clear that no static form of masculinity exists. It is fluid, changing over time, society, age, culture etc. (Morrell 2001b:7; Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:504) and is therefore not owned in any static form by any specific male group. "Masculinities ... are socially and historically constructed in a process which involves contestation between rival understandings of what being a man should involve" (Morrell 2001b:7). Here, it is important to note that "all masculinities are not created equal" (Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:504). The different masculinities are in hierarchical relationships with each other, so that certain masculinities are "dominant" (Connell 2000:10) in relation to other "subordinate or marginalized" masculinities (Connell 2000:10; cf. Connell 1987:183; cf. Connell 1995:77-79) and women (Connell 1987:183). Connell and Messerschmidt (2005:832) explain the relationships between masculinities as follows:

> *Hegemonic masculinity* was understood as the pattern of practice that allowed men's dominance over women to continue. Hegemonic masculinity was distinguished from other masculinities, especially subordinated masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it ... Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a *complicit masculinity*... Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005:832).

"White men's masculinities, for instance, are constructed not only in relation to white women but also in relation to black men ... Similarly, it is impossible to understand the shaping of working class masculinities without giving full weight to their class as well as their gender politics"[37] (Connell 1995:75). Some men therefore not only subordinate women, but also other men (Connell 1995:77-79). The relation between different manifestations of masculinity plays a significant role in maintaining the patriarchal order of societies (Connell 1987:183).

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[37] When dealing with the intersectionality of gender, race, class etc. there is a risk of oversimplification. "It is easy in this framework to think that there is *a* [emphasis in original text] black masculinity or *a* [emphasis in original text] working-class masculinity" (Connell 1995:76).

Hegemonic masculinity refers to the most desired masculinity in a context (Connell 2000:10). This form of masculinity dominates other masculinities, by communicating what it means to be a 'real man'. The other masculinities within the same context can be classified as "subordinate ... complicit ... marginalised" (Connell 1995 in Morrell 2001b:7, cf. Connell 1995:77-79). 'Hegemony' therefore refers to "a particular form of masculinity which is dominant in society, which exercises its power over other, rival masculinities, and which regulates male power over women and distributes this power, differentially, amongst men" (Morrell 2001b:9). It can be defined as "a social ascendancy achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond contests of brute power into the organization of private life and cultural processes" (Connell 1987:184). Ascendancy is here "embedded in religious doctrine and practice, mass media content, wage structures, the design of housing, welfare/taxation policies" (Connell 1987:184) etc. Perceptions with regard to the meaning and expression of masculinities are influenced by race, class, ethnicity and sexual orientation, so that marginalised masculinities have a different perception of what it means to be a man than men who find themselves in the elite class (Connell 1995 in Morrell 2001b:7). Hegemonic masculinities are therefore not a fixed state that a man owns that stays unchanged over time and within different and changing situations. The hegemonic masculinity is rather "the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable" (Connell 1995:76).

What is regarded as an ideal masculinity in a society does not necessarily reflect the true realities of the majority of men. Hegemonic masculinity often entails utopian models of masculinity so that the ideal masculinity is often an "unattainable ideal" that few men truly reflect (Connell 1987:185; cf. Connell 1995:79). Despite this, the majority of men comply and collaborate in sustaining images of the masculine ideal. Reasons for this may include fantasy gratification and displaced aggression (Connell 1987:184, 185). Connell (1995:79) refers to this as the "relationship of complicity with the hegemonic project". "Masculinities constructed in ways that realize the patriarchal dividend, without the tensions or risks of being the frontline troops of patriarchy" (Connell 1995:79). Some men, therefore, gain privilege from the patriarchal dividend without falling into the hegemonic masculinity category.

Connell (1995:79) shows that men in general benefit from the subordination of women in a patriarchal society. Despite not all men exploiting women and having the same amount of power, men confer power simply by being male (Connell 1995:79). The biggest contributing

factor, then, to why men comply with and collaborate in sustaining images of the masculine ideal, seems to be the fact that "most men benefit from the subordination of women, and hegemonic masculinity is the cultural expression of this ascendancy" (Connell 1987:185). This, however, does not mean that hegemonic masculinity necessarily represents behaviour that is perceived by women as more oppressive when compared to other masculinities. Women may, in fact, perceive other non-hegemonic masculinities as more oppressive (Connell 1987:185). Connell reflects about the relation between hegemonic masculinities and the subordination and oppression of women when he says that hegemonic masculinity nevertheless implies:

> … the maintenance of practices that institutionalize men's dominance over women. In this sense hegemonic masculinity must embody a successful collective strategy in relation to women. Given the complexity of gender relations no simple or uniform strategy is possible: a 'mix' is necessary. So hegemonic masculinity can contain at the same time, quite consistently, opening towards domesticity and openings towards violence, towards misogyny and towards heterosexual attraction... The most important feature of contemporary hegemonic masculinity is that it is heterosexual, being closely connected to the institution of marriage; and a key form of subordinated masculinity is homosexual (Connell 1987:185, 186).

The complexities of relationships amongst unique and diverse individuals lead to diverse perceptions and expressions of masculinity. Class patterns, generational- and ethnic differences (Connell 1987:183), race, age, sexuality, and region have an influence on the construction of gendered identities (Connell 1987:183, Kimmel & Aronson eds. 2004:504). Hegemonic masculinity is maintained both through "direct interactions" (Connell 1987:186) and through "ideological warfare" (Connell 1987:186). Examples of how masculinity is maintained is through violence, economic discrimination etc. (Connell 1987:186).

"Masculinity is not inherited nor is it acquired in a one-off way. It is constructed in the context of class, race and other factors which are interpreted through the prism of age" (Morrell 2001b:8). Individuals, however, are not fully free to choose their gendered identities, but are rather, to a degree, shaped by the societal discourses of gender that they encounter from an early age (Morrell 2001b:8). Epstein and Johnson (1998:15) refer to the ways in which our identities are formed and influenced by "power and discourse" (1998:15) within specific cultural environments. Individuals can therefore not exercise and wield power as they wish, but are rather influenced and shaped by societal pressure to take on specific

identities. "... power and knowledge as discourse 'constructs' social identities" (Epstein & Johnson 1998:15).

It is possible to speak of a specific form of masculinity as rooted within "the gender regime of an institution" (Connell 2000:29) so that it is possible for the state to institutionalise and regulate "relations between masculinities in the gender order of society" (Connell 2000:30). The state can therefore "constitute gender relations and the social categories they define" (Connell 2000:30). The meanings and relationships between gender relations are therefore influenced by state laws, like marriage, as well as a variety of policies, such as education (Connell 2000:30). According to Morrell (2001b:10), "race and class are of major importance in determining how men understand their masculinity, how they deploy it, and in what form the patriarchal dividend comes to them" (Morrell 2001b:10). The apartheid laws that were enforced by the South African government prior the 1994 elections can in this sense also be seen as having an influence in regulating gender relations and the social categories they define. As will be seen in the next section, the apartheid government and state therefore played an integral role in constituting and maintain a specific type of white, Afrikaner masculinity.

5.3   The context of the Worthy Women Movement: South Africa, a country in transition

With the constructivist, fluid, dynamic view of masculinity taken into consideration, I will now turn to the South African context in which Gretha Wiid and her followers live and operate. The constructivist approach to gender and masculinities implies that societal changes and transformation – in the social, political, economical spheres – have an influence on the expression of gender. As a result of the nature of this thesis I will only focus on the intersections between race, class and gender in the post-apartheid South Africa. Although various other aspects may also influence the rationale behind and popularity of the Worthy Women Movement, I will not go into detail in this regard. This section will consist of a discussion on the transformation of the white, Afrikaner masculinity amidst transitions and changes that have taken place in South Africa, as well as an exploration of whiteness. An overview will then be given of the ways in which South African women have been influenced by the transitions and accompanying transformation of masculinities.

The aim of this section is to get a glimpse of the lives of the followers of the Worthy Women Movement in order to obtain a better understanding of the popularity of this Movement under specifically white, Afrikaner women. This section will form the basis for a further

engagement with the rationale behind the Worthy Women Movement and the reasons for its popularity in chapter 6.

5.4   Whiteness, class and gender: intersectionalities

According to Frankenberg (1993:1), the term 'whiteness' refers to: 1) A position of structural advantage/race privilege; 2) A lens/ standpoint through which white people form their views of themselves, others and society; and 3) A range of cultural practices, "that are usually unmarked and unnamed" (Frankenberg 1993:1). To speak of whiteness is for Frankenberg a means to emphasise the fact that "racism shapes white people's lives and identities in a way that is inseparable from other facets of daily life" (Frankenberg 1993:6). Whiteness is seen as a social and political category, inhabited by groups or individuals. Race, together with class, gender and other social and political categories, contribute to social relations and individual consciousness (Torres & Pace 2005). "Race, like gender, is 'real' in the sense that it has real, though changing, effects in the world and real, tangible, and complex impacts on individual's sense of self, experiences, and life chances" (Frankenberg 1993:11).

Snyman notes that "with the demise of apartheid there is a deliberate drive to have Africa coming into her own, claiming her own way of doing, knowing and thinking. In the process, several aspects of European, American or Western culture in general are branded as destructive" (2008:17). Whiteness is a "power-laden discursive formations" (Shome 1999:108, in Snyman 2008:17) that has had an influence on identity formation beyond just the West. "Whiteness, thus, is not merely a discourse that is contained in societies inhabited by white people; it is not a phenomenon that is enacted only where white bodies exist. Whiteness is not just about bodies and skin color, but rather more about the *discursive practices* that, because of colonialism and neocolonialism, privilege and sustain global dominance of white imperial subjects and Eurocentric worldviews" (Shome 1999:108, in Snyman 2008:17)

Whiteness "operates as a tremendous social force in mobilizing how people act and interact ... around the world, in the ways they think of themselves and others" (Wander et al. 1999:23). Like gender, race can also be seen as a social construct. Instead of approaching gender and race as objective or universal qualities, it can be seen as factors that determine the distribution of power and social resources, so that both racial- and gender constructions are tied to competition for access to power and privilege (Torres & Pace 2005). Frankenberg sees

'white' as "an economic and political category maintained over time by a changing set of exclusionary practices, both legislative and customary" (Frankenberg 1993:11).

Connell (1995:75) shows that gender "'intersects' – better, interacts – with race and class". The "interplay of gender with other structures such as class and race creates further relationships between masculinities" (Connell 1995:80). Connell (1995:35-39), as well as Wander et al. (1999:22), and Rieger (2013:199-205) refer to the influence of class on the perception and expression of masculinities.

Rieger (2013:189) refers to the fact that class has often been ignored from studies of religion and theology. The late President Nelson Mandela "declared that freedom along the lines of race and gender were at the heart of the new South Africa" (Rieger 2013:191). President Mandela therefore also neglected the fact that "power continues to be distributed along the lines of class" (Rieger 2013:191) and that conflict and tension exists between the different classes in South Africa. The importance of not only the different incomes between different classes, but rather the relationships between these classes and the "identities produced in these relationships" (Rieger 2013:199) must be emphasised. Like gender and race, class is a social construct that is fluid and changes over time and in different historical situations. A struggle of power therefore also exists between different classes (Rieger 2013:189-199). "A deep awareness of the notion of class as constructed in struggles of power reminds us that notions of gender, race, and ethnicity are not natural and God-given... but constructed in struggles of power" (Rieger 2013:199).

Although white privilege is real and cannot be denied, it would be a mistake to ignore the differences in class amongst people of all colours, cultures and races. People often equate poverty and inequality in a society with race, without acknowledging that class also plays a significant role in dividing people and struggles for power between individuals. In this sense, white people are often assumed to be rich and in a higher social class in comparison to black people, who are assumed to be poor and occupying a lower social class. This approach to class benefits the rich people in a society, as a result of the fact that even poor white people are more likely to associate themselves with rich white people than with people from different races that find themselves in the same class. Poverty is therefore much more easily linked to race, ethnicity or gender, than with class differences. The failure to acknowledge class differences often lead to the perception that "when white males end up at the bottom it is their own fault, because they enjoy white male privilege, and when others end up at the bottom the sole reason is gender, race, or ethnicity" (Rieger 2013:200-201). "Identity politics,

therefore, creates false alliances within racial and ethnic groups" (Rieger 2013:201). It can therefore not be denied that power is differentiated across class lines (Rieger 2013:201).

This information does not deny the fact that class and race often intersect and that white people often do find themselves in higher classes with better and more job opportunities, while the majority of black people in South Africa find themselves in lower classes with fewer job opportunities[38]. This information merely points to the complicated nature of the intersections between gender, class and race and aims to reject an oversimplified understanding of these perceptions, where the dynamics introduced by class struggles are not taken into consideration.

5.5   A country in transition: Effects on the masculinities and identities of white Afrikaner men

According to Connell (1995:114), "an active process of grappling with a situation, and constructing ways of living in it, is central to the making of gender". In this sense, the transformation and transition that South Africa have been undergoing since the 1994 elections, when political power was handed over from the dominant white minority into the hands of a privileged class of previously oppressed black majority[39] (cf. Fourie 2008:239), have had an immense influence on the understanding and expressions of gender – this includes the relationships *between* men and women and *amongst* men and *amongst* women – as well as the expression of whiteness.

"Masculinities in southern Africa both reflect the region's turbulent past and have been the cause of the past"[40] (Morrell 2001b:12). The apartheid policy in South Africa was introduced in 1948, with the aim of controlling the black population in South Africa. This ensured that white people found themselves in positions of domination over black people, so that a power dynamic of "*baasskap*" ("master or boss") (Morrell 2001b:16) in relation to black workers were established. Black individuals received no support from the government or unions and were therefore easy targets for exploitation. This inequality and power dynamics lead to the

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[38]   For more information with regard to the unemployment and workforce statistics, see: http://www.statssa.gov.za/presentation/Stats%20SA%20presentation%20on%20skills%20and%20unemployme nt_16%20September.pdf and http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02114thQuarter2014.pdf

[39] It is important to note here that the political power was not handed over from the white minority into the hands of the entire black majority; it was rather handed over into the hands of a specific group of privileged black South Africans, so that the majority of black people in South Africa are still poor and marginalised.

[40] For more information with regard to the history of masculinity in twentieth century Southern Africa, see: Morrell, R. 2001a. Introduction. In: Robert Morrell (ed.) *Changing men in Southern Africa.* London: Zed Books Ltd., 12 – 18.

formation of a violent masculinity within the "newly created townships for Africans" (Morrell 2001b:16).

Prior to the 1994 elections, the South African government consisted of Afrikaans-speaking, white men. "They espoused an established masculinity which was authoritarian, unforgiving and unapologetic" (Morrell 2001b:17). South Africa left the Commonwealth and became an independent republic after the Sharpeville massacre. At this time, the military already played an integral role within the government and at the end of the 1960s "all white men were eligible for conscription into the army, air force or navy" (Morrell 2001b:17). These developments were easily accepted without contest by a passive white South African population, firstly, as a result of the *"swartgevaar"* ("the danger posed by blacks") (Morrell 2001b:17) propaganda advocated by the government and secondly, as a result of the perception of men as protectors, bread winners and knowledgeable when it comes to decisions between right and wrong. The South African military and state ensured that individuals who do not agree with the "direction of government policy" (Morell 2001b:17) would be repressed (Morrell 2001b:17).

It is clear from this account of the history of South Africa during the apartheid era that "South Africa, until recently, was a man's country. Power was exercised publicly and politically by men" (Morrell 2001b:18). When it comes to gender, however, masculinities have also been affected by changes that have been taking place in South Africa since 1994. Since the 1990's, these changes have led people to ask questions like: "Are men in crisis and should they be assisted to recover their masculinity? Are men able to be part of a quest for gender justice? Are men actually just as entitled as ever before and committed to holding onto their privilege at the expense of women?" (Morell 2001b:4).

During the apartheid era "a hierarchy of races was created by differential state spending, which in turn determined that most Africans would be in menial labouring positions... and whites in supervisory and professional positions. Race and class were ... manipulated by the state and this affected gender identity" (Morrell 2001b:17). "For most of its history, dominant South African masculinity has been white masculinity and white masculinity has been racist masculinity" (Vincent 2006:354). Apartheid also led to the formation of white suburbs, where men lived who were "assured of jobs, who had family homes, stable environments, status and political influence" (Morrell 2001b:22). This led to the formation of a hegemonic Afrikaner masculinity (Morrell 1998:607, 608, Morrell 2001b:22, 23) according to which the following

features were the most desirable: "white, financially independent, Protestant, mature (over 25 years old), and of irreproachable personality"[41] (Morrell 2001b:22).

"This form of masculinity nestled comfortable in the patriarchal Afrikaner family though it also showed itself adept at responding to change" (Morrell 2001b:22, 23). Although some transformation in what used to be perceived as hegemonic Afrikaner masculinity took place, "it remained in relative terms socially and politically conservative, and it remained hostile to black, English and working class challenges to its prescriptions" (Morrell 2001b:23). For decades white men were protected against poverty and joblessness, because of job opportunities in the areas of mining, railways, the police etc. being handed over from one generation to the next (Swart 2001:77). This hegemonic white masculinity still plays an influential role, especially through the media and institutions that are still entrenched with this form of masculinity (Morrell 2001b:25).

With a specific focus on the South African context, Van Wyngaard (2012:47) shows that whiteness in South Africa is experiencing a new kind of crisis in the aftermath of apartheid, where changing circumstances necessitate the construction of new identities. More than twenty years after the birth of a democratic South Africa, racism and race in general can still be seen as a major issue within the lives of all South Africans – both for black and white persons[42].

The social reality of white South Africans changed drastically on 2 February 1990, when former president F.W. de Klerk announced that the African National Congress (ANC) was to be unbanned and Nelson Mandela was to be released from jail. The white Afrikaner's changing socio-political position "was described as that of one who was in power, to one who was willing to share power, to one who was finally powerless" (Fourie 2008:239). Many

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[41] "In South African the history of white supremacy suggests that white, ruling class masculinity was hegemonic. There is some truth in this, but ... it fails to capture the stubborn reality of African life" (Morrell 1998:616). Morrell and Ouzgane (2005a:8-9, in Chitando & Chirongoma 2012:6) as shows that "the definitions of African masculinities are not uniform and monolithic, not generalizable to all men in Africa ..." "While hegemonic South African masculinity under apartheid was racist white masculinity, it is also important to point out that dominance is never total or complete. Even in the context of apartheid there were many different masculinities which were involved in processes of contestation with the politically and militarily dominant white Afrikaner form" (Vincent 2006:356).

[42] The current situation with regard to language and racism at the University of Stellenbosch, months after racist allegations in the 'Rhodes must fall' saga, as well as the current racist allegations with regard to the selected national rugby team for the 2015 World Cup is only two of many examples that illustrate how the lives of South Africans are organised, shaped and influenced by race and racism. To read more on the issues mentioned here, the following websites can be viewed: 1) http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2015-09-01-stellenbosch-luister-could-lead-to-change/#VeiW03kazCQ 2) http://m.ewn.co.za/2015/09/01/Race-debate-clouds-South-Africas-Rugby-World-Cup-preparations 3) http://m.ewn.co.za/2015/04/09/Rhodes-Must-Fall-campaign-was-a-wakup-call

white people in South Africa experience a real or assumed sense of loss within the post apartheid South African context; a loss of "power, of status, of economic, social and political advantage" (Vincent 2006:356). It is within this context that identity is perceived as most under threat of dissolution and individuals feel the urgency to defend themselves against otherness (Vincent 2006:356).

Van Wyngaard also refers to the mistaken assumption in the post-apartheid era in South Africa that has led people to think that "white people are now the oppressed group in society" (Van Wyngaard 2014). There is a culture of violence that continues to plague the post-apartheid South African context and society. These high levels of crime, as well as the portrayal of high rates of violence in the media plays an important role in the manner in which White South Africans define their positions within society (Van Wyngaard 2012:4, 47, 106). Morrell links the high levels of violence in South Africa to "historical constructions of masculinity" (2007:18). He shows that "colonialism and apartheid had provided fertile ground for constructions of masculinity that endorsed and legitimised the use of violence in a variety of public and private contexts" (Morrell 2007:18). A link exists between violence and masculinity, so that "where men perceive their positions to be under threat, levels of domestic violence are much higher" (Morrell 2007:18). The reason for this up rise in violence is not to enhance the domination over women, but rather "an attempt to secure a position of status which is central to the man's experience of being a man ..."[43] (Morrell 2007:18).

According to Jewkes (2002:1426), two factors play an important role when it comes to the causality of intimate partner violence: 1) "The unequal position of women in a particular relationship (and in society)" (Jewkes 2002:1426); and 2) "The normative use of violence in conflict" (Jewkes 2002:1426). Studies have shown that societies which reflect stronger levels of male dominance also have higher rates of intimate partner violence. Jewkes shows how South Africa is an example of a society where violence is usually employed in conflict situations and political struggles (2002:1425). Male identity, what is viewed as "successful

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[43] I include this information in my research, not as an attempt to prove that Gretha Wiid or the Worthy Women Movement actively promote patriarchal violence, but rather to show that when we perceive their status to be under threat, it leads to various unhealthy and problematic situation within the domestic sphere (and society at large).

Despite the fact that it is not my intention to prove that the Worthy Women Movement and Gretha Wiid promote any form of physical violence, Nortjé-Meyer (2011) shows in her article 'A critical analysis of Gretha Wiid's sex ideology and her biblical hermeneutics' that: "Indeed, regarding Nadar's (2009:2) remark about 'the mystery of how a man is made', Wiid provides us with a recipe by telling young boys that they are godly men and kings and thereby promoting patriarchal violence ..."

manhood" (Jewkes 2002:1424), and male vulnerability play a part in creating a climate for sexual and gender based violence (Jewkes 2002:1424).

Political transition is "never a single event or moment. Rather, it is a continuous process that faces setbacks and contradictions" (Vincent 2006:350). South Africa can thus be regarded as a society that is in transition. "The process of contestation, accommodation, transgression, and resistance over the construction of dominant norms of masculinity is a prime example of how this transitionary moment continues to transpire" (Vincent 2006:350). According to Kimmel (2001:337), class, gender, and race should be seen as elements around which political and social power are organised. Vincent (2006:356) also notes that "ethnicity, as well as class are deeply implicated in constructs of white masculinity". A key question that should therefore be asked is the extent to which the gender order of a society in transition has or is changing? Vincent (2006:356) explains the shift that has taken place in dominant forms of masculinity as a result of changing political and social dispensation in South Africa as follows:

> With the new political and social dispensation within South Africa, larger changes are taking places - in the spheres of "globalization, economic restructuring, the positioning of men as consumers, changes in family structure, and feminist, gay, and postcolonial political counter-discourses". Together these have provided the conditions under which shifts in the dominant forms and constructions of masculinity might be anticipated. While elements of the previously hegemonic Afrikaner nationalist idea of what it is to be a man remain influential, the transition period has created a much more fluid situation in which the precise outlines of the hegemonic norm are difficult to distil" (Vincent 2006:356).

Connell (1996:209, in Swart 2001:77) points to the fact that some masculinities earn more respect in the social sphere than others. While some are "actively dishonoured (like homosexuality), some are exemplary (like sporting heroes), and some are socially marginalised (as in the case of certain ethnic groups)" (Connell 1996:209, in Swart 2001:77). Masculinities undergo change as a result of struggle for the hegemonic position (Connell 1996:210, in Swart 2001:78). South Africa is a country in transition, so that it is hard to determine which discourse is hegemonic (Morrell 2001b:25). "The crumbling of apartheid exposed the differences in the supposed homogeneity of Afrikaners and, simultaneously, caused Afrikaners as a whole to suffer a crisis of identity" (De Klerk 1984, in Swart 2001:75). Morrell shows that "while South Africa's political and economic systems have

been changing, there have also been changes in gender relations" (2001b:3). Although women have gained more equal rights in relation to men since 1994, the subordinate position of women in relation to men are still emphasised within public discourse and interest (Morrell 2001b:4). Although a new form of masculinity (in the form of the 'new man movement[44]') has emerged, with some men striving for the liberation of women, there has also been a reactionary development; a backlash to feminism (Morell 2001b:4). Morrell show that "struggles over masculinity are ceaseless ... In the face of gender challenges, the defenders of hegemonic masculinity are vigilant, guarding male privilege and recreating a gendered discourse for this purpose" (2001b:25-26).

The post-apartheid era has also seen the rise of gender equality and institutions and practices that foreground women's rights within the state's new gender discourse (Vincent 2006:356). Walker (2005:226) also points to a crisis of masculinity that men in South Africa are experiencing in general, where traditional expressions and forms of masculinity and male sexuality have been destablised. Nadar (2009:557), like Van Wyngaard, Vincent and Fourie, however, refers to a crisis of masculinity experienced particularly by white men, and more specifically, Afrikaner men in post-apartheid South Africa. In her view, the basis of this crisis experienced by white Afrikaner men is the fact that "the nature of white Afrikaner hegemonic masculinity is being challenged by the democratic order ushered in 1994; by an increase in acceptance of diverse sexual orientations; and not least of all by a steady rise in women's emancipation" (Nadar 2009:557). Afrikaner hegemonic masculinity can be described as 'puritan'. This form of masculinity has however been challenged in the post-apartheid South Africa:

> Initially the puritan ideal of Afrikaner masculinity was expressed in the image of the simple, honest, steadfast, religious and hard-working *boer* (farmer): the personification of puritan moral values and work ethics ... Patriarchy, the rule of the father, was justified in all spheres of society in terms of biblical texts. Symbols of masculinity and femininity were manipulated to uphold patriarchy ... Puritan Afrikaners viewed the male-headed family as the cornerstone of a healthy society ... The Afrikaans churches have held the view that the male head of the family should

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[44] "... an organic development in which men came together to discuss gender relations and specifically to discuss the role of men in the exploitation of women. Amongst the most public expressions of this movement was the British publication, *Achilles Heel,* which was founded in the early 1970s and became a forum for the discussion of masculinity and specifically how the private related to the public" (Morrell 2001b:4).

For a further elaboration on the development of the study/field of masculinity, see: Morrell, R. 2001a. Introduction. In: *Changing men in Southern Africa.* London: Zed Books Ltd. 1-3

fulfill a priestly function, by not only providing his family with material things, but also looking after their spiritual well-being (Du Pisani 2001:158, 163-164).

The core of Afrikaner masculinity "defined by heterosexuality and conservatism with regard to race and gender, although remaining relatively intact during apartheid, began to be seriously challenged in post-apartheid South Africa (Nadar 2009:558).

Afrikaners have also had diverse responses to changes that have been taking place, with some reacting positively and embracing "the new democratic order while others rejected it" (Swart 2001:75). "The changing racial order overturned the old hierarchies, challenging the identity of white men – particularly in spheres which had come to rely on everyday assertions of white superiority over black" (Swart 2002:83). Masculinities are never isolated and influence each other (Morrell 2001b:25). White masculinity therefore still has an influence on other masculinities. Masculinities that were in the past seen as oppositional – that is "urban black and rural African masculinities" (Morell 2001b:25) – are now competing for the hegemonic position (Morrell 2001b:25). The male reaction to the transition that is taking place within the South African context can take three forms: 1) "reactive or defensive" (Morrell 2001b:26); 2) "accommodating" (Morrell 2001b:26); or 3) "responsive or progressive" (Morrell 2001b:26). These categories are fluid, however, so that they often overlap (Morrell 2001b:26). For this study, I will look at the first category, namely "reactive or defensive responses".

The first category refers to men who have been working against changes in order to re-establish their power. An example of this can be seen in the organisation 'South African Association of Men' (SAAM) that was established before the 1994 elections that led to the end of white minority rule. This movement was specifically opposed to modern feminism. The emergence of this movement in a time when white men in South Africa were being challenged, government positions were being taken over by black South Africans, affirmative action policies put in place and public display of gay masculinities increasing – a sign that "the homophobic grip of hegemonic masculinity was losing its strength" (Morrell 2001b:27) – should not be overlooked. Attention in this time was placed on "the failings of the new government, the rising crime rate, the decline in white standards of living, and net (white) emigration" (Morrell 2001b:26-27). The weakening of white privilege under the governance of F.W. De Klerk and other changes that threatened the livelihoods of mostly white, Afrikaans farmers also led to the formation of the masculine right-wing movement, the Afrikaner Weerstands Beweging (AWB), under the leadership of Eugene Terreblanche (Morrell 2001b:23).

"Race, class and gender dynamics" (West 2011:26) govern power dynamics at work within the South African context (West 2011:26). "White identities continue to be characterised by a largely unconscious (and thus unexamined) set of assumptions, and a conmitant sense of entitlement that manages to hold currency, despite more than fifteen years of democracy... Whiteness is still favoured as a racial category, despite official policies that have shifted the racial marker into a less than comfortable position" (West. 2011:18, 19).

Morrell (2001b:33) shows that:

> "… there has been no single or clear response to gender conditions in the new South Africa. But the diversity of responses and the relative absence of gendered organisation amongst men should not obscure the fact that the gender order is changing. This is as much an effect of an interventionist state committing itself (at least at the level of policy) to gender equity, as of the small moves made, often in contradictory ways, by men themselves. Hegemonic masculinity has shifted and continues to shift (Morrell 2001b:33).

5.6   White women and race

Elizabeth Spelman, in her book *Inessential Woman*, writes:

> We must give up the hunt for the generic woman – the one who is all and only woman, who by some miracle of abstraction has no particular identity in terms of race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, language, religion, nationality (Spelman 1988:187 in Wander et al. 1999:13).

Like masculinity, women are also shaped by their environments, histories and contexts. It is therefore not only men who are affected by whiteness, race and gender, but also women. Women are easily thought of as mere victims of oppression by men. This is however not always the case. In her book, *White women, race matters*, Ruth Frankenberg shows how the lives of a wide variety of white women from different age- and socio-economic groups, as well as different geographical areas in the United States of America are, in complex ways, shaped by long histories of racism. Similar to the way in which gender shapes the lives of both men and women, the lives of both white individuals and black individuals are racially structured (Frankenberg 1993:1, 7, 10, 42-45). As was mentioned earlier in the discussion on masculinities, it is important to notice that differences amongst women are also a reality, so that not all women have the same view of whiteness and race. Some general features, however, can be identified. Although the work of Frankenberg is specifically focussed on the

lives and contexts of women living in the United States of America, she provides us with helpful insights that can lead to a better understanding of the complexities of the lives of white women living in the post-apartheid South Africa.

Both Frankenberg and the women that she interviewed for her study pointed to the fact that the history of racial segregation in the United States of America has an influence on their present lives, "placing them in a range of relationships with people of color that included relative privilege, social distance, explicitly articulated segregation" (Frankenberg 1993:244). Frankenberg shows how the lives of white women are influenced and even shaped by race, so that "white women's sense of self, other, identity and worldview are also racialized" (Frankenberg 1993:245). Race privilege and racism takes on a variety of forms in the lives of white women: "educational and economic inequality, verbal assertions of white superiority, the maintenance of all-white neighbourhoods, the 'invisibility' of (black and Latina) domestic workers, white people's fear of people of colour, and the 'colonial' notion that the cultures of people of colour were great only in the past" (Frankenberg 1993:69).

Shefer et al. show that gender relations within the South African context can only be understood when the "broader framework of national change and reconstruction in the first decade of democracy (and beyond) following the abolition of apartheid" (2008:157) are take into account. Women find themselves in a complex decentred position when it comes to the position within the construction of whiteness. "The benefits of whiteness came mainly through being associated with white men, who were 'the ones who constructed white history'" (Frye 1983:225, in Steyn 2001:19). "As both female and white, white women belonged to the group that white men needed to draw on for mates, if they were to perpetuate their privileged species. White women could therefore enjoy 'second-hand feelings of superiority and supremacy as well as the hope of becoming equal, of being able to participate first-hand within the structures of racial dominance" (Frye 1983:125, in Steyn 2001:20). This is ironic, however, given that men used the same mechanism to subordinate women that they used to elevate whiteness. "White men's domination and control of white women are an essential part of their maintaining racial dominance. Whiteness needed to create docile bodies, both of its women, and of those it marked as excluded. Treacherous white women were (and are) considered a threat to the continuation of the superior race. For this reason control of their women's sexuality was an important component of the white narrative" (Nederveen Pieterse 1992, in Steyn 2001:20).

5.7   A crisis of whiteness and masculinity: Contextual factors influencing the rise and popularity of the Worthy Women Movement

These transformations also play a significant role in the view of masculinity and gender relations that are prominent in Wiid's teachings. Considering the similarities of Angus Buchan's Mighty Men Conferences and Wiid's Worthy Women Movement, it is important to take note of the fact that an overwhelming proportion of men who participated in Buchan's 2009 Conference were white and the majority of them were farmers (Nadar 2009:557). Nadar and Potgieter (2010a:46) show that the Worthy Women Conference organised by Wiid also attracts thousands of women, who are mostly white, although there are an increasing number of black women also attending. It is also evident in the DVD's produced by Wiid that the majority of audiences who attend her talks on marriage, sexuality etc. is predominantly white.

"For many (if not all) of Buchan's followers South Africa's 'societal problems' are a result of societal changes post 1994" (Pillay 2015:64). Considering the fact that Wiid's audience predominantly consists of white women, as well as the fact that Wiid and Buchan share the same moral vision, the possibility exists that Wiid's audience, like the followers of the Mighty Men Conference, perceives societal changes post 1994 as the reason for South Africa's societal problems. Nortjé-Meyer (2011:3) notes that the desire to restore the family in South Africa (promoted by both Wiid and Buchan) seems to stem from insecurities experienced by a lot of white people in South Africa as result of high levels of crime and violence, as was shown in the previous section of this chapter.

According to Pillay (2015:62), the Mighty Men Conference can also be seen as "a backlash movement driven by fear of losing power and control in times of change". With the information above, as well as the similarities between the Mighty Men Conference and the Worthy Women Movement taken into consideration, the same may be true for the Worthy Women Movement. Similar to Buchan's teaching that the headship of husbands will solve societal problems (Du Pisani 2013:686), Wiid also tells her audience that the subordination of women will solve societal problems and lead to South Africa becoming a 'Christian country'. Wiid and her teachings therefore operate within a context of societal changes with regards to whiteness, as well as economic, political and social status. Like white men in South Africa, the women in her audiences experience a loss of perceived power and privilege and therefore strive to change their status and secure position within South Africa to the way it used to be in the past.

5.8   Conclusion

It is clear from the discussion above that the lives of both men and women are, in complex ways, shaped and influenced by their contexts. It has been seen that intersectionalities exist between gender, race, class, culture and other societal norms and perceptions. Masculinities are therefore not a fixed state, owned by any one group of men, but rather fluid and changing over time and contexts. Hegemonic masculinity, in the same way, is not owned by a group of men, so that continual contestations and competition forms part of the formation of hegemonic masculinity. In this sense, the white Afrikaner hegemonic masculinity that was for many years in South Africa's colonial and apartheid past seen as the ideal form of masculinity are influenced by the transitions that have been taking place since the abolishment of apartheid and the country's first democratic elections in 1994. These changes – challenges to white domination and privilege, as well as challenges to the white Afrikaner hegemonic masculinity - has led white men in South Africa to experience an identity crisis in terms of their whiteness, as well as their masculinity. Although the white women who attend Wiid's conferences and meetings have for the biggest part of the South African history been subject to male oppression and domination, their lives have also been influenced by the racial segregation in South Africa pre-1994. White women therefore also benefitted from the unequal racial society, mainly as a result of their association and relationship with white men, who occupied a dominating role over the rest of the South African society. In the same way that men have been experiencing a crisis with their changing circumstances, white women have therefore also been experiencing these transitions in identity as a result of changing social, political, and economical status.

6   Subordination versus agency: Women supporting discourse of female subordination and male headship.

6.1   Introduction

Despite the problematic and oppressive nature of the discourse promoted by the Worthy Women Movement (as discussed in chapters 3 and 4), the popularity of the movement cannot be denied. This chapter can be seen as an attempt to answer the third research question: What is the reason for women maintaining a system and culture in which they themselves, as well as other women, are oppressed? An attempt at explaining the popularity of this movement can only be made when the complexities of various influences on the lives of the followers of the movement is taken into consideration.

In chapter 5, a part of the complex nature of women's lives, and more specifically, the lives of the followers and supporters of the Worthy Women Movement, became apparent through an exploration of the intersections that exist between race, class and gender, and the influences of these intersections on the lives of these white, Afrikaner female women. These complexities identified in chapter 5 forms the basis for the discussion in chapter 6. Notions of 'internalised oppression', 'subordination versus agency' and 'patriarchal bargaining' will be explored.

6.2   Recognising the complexities of the feminist subject 'woman'

In her book, *Changing the subject,* Fulkerson (1994) points to the complicated and often contested assumptions made about feminism's main subject, 'woman'. Feminists have often made problematic assumptions, claiming to speak on behalf of all women (Fulkerson 1994:3). The complexities of race, gender, class etc. have different influences on the lives of different women. This thesis focuses on the lives of white, Afrikaner, middle class women in South Africa; a group of women whose experiences have often wrongly been taken for granted and assumed to be universal for the lives and experiences of all women[45]. Although attempts to highlight the experiences and oppression of women that are not white, middle-class and heterosexual have been made by Asian, womanist, African, *mujerista* and lesbian feminists, as a response to this critique, Fulkerson shows that the subject 'woman' in feminist theology has often also been restricted to women who identify with feminism or other liberation theologies. Fulkerson therefore suggests that the subject 'woman' of feminist

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[45] For more information on this, see Ackermann, D. 1993. Meaning and power: Some key terms in feminist liberation theology, *Scriptura Journal of Bible and Theology in Southern Africa 44,* 19-33.

theory and feminist theology should be broadened to also consider and explore the experiences of women who do not identify with feminism or other liberation theologies (Fulkerson 1994:3).

The question should therefore be asked if "feminist theology's definitions of 'woman' and current ways of problematizing that subject are adequate to encompass a feminist inquiry into women ... who are outside feminist conversation" (Fulkerson 1994:3)? A broadening of the subject 'woman' "beyond the respectful acknowledgment of women engaged in other liberation struggles" (Fulkerson 1994:3) is therefore needed, in which the complexity of experience and women's contexts are taken into consideration. As the title of Fulkerson's book, *Changing the subject,* suggests, the subject of feminism ('woman') should be changed so that the complex formation "of *multiple* identities" becomes essential to our thinking (Fulkerson 1994:7).

Fulkerson rightly highlights a tendency in feminism to focus mainly on the lives of women who see themselves as in need of emancipation and who support the feminist agenda. When feminists do recognise women who do not identify themselves as in need of emancipation and the feminist agenda, a process of conscientisation is often suggested. It is then assumed that these women will respond to this process of conscientisation with a desire to be liberated from what is regarded as oppressive practices and situations. In her book *Politics of piety: The Islamic revival and the feminist subject*, Saba Mahmood notes that the female participation and support for the Islamist movement provokes strong reactions from various feminists. These reactions normally entail the assumption that "women Islamist supporters are pawns in a grand patriarchal plan, who, if freed from their bondage, would naturally express their instinctual abhorrence for the traditional Islamic mores used to enchain them" (Mahmood 2005:1-2). An important question that therefore needs to be addressed is why women across the globe would actively support and perpetuate a movement that seems oppressive, especially at a moment in history when women have a number of emancipatory possibilities available to them (Mahmood 2005:2)?

It became clear in the exploration that was done in chapters 3 and 4 that the discourse advocated by Wiid can, in fact, be seen as opposed to feminist theological objectives and goals. Despite the palatable language and notions of 'liberated through submission' Wiid uses, her discourse and teaching on gender roles and sexuality are entrenched with language of female subordination and male headship. These discourses therefore promote and maintain negative and life-denying societal norms and perceptions, and perpetuate the common

language used within society and culture that casts women into a subordinate position compared to men. Gretha Wiid and her followers therefore do not identify themselves with the group of women who identify with and work towards feminist goals.

With this feminist response to women Islamist supporters taken into consideration, the question can also be asked why Gretha Wiid and the female followers of the Worthy Women Movement would actively support and perpetuate discourse of subordination and practices that can not only be regarded as negative and oppressive for themselves, but for women in general? When taking Fulkerson's concern about what she regards as an over-simplified view of the feminist subject 'woman' into consideration, it is easy to fall into a trap of regarding Wiid's discourse and teachings as beyond the feminist agenda. It is also easy to view Wiid's discourse in an over-simplified way, without taking the complexities of the context in which Wiid and her followers live and operate into consideration when trying to answer the question with regard to why the followers of the Worthy Women Movement would support oppressive discourse. Wiid can also easily, in an over-simplified way, be regarded as an oppressive perpetrator, who promotes discourse of subordination for her own gain. The aim of this chapter is therefore to adhere to Fulkerson's concerns and accordingly, to complicate the feminist subject 'woman' when attempting to give reasons for the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement. The focus will now shift to identifying the reasons behind women's support of the Worthy Women Movement.

6.3   Subordination vs. Agency

As suggested by Fulkerson, feminism have often tended to have an over-simplified view of the subject 'woman', in which all women have been seen as victims of subordination, with no agency. The relationship between subordination and agency will now be explored.

6.3.1   Internalised Oppression

Louise Kretzschmar shows that "there are a variety of spheres in which discrimination occurs against people on the basis of their gender. These include the realms of politics, the economy, culture, the family and the church. More extreme forms of discrimination are rightly termed oppression" (1998:173). Kretzschmar, a South African feminist theologian, explains how two types of oppression can be identified, namely 'external oppression' and 'internalised oppression' (1998:173). External oppression includes "exclusion and androcentrism". In the case of exclusion, women are prevented access "to influential areas such as politics, church government, and the economy" and, at the same time, restricted to the domestic sphere and

106

family life. 'Androcentrism' is defined as "the habit of thinking about the world, ourselves, and all that is in the world from the male perspective ... Androcentrism drowns or silences women's voices and perceptions by the continual outpouring of male perceptions into the world" (Wehr 1987:16 in Kretzschmar 1998:173). "The role of law and justice systems that do not accord women the same rights to protection, property, wealth, or even education enjoyed by men ... (to) lock women out of membership and leadership of trade unions, political parties, religious institutions, and other powerful organizations" (Fuchs Epstein 2007:16) can be seen as examples of external oppression.

According to Young (1990:40), oppression does not always involve "brutal tyranny", but often also includes the injustices that individuals or groups of individuals suffer because of others buying into structures, habits, symbols and unquestioned norms. In this sense, oppression does not always include the conscious decisions of people to oppress others, but rather the unconscious oppression of others through daily activities, language etc. This, however, does not deny the fact that certain individuals and groups of people benefit because of the oppression of others, and therefore "have an interest in their continued oppression" (Young 1990:42). It can consequently not be denied that "for every oppressed group there is a group that is *privileged* in relation to that group" (Young 1990:42).

"Women's segregation and subjugation is also done *culturally* (emphasis in original text) and through *cognitive* (emphasis in original text) mechanisms that reinforce existing divisions of rights and labor and award men authority over women" (Fuchs Epstein 2007:16). Groups that are being dominated by others often enhance and perpetuate their own subordination "because of perceptions shaped by the conditions of their existence – the dominant system made of binary oppositions" (Fuchs Epstein 2007:16). Internalised oppression, then, takes place "when the oppressed accept or internalise the negative perceptions that those in power have of them. The powerful develop the system and define the roles that they wish others to play in these systems" (Kretzschmar 1998:173).

Mind sets and convictions that lead to women's subordination and segregation are legitimated on a daily basis through portrayals in the media, on the pulpit, in the academy etc. "Internalized cultural schemas reinforce men's views that their behavior is legitimate and persuade women that their lot is just" (Fuchs Epstein 2007:16). The media enhances these perceptions when men and women are portrayed as having different essential natures that determine their behaviour. People therefore tend to accept oppressive notions of natural differences between men and women in their daily lives and conversations. "They accept its

inevitability and are persuaded of the legitimacy of segregation, actual or symbolic." (Fuchs Epstein 2007:16).

The moment when the oppressed (in this study, women) accept these roles and buy into the negative perceptions of those in power, they have internalised those oppressive views. When the oppressed therefore regard the oppressive "perceptions, customs and systems" (Kretzschmar 1998:173) as legitimate and appropriate, they "have internalised the system that is oppressing them" (Kretzschmar 1998:173) and therefore start to live according to oppressive societal norms and customs. As a result of these women's internalisation of oppressive perception, customs and norms about them, they are likely to avoid identifying themselves with what is often, in an over-simplified way, recognised as the subject 'woman' in feminism (as referred to by Fulkerson) and might reject feminism and the aims of feminism to question and fight against the subordination of women. These women can at times even be seen to defend patriarchal notions, systems and customs (Kretzschmar 1998:173). Isherwood and McEwan (1993:19) show that women are often even "dissatisfied with their own sex and believe men when they denigrate women".

Many women are not aware of the life-denying nature of gender discrimination and sexism. Kretzschmar refers to the feminist theological work of Denise Ackermann and Swart-Russel (Swart-Russel, in Ackermann 1992:299) to show that women are often also not able to distinguish between the androcentric approach to the Gospel of Christ and the gospel of Christ itself (Kretzschmar 1998:173). This also became apparent in the discussion on Wiid's androcentric approach to Biblical texts to legitimate her discourse and teachings.

The internalisation of oppression often leads women to experience a neurotic feeling of false guilt[46]. "Neurotic guilt is a false guilt which is imposed upon certain people by those who wish to maintain control over them" (Kretzschmar 1998:174). An example of this is when women who fall victim to physical or emotional abuse experience feelings of guilt and blame themselves that they were somehow the cause or provoked their husbands to act violently (Kretzschmar 1998:173, cf. Shefer et al. 2008:165). The internalisation of oppression therefore leads women to feel a neurotic sense of guilt, while the perpetrators evade the responsibility for their actions. "The oppressors refuse to admit their real guilt and instead project it onto the oppressed that then experience a neurotic (and paralysing) form of guilt"

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[46] "A distinction needs to be made between genuine and neurotic guilt. Genuine guilt is a consequence of the work of the Holy Spirit who leads us towards repentance, confession and forgiveness" (Kretzschmar 1998:174). When referring to guilt as part of internalised oppression, it does not include this definition of genuine guilt.

(Kretzschmar 1998:174). Men therefore often feel "justified in threatening and punishing females who deviate from male-mandated rules in public and private spaces" (Fuchs Epstein 2007:16). This leads women to feel "stupid, helpless, inadequate either because they are made to feel this way by others, or because they lack the esteem, skills, opportunities and experience to achieve any of their dreams. The sad irony is that very often it is women who hold households, families, churches and communities together, and yet they feel inferior and useless" (Kretzschmar 1998:174).

When trying to explain the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement, especially the concept of 'internalised oppression' should be taken into consideration. The following questions should therefore be asked: 1) Are the followers of the Worthy Women Movement supporting, maintaining and perpetuating negative perceptions of women, as well as female subordination, because they have internalised the oppressive discourse and teachings proposed and sustained by Wiid?; 2) Do Wiid and the followers of the Worthy Women Movement believe that the roles and system designed by those in power within a patriarchal society (in this case, the South African society) are beneficial for them?

6.3.2   A move beyond the assumed dichotomy between subordination and resistance

As reflected in Kretzschmar's work on 'internalised oppression', Mahmood notes that women's subordination, as well as their support and perpetuation of patriarchal values, were in the past explained by means of false consciousness or the internalisation of patriarchy. Increased feelings of discomfort with these explanations are, however, on the rise. Since the 1970s, feminists have (following work in the humanities and social sciences) emphasised human agency within structures of oppression. This change in emphasis can be seen as an attempt to understand women's agency in resisting the dominant male order by "subverting the hegemonic meanings of cultural practices and redeploying them for their own interests and agendas" (Mahmood 2005:6). This approach moves beyond the dichotomy that is often assumed between subordination and resistance, and emphasises the fact that women's lives and experiences are far richer and more complicated than what has often been assumed (Mahmood 2005:6).

Morrell (2007:22) emphasises the fact that women often perpetuate and buy in to practices that promote the subordination of women, the fact that women often exercise power, as well as the fact that friendly relations can often be observed between men and women. In his view, this shows that there are more to the relationships between men/masculinities and

women/femininity than purely repressive power (Stolen & Vaa 1991:9 in Morrell 2007:22). Although "gender power differences may translate into inequalities, injustices, violence and so on" this might also not always be the case (Morell 2007:22-23). One of the key questions that should be asked in this regard is: "How do women contribute to reproducing their own domination, and how do they resist or subvert it"? (Mahmood 2005:6).

Connell and Messchershmidt (2005:842-843) show that: "One is not free to adopt any gender position in interaction simply as a discursive or reflexive move. The possibilities are constrained massively by embodiment, by institutional histories, by economic forces, and by personal and family relationships". Issues like race, class, etc. therefore play a role in the gender position that individuals take on. In accordance with the views of Connell and Messchershmidt, Mahmood also warns against the over-simplification of assumptions and elisions of agency and notes that critical examination is needed (Mahmood 2005:9).

With the complex relationship between resistance and subordination taken into account, Lila Abu-Lughod also asks the following important question that needs consideration: "How might we recognize instances of women's resistance without misattributing to them forms of consciousness or politics that are not part of their experience – something like a feminist consciousness or feminist politics" (1990:47)? Mahmood shows that the tendency often exists (which she argues is also the case in the work of Abu-Lughod herself) to over simplify the binary of resistance and subordination, so that 'resistance' is approached as a "fairly unproblematic enterprise" (2005:9). She attempts to problematise the claims that individuals have a universal desire to be free from relations of subordination, and by implication that women, in all cases, desire to be free from patriarchal structures (Mahmood 2005:10).

Mahmood (2005:17) identifies Michel Foucault's notion of the paradox of *subjectivation* – "the very processes and conditions that secure a subjects' subordination are also means by which she becomes a self-conscious identity and agent" (Mahmood 2005:17) – as helpful in this regard. It is a notion that entails that "the set of capacities inhering in a subject – that is, the abilities that define her mode of agency – are not the residue of an undominated self that existed prior to the operations of power but are themselves the products of those operations. Such an understanding of power and subject formation encourages us to conceptualize agency not simply as a synonym for resistance to relations of domination, but as a capacity for action that specific relations of subordination create and enable" (Mahmood 2005:17).

6.3.3   Patriarchal bargaining

Patriarchal bargaining can be seen as an example of an approach to the relationships between submission and resistance that emphasises women's agency in gender positions and roles. According to this approach, women are not merely the receptors of patriarchal rules and customs, but also often use these patriarchal concepts to gain certain positions in society, for example security, financial benefits, social status, etc.

Nadar and Potgieter show that "patriarchal bargaining is consistent with the complementarian (as opposed to egalitarian) school of thought with regards to gender" (2010:148). This approach to gender is palatable; "they do not promote inequality per se but are less radical than egalitarian approaches, which do not accept that equality can exist in a headship-submission paradigm" (Nadar & Potgieter 2010:148). Nadar and Potgieter rely on the work of William Bradford Wilcox in his work *Soft Patriarchs, New Men: How Christianity shapes fathers and husbands* to explain the notion of 'patriarchal bargaining'. Wilcox uses the notion of 'patriarchal bargaining' when he explains that conservative Protestantism "offers men a 'patriarchal bargain' that accords men symbolic authority in the home in return for their exercise of greater responsibility for the well-being of their families" (Nadar & Potgieter 2010:147). In a similar way, the Promise Keepers Movement referred to earlier in this thesis also uses the notion of patriarchal bargaining. Tony Evans, a Baptist minister, explains to men at the Promise Keepers Movement that one of the gains that women earn through patriarchal bargaining is a responsible husband, who will provide for his family (Wilcox 2004:1-3). Walker (2005:225) also refers to the ways in which South African men are negotiating their manhood "in a period of social turbulence and transition).

It came as a surprise when scholars noticed that conservative Protestantism succeeds in "domesticating men, that is, it prompts them to make greater investments in the practical and emotional dimensions of family lives, especially in ways that appeal to the ideals and aspirations of their wives" (Wilcox 2004:9). It was found that this success is achieved through "linking male authority to a demanding ethic of male familial involvement" (Wilcox 2004:9). It was also found that this approach by Protestantism is often linked to gender traditionalism "in ways that accord high value to male involvement in the home" (Wilcox 2004:9).

Kandiyoti also has an open-minded approach to gender relationships and points out that "the forms of consciousness and struggle that emerge in times of rapid social change require sympathetic and open-minded examination, rather than hasty categorization" (1998:284). She

111

uses the notion of patriarchal bargaining to refer to the fact that "women strategize within a set of concrete constraints". The term 'patriarchal bargaining' is used to indicate that a set of rules and scripts exist that regulate gender relations. Both males and females submit to and accommodate these rules and scripts, while at the same time often contesting, redefining and renegotiating it. Despite both men and women using 'patriarchal bargaining', the notion takes into consideration that women always bargain from a weaker position (Kandiyoti 1998:284).

Molyneux (1985:234, in Kandiyoti 1988:282) shows that even though "false consciousness" is often presumed to be the contributing factor to women's resistance to processes of transition, this is often not the sole contributing factor. Changes that these processes of resistance can result in often lead to a loss of forms of security and protection that are not compensated for in other ways. This leads women to put pressure on men to live up to their obligations when patriarchy experiences a crisis. Women will often in these cases also not lose their respectability by stepping out of line, because of the possibilities that such behaviour will compromise the basis for their claims. Accordingly, they will hold their end of the patriarchal bargain – "protection in exchange for submissiveness and propriety" (Kandiyoti 1988:283). Women will also often heighten certain submissive practices to signify their worth of protection[47] (Kandiyoti 1988:283).

According to Kandiyoti, women often show resistance to processes of transition away from patriarchy, despite the fact that the obstacles presented by patriarchy often outweigh any form of economic or emotional security that can be gained through it. A lack of empowering alternatives also influences women's resistance to processes of transition and resistance (Kandiyoti 1998:282). Women often "derive security from the stereotypes projected onto them, and willingly conform to these stereotypes" (Ackermann 1992:299 in Kretzschmar 1998:174). The thought of breaking away and questioning sexist assumptions causes them to feel anxious, where liberating options provided to them often do not lead to immediate security and alternatives. Emancipation also often demands self definition. Women therefore often find it easier to "accommodate the expectations of the oppressor groups than to defy

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[47] For example, "the response of many women who have to work for wages in this context may be an intensification of traditional modesty markers, such as veiling. Often, through no choice of their own, they are working outside their home and are thus "exposed"; they must now use every symbolic means at their disposal to signify that they continue to be worthy of protection. It is significant that Khomeini's exhortations to keep women at home found enthusiastic support among many Iranian women despite the obvious elements of repression. The implicit promise of increased male responsibility restores the integrity of their original patriarchal bargain in an environment where the range of options available to women is extremely restricted. Younger women adopt the veil...because 'the restrictions imposed on them by an Islamic order was therefore a small price that had to be paid in exchange for the security, stability and presumed respect this order promised them" (Kandiyoti 1988: 283).

that group and enter the uncharted territory of self-knowledge and free self-identification" (Ackermann 1992:299 in Kretzschmar 1998:173).

Kandiyoti shows that "different forms of patriarchy present women with distinct 'rules of the game' and call for different strategies to maximize security and optimize life options with varying potential for active or passive resistance in the face oppression" (1988:284). Oduyoye, for example, shows in her work, *Introducing African women's theology,* that "women face daily survival issues of managing their hearth-holds and they give up their time and energy, muster their ingenuity and creativity to assure life for others" (2001:107). The question has been asked, however, if sacrifice can be labelled as "that which one does because one cannot do otherwise" (Oduyoye 2001:107). It has been argued that women do not make sacrifices "as they are in fact acting in self-interest, they are protecting their own survival, saving their own faces and avoiding the taunt, blame and ridicule of the society" (Oduyoye 2001:107).

Radical feminism insists that 'patriarchy' refers to virtually all forms of male domination, while social feminism pays attention to the intersections that exist between patriarchy and class within a capitalist society. Kandiyoti shows that 'patriarchy' is often treated at a level of abstraction, which masks the complexities of culturally and historically distinct arrangements that often exist between genders. Class, caste, and ethnicity have an influence on the ways women choose to strategise within a patriarchal society and culture. The ways in which women strategise within oppressive contexts should be seen as fluid and can change and be adapted over time; it is "susceptible to historical transformations that open up new areas of struggle and renegotiation of the relations between genders" (Kandiyoti 1998:275). In the case of Gretha Wiid and the followers of the Worthy Women Movement, the transition that has been taking place in South Africa with regard to class, gender and whiteness needs to be taken into consideration when identifying the arrangements that these women choose to strategise with the South African context.

Broken bargains often lead to the search for culprits and a longing for "the certainties of a more traditional order, or an attempt to reduce feelings that "change might have gone either too far or badly wrong" (Kandiyoti 1998:284). According to Kandiyoti, a "systematic analysis of women's strategies and coping mechanisms can help to capture the nature of patriarchal systems in their cultural, class-specific, and temporal concreteness and recall how men and women resist, accommodate, adapt, and conflict with each other over resources, rights, and responsibilities" (1998:285). Patriarchal bargains do not only have an influence on

113

women's rational choices and decisions, but also on the "more unconscious aspects of their gendered subjectivity, since they permeate the context of their early socialization, as well as their adult cultural milieu" (Kandiyoti 1988:285).

6.4   A context of female subordination and the oppression of white Afrikaner women

Throughout the history of South Africa, different strategies of female oppression, agency and subordination have been operative. These strategies have been widely influenced by issues concerning race, class, religion, power dynamics etc. Olive Schreiner, a famous South African feminist, made the following statement in 1883: "But this one thought stands, never goes – if I might but be one of those born in the future, then perhaps to be born a woman will not be to be born branded" (Walker 1991:1). According to Walker, this cry has, almost a century later, still not been answered. Socially, economically, legally, in all spheres of society women occupy a distinct and subordinate position to men (Walker 1991:1). Even though Walker wrote this in 1991 before the democratic elections took place in 1994, this is still the position that many, if not all women in South Africa, occupy to a certain degree. In this section, it will become clear that the South African context has throughout history and up to the present been marked by an overtone of patriarchy and female oppression. Although the strategies employed to maintain patriarchal norms, perceptions and customs changed over the years, the lives of South African women have always been marked by female subordination and male domination.

Annelie Botha and Yolanda Dreyer (2013:2) specifically show how the Afrikaans community and culture have also to a large extent been marked by a tone of female submission and inferiority. Women have carried feelings of guilt with them for years and tried to win the favour of the dominant male culture (and God) by accepting their inferior positions. The position of women in the South African context in the first half of the twenty first century was marked by a certain understanding of gender roles, based on a white, Western, Christian model. These models entailed domesticity, mothering, child education and subordination to husbands. Even after the Second World War, these traditional concepts of the 'housewife' were still in place within the South African context. This was accompanied by the South African law system, which put certain restrictions on women, and specifically married women. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these images of women were also extended to include the concept of the *volksmoeder* (folk mother discourse) that implied that the motherly role of women now also included the spiritual care of the folk/nation (Botha &

Dreyer 2013:2, 3). This discourse caused women from the Dutch Calvinist tradition in South Africa to be "silenced in public" (Landman 2009:11) and still has an influence on Calvinist women even today, making them feel "uncomfortable about speaking on matters of gender" (Landman 2009:11). This discourse promoted a situation in which women's dependence were promoted and in which women were encouraged to be active in the lives of their husbands and children, rather than in their own lives (Botha & Dreyer 2013:3).

Despite some female opposition to these images of subordination and gender roles, women, in general, were conservative and opposed to any changes that would emancipate them from their subordinate positions. The reasons for this was women's concerns about the dangers associated to opposing a patriarchal system, as well as the rewards women would receive for conforming to rules and perceptions that would place them in the subordinate position. Women who dared to question the prescribed gender rules would be at risk of losing the benefits attached to conforming to these prescribed roles (Botha & Dreyer 2013:2).

The subordination of women were also perpetuated and kept in place in religious circles and by churches, such as the Netherdutch Reformed Church (*Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk*[48]) (Botha & Dreyer 2013:2). In her article, *Calvinism and South African women: A short historical overview,* Christina Landman traces the role that female piety played in the South African history and writes about the decision of Christian women over the past three and a half centuries to choose "for pietistic expressions of their faith" (2009:1). Landman observes that "for more than 300 years, Afrikaner women – white, South African women of Dutch descent – have inherited the worst of Dutch piety" (2005:147). These women inherited the pessimistic, guilt-ridden piety and, self-humiliation of Dutch pietists from the seventeenth century (Landman 2005:147).

The conditioning of women by the church still has an influence on women's lives, making it difficult for us to take on our equal positions within society and marriage (Botha & Dreyer 2013:9). Landman shows that when this historical information are considered, the popularity amongst Afrikaans-speaking Calvinist women (women from the Dutch Calvinist tradition) of "mass church movements that are women-specific, such as the 'Worthy Women'" (Landman 2009:11), where women "were encouraged –as part of their salvation – to crown and anoint their husbands as king of the household in order to become worthy women in God's eyes" (Landman 2009:11) does not come as a surprise.

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[48] The majority of the congregants that form a part of the Dutch Reformed Church are White, Afrikaans-speaking Afrikaner people in South Africa.

As was seen in chapter 5, strong intersectionalities exist between racism, class and gender oppression, so that the transformation that took place within the South African society after the democratic elections of 1994 also had an effect on gender relationships. Gender relations within the contemporary South African context can only be understood when the "broader framework of national change and reconstruction in the first decade of democracy (and beyond) following the abolition of apartheid" (Shefer et al. 2008:157) are take into consideration. South Africa is ranked amongst the countries with the highest levels of gender based violence (Shefer et al. 2008:158) and was already in 1995 dubbed "the 'rape capital of the world'" (Jewkes & Abrahams 2002:1231). In the context of the post-apartheid South Africa, the assumption is often made that patriarchy within religious groups are something of the past. In reality, however, this is not the case. Patriarchy still forms a significant problem and is often even supported by women. This also becomes clear in the research that was done by Shefer et al. (2008).

Shefer et al. (2008:158-159) conducted a study using attitudinal measures as an indicator of continued patriarchal ideologies and levels of "adherence to dominant discourse of gender roles and relations as well as resistance to gender transformation" (Shefer et al. 2008:158-159). While doing their research, indications were found that showed that traditional gender roles, as well as (hetero)sexual practices, were still prevalent in the communities that they studied (including those in South Africa). This implies that women still mainly focus on household duties and family life, while men focus on being the 'breadwinner' in the family. Participants also noted how it is still expected of women to be submissive to their husbands (Shefer et al. 2008:162, 173). It was therefore found that family structures still reinforce women's subordination. Women were even encouraged to stay in abusive relationships for the sake of the family (Shefer et al. 2008:173).

"The salience of the 'male sexual drive' discourse was widely reported in the South African context; it is one of they key discourses used to reproduce the dominant binary construction of men and women and legitimize hegemonic (hetero) sexual practices" (Shefer et al. 2008:166-167). There were also evidence of a sexual double standard that existed for men and women. Cultural and traditional discourses, as well as notions of biological determinism, that are reflected in "the male sexual drive discourse" (Shefer et al. 2008:173) were prevalent in interviews with the participants. These discourses and notions serve to "rationalize and reproduce traditional gender roles, relations and practices" (Shefer et al. 2008:173).

It was also found that an unstated implication exists within the South African context "that South African society would be better off if men were to reassert their power over women and if traditional gender roles and relations of dominance-submission were reinstated" (Shefer et al. 2008:174).

The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI), a measure of contemporary sexism, assesses both hostility and benevolence towards women. Hostile sexism not only involves the beliefs that women are the inferior sex, but also holds that women threaten to take over the rightful (dominant) position of men. Benevolent sexism, on the other hand, "emphasizes that women are special beings to be cherished and protected and is measured by beliefs such as: A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man" (Shefer et al. 2008:159). When individuals display a combination of both hostile sexism and benevolent sexism, they form part of a third group, which shows signs of what is referred to as 'ambivalent sexism'. These individuals "have polarized beliefs about women" (Shefer et al. 2008:159) and may, for example, believe "that modern women are intelligent and hardworking, but also that they are selfish, aggressive and cold" (Shefer et al. 2008:159). When ambivalent sexism is at work, women complying with submissive roles are often perceived in a positive manner, and are validated; that is, "as long as they stay in their place" (Shefer et al. 2008:159).

In this study, measures of levels of hostile, benevolent and ambivalent sexism were taken amongst both men and women from 19 nations, including two communities in the Western Cape, South Africa. The following findings were made: "On the Hostile Sexism scale, South African men had one of the highest mean scores ... and South African women had the highest mean of any group of women. On the benevolent sexism measure, South African men had the third highest mean score ... South African women scored even higher that South African men on this measure ... their benevolent sexism scores were the highest in the entire group of samples from 19 countries" (Shefer et al. 2008:159). It is therefore clear that both South African men and women display signs of ambivalent sexism. Women fulfilling roles of wives and sexual partners are therefore perceived in a more positive light than women who do not serve men's needs (Shefer et al. 2008:159, 160).

A connection therefore exists between benevolent sexism and hostile sexism, so that both sustain a context of patriarchy in complementary ways; "hostile sexism punishes women who challenge the status quo, while benevolent sexism rewards those who accept conventional gender norms and power relations" (Shefer et al. 2008:160). In contexts and societies where hostile sexism is prevalent, women may adhere to societal rules that communicate to them

what it means to be a 'good women' with the hope of protecting themselves against male violence. These women therefore endorse benevolent sexism, with the hope of reducing hostile sexism. South African women might then reflect these attitudes (Shefer et al. 2008:160).

"Not only did the 1996 constitution guarantee women's rights but the government also put in special mechanisms, such as the Office of the status of women and the Gender equality, to ensure public compliance with gender equality principles" (Nadar & Potgieter 2010:149). Despite courts and parliaments in South Africa granting women "equal rights within the family and to inheritance ... a 'stubborn persistence of patriarchy'" (Albertyn 2009:166) exist so that these laws and rights remain contested (Albertyn 2009:166). Although Albertyn's findings were primarily based on black individuals within the South African context, it is clear that attitudes and perceptions of female subordination and male headship still exists within the larger South African society.

6.5 The popularity of the Worthy Women Movement: Internalised oppression and patriarchal bargaining

With the work of Landman, Botha, Dreyer, and Albertyn, as well as the study of Shefer and Crawford (et. al) taken into consideration, it is clear that patriarchy, androcentrism and sexism has been prevalent throughout the history of South Africa and still place a significant role in the lives of women in contemporary South Africa. Shifts can be identified in the strategies that were used to sustain these patriarchal norms, perceptions and customs. While the South African law and constitution have undergone changes, granting women an increase in equal rights, patriarchal perceptions and attitudes are still prevalent in the everyday lives of women.

The followers of the Worthy Women Movement and Gretha Wiid find themselves in a context that has for years been marked by patriarchy, androcentism and sexism. The strategies shifted from what Louise Kretzschmar identified as external oppression through the South African law systems etc. to internalised oppression in the forms of ambivalent sexism. The high rates of rape and gender based violence in the South African context can also be seen as part of the external oppression strategy used to 'keep women in their place'. As was seen previously, the history of female piety in South Africa contributed to women feeling guilty and internalizing oppressive perceptions about them.

Although women, in general, abided by patriarchal rules and norms, examples of female opposition and women rejecting patriarchal norms and practices can be identified throughout the South African history. Women, however, were seen to comply with images of subordination as a result of the dangers associated with opposing a patriarchal system, as well as bargains that they received for conforming to the roles ascribed to them by a patriarchal society and system. Benevolent sexism that was detected amongst contemporary South African communities can also be seen as an example of women receiving bargains for subordinate practices. Patriarchal bargaining has therefore also played in role in gender positions and relations in the history of South African women.

It is clear from the work done by Mahmood, Butler, Foucault, and Kandiyoti that a tendency exists to over simplify subordination and women's agency, as well as their capacity for resistance. Accordingly, at first glance it is easy to assume an over-simplified approach to the discourse and reasons for the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement. The complexities of power relations that have an influence on the agency, subordination and resistance of the followers of the Worthy Women Movement, as well as the larger social context, should therefore be kept in mind when exploring the reasons for perpetuating and sustaining the oppressive discourse and customs promoted by Wiid and the Worthy Women Movement.

The following questions should therefore be asked in an attempt to reach an understanding of the reasons behind the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement: When considering the fact that female subordination and oppression have been a part of, not only the history of white Afrikaner women in South Africa, but also of their current situation and context, is it possible that Wiid and the followers of the Worthy Women Movement have internalised these oppressive systems, ideologies and practices? Do Gretha Wiid and the followers of the Worthy Women Movement truly believe that the subordinate roles ascribed to them are good for them and appropriate? Does the crisis of whiteness currently experienced by white people in the post-apartheid South Africa have an influence on the discourse promoted by Gretha Wiid and the Worthy Women Movement and can this be seen as a contributing factor for the popularity of the movement? Can the popularity of this movement be seen as an attempt by women to restore the status/position of the white male within the household (and therefore in South Africa), and by implication to resolve unhealthy environments within homes? Therefore, are the supporters of the Worthy Women Movement using subordinate practices, notions and ideologies as a bargaining tool to restore social and financial security within

domestic spheres and to promote "healthier" family environments, including utopian futures of loving, secure, involved and happy fathers and husbands?

When studying the language used in Wiid's discourse, it becomes clear that it is entrenched with notions and references of marketing strategies and bargaining. Pillay argues that the male version of the Worthy Women Movement, the Mighty Men Movement that is led by Angus Buchan, has something to sell to his "clientele" (Pillay 2011:190). He therefore uses Biblical texts as marketing strategy to convince his followers that his product is, in fact, genuine. The discourse proposed by Buchan are marketed to be 'the way' back to "God's plan for God's people and husbands are encouraged to reclaim their God-given power as heads of household by taking care of wife and family" (Pillay 2011:188). This marketing strategy of Buchan seems to be so good that both men and women find hope in it, as is evident in Jill Buchan's (Angus Buchan's wife) support of the discourse proposed by her husband (Pillay 2011:188). According to Nadar, 'discourses of power' "refer to language that appeals to a 'higher authority' for legitimation, and ... Buchan's higher authority cannot get any higher than God" (2009:555). Pillay further states that "it is the sanctification of male headship (of our faith) that almost compels women and men to defend patriarchal hierarchy" (Pillay 2011:188).

It is clear that Gretha Wiid uses the same 'marketing strategy' to sell her palatable, patriarchal discourse to her female 'clientele' as Buchan. Her discourse is marked by "bargaining and marketing language" (Pillay 2011:190), with which she persuades and convinces women to buy into her discourse. The marketing strategy used by Wiid to legitimate her discourse and convince people that her teachings are worthy of following can be seen in the following manner:

Wiid does not only use Biblical texts to legitimate her discourse and sanctify male headship, but also to imply that Biblical texts have some sort of magical component that, when used, will magically resolve her followers' marital problems. An example of this is when Wiid testifies to writing Bible verses on stones and placing it under her and her husband's bed to promote good sex (cf. Vroue wat glo 2014). Wiid sees Biblical texts as the Word of God and therefore (according to John 1:1) God self. She teaches her followers that when they use God's word, they are guaranteed to get results and receive blessings (Wiid 2008a).

Wiid also uses her and her husband, Francois' own "success story" as "proof" of a "recipe that can make your marriage work, can save it, or simply enhance it" ("... 'n resep ... wat jou

huwelik kan laat werk, kan red, of bloot kan verbeter") (Wiid 2010:17) and as a marketing strategy to 'sell' her discourse entrenched with palatable patriarchy. She names pornography, adultery, physical abuse, financial problems, and verbal abuse as some of the things that she and her husband struggled with in their relationship, but was able to overcome (cf. Beyers 2009, Huisgenoot, cf. Rapport 2009d, cf. Thamm 2009). Wiid reassures her followers that in a similar way, God can make a success story out of their broken relationships and lives. Through her discourse, Wiid therefore implies that women can "simply" submit to their husbands to bring change amidst negative and even life threatening and abusive marital relationships. She motivates women to simply submit, stand firm in their faith and follow her recipe to guarantee their own 'success stories'. Following this recipe, according to Wiid, will guarantee that women "will be safe in paradise".

Although the influence of internalised oppression as described by Kretzschmar has to be considered amidst a society with a patriarchal and oppressive history, Kandiyoti's notion of patriarchal bargaining can be seen as a major contributing factor to the rationale and motivation behind Wiid's discourse and the popularity of the movement. Wiid proposes that by 'simply' submitting to their husbands and honouring their husbands' kingship, women can justify spending money on clothing (Wiid 2008b) (perhaps implying economical prosperity), can guarantee their husbands' faithfulness and eliminate female 'competition' for their husbands' attention (cf. Wiid 2012:132, cf. Wiid 2008b, cf. Wiid 2009b). According to this bargain, female subordination can also guarantee men's involvement as fathers and spouses and that their children will form a part of "a changed generation". This bargaining even includes women being able to contribute to the "welfare" of South Africa as a country and lead South Africa to become, what Wiid describes as a "Christian country" (Wiid 2008a).

With the discussion in chapter 5 about the transitions that have been taking place in the South African context and the intersections between race, class. and gender taken into consideration, the possibility exists that the white, Afrikaner, female followers of the Worthy Women Movement are bargaining from a place of uncertainty with the aim of regaining control and a sense of security. The crisis of masculinity and whiteness experienced by white, Afrikaner men in South Africa as a result of a perceived loss power and security also has an influence on the status, security and position of women in the South African context. All white people in South Africa operate from a place of white privilege so that white women's lives and identities are, like their male counterparts, strongly influenced by their position within the race and class schema in South Africa. Although white women mainly received

benefits of whiteness, especially in the history of South Africa (and today) through their association with white men, they also experience a sense of loss as a result of the weakening position of the white men with whom they associate. White women experienced a sense of 'second hand superiority and supremacy' as a result of the racial divides of the apartheid era, which was lost in the transition to a democratic South Africa.

Wiid's discourse should therefore be seen in the light of the larger societal changes that have been taking place in and around the lives of the followers the Worthy Women Movement and of Wiid herself. Wiid's discourse provides women with a utopian picture of the perfect family life, where men will regain a sense of security and control; a situation in which men will be able to answer "yes" to the question "Am I man enough" (Wiid 2008b)? Wiid assumes that when men are enabled by their wives to feel "man enough" (Wiid 2008b) at home and take back their rightful position as head of the household, women will also regain security through their association with their husbands. She assumes and promotes the idea that when women honour their husbands as king, prophet and priest in the household, husbands will keep them safe and take on the role of breadwinner in the family.

Wiid, however, does not only assume that men will feel "man enough" (Wiid 2008b) at home as a result of female subordination, but also that the larger societal problems within the South African context will be solved through female submission. She therefore implies that women will not only gain the benefits of a more involved, secure, and loving husband as bargain for their submission to male headship, but also a utopian sense of security amidst the larger societal changes that has been taking place in South Africa. Wiid therefore seems to operate from a place of uncertainty and crisis with regard to whiteness and gender relations. With the information with regard to the crisis of whiteness in South Africa, as well as the links that exist between gender inequality and racism taken into consideration, it does not come as a surprise that attempts to re-install notions and practices of female subordination will surface in an effort to restore the status/position of specifically white men and as a result, secondarily of white women.

With Wiid's marketing strategies and the suggested bargains that women will receive in return for female subordination taken into account, her discourse may be perceived as an attractive alternative to abusive relationships, economic disparity, absent husbands and fathers, insecurity and a loss of social status, as well as the current socio- and political changes in a "non-Christian" South Africa that leads to feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. Wiid, after all, suggests to women that submitting to their husbands and honouring them as

122

king in the house will result in them "being safe in paradise" (Wiid 2008a). These benefits hardly seem like a hard bargain to negotiate.

6.6   Conclusion

Chapter 6, in combination with the findings of the research done in chapter 5, was aimed at answering the questions with regard to the reasons behind the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement. Mary McClintock Fulkerson shows that women who do not identify themselves with feminist and other liberation struggles are often left out of the feminist subject 'woman'. According to this statement, it became clear that Wiid's discourse also does not fit into what is often regarded as the feminist subject. In an attempt to move away from this over-simplified approach, the question with regard to the relationships between subordination and agency was explored. The notion of internalised oppression, which takes place "when the oppressed accept or internalise the negative perceptions that those in power have of them" (Kretzschmar 1998:173), were discussed.

This research, as well as the research done on patriarchal bargaining, suggested that although it might at first glance seem as if Wiid's followers are mere innocent and passive victims in need of conscientisation, the power dynamics at work are far more complex. Although internalised oppression may have an influence on the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement, it was found that women often resist processes of transition away from patriarchy, despite the fact that the obstacles presented by patriarchy often outweigh any form of economic or emotional security that can be gained through it. The research on patriarchal bargaining therefore suggested that women use different strategies within a patriarchal society "to maximize security and optimize life options" (Kandiyoti 1988:284). Women therefore do not only internalise oppressive images and perceptions, but also abide by patriarchal rules and norms as a result of the dangers associated with not complying to these rules on the one hand, as well as the privileges associated with abiding by them on the other hand. These findings, as well as a consideration of the marketing language often used by Wiid in her discourse, suggest that patriarchal bargaining also plays a role in the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement.

7   Conclusionary remarks and possible further studies

7.1   Introduction

This chapter will serve to give an overview of the findings and research conducted in this thesis. An attempt will also be made to answer the research questions that were laid out in chapter 1. Suggestions for further studies that arose from the research conducted in this chapter will also be made.

7.2   Summary and findings

The first chapter of this thesis served as a general introduction to the study. A general overview of themes, the aims of the research, the research question and the proposed structure of the study was laid out in this chapter. This chapter can be seen as an overview of the line of thought of the research that was conducted as a whole. The findings of the research will be discussed and will be used as basis for an attempt to answer the research questions that was proposed in chapter 1.

In chapter 2, an overview of the history of the Worthy Women Movement was given. This chapter also examined the events in Gretha Wiid's life, pertaining to her own struggles with an unfaithful husband and abusive relationships that led to the formation of the Worthy Women Movement, as well as the content of Wiid's discourse. Critique from churches and the media, which has been aimed against Wiid's discourse, as well as her response to this critique, was offered. This chapter introduced the main conversation partner, Gretha Wiid, who was engaged with in later chapters from various feminist theological points of departure. This chapter therefore laid the foundation for a better understanding of the content and dynamics at work in the Worthy Women Movement.

In chapter 1, Wiid's approach to her movement as the mirror image of Angus Buchan's Mighty Men Conference became clear (Beyers 2009). Wiid therefore adapted and formed her discourse to correspond with Buchan's discourse. The reason for this, according to Wiid, is that "mighty men should have worthy women" (Jackson 2009). The research in this chapter was conducted with the help of both primary sources in the form of DVD's of Wiid's live performances and the book *Onblusbare liefde,* written by her, as well as various magazine and newspaper articles produced by the media (The *Huisgenoot* magazine, the *Beeld* news paper, the *Rapport* newspaper, the News24 website etc.). This research suggested that a complimentary view between men (as mighty men) and women (as worthy women) formed

the basis of Wiid's discourse. Wiid suggests that all men have one fundamental question that they need to be answered, namely "Am I man enough?" (Wiid 2008b).

With the help of a feminist theological lens, the content of Wiid's discourse was divided into the following categories: 1) Female submission and male headship; 2) Gender identities; and 3) The female body and sexuality. Wiid suggests that men look to their wives to answer the question with regard to their manliness, so that the responsibility to make men feel man enough rests on the shoulders of women. Wiid suggests that a wife can do this by calling her husband 'king' and also by treating him like a king in the house, even in times when he does not deserve such treatment (Wiid 2012:132). Wiid also seems to suggest that women's sexuality should be used as a means to an end so that women can help their husbands to feel man enough and desired through sex (Wiid 2008b). Even when wives do not feel like having sex with their husbands, the role that they can play in making their husbands feel man enough should be enough motivation for them to have sex with their husbands regardless (Wiid 2008b). It was seen that the themes of complimentary natural traits assigned to women and men, as well as the use of sex as a means to an end was two of the focus points in Wiid's discourse. As can be seen in the discussions in chapter 3 and 4, these two themes were identified in Wiid's discourse to engage with from a feminist theological perspective.

Through the research done, it became clear that Wiid received critique from various platforms, including churches (for example De Villiers 2009a) and the media (for example Beeld 2009, Rapport 2009a, Rapport 2009b, Rapport 2009c, Rapport 2009d, Thamm 2009, Radloff 2010). Wiid dedicated a whole section of her website to respond to the criticism that she receives (Wiid 2015). When comparing the primary sources of Wiid's discourse (DVDs and her book), it became clear that Wiid uses a nuanced approach in her response to critique (cf. Wiid 2015).

Despite this critique from various platforms, the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement was seen to be astounding. Wiid started her Worthy Women Conferences in 2009 in Pretoria and has expanded it to also include a Conference in Cape Town in 2015 as a result of high demand and her growing popularity. Consequently, it became clear that although overtones of female submission and male headship could be detected in Wiid's discourse, the female followers and supporters of the Worthy Women Movement continues to grow in numbers.

In chapter 3 the focus was shifted to introduce feminist theological voices to the conversation. An overview of the aims, definitions and content of feminist theory, as well as

feminist theology was presented. This theory was used to engage Wiid's discourse in general and the first theme that was detected in her discourse, namely essentialist traits assigned to women (and men) especially. The life-giving aims of feminist theology to create an equal and just society for all without hierarchical gender approaches and norms seemed to be in contrast to Wiid's teachings of female subordination and male headship.

With the content of Wiid's discourse with its patriarchal overtones taken into consideration, it may come as a surprise to some that this discourse of female submission is promoted by a woman. Wiid's discourse was therefore found to fit into the category of what Nadar (2009) has labelled for*men*ism, which refers to a belief in the inherent superiority of men that is promoted and sustained by women. For*men*ism is therefore oppressive to women and beneficial to men (Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:143). Wiid also has an essentialist approach to female submission, and advises women to accept their submissive roles gladly, because it is, in her perspective, part of God's plan and part of the essential nature of women (and men) (Nadar & Potgieter 2010b:146, Wiid 2008a).

The exploration of theory that was conducted on the essentialist approach to gender identity formation and the subsequent engagement with Wiid's discourse suggested that her language and discourse are entrenched with essentialist assumptions about gender identities and roles. The study also suggested that Wiid has a deterministic and naturalist view of gender, so that gender traits are assumed to be natural and not the result of cultural and contextual influences. Wiid also seems to see female gender traits as complimentary to male gender traits when she describes men as being more analytical and less emotional when compared to the emotional tendencies of women (Wiid 2008b). Her discourse also suggests a hierarchical relationships between men and women, in which men's gender traits are defined as the norm (for example, when men are described as naturally being visual beings (Wiid 2008b) and women's gender traits defined as 'other' (for example, when women are advised to adjust their appearance to fit into a picture that their husbands will find attractive (Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b, Wiid 2012:132). It therefore seems as if Wiid's discourse on gender identities and roles support hierarchical relationships in which women are seen as subordinate to men.

In chapter 4, the feminist theological engagement with Wiid's discourse was continued. The focus on this chapter, however, turned to the third theme that was identified in Wiid's discourse in chapter 2, namely sexuality. An overview of sexuality was first given to show that sexuality is about more than just sexual pleasure and procreation. Sexuality therefore should not only be understood as something that we *do* but also to who we *are* as body selves

(Nelson & Longfellow 1994:xiv). The wide variety of meanings attached to sexuality, so that sexuality can be seen as either good or negative and as an arena in which men can oppress women, was also highlighted (cf. Kurth et al. 2000:323).

A distinction was also drawn between a Christian sexual ethics based on relationships of justice and love on the one hand, and a legalistic approach to sexual ethics, in which the legitimacy of a sexual relation is judged according to an individual's marriage status, on the other. The research conducted suggested that a legalistic ethics can lead to exploitative sex within marriage relationships. An engagement that was done with Wiid's discourse in the light of the research conducted, suggested that she has a legalistic approach to sexuality in her discourse, so that the danger of exploitative sex within marriage relationships are increased.

Through research done on sexual scripts and mentalités, it was found that Wiid's discourse did not reflect new perspectives on female sexuality and the body, but rather reflected existing social sexual scripts according to which individuals are expected to act. It was also seen that these sexual scripts have a long history and that the roots of these assumptions can be traced back to the Christian church fathers, in particular to Augustine and Tertullian. According to their teachings, women could be categorised according to the categories of virgin, wife, or whore (Ruether 1974:164). This led to the formation of the Madonna/Whore Complex/Duality, according to which a woman is either seen as a Madonna, "whose grace derives from her marital chastity" (Conrad 2006:311) or as a Whore, "who, as an unmarried women, exudes sexuality" (Conrad 2006:311) and can be seen as temptress. The engagement with Wiid's discourse that was conducted from the basis of this research suggested that her discourse reflects these same assumptions; so that a woman is either seen as virgin, wife or whore. Women who are not in marriage relationships are expected to be virgins, while wives are expected to hand over "their bodies and their sexual decisions completely into the hands of men" (Nortjé-Meyer 2011:5, cf. Radloff 2010) and hence, to place their bodies and sexuality under the control of men. Women who find themselves outside of either of these categories, however, are described as lustful (Wiid 2012:132, Wiid 2008b, Wiid 2009b) and therefore seem to fit into the third category of whore.

From the research done in chapters 2, 3 and 4, it seems safe to say that Wiid's discourse is entrenched with for*men*ist, essentialist language of female subordination and male headship. These assumptions seem to colour her approach to gender identities and roles, the relationships between husband and wife, as well as her perpetuation and maintenance of oppressive approaches to female sexuality. With all of this taken into consideration, the

127

popularity of the movement seems peculiar. From the basis of the theoretical study conducted in chapters 2, 3 and 4, the reasons for the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement amongst its female followers was explored in chapters 5 and 6. Before reasons for the popularity could be explored, the influence of the wider South African context, as a country in transition after the abolishment of apartheid, was explored and brought into conversation with the formation of masculine gender identities. This research was conducted in chapter 5, where it was found that white, Afrikaner men are experiencing a crisis of whiteness, which spills over into an experience of a masculinity crisis. The transitions that have occurred in South Africa have led to a perceived shift in masculine identity so that there are now several contenders for the hegemonic masculine spot that was previously occupied by white men[49]. Issues of race, gender and class were seen to play a role. White men often feel powerless as a result of the transition in South Africa, where power was handed over from the hands of the white minority into the hands of black men. As a result of this, white women are also experiencing a crisis, because of a loss of the privileges and power that they received because of their association with white Afrikaner men during the apartheid era.

Chapter 6 was built on the findings of chapter 5, so that the complex relationship between race, gender, and class was found to have an effect on the position of white Afrikaans women in South Africa. The discourse of Wiid and the support from the female followers of the Worthy Women Movement was seen to challenge the traditional view of the feminist subject 'woman' that is often associated with women who support liberation and feminist struggles. The research conducted suggested that the wider context in which the followers of the Worthy Women Movement find themselves have an influence on the strategies that they employ within unequal gender relationships.

The work of Landman, Botha, Dreyer, and Albertyn, as well as the research conducted by Shefer et al. (2008) highlighted the influence of patriarchy, androcentrism and sexism, not only in the history of the South African context, but also in contemporary South Africa. Patriarchy, androcentrism and sexism therefore still form a part of the lives of South African women today. The information about the long history of female subordination and oppression suggested a possibility that the notion of internalised oppression, which refers to the moment

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[49] "In South African the history of white supremacy suggests that white, ruling class masculinity was hegemonic. There is some truth in this, but ... it fails to capture the stubborn reality of African life" (Morrell 1998:616). "While hegemonic South African masculinity under apartheid was racist white masculinity, it is also important to point out that dominance is never total or complete. Even in the context of apartheid there were many different masculinities which were involved in processes of contestation with the politically and militarily dominant white Afrikaner form (Vincent 2006:356).

"when the oppressed accept or internalise the negative perceptions that those in power have of them" (Kretzschmar 1998:173) may play a role in women's motivation to support the discourse of female subordination and male headship proposed in the discourse of the Worthy Women Movement.

Research on the relationship between agency and subordination, however, suggested that women are not in all cases mere victims, but that women also exercise agency in oppressive situations. Women, therefore, do not only internalise oppressive images and perceptions, but also abide by patriarchal rules and norms as a result of the dangers associated with not complying to these rules on the one hand, as well as the privileges associated with tolerating it on the other. These findings suggest that patriarchal bargaining, which refers to the fact that "women strategize within a set of concrete constraints" (Kandiyoti 1998:284) also plays a role in the popularity of the Worthy Women Movement.

It was also seen that Wiids' discourse is entrenched with notions and references to marketing strategies and bargaining. It seems as if Wiid uses the story of the way in which her own marriage was saved as a sort of proof of the success of her discourse. This, as well as Wiid's use of Biblical texts and God-language to legitimise her statements, therefore plays a part in the motivation of women to buy into her discourse. Wiid also provides women with information on what the proposed outcome will be when they do submit to their husbands; this includes an involved and loving husband and father (cf. Wiid 2008b), the elimination of female 'competition for their husbands' attention (cf. Wiid 2008b, cf. Wiid 2009b), the opportunity for women to contribute to the 'welfare' of South Africa (cf. Nortjé-Meyer 2011:3) and children that will form part of a 'changed generation' (cf. Wiid 2008a).

It therefore seems as if complex power relations have an influence on the agency, subordination and resistance of the followers of the Worthy Women Movement.

7.3   Answering the research questions

The aim of this thesis was to answer the following research questions

1. How can a feminist theological approach contribute to the deconstruction of the views and discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement?

2. How do the views and discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement contribute to, maintain and promote a context in which the female body "is inscribed by patriarchal culture"?

3. What is the reason for women maintaining and supporting a movement and culture in which they themselves, as well as other women, are oppressed?

The first research question was answered through the research conducted in the thesis as a whole. The research was conducted in order to identify oppressive themes operative in Wiid's discourse with the help of a feminist theological lense. This lense helped to highlight the internal working of the oppressive language used in Wiid's discourse to promote the uneven distribution of power, essentialist approaches to gender identities, gender roles and sexuality, as well as female subordination and male headship. A feminist theological method was also used to highlight the intersectionalities that exist between gender, race, and class within the South African context that were seen to have an influence in Wiid's discourse. This method also helped to obtain a better understanding of the oppressive assumptions implicit in Wiid's discourse. In short, a feminist theological approach was a helpful tool to reach a better understanding of the power dynamics, context, assumptions and discourse at work behind the oppressive discourse of the Worthy Women Movement.

The second research question, namely 'How do the views and discourse proposed by the Worthy Women Movement contribute to, maintain and promote a context in which the female body "is inscribed by patriarchal culture"?' was answered in chapters 2 and 3. Through the research done in these chapters, it became apparent that the reflection of patriarchy and for*men*ism in Wiid's discourse can be seen as the first way in which the views and discourse of the Worthy Women Movement contribute to, maintain and promote a context in which the female body is inscribed by a patriarchal culture. The essentialist approaches to gender identities and roles and to sexuality that are reflected in her discourse also contribute to, maintain and promote the oppression of women. The reflections of societal sexual scripts in Wiid's discourse, which can be seen as oppressive to women, also contribute to oppressive perceptions of women in society.

The third research question, namely 'What is the reason for women maintaining and supporting a movement and culture in which they themselves, as well as other women, are oppressed?' was answered in chapters 5 and 6. Here, it was found that there a complex contextual and societal influences that can be seen to play a role in the lives of the followers of the Worthy Women Movement. This includes the intersections that exist between gender, race, and class, as well as the current crisis of whiteness experienced by white people, and more specifically, white men in South Africa. This can also be linked to the masculinity crisis experienced by many men in South Africa. These dynamics also have an influence on the

white, female followers of the Worthy Women Movement. It was found that while the notion of internalised oppression may play a role in the popularity of the movement, patriarchal bargaining is the biggest contributing factor where women are seen to abide to patriarchal rules and laws as a result of both threats associated with not complying to these rules, as well as benefits associated with women who do comply.

7.4 Possibilities for further exploration

7.4.1 White women, race, class, gender and religion

As was shown in chapter six, Mary McClintock Fulkerson points to the need for a more complex view and broadening of the subject 'woman'. Fulkerson (1994:3) shows that feminist theology has often had an over simplified view of the subject women in which feminism are only oriented toward women who identify themselves with feminism and other liberation theologies. The subject 'woman' therefore needs to be broadened to include the experiences and approaches of women who do not fit into the narrow approach to the Feminist subject 'woman'. As was shows in chapter six the question therefore needs to be asked if "feminist theology's definitions of 'woman' and current ways of problematizing that subject are adequate to encompass a feminist inquiry into women... who are outside feminist conversations?" (Fulkerson 1994:3-7).

As became evident in the research done in this thesis, the complexities of race, gender, class, sexuality, etc. need to be taken into consideration when approaching women and their experiences. As was shown in chapter 5, a lot of research is being done on the intersections between race, identity, and masculinity[50]. The work of Ruth Frankenberg in *White women, race matters,* can be seen as an example of work that also takes the impact of these intersections on the lives of white women into consideration. Her writings, however, can also be seen as one of the few examples where research into the impact of gender, race, and class on the lives of white women was conducted. While the intersection between race, gender, class, and theology have been examined, this research often focuses on the impact of these intersections on the lives of black women and on masculinities. This seems to be particularly true in the South African context.

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[50] The extensive work done by Robert Morrell can be seen as a good example. To read some of his work on this subject, see: Morrell, R. 2001a. Introduction. In: *Changing men in Southern Africa.* London: Zed Books Ltd. 1-3.

The information gained through the research done in chapter six seems to suggest a complex dynamic at play between whiteness, class, sexuality and religion. These intersections have not been explored adequately, however, so that further exploration is needed into the complex dynamics and influences of these intersections on identity formation, gender roles and gender relations. The effects of this on women's agency on the one hand, and their submission on the other, can also lead to significant research and helpful findings. This research would be significant within the South African context where oppression on the grounds of gender and race still play a significant role and can contribute to a better understanding of the complex power dynamics at play within the South African society. This research would also contribute to the larger feminist framework, however, and would be another step in the direction of broadening the subject 'woman' as suggested by Fulkerson (1994:3-7).

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