
By

'Mamoketsi Nkiseng Ellen Ntho

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand, in full fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

DECEMBER 2010
Declaration

I, Mamoeketsi Nkiseng Ellen Ntho, declare that this thesis is my original work. It has never been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University. I am submitting it for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Social Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Name of Student: Mamoeketsi Nkiseng Ellen Ntho (9605953N)

Name of Supervisor: Professor Shireen Hassim

Date: 06/12/2010
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Academy for Education and Development (AED) under Kellogg Foundation provided me with financial support to do this PhD, this support made my academic life bearable as I did not struggle financially, but most importantly the Foundation allowed me to study at the best University. Imelda Von Rudloff and all AED staff went beyond financial sponsors and became a family, I am grateful to their love and I also want to thank Kellogg for creating a community leader in me; the sky is the limit.

My family, friends, colleagues and staff at Wits helped me to complete this study. My greatest thanks are firstly owed to my supervisor, Professor Shireen Hassim who helped me to articulate my research ideas which were initially very hazy. Her guidance in crafting a theoretical framework rescued me from an academic embarrassment, thank you very much.

I am grateful to my children, Moeketsi (Max) and Lineo (Meme), for believing in me amidst the pain they were going through. I love them for giving me unconditional love and support that I needed. In spite of the loss of their brother and father during my study they gracefully buried their grief and enabled me to persevere and complete this project. I did this for you guys.

I am highly indebted to many friends who supported me emotionally when I was going through trying times: Nthomeng Panyane a friend and sister, Mme Matanki, Dr Tsikoane my mentor, Matholoana, Mahali, Keiso, Lebo, Isaac, Litsepiso, Selloane, the Petlane family, thanks for pushing me to my destiny, I owe it to you.

My parents and siblings deserve my special thanks for their love and support that pulled me through, I know they always wanted the best for me.

All those activists and politicians who allowed me some space in their tight schedule to interview them deserve my thanks. Librarians at archival units who helped to dig into old files deserve my thanks too.

I thank you all, and may God who walked faithfully with me bless you.
Table of Contents

Declaration

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Chapter One: Introduction ................................................................. 1

The context: a glance at the domestic context

The development context

The political context

The policy and legal context

Women’s issues and political context

Women’s issues and the electoral politics

Women, education and politics

Women, migrant labour and Lesotho’s geopolitical issues

Women’s issues and the aid industry

The women’s movement and the political context

Women’s issues and the church

Institutionalizing feminist issues: the problem

The Theoretical framework: Transnational feminism

Feminism

The transnational Space and feminist agenda

Transnational feminism and democracy

Transnational feminism and Africa

Presenting a feminist paradox: the rationale

Research methodology

Interviews

Document analysis

Structure of chapters ...........................................................................
Chapter 2: The State and the Transnational Feminist Agenda

Introduction

State feminism

Women’s policy Units: Institutionalising the agenda

The women’s Bureau

The Department of women’s and youth affairs

Ministries of women/gender

Location; Proximity to resources or state control

Conclusions

Transnational feminism, dependency and undemocratic states

Chapter 3: The Domestic Political System and the Place of Feminist Issues

The political system, the transnational space and women’s issues

The political system and the place of transnational feminism

The political parties and feminist issues

Big parties

Elections and transnational feminist agenda of representation

Conclusions

Chapter Four: Women’s Organizations and Articulation of Transnational Feminist Issues

Introduction

Conceptualizing the women’s movement

Characteristics of the Lesotho women’s movement

Profile of women in the front of the movement

Politics of engagement

Welfare or ‘bread and butter politics

Knowledge and rights-based groups

Conclusion

Chapter Five: Mixed-sex NGOs and Global Feminist Issues
Introduction

conceptualizing the civil society

the emergence of the civil society and NGO-isation of activism

NGOs in Lesotho

NGOs, financial dependence and the place of feminist issues

NGOs, democracy and women’s political visibility

Engaging the feminist agenda

Conclusions

Chapter Six: Foreign Aid and the Institutionalization of the Global Feminist Agenda ........... 232

Introduction

The aid industry

Aid, apartheid legacy and prioritization of women’s issues

Shifting development discourses and the place of gender equality debates

International development agencies and women’s issues

UNDP

UNFPA

USAID/US embassy

Irish Aid

Conclusions

Chapter Seven: Conclusions; Sheer necessity? ................................................................. 278

Areas for further research..................................................................................................

References......................................................................................................................... 305

Appendices....................................................................................................................... 317