

Chapter 1: Introduction

The focus of this study is on how young black women within political organizations make sense of apartheid history, their roles in the present and projected futures. There are multiple ways to engage with, think and talk about the past. Despite the reality that the new South African present is in many ways different to the past, remnants of the past, political struggle symbols and narratives are still significant in the present, especially for young people involved in political organizations. The different ways that they engage with or make meaning of that past has implications for their identities in the present and in the future, as young women in politics.

This chapter provides an overview of the context of the study, including historical developments from the struggle of apartheid that impact on present day South African society. The apartheid past is very much part of present day discourses, collective public memory and the context of student politics within which this study is situated. A particularly pertinent focus is the position of women within the struggle and in the present with focus on the ANC women's league. Finally, the role of the youth historically and currently, particularly the role of the ANC youth league, is outlined. These aspects are important to explore, as the apartheid and struggle history, the role of women and the role youth, each have an impact on the identity construction of the participants of this study and the ways in which they make meaning of their roles as politically active young black women.

1.1 Ways of engaging with the apartheid past

One of the key ways in which the South African past has been engaged with or thought about was through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC was used as a public space for sharing narratives, many of which had been previously marginalized or entirely

silenced, to understand the past and also as a therapeutic space for closure and healing, which would also contribute to nation building (Andrews, 2007; Becker, 2011; De Kok, 2007; Green, Sonn & Matsebula, 2007). It seemed there was a formula for healing; “the more stories, the more truth, the more reconciliation” (Andrews, 2007, p. 159). According to Green, Sonn & Matsebula (2007) the big problem of social justice was peripheral within the TRC. The perpetrators of specific acts or agents of the apartheid system were the focus, rather than the leaders or the creators of the whole system or more systemic injustices (Green et al, 2007). Therefore, the structural impacts and how apartheid impacted on the daily living of black South Africans were not investigated or evaluated, which explains the continuities of apartheid in multiple levels of society today (Green et al, 2007). In addition, due to the focus on prominent figures and narratives, some of the everyday seemingly minor acts and complicity with the apartheid system from those who were privileged by this system were not addressed nor were the structural impacts, nor were those in significant leadership positions held responsible (Vice, 2010; Green et al, 2007).

Public holidays, public memorials, museums and the renaming of public spaces and streets were also created with the goal of healing the traumas of the past and keeping the past alive or in mind (Marschall, 2010 cited in Becker, 2011). For example, the grand narrative of the Soweto uprising and the iconic symbol of Hector Petersen, is prominent in any account of the apartheid past (Baines, 2007). There is now a formal memorial site in Soweto in Hector Petersen’s honour. The remembering of the Sharpsville Massacre, the renaming of some airports (e.g. OR Tambo International), the changing of street names and the Apartheid museum are just some further examples of the symbolic memorialisations.

Some of the prominent figures from the past become relevant or focused on at different times; the significance of historical narratives is reinterpreted in the present. Mamphela

Ramphela¹ has recently made headlines with the launch of a new party AGANG. She was a leader in the Black Consciousness movement, an academic, writer, doctor and former-Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town and of course perhaps most famously, Steve Biko's partner. Her entry in the current political landscape is therefore understood in relation to her symbolic iconic status in the past (Ramphela, 1991; Yates, Gqola & Ramphela, 1998). Nelson Mandela², the first democratically elected president in South Africa remains iconic across the political spectrum despite some attempts to rewrite his role in the negotiated democratic state as "selling out". Statues have been erected in his honor, places and events named after him and an international Mandela day has been created to carry on his legacy. There are many other figures that have been celebrated and significant in the South Africa social and political spaces.

There are different forms of representation of the past and collective narratives; a particularly important form being music. Liberation songs sung by black South Africans in the past were used as a tool to "accelerate change"; to educate and update people on political plans and occurrences (Gray, 2004, p.85; Gilbert, 2007). The purpose of songs for politicians was to influence people or their followers to particular points of views and or visions, a way of constructing a collective identity (Gray, 2004; Gunner, 2008). Songs were often updated and adapted by the different communities (Gray, 2004; Gilbert, 2007; Gunner, 2008). "Any suffering that [black people] experienced was made much more real by song and rhythm" (Biko, 1978, p. 42). A really important factor about liberation songs is that collectively they were a tool of unification that could transcend the boundaries and issues that could possibly separate people, like ethnicity, class and political affiliation. Music creates connections

¹ In January 2014 Mamphela Ramphele is announced as the Democratic Alliance (DA) Presidential candidate, at the beginning of February Mamphela Ramphele announced she would no longer be running as the DA Presidential candidate.

² The study was conducted before the death of Nelson Mandela.

between people; creating symbols to share, an experience between people, symbols that people could relate to (Biko, 1978).

The public and some political figures have re-appropriated and sung songs of the political struggle creating interesting and sometimes heated debates on their meaning and use within post apartheid South Africa. A song that was used by our president Jacob Zuma *Umshini wami* (My machine gun), prior to him being voted as president, rallied public support, elicited certain public memories and feelings of a past that was more dangerous and oppressive, a time of freedom fighters (Gunner, 2008). Another instance of appropriating the past and one that was covered quite intensely in the media is that of *Dubula iBhunu* (Kill the Boer) sung repeatedly by Julius Malema (The Mercury, 2011) the expelled ANC youth league president and now, (since the completion of this study), the leader of the newly formed Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) political party. The singing of the song was contested because it was believed that it motivated attacks and killings of white Afrikaans farmers. Even though songs can be used as symbols bringing people together they can also lead to divisions.

1.2 Women and Politics

Even though women were involved in the political struggle in South Africa, politics was perceived mainly as the domain of men where they directed visions and took control; women were excluded from making crucial decisions and often relegated to support roles (Geisler, 2000; Hassim, 2002). Women were only allowed to be full members of the ANC from 1943 when the ANC Women's League was created (Geisler, 2000). The ANC Women's league took their direction from the goals identified by male leadership (Hassim, 2004). Being part of a bigger body, the ANC prevented women from following ideas and actions independent of that body that were important to them; there was no autonomy (Geisler, 2000).

Hassim (2006) asserts that the position of women in the struggle must be understood through a feminist lens. “Regardless of race, class, ethnicity, and other factors, women are consistently defined as political outsiders or as second class citizens whose entry into the public sphere is either anachronistic and short term or conditional upon their maternal social roles”(Hassim, 2006, p. 6). Understanding women’s experiences within political spaces is about engaging with the personal as the popular slogan says ‘the personal is political’. Engaging with the personal reveals the ways in which patriarchal beliefs and practices are embedded in the everyday and sometime private experiences of women’s lives and through showing and sharing experiences, space for resistance may be created (Weedon, 1987).

At the point of negotiating democracy, women’s roles within the higher levels of political structures were seen as insignificant because they did not have much power to direct or control the passage into democracy (Hassim, 2002). The political identity of women was centred on motherhood; women came into the movement as concerned mothers fighting for the future of their children (Geisler, 2000; Hassim, 2004). The symbol of motherhood united different kinds of women across South Africa but the motherhood symbol also led to women’s issues being sidelined with a focus on the nationalist project (Geisler, 2000). In exile and even within the military wing *Umkhonto weSizwe* (MK) women were not part of the higher commanding structures and often were in administrative and supportive roles, (Geisler, 2000; McEwan, 2000). Even the narratives of women as leaders, feminists and or intellectuals were marginalized (April, 2012; Ginwala, 2011).

The family, where the maternal role is rooted, is seen as a personal and private space, but these areas are also engaged with publicly and have an influence on the public space (Billington, Hockey & Strawbridge, 1998). The public space is perceived as men’s domain, so there is a need to capture women’s experiences or narratives, understanding these personal stories as in and of themselves being political. “People who view themselves as fully human,

as subjects, become activists, no matter how limited the sphere of their activism may be,” (Hill-Collins, 1986, p.524). It is important to keep this in mind in thinking about the ways in which women engaged politically in the past and in the present, incorporating the multiple challenges that they face. The following section looks at the role of youth with focus on the ANC youth league (ANCYL).

1.3 Youth and Politics

The ANC formed a youth league in 1944 under the leadership of Muziwakhe Lembende and members range from 14 years to 35 years old (Botiveau, 2006; Mothlabi, 1984). “It advocated the restoration of the land to the people, one African nationality under an African majority rule, and the drafting of a program of action to give direction to the struggle. The program of action, drawn up in 1949 shunned empty negotiations with the government and adopted a policy of non- co- operation with the government,” (Mothlabi, 1984, p. 6).

This program of action was still evident during the eighties; when the youth were highly involved in activism against the state. They boycotted school; they fought against the state police and they took action against those who worked with the state within the community (Botiveau, 2006; Seekings, 1996, Perrow, 2004). The goal of the ANC was to make South Africa ungovernable initially through peaceful resistance and then finally through violent acts (Botiveau, 2006; Seekings, 1996). Due to their big role in making South Africa ungovernable, the youth were called the “Young Lions” by the late Oliver Tambo, who was the ANC president during the-1980s (Seekings, 1996). At the point of negotiation, the ANC had the difficult task of controlling the militant youth, who did not agree with negotiating with the oppressors, and if not reigned in, could have jeopardized the whole negotiation process (Seekings, 1996). Thinking about the youth of the past within the present there is a sense that being young then entailed being “a significant agent of social transformation”

(Perrow, 2004, p. 368). As the social and political landscape changed so there was a change in vision within the ANCYL, it was re-launched in 1990 having lost its militant agenda (Botiveau, 2006). Since then the ANCYL adopted a militant agenda under the leadership of Julius Malema making strong statements on nationalism and race issues. The ANCYL executive has since been disbanded in March 2013 (Letsoalo, 2013) due to several disagreements on visions and actions with the ANC.

The ideology of the ANCYL is founded upon the ANC values, that being “promotion of democracy, anti-sexism and anti-racialism” (Botiveau, 2006, p. 37). In terms of representation of women, the youth league has a minimum quota of 40% representation of women at the multiple levels (Botiveau, 2006). The idea of adequate representation of women within the organizations is an important task for both the ANC and the ANCYL but in the past women have generally played secondary supportive roles. So it would be interesting to explore what kind of symbols or associations are used by young women today to speak of their roles within the political structures in which they are members.

The South African Students Congress (SASCO) is a diverse student organization operating within tertiary institutions (*Sasco*, 2013). It draws inspiration from the ANC and from what could be described as broadly socialist ideologies (*Sasco*, 2013). Its key strategic tasks are: “Establishing a single coordinated system of education, building a democratic system of education a non-racial system, a non sexist system and a development System”(Sasco, 2013).

The Student Representative Council at the University of Witswatersrand was SASCO majority during the collection of the data of this research project, and elected by the Wits student body. They participate in university governance structures; have national political affiliation with students on other campuses and with political parties (*SRC homepage*, 2012; 2013), notably the ANC.

1.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has given an overview of the different ways in which the apartheid past has been engaged with. The TRC was seen to be a significant process in terms of restoration and reconciliation although having its limitations. There have been other ways of making meaning and remembering the past in South African social spaces be it public holidays, public memorials and singing of songs just to name a few processes.

The role of women in politics is also pertinent; the issue of gender was marginalized or sacrificed for the racial struggle. The idea of women within the South African political space has been centred on the symbol of a mother and playing a supportive role. On another level the youth played a militant role at the forefront of the struggle but that militancy was lulled to ensure a smooth and peaceful transition to democracy. The ways in which the past, women and youth within politics have been portrayed and understood has bearing and significance within the present in particular for the participants of this research. There is focus on the ANC as it was at the centre of the apartheid struggle and is significant to the participants of this research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides the theoretical framework for the study by drawing on relevant literature in relation to the structural dimensions of race, class and gender, and the intersections between these in the construction of identity. Race issues are still relevant in the present and are thought of in light of the apartheid history and the continuities and discontinuities in the present, particularly in relation to minimal class mobility and increasing socio-economic inequalities and how that possibly plays out in the present. Gender is also critical in understanding young women, taking into account the ways in which gender issues were marginalized in the struggle and in the negotiation of freedom. While these dimensions of identity may be considered separately for analytic purposes, they intersect in the construction of individual identities. This intersectionality is reflected in that the section that focuses on ‘race’ links this to class and the section that focuses on gender links this to ‘race’. The chapter then presents a narrative approach which offers a holistic view of individual lives and intersectional identities, while connecting these lives with longer historical narratives and wider social structures.

2.1 Race (and class)

‘Race’ issues and racial reasoning continues to be of great significance in contemporary post apartheid South Africa (Posel, 2001; Vice 2010); therefore it is imperative to pause and explore these issues and think about their relevance in the present. Although the longer history of colonization is important, the immediate history of the system of apartheid is of critical importance for the “hinge generation” of today (Hoffman, 2004). “Apartheid was not a thing in itself. It was rather, a name for host of events, things and processes” (Chipkin, 2007, p. 180). This system legally, socially and politically, discriminated against black

people, asserting the privilege, status and elevation of white people and was mainly enforced through violent means (Steyn, 2001; Sonn, 2012). Apartheid ensured white privilege (Badat, 2009). Race issues impacted on and permeated all aspects of daily living, in seemingly minor acts or practices; black people were excluded from certain spaces services, opportunities and roles, which were reserved for white people (Durrheim, Mtose & Brown, 2011 & Sonn, 2012). Although legislation may have changed, these issues or “race troubles” still present themselves through “racial suspicion, threat and conflict” (Durrheim, Mtose & Brown, 2011, p. 1).

“The state or more generally the ruling classes, in any society have the paradigmatic prerogative of setting the template on which social identities, including racial identities, are based” (Alexander, 2007, p. 93). Racism can be viewed as an ideology which guarantees the dominance of the ruling class; therefore it can be linked to economic conditions. “Apartheid’s principal imaginary was of a society in which every ‘race’ knew and observed its proper place – economically, politically and socially” (Posel, 2001, p. 58). The apartheid system based on racist ideologies ensured a certain class of people, white people stayed in power ensuring access to resources. Therefore race and class were conflated in apartheid South Africa. In democratic South Africa “black and white are no longer synonymous with rich and poor” (Natrass & Seekings, 2001, p. 47). There have been changes in post apartheid South Africa which have perhaps added more complexities to race issues.

In order to address some of the economic issues due to apartheid, the government introduced the policy of Black Empowerment (BE) which is now called Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) to include black people in the economy (Alexander, 2007). These kinds of policies are meant to provide equal opportunities but only seem to benefit the black and is middle class but (perhaps) increasing class inequality in South Africa (Alexander, 2007). Token

appointments have also been made to hasten transformation where people who are not skilled and inadequately trained have been placed in positions (Alexander, 2007). Inclusive or exclusive of BEE, there have been new employment opportunities for the black population (Natrass & Seekings, 2001). Therefore in post apartheid South Africa, class issues have been become quite apparent and relevant in the black population. Now there is intra-racial inequality amongst black people (Natrass & Seekings, 2001). Class differences represent new “lines that divide” (Bradbury and Ndlovu, 2011).

There have been shifts, in the political dispensation and some class mobility for some black people but there are ideologies which continue to serve those in power at the economic level. In the new political dispensation, political power has been transferred to black people but within the economic sphere white people still have power (Steyn, 2001). There is still a strong relationship between race and household income (Natrass & Seekings, 2001). A particular ideology that still operates is the ideology of whiteness.

“Whiteness [is], the racial norm, the invisible center that deflects attention from itself by racializing the margins, and constructing them as the problem. Whiteness then believes in its own homogenous neutrality,” (Steyn, 2001, p. 162). It is about dominant positions and unfair privileges “while rendering these positions and privileges invisible to white people” (Green et al, 2007, p. 390). The ideology of whiteness is powerful and has assisted white people to remain dominant globally, although there are differences or complexities in varying contexts (Lewis, 2004; Steyn, 2001). Whiteness is associated with freedom and power with endless possibilities of self-creation, which is linked to the “American dream”. It is a cultural idea permeable to different social influences (Altman, 2004; Green et al, 2007).

The dominance of whites or whiteness has other personal and social implications. “People who are not who are not white can embody or perform hegemonic [dominant] whiteness

(e.g., embracing certain cultural practices, defending institutional practices, protecting particular interests)...”(Lewis, 2004, p. 634-635). Black people could be compliant or embrace whiteness. This is linked to blackness being associated with what whiteness is not. Blackness is then related to lack of power and freedom, oppression and victimhood (Altman, 2004; Ndlovu, 2012). There may be an internalization of whiteness which may complicate and or make it difficult to reconstruct or imagine other ways of being; agency is constrained most severely by economic realities. Therefore one also has to be realistic and guarded about the limits of agency; the possibilities of the self narratives are constrained by the society in which one lives (Bradbury & Miller, 2010).

Whiteness has been linked to affluent and or educated black people who have been embracing Western lifestyles (Green et al, 2007). The use of word *umlungu* (white person) to refer to a powerful or affluent black person reveals how race and class are shifting in South Africa. “The use by township youth of the term ‘*umlungu*’ (white man or white woman) to refer to wealthy black individuals. By conflating ‘race’ and ‘class’ in this way, they are, paradoxically, beginning the dialectical process of de-linking ‘race’ from ‘class’” (Alexander 2007, p. 102). The term *umlungu* may now refer to class rather than the embodiment of a white person. University educated students may possibly be referred to as *abelungu* (white people) as they might be seen as embodying class mobility and on the path to affluence.

With the political and social environment being in flux, one wonders then what it means to be black, what informs black identity or identities if it is not simply in contrast to whiteness. Biko wrote about what he termed ‘black culture,’ and defined it as the following: “[it is] a culture of defiance, self-assertion and group pride and solidarity ...a culture that emanates from a situation of common experience of oppression” (Biko, 1978, p. 46). Identities are the experiences of the self are located in culture (Billington et al, 1998) and black identity

therefore reflects common history and multiple current challenges and influences. As Hall (, 1992, p. 26) argues, “Black culture is a contradictory space...a site of strategic contestation. But it can never be simplified or explained in terms of the simple binary oppositions that are still habitually used to map it out; high and low; resistance versus incorporation; authentic versus inauthentic; experiential versus formal; opposition versus homogenization”. There are shared experiences bringing together black people, seen in the use of “we and us” but also experiences that fragment that commonality and create different kinds of black identities (Bradbury & Ndlovu, 2011). Ndlovu (2012, p. 163) argues that “people inhabit multiple identities, there are, however, particular situations, moments, and contexts where certain aspects of identity are made more dominant than others in the articulation of who we are”. Different personal narratives are silently operating in the back ground, or seem absent but are contributing meaningfully to whom a person is, and at other times those fragments are pulled from the shadows and highlighted depending on the situation and audience (McAdams, 2001 & Sampson, 1989).

Having gone through the system of apartheid to democracy and understanding the multiple and changing identities that have grown and evolved in post apartheid South Africa, there are still continuities from that era, and there are still oppressive ideologies operating. How does South Africa move on? According to Fanon (1963) a violent revolution needs to occur in order to free the colonized. Applied to the South African context, this refers to those still mentally imprisoned by apartheid (Fanon, 1963). “Freedom is the ability to define one-self with one’s possibilities held back not by the power of other people over one....If one is free at heart no man made chains can bind one to servitude” (Biko, 1978, p.101- 102). Perhaps the same questions may be applied in thinking about gender and breaking the chains of patriarchy.

2.2 Gender (and race)

In using or applying feminist thinking it is imperative to understand and define patriarchal society. The patriarchal system refers to the powers and privileges that men have compared to women and patriarchal societies are structured around the interests of men (Edley & Wetherell, 1995; Weedon, 1987). The norm is male and what is female is defined or thought of in relation to what is male, not independently (Weedon, 1987). The unequal division of labour between men and women and social relations, with women in the domestic and supportive sphere and men in the public sphere in politics and culture, is encompassed in the concept of patriarchy (Edley & Wetherell, 1995).

The two genders are seen to have different roles to fulfil, informed by their “biological sexual difference” (Weedon, 1987, p. 2). Women are viewed as being naturally equipped to be in their roles as mothers and wives (Weedon, 1987). These roles demand or call for specific qualities perceived to naturally come with femininity; being good with emotions, caring and being altruistic (Billington et al, 1998; Weedon, 1987). There is a popular thought or belief that women are “‘naturally’ better than men at dealing with and managing emotions, layered in that is the belief that women are ‘more’ emotional”; making them less rational (Billington et al, p. 161). This would translate into exclusion from the important forums of political decision making. Thinking that these roles are natural, ignores history and the role of agency or the possibility of creating different roles or identities in the future; it negates change (Weedon, 1987).

The domesticated role that women occupied and still occupy can be located within culture and the family is a primary vehicle for instilling, inspiring and implementing cultural values (Billington et al, 1998; Chodorow, 1979). This can be viewed through the bringing up of girls, in ways that perpetuate the mothering role and lead young women to see their primary positions or identities as located in the domestic sphere (Chodorow, 1979). Psychologically,

at an unconscious level, the patriarchal family structure provides a setting to create gendered personalities. Boys become less affective, more bounded or contained and less relational and girls are more dependent, supportive and caring (Chodorow, 1979, Billington et al, 1998). Chodorow's theory opens up different ways of thinking about parenting and the possibilities of challenging patriarchy through restructuring of the family (Weedon, 1987). The critique though is that this theory may be limited in its cultural and historical application (Weedon, 1987). The concept of a universal or uniform experience of women, their place and role in gender development particularly within psychoanalytic theories silences or ignores "the role of race and other social divisions, and how these might be involved in the production and reproduction of gender" (Mama, 1995, p. 148).

Scheibe (1986) writes about adventure as a fun, exciting and life giving force it enlivens narrative. Adventure is located outside the domestic space it is gendered where traditionally the men leave the home in pursuit of adventure and the women stay behind (Scheibe, 1986). This leaving of the domestic space, this adventure provides a space for the creation of more diverse identities (Scheibe, 1986). However for many women, "It is their identity as mothers, in particular, but also as wives or carers, which is crucial to their identity as women, and there may be ambivalences and contradictions surrounding paid work and a woman's self identity" (Billington et al, 1998, p.157). The roles or positions that we take on or play become part of identity; these influence how we and others view us (Billington et al, 1998). Even though there are increasing opportunities for adventure and for the creation of different kinds of identities for women, the metaphor of the mother is still significant in political narratives of South Africa.

Women may challenge their allocated roles as mothers and wives but there is still a specific and accepted way of being a woman (Weedon, 1987). A woman still has to be "attractive and desirable to men", their sexual and emotional energy and desires to be ideally directed or

dedicated to one man (Weedon, 1987, p. 3). All heterosexual women are in different ways concerned with attracting the opposite sex and it is boys and men that define or name what is beautiful or ugly (Erasmus, 1997; Mama, 1995; Weedon, 1987). Specifically the complexity of black women's attractiveness or beauty has always been juxtaposed to or conceptualized in relation to white beauty (Mama, 1995). Holloway (cited in Mama, 1995, p. 149) states that "racist discourses have historically defined black women as 'ugly' and their sexuality in negative terms". Black women in Britain and South Africa have aspired to have Eurocentric features, for example, lighter skin and not a "curvier bum" and full or thick lips (Erasmus, 1997; Mama, 1995) although, there seems to be shifts in these ideas. Erasmus writes about the complexity of black beauty, with a focus on the chemical processing of black hair and she concludes that "... revolution is not on your head, it is in it" (Erasmus, 1997, p. 16). Keeping in mind the gendered discourse of women's sexuality and the racialised definition of beauty and attractiveness, it will be interesting to see how young women in South Africa today possibly engage with this in their political spaces.

What is clear is that gendered analyses cannot be considered aside from other forms of social structure and power and, particularly in the South African context, the critical significance of 'race' remains pertinent. Patricia Hill-Collins (1986), through her work on Afro-American women, asserts that black women encounter multiple oppressions; gender, class and racial oppression. Black women face the dual challenge of being silenced not only by race discourse but also by the patriarchal discourse of black men and this often means that black women 'forget' or ignore the fact that they are women and focus on fighting racial oppression (Badat, 2009; Mama, 1995). On the other hand, black feminists were also silenced by the gender discourse of white feminists which ignored or were oblivious to the struggles of black women and the role that white women played in the oppression of black people (Hill-Collins, 1986; Mama, 1995). In terms of understanding feminism in the local context of

South Africa, it was largely seen as the ideology of white academic western women and therefore had very restricted usability for black women (Hassim, 2006). This was based on the idea of essential womanhood, ignorant of other power relations that may coincide with patriarchy (Weedon, 1987).

Politically, feminism was viewed as being a source of division that distracted from the nationalist goal and in conflict with the male-dominated leadership (Hassim, 2006) and was therefore silenced or marginalized within the struggle. “Black women’s experiences suggest that black women may overtly conform to the societal roles laid out for them, yet covertly oppose these roles in numerous spheres, an opposition shaped by the consciousness of being on the bottom” (Hill-Collins, 1986, p. 523). One may wonder whether the motherhood role was one of the factors that could have been a hindrance to black women actively or overtly challenging patriarchy, although contributing to some political participation although not overt feminism.

Specifically within the Black consciousness movement, the issue of race was the focus; gender issues or the recognition of women were not pertinent, women entered the struggle as black people not as black women (Ramphela 1991; McEwan, 2000). In light of a political history that sidelined women and constructed the role of women in politics as mothers, which starts within their families, this study will investigate how women in political institutions today engage with those symbols and how they construct their present and future political identities.

2.3 Intersectionality and the Narrative Construction of Identities

Identities are created within socio-historical realities and, as outlined above, different social structural dimensions, such as race, class and gender, intersect in the positionality of individual lives. The narrative paradigm provides a constructivist way to think about how

people build intersectional identities (Bradbury & Miller, 2010; Mc Adams 2001; Scheibe, 1986). Life stories or identities are dependent on and limited by the society that an individual lives in; society influences how identities are produced through cultural repertoires, shared histories and meaning making systems (Billington, Hockey & Strawbridge, 1989; Bauman, 2000; Hall, 2000). “The more we seek the inner core or true self, the more we find our culture with its expectations and patterns deeply embedded” (Billington et al, 1989, p. 41). Sampson (1989), in his analysis of the individual, shows that societies create the kind of characters imperative for societal reproduction and that ideologies will influence the construction of narratives for identity purposes.

Ideologies are the ‘grand narratives’ that guide or even dictate the kind of characters necessary for societal functioning and reproduction (Sampson, 1989), but, even within those structures, people are actors or agents, who can and do have transformative power upon society. During the times of apartheid South Africa, particular identities were produced; subjugated and oppressed identities but also revolutionary identities. “The person is the mediated product of society and also, in acting, reproduces or potentially transforms that society” (Sampson, 1989, p. 6). Scheibe (1986, p.131) argues that individuals need “adventures in order for satisfactory life stories to be constructed and maintained”. Political activity may be understood as “adventure” involving challenges and with worthwhile goals. Reading into the apartheid past, hearing, seeing and imagining how life may have been offers vicarious adventure, and may contribute to an individual’s identity. The kind of identities that are produced in post apartheid South Africa could be different from those identities of that specific socio-political period, but individuals today continue to appropriate and reproduce struggle symbols and narratives of that era, deriving significance from them in new ways in the new democratic context.

Through engaging with the past there is a relational aspect of connecting to others in the past who are brought to life by narratives. The deconstruction of language, through the concepts of presence and absence shows how the self is understood in relation to the other As (Sampson, 1989, p. 155) asserts “The Derridian subject can never be set apart from the multiple others who are of its essence”. There are always unconscious or absent factors that have an impact on how the self is constructed or enacted. “The self-isolated organism enclosing an atomistic self is an optic illusion...” (Crites, 1986, p. 155). The point that is being made is that the self cannot be bounded and closed off from others. There is always a presence of others whether acknowledged or unacknowledged in the definition of self. These ideas are evident in the concepts of post memory and the narrative unconscious. “I ‘remember’ my parents ‘memories’, I can also ‘remember’ the suffering of others” (Hirsch, 2001, p.10). When “remembering” memories that are not your own, one inevitably incorporates these memories into personal narratives, which means that these memories have a bearing in an individual’s identity (Hirsch, 2001; Freeman, 2010). The aim of this research project was to investigate these influences of the past; memories and narratives of significant others and the cultural and political symbols that carry these histories, within women students who were not yet born in the apartheid struggle period.

The life-story model by McAdams (2001) will shed light on identity exploration within youth. Mc Adams (2001) extends the developmental concept of ‘ego identity’ of Erikson in his life story model. The period of youth or young adulthood is a time when individuals actively think about and explore identity, realising that they are no longer a child (Mc Adams, 2001) with sexual changes in the body marking this transition, and creating questioning and curiosity about who one is and who one can be in the “anticipated future” (Mc Adams, 2001, p.102). This stage is about finding a place for one’s self in society in order to create a meaningful life.

Life tools and cognitive abilities develop at this time that help an individual to be able to start constructing a coherent life story, where a person is able to reason or think about a range of hypothetical scenarios that will contribute to a life story. Within that creative hypothetical space an individual also has to make sense of identity synchronically and diachronically. Synchronic coherence in the life story integrates the variety of roles and relationships that one has, even those that may be in conflict (McAdams, 2001). Identity also has to make sense diachronically; the individual has to be able to weave together a meaningful life story across time, encompassing the shifts of self across time (McAdams, 2001).

2.4 Reinterpreting the Past

In order to think about how meanings and understandings are symbolically represented and interpreted, this study was inspired by the hermeneutic concepts of distanciation and appropriation (Ricoeur, 1981). These concepts explain the process of engaging with a text or symbol from a distance and projecting upon it some meaning that is significant to the individual in the present (Bradbury & Miller, 2010). As Ricoeur (1981, p. 185) defines it “Appropriation is my translation of the German term *Aneignung*...means to make one’s own which was initially alien”

The reader is always removed from the actual experience which is written about in the text. The author is not present to the reader at the moment of experience; therefore there is some distance between reader and author. There is also distance between the world of the text and the world of the reader (Bradbury & Miller, 2010). So what is the significance of this distance? Due to distanciation, the reader is able to appropriate the text, make it their own, interpret it and understand it in their own way, which transforms the product of the author. Appropriation occurs when the meaning of the text, symbol or past event becomes real for someone in the present (Ricoeur, 1981). This kind of engagement with the text, or

interpretation, creates possibilities to understand not only texts but also the self and one's social world in a different way (Bradbury & Miller, 2010). This implies that in the process of identity building, we look back into our lives and the longer narratives of history and interpret things that happened in relation to our present positions and the self is affected and also changed (Bradbury & Miller, 2010).

Apartheid history has played a crucial role in the construction of meaning and identities within the lives of these young women. The stories of the apartheid struggle are told and shared are interpreted within the present. The songs that are sung now were songs that were sung then perhaps with a different meaning in the present. The different iconic people or leaders that were at the forefront of struggle history still have significance now and the way that these different symbols are made sense of has different implications or impact for identity building in the present.

As women have been and are still seen as political outsiders this may have an influence on how they appropriate apartheid struggle symbols and generally how they operate within the political arena. In particular, many of the iconic symbols of the struggle are masculine, centering the role of men and rendering women invisible or marginal to events. How young women today interpret their own roles as political activists in relation to these symbols is of great interest.

The creation of identity incorporates stories of others and collective or cultural memories that are shared within a society. The concept of post memory explains a process of how second generation survivors of trauma or traumatic political systems such as apartheid, incorporate those experiences that their parents went through and how those experiences become part of their identities (Hirsch, 2001). The concept of the 'narrative unconscious' (Freeman, 2010), refers to the historical narratives and symbols that a society transmits across generations and

how these impacts on identity formation. Through collective memory, one is made aware of how ideologies can influence memory production and which memories are marginalized (Hoffman, 2004).

Post memory is a process that describes and seeks to understand how the children of collective or cultural trauma survivors begin to own those experiences even though they were not present and how those experiences effectively become part of their personal memories (Hirsch, 2001). The children are removed from those experiences, as in the process of ‘distanciation’, therefore requiring the children to engage with those memories in a different way. Even though they are removed from that past, hearing stories from then can be very unsettling (Mohamed & Ratele, 2012); the painful feelings from the past may be projected into the present. People may try in different ways to protect themselves from that past. One way is through silence (Frankish & Bradbury, 2012). “Post memory is a powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through representation, projection, and creation often based on silence rather than speech, on the invisible rather than the visible”(Hirsch, 2001, p. 9). The focus of this research project was on the process of memory appropriation of the following generation, rather than the trauma aspect of post memory, and how the current generation engages with those memories.

The family is the main vehicle of passing on these post memories, consciously and or unconsciously, to the following generations, through pictures, stories and other documents and shared everyday lived life (Goertz, 1998; Hirsch, 2001, Hoffman, 2004). Political organizations may also act as surrogate “families” guardians of memory, passing these on as socialization practices. These symbols of the past tend to overpower the lives or the realities of the following generations leading to their current personal narratives being dominated by

the narratives of the previous generation, which bear significance and are actualized within their lives (Hirsch, 2001).

Jill Bennett, (1998 cited in Hirsch, 2001) tells how a picture produces a certain effect within the viewer. The picture or narrative communicates emotively and bodily, by awakening the viewer's own emotional, psychological and bodily reactions (Hirsch, 2001). These symbols speak, through the viewer's emotional and bodily reaction, of a time that has past become more than a representation the past. The viewer participates in the construction of the past (Hirsch, 2001). There is an appropriation of the past by the viewer through their own subjectivity at a distance from that past. Finkelkraut (1994 as quoted in Goertz, 1998, p. 33) writes of a concept called the 'imaginary Jew' "to describe those ...that live fictional, inauthentic lives because they have borrowed their identity from their truly persecuted predecessors." So some people find their lives meaningful by adopting identities through experiences of those that were persecuted before. Within the South African context, young women in political organizations could find meaning and resonance through identifying with people in the struggle and possibly appropriating and reenacting those political identities or specific ways of performing the politics of the apartheid past in the present.

"...Memory is comprised of realities, operating unconsciously, that are largely secondhand, outside the perimeter of direct experience" (Freeman, 2010, p. 103). Freeman writes about a process called the 'narrative unconscious', which is similar to the concept of post memory that Hirsch, (2001) writes about, although it need not be traumatic. The concept of the narrative unconscious goes beyond the familial and personal space and trauma to the narratives and symbols that are shared within a culture and how those representations are incorporated into a personal story (Freeman, 2010).

These representations are not directly experienced or witnessed by the individual, but they become part of an individual's memory, they become real through the process of imagination and become part of a personal narrative (Freeman, 2010). The children of survivors more specifically tend to recreate their parents experiences with themselves being actors in it (Goertz, 1998). The personal narratives that an individual shares is made up of firsthand and second hand resources that are beyond the scope of an individual life (Freeman, 2010). The cultural-historical world and its representations are unconsciously incorporated into the innermost spaces of the mind and of the self; this process unconsciously influences the development of identity (Freeman, 2010).

The narrative unconscious is also similar to the concept of "collective memory" a term formulated by a French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (Hoffman, 2004). It is about how memory is shared within a community a cultural object or symbol that is owned by that community and those events or experiences are remembered together (Hoffman, 2004). This kind of memory though, is open to manipulation by those in power as they can intentionally construct what is remembered and not remembered (Hoffman, 2004). The idea of the symbols of the past being open to construction to serve particular ideological purposes speaks to the idea of 'grand narratives' and icons of the apartheid struggle compared to the marginalized narratives and 'insignificant' figures. The guided path of public memory has implications for how the past is remembered that filters into a personal construction of the self where one is particularly invested in the past as a site of identity formation.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion race issues are still pertinent in post apartheid South Africa. There are remnants or residual race problems and racial reasoning which in various ways become more complex and nuanced within the present. The issue of class is becoming more significant within the black population due to new opportunities that democracy has presented. The idea of

blackness and whiteness; black identities or white identities have become less clear, less structured and more fragmented with the opening up of new spaces and new ways of engaging.

Black women not only have to be understood through racial lenses but also through gender lenses and the intersections or layers of these within their lives. Gender issues become significant within the patriarchal system, where power and privilege is for men. Men are at the centre and women are supporters of men's visions and dreams. Black women are then faced with these multiple oppressive systems, and in the South African context the issue of race has been at forefront. Identities have relevance within different periods in society, some silenced or in the shadows and some attended to and these are open to reconstruction as seen in the evolving meaning of race and gender in South Africa.

The different ways in which identities, race or gender are constructed mutate and shift and are founded upon how the past is understood. What is remembered and or forgotten from that past has meaning for the self and selves within the present. Some aspects of the past are silenced or cannot be said perhaps due to the pain still carried but still have important impacts on the present.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Narrative Approach

This is a qualitative study that adopted a narrative approach. “Narrative lends itself to a qualitative enquiry in order to capture the rich data within stories” (Mitchell & Egudo, 2003, p.2). Everyone has a story to share about their life. Through the process of storytelling people talk about things that are important or significant to them (Atkinson, 1998). People create who they are and how they would like to be seen or known through narratives (Riessman, 2008).

The sharing of personal narratives is important within the South African context because of the complex and painful history which has been influenced by the grand narrative of apartheid. Capturing individual life histories will enable us to think about and make sense of social histories and generational shifts with our South African context. As time passes and significant phases in history go by, so the stories told by people in different positions, periods and places, shift, making meaning of these historical phases in different ways. “One of our purposes may be to understand the time that in which we live, how historical events have shaped our world and our lives, and how we, all of us, shape the major events that occur during [and before] our lives” (Atkinson, 1998, p.48).

Due to the social nature of humans, there is always an audience when someone is recalling a story. This audience may be an internalized audience or an external audience, but this highlights the aspect of humans as social beings (Andrews, Squire & Tambokou, 2008).

There are also multiple others who may be involved in the telling and construction of narratives from the “writer and reader, speaker and hearer” (Ricouer cited in Andrews et al, 2008p. 44). In research, one of the ways to share these narratives is through interviews.

More than a site for seeking answers, the interactive process of the interview provides a space for meaning creation, in relation to the research enquiry. “The interview therefore becomes a site for the production of data and an opportunity to explore the meaning of the research topic for the respondent” (Elliott, 2005, pg. 22). The interviews were based on a narrative style of enquiry. Therefore the narratives were co-constructed or created in interaction or in dialogue understanding the, “self as an interactional process” (Crossley, 2007, p. 134). “[When] we treat the other as a human being, we can no longer, remain objective, faceless interviewers, but become human beings and must disclose ourselves, learning about ourselves as we try to learn about the other” (Fontana & Frey, 1998, p. 73).

Narratives are located in time and made sense of through time. Narratives are reflective of a temporal dimension and they have to be ordered meaningfully (Gergen & Gergen, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1988). “For the way in which a generation understands the past is in part a function of what it takes itself to be, but how it understands itself is in part a function of what it takes the past to be. The relation between the past, the present, and their interaction is not simple or unidirectional, rather it is dialectical” (Fay, 1996, p. 189). The way that an person makes meaning of the past within the present shapes the way that the past is seen and the way that the past is seen shapes the way that present and therefore the person is constructed. “Narratives are useful in research precisely because storytellers interpret the past rather than reproduce it as it was. The “truths” of narrative accounts are not in their faithful representations of a past world, but in the shifting connections they forge among past, present, and future,” (Reismann, 2003, p. 6).

Constructing meaning is also about merging experiences together that speak to certain themes. “The narrative is a way of organizing episodes, actions and accounts of actions; it is an achievement that brings together mundane facts and fantastical creations; time and place are incorporated” (Sarbin, 1986.p. 9). Humans are ready to make use of plots to give

meaning to meaningless movements [or actions]” (Sarbin, 1986, p. 14). Specifically within experience-centered narrative analysis the focus is on “the sequencing and progression of themes within interviews, their transformation and resolution” (Andrews et al, 2008, p. 57).

3.2 Research Questions

3.2.1 Primary Research Question

How is apartheid history appropriated and reinterpreted by politically active women university students?

3.2.2 Secondary Research Questions

- What role does the family play in making meaning of apartheid history?
- How is the ANC history constructed to have significance in the lives of young women students?
- How does engaging with apartheid history influence the student politics that the young women are involved in?
- How does appropriating and reinterpreting of apartheid history impact the future aspirations of the young women?
- How does the apartheid history influence how these young women make sense of race and class?

3.3 Profile of Participants

A non-probability purposive sampling technique was used. Participants were selected based on their availability, age, gender and political involvement. I knew a woman who is member of SASCO in a leadership position that was invited to participate in the study; from there on the snowball process took place. Nine women students who were active members for a minimum of six months of SASCO and other ANC affiliated organizations were chosen to participate in the study. Being an active member, for this research implied that the person

attended party meetings regularly, was involved in party activities; protests, rallies and celebrations. SASCO is important because of its affiliation with the ANC and of its role in student activism. The research was interested specifically in the ANC struggle history which makes SASCO the appropriate student political party for sourcing participants.

The table below reflects the profile of the nine women who range from the age of 19 to 26.

Women were selected for this research because women and their narratives were marginalized in the recording of the apartheid struggle. Women also played supportive roles therefore it was important to forefront the narratives of these women. Based on these reasons women were chosen rather than men. The table also shows which political organizations they are members of and their positions, the type of schools that they attended and whether any of their family members were politically active. All of the women were black. All participants went to Model C or private schools, although it is important to note that this was not a criterion it emerged that all in leadership came from this school background.

TABLE 1: PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

PSEUDONYM	AGE	POLITICAL ORGS	SCHOOL	POLITICAL FAMILY
Amina	20	SASCO ANCYL PSC	Private school	Yes – Mother
Noma	21	SASCO ANCYL SRC	Model C	Yes- Father & Mother
Anele	24	SASCO ANCYL YCL SRC	Model C	Yes- Mother
Humbulani	24	SASCO ANCYL YCL SRC	Model C	No
Janet	19	SASCO ANCYL	Model C	Yes- Multiple members
Bonang	26	SASCO ANCYL ANC	Model C	Yes- Mother, grandmother, Father.
Minnie	20	SASCO ANCYL YCL	Model C.	No
Oneka	22	SASCO ANCYL YCL	Private School	Yes-Aunt
Zimasa	23	SASCO ANCYL YCL ANC ANCWL	Model C	Yes- Father

3.4 Data Collection

Interviews were the instrument for collecting data and the interview schedule can be found in Appendix A. “Interviewing is one of the most common and most powerful ways we use to try to understand our fellow human beings” (Fontana & Frey, 1998, p. 47). It is a conversation between people with a purpose specifically to seek answers for the research question. My main role was to lead the participant on a specific journey that looked back on their past, their roles and meanings in the present and project forward into the future. It was imperative to know what “questions to ask, how to ask them, and when.” (Atkinson, 1998, p. 33). The type of questions that were asked were designed to elicit stories from the participants. The questions were constructed in an everyday style of language that was free of technical terms, that participants could relate to their lives (Elliott, 2005). These were open interviews that engaged in the process of the participants and I shared my thoughts and feelings where I felt it to be appropriate; I subjectively engaged in the process.

The data were collected through a broadly narrative frame for the interview where the participants were asked questions about the past, present and future related to the research questions. The questions were designed in a manner to elicit responses around specific themes and interviewees were probed where necessary. The interviews were conducted in English but shared African words and terms were included in the conversation, mainly in Zulu and Sotho.

I conducted the interviews in a location that was comfortable and safe for both the researcher and the participant. “An informal room one that is quiet and encourages sincerity, is probably the best location for the interview” (Atkinson, 1998, p. 30). The interviews were conducted within the University of Witwatersrand in the offices at the Emthonjeni centre. The allocated interview time was 90 minutes per participant but some of the participants exceeded those times. The interviews were audio recorded. Digital recording enables the interviewer to focus

attention on the participant rather than having to pause to write down notes (Elliot, 2005). Voice recording is important for holding onto or capturing the details of the vocal interview and the different ways that the participant expresses their life story in conjunction with the interviewer (Elliott, 2005). Following that process the interviews were transcribed and translated into English where necessary.

3.5 Ethics

On the participant sheet, information was supplied to the participants with a brief summary of the study, after that was read and they consented to participate, they signed consent documents: consent to participate and consent to be recorded (see Appendices B, C and D). Confidentiality has been ensured by using pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants (this excludes the knowledge researcher and her supervisor). The participants were informed that participation was voluntary and they could withdraw at any point, and refrain from answering questions that they desired not to answer. They were also advised that they could withdraw from the study even after their interviews were completed. Once the forms were signed, I proceeded with the interviews.

“Because the objects of inquiry in interviewing are human beings, extreme care must be taken to avoid any harm to them” (Fontana & Frey, 1998, p. 70). Some of the participants were very initially suspicious about the research that I was doing and who would have access to this information. They were initially especially worried about the university involvement as the political parties that they were involved had organized protests which at times had led to tense relations, were some students had been suspended in the past. However, they were generous in sharing of their stories, the political community is also very small and some of the participants were protective of names and sharing secrets of the organization with an outsider. Based on that I felt that the potential breach of privacy and anonymity was a great source of anxiety and therefore I have ensured that those boundaries are protected, to avoid

any harm. My power to protect though is limited taking into consideration my sampling method. Access to their interview transcripts has been limited to the researcher and supervisor. Quotations from the interviews have been used in the report by referencing pseudonyms or fake names as agreed by the participants. The recordings and transcripts were only shared between the supervisor and researcher and were kept in a safe locked place and electronic copies have been password protected. Participants understood that the results may be found in my masters' research report, and in academic publications and conference presentations.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data were analysed thematically within a broadly narrative frame against the time zones of past, present and future. A thematic analysis was adopted “for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Emphasis is on the content of a text, “what” is said more than “how” it is said, the “told” rather than the “telling” (Riessman, 2003, p. 2).

The nine interviews were conducted by me and then were transcribed. I listened to the recordings and read the transcripts several times to familiarize myself; I made notes based on the ideas that came through reading the texts (Storey, 2007). “The researcher’s decisions about what to include and how to do so must be informed by the theoretical stance and empirical focus of the study, as well as by such pragmatic considerations as the availability of sufficient resources” (Poland, 2002, p. 637). I returned to the transcripts to identify the themes, being led by concepts in my research in conversations with my supervisor (Storey, 2007). The themes that emerged unsurprisingly spoke to the concepts of race, class and gender. These structural dimensions were thematically explored in the data across the past, present and future, highlighting changes and continuities of experience. In reflecting on the past, race, was understood through both ‘the grand apartheid narrative’ and more personal

‘family histories’. Gender roles in the past were talked about in relation to three thematic metaphors of women as nurturers, iconic wives and heroes. In talking about the present and the ways in which the past is reinterpreted in their sense of themselves as young women activists, the intersections of race, class and gender are evident. The intersections of race and class are explored through the following themes: 1) Overt racism: second hand accounts; 2) The white grip on power; 3) If not (black) racism? 4) Struggle songs appropriated, and 5) comrade language. The intersections of ‘race’ and gender are thematically explored in relation to: 1) supportive and nurturing roles; 2) Sexuality and political reputation; 3) the Barbie-doll stereotype; 4) One of the boys. In envisaging the future, these intersections of identity become increasingly fluid and it is evident that participants cross boundaries and create synergies across contradictions. The intersections of race and class are discussed in terms of the following themes: 1) Black movers: class mobility and new spaces; 2) Whiteness: Abelungu and Coconuts; 3) A Free South Africa. Possibilities for future gender roles in relation to class and race are explored through the themes of: 1) Feminism and struggle theory; 2) embracing femininity and 3) Myself, my family and my work.

These thematic units though were not left fragmented and the sequential nature of narrative analysis was incorporated to provide continuity (Riessman, 2008). A narrative analytic structure was used in the analysis to speak to the temporal dimensions of the research. This kind of analysis was used to understand how the participants have ordered their life experiences and where they have drawn significance in making sense of their identities, in light of the apartheid past and how they possibly incorporated or appropriated symbols or narratives from then into the present and into the future.

“There are a number of logistical and interpretive challenges to the translation of audiotape conversation into the textual form” (Poland, 2002, p.632). It is important to keep in mind that the way that an interview is transcribed may impact the intended meaning for instance where

particular notations are inserted and where sentences are ended and started (Poland, 2002). Transcriptions of the recorder interviews were done, which included other linguistic expressions, such as laughter, hesitations, pauses and other sounds. One of the important subthemes that emerged in this research was comrade language. This language was spoken by the participants within the interviews; it has been underlined within the text to indicate when that occurred.

3.7 Role of Researcher

“All parties in the dialogue have subjectivities and emotional lives that they bring to research relationships.” (Elliott, 2005, p. 476) As the researcher I am a black woman student but I am not an active member of any particular party. I have particular beliefs and theories about politics and gender issues so I had to constantly be aware of my thoughts and feelings when interviewing the participants for the study. I kept updated with local events in the political sphere through watching and listening to the news and reading the Mail and Guardian. I kept track of my thoughts and feelings through a process of frequent journaling.

“Blacknesses... are articulated, realized and lived out in the messy, intricate and entangled networks of “race”, class, nationality and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, generational and religious affiliations, embodied in everyday practices and in encounters with one another” (Bradbury & Ndlovu, 2011, p. 5). As a black person who was born in the early eighties, when the system of apartheid was still enforced and practiced, I have some recollections of that past which makes it hard for me to disentangle myself from that racialized history, which has morphed into the present.

As I read into or listened to other people’s stories, I was also in the process of making sense of my life narrative, my racialized, gendered and class narrative. Therefore I grappled with many ideas and questions as I critically engaged with the research process. Is the idea that

people born in the late 1980s and 1990s are born free an illusion? What does it mean to be a born free? Is it the ability to distance the self from a traumatic past? Is that position really possible? How can this experience of writing this document be emancipating when there is a constant revision, editing and re-editing due to the reality of being a black student being supervised by a middle class white supervisor. What I have recognized is that I have constantly found myself in “white spaces” speaking a language that is not mine, writing in a language that is not mine, where at times even my mother tongue seems foreign to me. There is no objectivity, perhaps subjectivity is what it is.

I’m always negotiating the sense of being an insider yet an outsider or an outsider yet an insider, which means my position, is constantly changing, my identity constantly shifting. How different would this research be if I had been supervised by a black woman or if I had been a white woman? At the same time though it was me as the black woman student that made it easier to gain rapport quickly with my participants. I find solace in the following statement; Appiah, 2005; 2006 implies “that it is not sameness or agreement that should provide the basis of our connections with others but rather, the quest is to develop a common language through which to debate, negotiate and disagree” (cited in Bradbury & Ndlovu, 2011, p. 18).

Chapter 4: Results and Discussions

The analysis is layered in a way to reveal the multiple complexities of being a woman, being politically active and being black, and the tensions of self representation across different spaces and time zones with an emphasis on apartheid history in relation to the present.

Thematic narratives are layered across the different time zones of past, present and future.

When we go back and recollect, remake and rewrite the past we are in the process of sense making, we are questioning and trying to find answers about who we are, in an identity formulation or reformulation process (Freeman, 1993). The aim is to look at the ways that participants make meaning of symbols, concepts and narratives rooted in the apartheid past; how they engage with these, reinterpreting the longer historical past in the present and in relation to their projected futures.

We cannot ever really experience what actually happened in the past, we only have access to the past from where we are in the present, through distance, and we interpret and understand through distance (Bradbury & Miller, 2010). The distance for these participants is created by being in the post apartheid present and engaging with and imagining the apartheid past, which was not experienced by them directly or personally. How participants make meaning of the past has an impact on their present identities and imagined futures.

We can only make sense of the present in relation to a recollected past and a projected future.

The future is always about what is to come and therefore offers hope or fear, it presents multiple possibilities for the self (Crites, 1986). It is therefore important to also engage with the ways in which the participants make sense of the future, particularly because they are young women on the cusp of adulthood. Is there hope for a future and what are the possible

selves that can be produced in the future; what impact will the apartheid past have on the identities of black women?

The narratives of participants were thematically analysed across the broad temporal zones of past, present and future. However, the interconnections across time are evident in that participants speak about the ways in which the (racist Apartheid) past impacts on the present and how their hopes for the future are both constrained and imagined in relation to present struggles. The intersectionalities of race, class and gender in the making of identities is explored within the narratives of past, present and future. By providing extended excerpts of data, the voice of the participants is centralised in generating this account of their experiences.

4.1 Sources of the Past

The sources of the past that inform current identity constructions and emerge across the young women participants' narratives were analysed and are presented here in relation to 'race' and gender. The young women's 'recollections' of the apartheid past, or the second-hand accounts of the imagined pasts that they construct on the basis of historical and familial knowledge are, understandably, mainly structured or framed, racially. The role of women in history is understood as peripheral and one dimensional, typically as 'mothers' or in supportive roles, and there is minimal identification with the lives and roles of the previous generation, although a few individual women are highlighted as historical icons or significant women role models.

4.1.1 Race and the apartheid story

This section focuses on how the women reflect on South Africa's apartheid past and its significance for them in present, post apartheid South Africa and the sources of knowledge of this past. The first theme, 'the grand apartheid narrative' looks at how the participants make

sense of apartheid history as documented in the public space through different media sources and how they ambivalently engage with these sources. The second theme, 'family narratives' is about how different apartheid narratives, feelings and thoughts are experienced and made meaning of through personal accounts of their close family members.

4.1.1.1 The Grand Apartheid Narrative

Zimasa talks about her view of apartheid, race and racist beliefs and practices as shaped by 'documentaries', clearly consigning this to history.

Zimasa: I think (pause) just the whole idea of segregation (pause) you know. Um (pause) that's just like that's just the first thing for me that, that just comes to my mind regarding apartheid. And (pause) m-, another thing would be the idea that other people would honestly be convinced that they are better than others because of how they look (T:mm)...you know obviously I've, I've gone through(pause) uhm like the different documentaries (pause)about those are the type of things the things that we see, on those documentaries(pause) like you know the ill treatment of black people leaders or no leaders; random people (T:mm) for no reason (T:mm) at all, you know and in all honesty there is no reason.

Zimasa seems to have some difficulty making sense of or even imagining the apartheid system, as seen in her hesitation or difficulty in conceptualising what apartheid really meant. Her views seemed to draw on secondary sources, "documentaries" quite distant from her lived experience. It may be difficult for her to make meaning of what seems to have been a ludicrous or senseless system that was based on the racial discrimination of black people across society. Noma talks about how she tries to avoid thinking about the apartheid past.

Noma: To be honest I try not to reflect on apartheid Hmm I try to stay away from the documentaries and the movies Hmm (pause) they anger me quite a bit Hmm like I am angered by the fact that a certain race decided that they are better in our land. (Laughs)(T:mm)So I try not to entertain that

cause I don't think it's (pause) I don't think it's constructive. I don't think anger is what we need today; I don't think anger is what the movement needs. I think we have a lot of angry people naturally, I mean if I had gone through the struggle (pause) and if I had been victimised the way that my father and his generation were victimised I would probably still be carrying bitterness. (T:mm) But I do think at some point there needs to be (pause) not forgetting, I mean I don't think we need to forget but I do think that we need a fresh outlook,

When Noma reflects on the past; viewing videos or images about the past awakens feeling of anger within her, which leads to her avoidance. The personal or individual anger that Noma avoids, inspires a conscious forgetting, a process of remembering but devoid of difficult emotions, due to not being present at that time and for the bigger goal of nation building. “When the present is burdened by a past constituted through impotent rage, misrecognition, shame and disrespect, memory,” imagining, viewing or hearing of stories from that past can quite unsettling (Mohamed & Ratele, 2012, p. 282). Outside of the public documenting of history, there are stories and feelings which are shared or not shared at the intimate level in families and relationships with the generations that lived through apartheid.

4.1.1.2 Family histories

The apartheid past is processed or handled in different ways. Below a participant talks about how she and her mother relate to the past. Zimasa talks about the silence and pain within the family.

Zimasa: I don't want her [mother] to start feeling all those things again because I don't think I'd be able to handle it (T:mm) Zimasa: hence I (pause) have not spoken to her about it

Thembi: mm ok, so you think it's ah (pause) mostly linked to (pause)ah like what? Awakening painful memories around your father? And not necessarily around the struggle? Or is it both?

Zimasa: It definitely has got to be both...I mean socially on the one part, but politically as well when (pause) um she (pause) let's say there's something that's playing on TV (T:mm)about like the past,

(T:mm)she always gets very sensitive and she just normally does not want to watch (T:mm)and just wants to (pause) chill and do something different, (T:mm) so I know that although she doesn't want to talk about it um it's something that affects her and I just don't know exactly to what degree it affects her and how? (T: mm) that's why I don't want to be that person that um (pause) you know (pause) awakens those type of emotions, (T: mm) I don't think I have the capacity to deal with them.

Zimasa reflects on the uncomfortable silence between herself and her mother that is related to both her father and the meaning or experiences of the struggle past for her mother. There is a gap or distance of unspoken yet shared experiences or emotions that divide and yet connect mother and daughter. Silence offers a way of sharing or passing on the parents' pain, but may also be a buffer from further pain through talking about the experience and exposing that distress to the children (Frankish & Bradbury, 2012; Hoffman 2004). "Silence [is seen as] an effective psychological defense" (Frankish & Bradbury, 2012, p. 302). These emotions and experiences seem so unbearable, that Zimasa feels that she would not be able to or have the strength for herself and her mother if ever these experiences were shared through talking. The participant below talks about how she understands the role of her father within the apartheid system.

Minnie: Back in the day, uhm he [my father] was just, he followed the rules, he didn't really challenge much, he believed that, you know, the white man is the boss this and this... if you wanna get somewhere in life uhm, if you wanna have a future, you must just follow the rules

Minnie talks about how her father was silent within the system of apartheid. The first lesson that is learnt by the oppressed or colonized person is to stay in his position and not cross boundaries (Fanon, 1963). Her father followed the rules and, therefore, did not challenge or try to fight the apartheid system perhaps due to fear and anxiety about the future, for his children as much as himself. From the position of the present within a democratic society

what is perhaps not understandable to Minnie are the different ways of domination that were present during apartheid, where encounters could end in serious violence or placing employment at risk (Sonn, 2012). Minnie expresses difficulty in imagining a situation that she did not experience, and her father's lack of agency. "Apartheid was not a thing in itself. It was, rather, a name for a host of events, things and processes" Chipkin, 2007, p. 180). It was a system of "social practices and uncivil acts" that subjectively tormented the subjugated individuals (Sonn, 2012, p. 247). This extract shows the complexity and internalization of oppression and making sense of that in the present.

4.1.2 A Gendered Past: Nurturers, Iconic Wives & Heroes

This section looks at the position of women within the apartheid struggle in relation to three themes. The first theme positions men as heroes and women as nurturers. Participants grapple with the idea of women as supporters and at the margins of the struggle with men being at the forefront constructed as the leaders and the heroes. The second theme focuses on iconic wives, women who have secondary heroic status because of their husbands' roles in the struggle. Finally, the third theme offers a possible role for women in the past as heroes in their own right.

4.1.2.1 Women as Nurturers

In terms of understanding the role that women occupied in the past, it was seen as a supportive role (April, 2012; Ramphele, 1991). Politics was the space for men who were seen as the heroes, with women playing the marginal roles. Women's roles were located mainly in the domestic sphere looking after the household and the family in line with patriarchal ideologies and practices ensured that. Ideologies have a great impact on the kinds of identities that are possible within society and the way that people think about themselves and the possibilities (Sampson, 1989). There were fears that if women were at the forefront and if they were caught they would not survive police custody (Ramphele, 1991). The system

created relationships of dependence on men and fear of going into public and political spaces. Women were the supporters, the wives however; there were women who did not fit into these expected roles. The following participants echo these views as they talk about how they understand the role of women in the past.

Humbulani:I mean the men go out and fight and (pause) go awol, go into exile and they come back as if they're heroes. (T:mm) Women then must stay at home, be both the mother and the father...raise the children, and still earn an income to feed your children.

Janet: I mean maybe the woman, vele (of course) the woman, you know from back then weren't...they were still supposed to be in the house cooking and whatever while the men go to the mines and get the money and fight the fight. Males went to exile, woman stayed e-Soweto and raised the families.

(T:mm) You know so I guess they (pause) they weren't seen to be radical enough or strong enough to lead.

Humbulani talks about the absence of men when they went to fulfil particular roles outside of the home in the times of the apartheid struggle. She does not see the great value or the need to celebrate these roles and be labelled as heroes when the women are left behind to look after everything. According to her, women played multiple roles, but there seems to be no public recognition of these contributions. Janet also perceives the role of women in the domestic sphere occupying the nurturing role in the past. She talks about how women did not really have the agency to move out of this role even if maybe there might have been aspirations to do so, when she says “they were supposed to...” This domestic role implies that women were viewed in a certain way as not ‘radical or strong’ enough to be out there in the public sphere to do functions that are set aside for men.

The political and the public sphere are seen as the space of men and the private and domestic space is the role where women are located (Chodorow, 1979; Geisler, 2000; Hassim, 2002;

Weedon, 1987). Therefore the role of women and/ or their contribution can be marginalised or ignored and not constructed as significant. The stories of women are perhaps not perceived to be exciting as they lacked adventure and were stuck in the role of domestication.

Adventure is about being able to “play”, “release from the dead and deadly”, “it is life-creating and enhancing”. “Adventure creates story and contributes to the realization of completed identities” (Scheibe, 1986, p. 148, 149). For this reason, Minnie shares some reasons why she identifies more with men than with women from the struggle period.

Minnie:.. I don't feel that the women in the Apartheid struggle played a, as much of a role as I would have liked them to. (T:mm). They kind've just stood back and supported the men, while the men did all the work and what not. If you look at the,... female struggle heroes, most of them (pause) it was the wife of so and so you know, uhm he will go to jail and I'll take care of the kids and what not. There were a few who went into exile and jail and what not but there was not as much of them as the men did. So I identify more with the males. Uhm females, the females were just too passive for me.

Minnie understands the role of women in the past as being in the margins or the periphery performing the necessary duties with men at the centre, in the history of the struggle. She views the women that became prominent or were recognised in the struggle as being attached to someone (wives of male icons e.g. Winnie, Albertina) and not being individuals in their own right, deserving of recognition. Similar to the other participants, she assumes that women in the past that were located in the domestic sphere but she does not think that this is right and she does not want it for herself. Based on how she makes meaning of what she calls the ‘passive’; not dominant position that women had, she identifies herself with the men. Even when women did go into the heart of the struggle like going to prison or exile, their role is hardly significant for her. Women within politics have been predominantly been viewed as

“political outsiders” (Hassim, 2006, p. 6). She further talks about how she makes sense of women being absent in the struggle and in representations or histories of the struggle.

Minnie: Maybe they just didn't get as much spot light. I don't know when I watch overseas documentaries I don't see women in the fore front... In fact in most of the documentaries you find they, they interview a man who was a part of the strikes and stuff and he'll say ja my mother told me to stay home and not be a part of that riot. (T: mm) So women, they were, ah, they had fear... They had to think of many things before actually joining such, ja I can't really, or, or perhaps it's just my narrow view. I've only ever focussed on the men and I never took the time and say, 'let me read mam Winnie's auto biography, and see what she went through' (T:mm) uhm it could be that, but I feel that the, the women could have done more.

There is also a sense that women were not given attention even when they did participate in the struggle, specifically when looking at documentaries. Minnie takes a critical position and does not accept what she is shown, through thinking about why there is minimal representation of women being militant. The ways in which that history is told and recorded reflects an absence of women at the forefront of the movement. The tellers of the stories are men, and women within their stories are represented in a certain way, where women at times were discouraged to participate in the struggle due to multiple reasons; some of these being fear and pressure from significant others (Ramphela, 1991.) Black women's ideas and stories are muted due to patriarchal voices and white feminists, there are multiple layers or oppressions silencing these complex and multiple voices (Hill- Collins, 1986; Mama, 1995; Yates, Gqola & Ramphela, 1998). Women are represented as being at the margins or absent and being fearful not as heroes according to Minnie. Men go to war and not women; men are the protectors and celebrated not women; they are the support structures, they are the mothers (Edley & Wetherell, 1995; Hassim, 2002; 2004). Minnie realises that her view of the women of the past is limited and her attention has been on the men, but she justifies her position by

stating that women could have given more, been more active. Humbulani expresses how significant the roles of women were and that more recognition is needed for the part they played.

Humbulani: you're a man you're out there like, in like uhm airfield or whatever, all you gotta look after is yourself (T:mm) and maybe there your other comrades. (T:mm) But here you're looking after your children, the community, you need to, you must see how they get raised you know? (T:mm) I think it's very fundamental um a woman's role, and I think it was very downplayed as well..., I don't think they were given enough credit.

Humbulani looks at the role of men specifically in the war zone; she views it as a role that is focused on the self, compared to women who have more socially inclined roles. This is connected to the motherhood role, of women being the altruistic, caring and supportive (Chodorow, 1979; Billington et al, 1998; Weedon, 1987). The women's role has a far reaching range from the microcosm of the home spreading to the outer community.

Humbulani finds this role quite pertinent but thinks that it was not given the justified recognition, even minimised. Her thoughts present a feminist understanding of the role of women, that the private or personal space is also significant and political (Weedon, 1987). Even though in the present there are more opportunities for women to be occupy other roles, women as mothers, wives and carers is still viewed as being significant to women (Billington et al, 1998), there could be some ambivalence about whether recognizing and celebrating this role could limit other ways in which women could be valued.

4.1.2.2 Iconic Wives

Particular individual women such as Winnie Mandela, Mamphela Ramphela and Albertina Sisulu, were identified as having iconic status but this was usually framed as secondary and dependent on the more central heroic role of their more famous husbands. This role of iconic wife is exemplified in

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela who, unsurprisingly, featured very prominently in participants' talk about struggle history and exemplifies this role of 'iconic wife'.

Janet: Winnie Mandela, ... there's a moment of her, whatever, I think that's when I first understood the role she played for South Africa, how she was Mandela (T:mm) for people cos you know...she was a symbol of Mandela and her, what they showing, you know ehm of how she was so (pause) stubborn and her resistance and you know uhm the pain she went through (pause) for a woman to, women are generally soft...

Janet identifies and constructs a prominent role for Winnie Mandela during the struggle years when Nelson Mandela was imprisoned in Robben Island. She represented hope and determination for the people that looked to Mandela for inspiration. Even though there is mention of her as his wife it is important to hold onto the meaning of that identity within patriarchy. Within patriarchal understanding generally a woman is defined in relation to a man (Weedon, 1987); a married woman is not viewed as independent, her identity is constructed in relation to her husband. Even though Janet presents Winnie as a strong woman, her identity was consumed by the Mandela symbol, perhaps raising questions or curiosity about who she was behind that symbol. Janet further understands Winnie's strength and resistance as possibly going beyond what is expected of women, who may be viewed as delicate and fragile. Women's identities in politics were constructed on the stereotype of motherhood; and some of the connotations of that image are soft, gentle, dependent and caring (Billington et al, 1988; Chodorow, 1979; Hassim, 2006; Geisler, 2000; Weddon, 1987). Winnie Mandela seems to represent an exception, symbolising something other than motherhood, there is a shift from that identity, and there are associations with masculinity and assertive redefinitions of female sexuality. However, Humbulani talks about how she sees the position of Winnie as a 'mother of the movement'.

Humbulani: *Winnie Mandela because literally, literally she is the mother of the movement in South Africa. You know uhm (pause) she carried, uh tata Nelson Mandela and many other comrades. um during the hardships...*

Humbulani further identifies Winnie Mandela as the mother of the movement or the struggle, and that motherhood is seen as being strong and resilient. As a mother, she nurtured the movement. Winnie is viewed as the vehicle that sustained the movement through very trying times. Oneka looks specifically at the case of Winnie and Nelson Mandela and the important role of Winnie as a symbol of hope and strength particularly while Nelson Mandela was in jail.

Oneka: ... There's an unequal representation of like the genders in terms of like heroes, Mandelas very popular. And I remember that Julius made this joke that uhm when Mandela came out of prison, he's a hero and we loved him but people used Winnie as a point of reference like (comrade language) the man on Winnie's arm must be Mandela because they had been away for so long and I mean we laughed and whatever... It was quite a fair point to make we are like Mandela was gone for a very long time, he was fighting underground he was in prison 27 years is not a joke it's true. (T:mm) But there's a woman next to him (pause) who was literally working on the ground being beat, a woman who has kids out there in the street.(pause) And of the two of them, well I guess maybe she didn't go to prison but I don't think we can reduce it to or make it as simply like because she wasn't in prison for 27 years. (T:mm)But here is somebody who I would say gave contribution. I wouldn't say equal contribution but everyone's contribution was meaningful. But why don't we have a statue of Winnie then cos they were a power couple or have them next to each other. Why don't we have them both in Sandton Square ?

Perhaps one of the most powerful comments made by Oneka about the presence or absence of women was about the role that Winnie Mandela played in the struggle. This thinking or critique could be applied to other women comrades. From what Oneka is saying it was as if

Winnie kept Nelson Mandela, or the symbol and meaning attached to Nelson Mandela, alive. Even though Winnie played a prominent role, there could be a curiosity on Winnie's other selves or other parts of her identity, beside the role of being the wife of an iconic man. In her presence she represented his absence, she is understood in relation to the other (Sampson, 1989), which is Nelson Mandela. Even when he was incarcerated and his physical presence was absent, Winnie came to embody what he represented in some way. The erection of the statue of Mandela without Winnie could represent the patriarchal ideas (in a crude way); of the power of men and women understood in relation to them, and therefore represent men, and not their selves as separate beings (Edley & Wetherell, 1995; Weedon, 1987). Having said that, one should not lose sight or ignore the way in which the role of Winnie Mandela is being reconstructed in a positive manner, it provides a vehicle to be critical of the role of women in politics in ways that could challenge the narrow construction of women's identities. Winnie has been appropriate as an iconic symbol and made significant in the present; the way that Oneka has engaged with this symbol of possibly has an impact on herself (Bradbury & Miller, 2012; Ricoeur, 1981). The following participant talks about her difficulty in terms of identifying with women heroes in the struggle.

Noma: (Big sigh)... I, I, I, I, identify with is hard for me because it sort of implies that I compare myself (pause) or that I see myself in them. (T:mm) And I think (pause) ya (pause) for me that's like bordering on (pause) I don't know, like I can't, can't possibly compare myself to a Winnie Mandela. (T:mm) I look up to her example and I look up to you know, your (pause) Albertina Sisulus and great female comrades but it's very hard for me to (pause) ja that's a difficult question. I can't say that I do. I admire a lot of qualities in them, (T:mm) but I think their bravery, I mean I don't know if I would be willing to put myself out there, I mean I don't know. I don't know if I could be married to a man who (pause) you know, if I could be involved, with a man who (pause) whose life was in danger everyday and consequently my life was in danger everyday (laughs as she talks) and I don't know if I could sell out myself to the, back then like they had...

For Noma, when talking about the struggle period and reflecting on the great women within the ANC, she finds it impossible to see parts of her in them and or parts of them in her. Appropriation of a symbol can only occur when an individual is able to make meaning of it in the present, when it can become real for someone (Ricoeur, 1981). Noma rejects this particular symbol of women, a self sacrificing symbol, she would rather preserve or protect herself, and there are limits to what she could sacrifice. The hardships of those times, the sacrifices made by these women, Winnie Mandela and Albertina Sisulu made them exceptional women and wives. These women gave up some of their personal endeavours and wishes for the movement. Women as wives and mothers are constructed as altruistic (Billington et al, 1988; Weedon, 1987) and Noma feels she would not be able to sacrifice herself in the way that those women did. What is interesting is the idea that she ‘looks up to’ these women, they are above her, they are idolised, and in her mind their personhood or way of being in that world could never be achievable to her.

4.1.2.3 Women as Heroes

The analysis above makes it evident that although women such as Winnie Mandela played a significant role in struggle history, this role is framed as secondary to that of their heroic husbands and is constructed as supportive and in the domesticated metaphor of motherhood. The only woman who was talked about as leader in her own right was Charlotte Maxeke. (It is possible that she was the focus of a particular commemorative campaign during the time of the interviews, but in addition, the Wits academic hospital is named in her honour, thus making her memory prominent in the university context.) Below, Zimasa and Bonang focus on Charlotte Maxeke and what her role represented and the reasons why she is significant to them.

Zimasa: and um(pause) there's this woman(pause) there's actually quite a few.

Thembi: (laughs) ok

Zimasa: Charlotte Magxeke, ne?

Thembi: Ja

Zimasa: She was one of the first people that founded the ANC, they called it the bantu women's league then. (T:mm) I think she's someone that I (pause) specifically look up to...

Charlotte Maxeke was a black woman intellectual, whose intellectual contributions were not give prominence in the recording of history (April, 2012). She was also a feminist activist in connection to women and marriage, the employment and mobility of women amongst other topics of concern during the 1920's and 1930's (April, 2012). She was a leader of the Bantu Women's League (Ginwala, 2011) now known as the ANC women's league. It is interesting that Zimasa says she can call on many women leaders in the past; taking into account the leadership roles that Zimasa has occupied in the organization and the long history of the ANC within her family. Having said that, Zimasa seems to have some difficulty, reluctance or hesitation in citing actual names and one wonders whether this is due to women mainly occupying supportive roles in politics (Geisler, 2000; McEwan, 2000; Ramphela, 1991). Bonang also talks about how she identifies with Charlotte Maxeke.

Bonang: Oh my God, there's one woman called Charlotte Maxeke... I make her my idol on the basis that (pause) I'm from a generation that partly has everything, which have been gifted to like a whole new level. Despite everything we have, we still don't make use of it. (T:mm) Charlotte Magxeke was an intellectual during the 18th century as a black woman, an intellectual, with degrees and this and that. I think that just, it, I, I idolise her to that extent. I think I've got a, a very soft spot for education because I think education is, it might not give you everything but it's the key to something (T:mm) something more profound that no one can take away from you...

Bonang values the importance of education, working hard and therefore getting the deserved respect for that work. Her individual values connect with Charlotte Maxeke who was a black

woman who achieved academically in a period that was not conducive to the growth and development of black women. Bonang makes meaning of her hero in the reality of a young black woman where there are so many opportunities to excel, possibly thinking that if this woman could achieve so much during apartheid, there is so much more that can be achieved by youth at present. Charlotte Maxeke is understood as a woman that possibly challenged the status quo of race, class and patriarchy that determined how and where black women should be. Unlike Winnie and Albertina, her role was not centred around being somebody's wife. This challenges and motivates Bonang to maximise her opportunities to be better simultaneously there is a hint that this idol achieved more than she ever could in the present reality. Education for Bonang becomes a process to agency; it is almost like a magical power that no one can take. What is interesting though is that "Maxeke is known in South African history as a "mother of the liberation struggle" but no more, not an intellectual, a theorist, a feminist or nationalist; only a figurehead" (April, 2012, p. 1).

4.2 Present Identities as Reinterpretations of the Past

In the talk of the participants, the past and the present are not spoken about in neatly divided ways. There are fixed stories and iconic names linked to history as discussed above, but talk of the past was continually interwoven with the present and reinterpreted in relation to participants' making sense of who they are in their present roles and political activities. However, whereas in the narratives of the past, 'race' and gender are seen as distinct, the participants do not as easily separate out these dimensions of their experience and in their talk about the present the different layers and meetings or intersections of race, class and gender are very evident. The analysis of the data about present identities is presented in this intersectional way, first, focusing on race and class, and then on race and gender.

4.2.1 Intersections of Race and Class

This section looks at the impact of race and class for these young women. The structural system of apartheid is over but there are still continuities from that past within the racialised present. The first narrative theme for discussing present identities, ‘overt racism: second hand accounts’, highlights the way in which racism is often talked of indirectly through recounting the experiences of others. The second theme, ‘white grip on power’ illustrates how less overt forms of race-based privilege and power intersect with class and continue to affect participants as they grapple with issues of access to resources, power and the internalization of ‘whiteness’ within society. The third theme, ‘if not (black racism)’ the participants explore their own, or others’ anger towards white people and the perpetuation of race based inequalities and how this anger is sometimes dismissed and positioned as ‘black racism’. The fourth theme in exploring present identities explicitly focuses on the appropriation of the past in the present in the culturally symbolic use of struggle songs in the politics of democratic South Africa. The fifth and final theme in this section highlights the intersections of race and class and how identity and positionality is played out in the particular use of language and accent within and outside of political organizations.

4.2.1.1 Overt Racism: second-hand accounts

Anele talks about the anger that she carries and how she makes meaning of racism by talking about a racist experience that her sister had.

Anele: so ja there's still a lot of anger but for what's happening now

Thembi: ja.

Anele: not for anything else

Thembi: not because of the past

Anele: not necessarily the past no, no, no, no I don't walk around (pause) suspicious of every white person but I do (pause) you know, I know internally that listen there are still (pause) the way that

certain white people see us I mean you'll see, different interactions I mean I have, my sister had a very racially charged interaction not so long ago. (T:mm) where, you know, someone would call her a monkey and used to refer to her as this thing and you know that it's something racially based (T:mm)it's not because, ah, you know my sister just irritated her. (T:mm)... I think, you can't walk around with blinders.(T:mm) but we know what's happening and we know how some people still think. (T:mm)so as much as, you know what's happening we can't also let it ah (pause) determine how we you know run through our daily lives as well...

Anele expresses ambivalence and confusion about how she feels towards white people. She approaches white people with caution and some anxiety, because the outcome of the encounter may be unpleasant. The past for her should not influence present interactions but in contradiction to that, the way that she makes sense of white people and different encounters with them still seem to be impacted on by the past. “Racial suspicion, threat and conflict” is present (Durrheim et al, 2011, p. 1) and it is very difficult to figure out ways to deal with such feelings. She attempts to distance herself from the racialised past but still identifies with it in her talk about white people viewing “us” black people in a negative way. She could have herself personally had such racist experiences, as she starts with an “I”, but reverts to sharing an encounter that her sister had, perhaps protecting herself from that pain or wishing to represent herself in a particular way in relation to me in the interview. She talks about how her sister experienced overt racism, where she was labelled a ‘monkey’, rendering her less than a person, not human; it reduced her to an object. There is a dilemma on how to acknowledge racism but at the same time not to enact or give in to these fears. She uses “we” to make these comments calling on a particular community of people and identifying with them. Likewise, Noma also presents an experience of present day racism but reflects this through her father’s angry reaction.

Noma: I recall once being called a kaffir (laugh) by an 8 year old. I didn't know what it meant then, (T:mm)but I remember asking my dad; ' What does kaffir mean?' (T:mm) I've never seen my dad so angry (laughs). Um (pause) that day we marched to their house made a confrontation, ja so that was my first experience of racism I have had several more other subtle ones...

The overtly racist label 'kaffir' carries the pain of the past into the present. The label invokes the pain from the past and the anger is then expressed by her father through a confrontation and challenging of the use of this label in democratic South Africa. Noma recounts the experience and her father's anger by laughing, indicating distance, ambivalence and perhaps embarrassment. It is clear that overt racism is still present in South Africa (Durrheim et al, 2011).

4.2.1.2 The White Grip on Power

Whiteness still matters in the present and offers access to privilege, resources and power despite the system of democratic equality. Zimasa talks about how she makes sense of whiteness.

Zimasa: One could argue that bla- white people for example, don't think they are superior but in practice they are superior, (T:mm)you know they've got access to 1 2 3 and 4 that black m- black people aren't. (T: mm) so I want that equality where (pause) your race is not an issue, your class position is not an issue, your gender is not an issue.

Zimasa talks about how white people may perceive themselves as being equal to others, but everyday interactions or experiences grounded in material realities and access to resources, negates this equality. White people may deny issues of race or inequality, which allows them to not be reflexive about how they could be responsible for the realities that white domination or supremacy creates (Moon, 1999 cited in Green et al, 2007). Those outside white supremacy, like Zimasa, notice the disjuncture or the incongruence between beliefs and ideas

that white people hold and material reality. Class and race become entangled, with white people having access to more and black people with no access or less access, irrespective of the rhetoric of equality. The following participant talks about the ways in which the ideology of whiteness has been internalised by black people.

Oneka: ...If you can't figure out like a particular mechanical thing you like ah, 'white people's things!' and you'll find out like maybe the Chinese made it, you like, 'ok, really?' They are a minority group too... There seems to be a reverence for white and almost like, eh, white is superior... I mean we've only been free, it hasn't been, it's been a short, I don't want to say, short democracy, I mean it's a young democracy but the state of the people in the actual society (pause) In as much as we might say 'ja we independent, there's democracy' there is still a level of white reverence. (T:mm) In society, a lot of it, and from the black part we, there's a reverence for white people and the white people do have an element of superiority, like, 'we are the superior race'. It's still within some of their minds that well look, cos they are being raised by people who believe in these ideologies...

Oneka talks about how the space of creation and invention is associated with whiteness and not blackness. A number of black South Africans still feel that apartheid has a psychological impact on them (Green et al, 2007). There is a psychological hold or belief in whiteness that still dominates society, especially black people. Oneka sees how the family is an important vehicle for transmitting these ideologies of whiteness of white being superior in both white and black racial groups. Janet shares how she makes meaning of internalised racism and talks about a specific social encounter.

Janet: Our elders are (pause) their, their mental states have been paternalised. Our elders think in a certain way and that thing, that thing, it does this (demonstrating something) onto generations. The black man still thinks his... Uhm the other day (pause) on Friday I went out to Phuma and the guys says, the white man says, the guy has closed the club down. Normal people can come in and I'm like

how the fudge can we still be allowing the white man, like the way he said it, the white man has said you , (bona ningasangeni sakakhulumile umlungu, uthi umlungu?) [Look, do not enter. The white man has spoken, he says the white man?]

Thembi: Ja

Janet:... I know he is working for the people, for the man but that, it just made me realise how the white man still has a hold over us, generally everywhere you go the white man is still in power, yet again (pause) the... where the black man is in power (pause) things don't seem to look like (pause) they doing so well...

Janet focuses on how positions of power are automatically associated with white people and how that angers her. But she ends by saying how she has lost faith or has no faith in “the black man”, expressing the view that when black people occupy positions of power there is failure. Although white people have lost their political power, white people still occupy major positions within South African and control the majority of the economy (Steyn, 2001). A number of writers have found that whiteness is, and has been, associated with being intelligent, being good, knowledgeable and being powerful (Green et al, 2007). What this conversation reveals is perhaps the difficulty in believing that black people have the capacity to hold these positions and the difficulty in having faith in the ‘black man’ due to the continued dominance of whiteness.

4.2.1.3 If not (Black) Racism?

Although there is some internalised ‘whiteness’ as discussed above there are also strongly negative thoughts and feelings towards white people, which can create some discomfort for the participants and raises the question of whether black people can be ‘racist’. The following participant talks about how her views on race and politics are often perceived to be ‘racist.’

Minnie: Sometimes people may mistake my strong political views for me being racist and that's not the case. Uhm I just I just feel (pause) strongly about things like BEE and affirmative action and things that help restore our nation and I get offended when people make uhm comments about black people and ... I analyse things and people (whispers) say, 'no you obsessed with that' and why does every debate have to come back to race but it has to because it's it's it's a sensitive issue in our country, we can't just pretend it doesn't exist. Uhm and and the the scars of apartheid are still there (T:mm)

you know uhm so, so we must face the issue and and I do believe that everything in South Africa (comrade language)comes back to race, so uhm, I'm not a racist (T:mm) Of course I not (laughs) I'm like uhm I just have strong views...

Minnie reflects a discomfort that she experiences socially from others, when she talks about race and inequality issues. It seems that people around her would rather not talk about it, due to the pain that is linked to that past. Being constantly aware, concerned and passionate about social issues that impact on black people may be constructed as being 'racist' or 'obsessed' with race. However, it seems that for Minnie most issues or problems are conceptualised within a racialised perspective as she believes that race is the foundation for every problem in South African society. There is something fundamental about race issues in South Africa and she expresses this in "comrade language"³, which probably provides some support for her from the comrade 'family' even in their physical absence. There is discomfort, something about the laughter that perhaps indicates some doubt, questioning or the absurdity of being labelled racist. Bonang talks about how the system of Apartheid may be over but there are still continuities in terms of how she and some people feel, think and act.

³ Comrade language is a particular kind of English that is spoken by the students within the political organizations, it has a specific African accent. On page 65 there is an in-depth explain of comrade language.

Bonang: I, I got out of, out of high school and I got to varsity and then you realise that you know actually this [Apartheid] is not over... You watch these movies you see 'Saraphina', despite the fact that you relate very well with white people, (T:mm) you have this, this diplomatic hatred, it's a very diplomatic hatred, honestly. Aah, I, I've got friends that are comrades (comrade language)that are very point blank... They don't like white people, they don't associate themselves with white people, they don't work with white people, they don't party with white people, they just don't do anything with white people, they hate them.

Thembi: Really?

Bonang: Whereas I am on the other side where...listen, comrades I am with you, but I mean, I have white descendants in my family (pause) and I have white friends (pause) and to a certain extent there are times where you think but grrr and not only white friends, you find it with white Jewish friends, which makes it extra-ordinary difficult and much more different....You see videos of Steve Biko, what they did with Steve (pause) explicit things... and you can't help, even though I wasn't there, there are times where you think I just hate these people. I don't care if they were there or if they were not there, but I just hate these people. And you have you have a very unwarranted hatred because you not there, you don't know what it feels like. You were not part of the system, but you think, no, but your grandmother and grandfather, your mothers and fathers did this to us, that can't be right.

Bonang talks about her transition from high school to university, a space which is less protected and more open to different kinds of realities and here she confronts the realisation that there are continuities of apartheid. Bonang as a person, separate from the organisation, has good relationships with white people, but within the organisation she is overpowered by a 'diplomatic hatred', a hatred which she does not want to own herself. She describes how other comrades within the organization, have absolutely no affiliation with white people nor do they have any aspirations to connect with white people at any level. Later on in the conversation, she moves to a position of acknowledging her own hate towards white people, but it seems for her to be unjustified because she was not present during apartheid. She then

conjures up a, 'they', white people in the past, and what they did to 'us' as black people. This collective black identity, at this particular moment, "transcends all boundaries and borders between black people" (Ndlovu, 2012,p. 157). The deployment of "us" in this instance removes her from the present, it crosses the boundaries of time and political systems, to apartheid a time when this hatred and anger was justifiable as black people were being overtly oppressed by white people, and therefore the hate felt then is brought into the present experience for Bonang. Bonang displays ambivalence, trying to understand or reconcile the love she feels for individual white people and hatred that she feels towards white people as a collective.

4.2.1.4 Struggle Songs Appropriated

An aspect of the past is kept alive within the student organizations through the singing of struggle songs. The issue of race is often central in these songs as they are rooted within a particular racialized history and their relevance for the present is therefore contested. The incorporation of current events or meanings into the songs, simultaneously make them relevant to the current context and highlight the continuities of past racist injustices in the present. Amina talks about how songs can be altered so that they are meaningful in the present.

Amina: You stick to, historical revolutionary songs...but you change them according to the event.

Thembi: yes yes.

Amina: or the goal, yeah nothing's really set in stone,

Thembi: ja.

Amina: You can literally add a word here and there...

Songs are shared and learnt in the organization but the present generation do not just reproduce these songs as Amina highlights. The songs are appropriated and made meaningful

by the members who are singing them in that particular time and space influenced by the goal at hand (Gray, 2004; Gilbert, 2007; Gunner, 2008). The members of the organizations do not reproduce past meaning, they appropriate (Ricoeur, 1981) they insert their current meanings into the songs, they own the songs. Zimasa talks about a specific song that was covered in the media due to the controversy it caused.

Zimasa: um, dubul' ibhunu? (Kill the boer) I think that song is actually quite fine...I don't understand how like the South African media and sometimes its citizens, think (T:mm) for me there is absolutely no link between a song? and the killing of Terreblanche, was it Terreblanche? (T:mm) there's absolutely no link there...I don't know if it's the song that's banned(T:mm)or if it's Julius Malema singing the song that's banned(T:mm) We still sing the song anyway...it's our song um and there is no link really (T:mm) between the killing and the song...My opinion is they should still be sung (T:mm)cause it's the meaning that counts if you don't understand the meaning ask.(laughs together)....I mean, ag, I just feel people always have like, wanna have an input on things that don't concern them which is wrong (T:mm)so we can't remember our history,...the songs in themselves are very emotional and for a song to be banned then you are saying, 'detach yourself from that emotion.'(T: mm). 'detach yourself from that reality', I can't (louder voice) because my present reality in itself is linked directly to my historical reality...And what they're saying is that 'no let's cut this part out of your history as a black person or as an activist of the ANC cut that part out and move on'(T:mm) how do we move on?

Zimasa sees no link between, the song Dubula iBhunu (Kill the Boer) and provoking attacks or violent behaviour from black members of society towards Afrikaans farmers, more specifically the killing of Terreblache. In saying “there is nothing wrong... [she] is not interested” she is in some way distancing herself from or removing the powerful meanings associated with the song; she is de-politicizing the symbol. She claims that the song is significant but also not significant, simultaneously; there is a contradiction in how she thinks

about the song. There is ownership, claiming that the song is historically relevant and giving it power and importance through mentioning different leaders who have supported the song. There is also a personal, an embodied investment, towards the history and political symbols of the movement, as Zimasa thinks about the link between the songs and her political identity and as a black person. She expresses that those songs are rooted in a particular history and singing them is a way of remembering, (Biko, 1978) and constructing or understanding the self within the present. There is contestation around subjective meaning of songs for individuals, different groups within and outside the organization and some songs' relevance in Post apartheid South Africa. The big question of "how do we move on?" and perhaps the complexity of that may be related to the tension and ambivalences around this song. Anele talks about her feelings about the banning of the song Dubula iBhunu.

Anele: Yho! there was a day, there was a time when there was like dubul' i bhunu like you know and it's a very, (sharp intake of breath) it would just energise you but now, (whispers) you can't sing those things any more (laughs) (whispers) it's been banned.

(laughs together)

Anele: (whispers) it's bad, it's bad, but people still sing it

Thembi: yes

Anele: sometimes

Anele expresses excitement and anxiety when talking about Dubula iBhunu, she feels the need to whisper when she talks about how the song makes her feel; it makes her feel alive, but now we are prohibited from singing the song. She excludes herself by saying "people still sing it" perhaps trying to protect herself or her political identity by not fully committing herself to a particular position. Her laughter could reveal what position she is aligned with although with ambivalence. Noma takes a contrary position and shares her

reasons on why the song should no longer be sung in South Africa when there is an aim for integration.

Noma: I don't sing Dubula iBhunu, Ehm

Thembi: Why?

Noma: ...I think there needs to be a paradigm shift, we cannot be singing (pause) Kill the Boer at this, like in 2012, the struggle is different like, I keep saying we need a national agenda (T:mm) uhm the problem now with the success or a lack thereof with a lot of our policies is there is still a very much an 'us against them' even with affirmative action (T:mm) it's us against them...there is no, we have this problem and let us fix it as a nation, (T:mm) let's chart a way forward as a nation one nation, uhm and I think songs like that are destructive. Uhm, Whether or not they had a historical relevance is irrelevant (T:mm) Uhm they did, I mean, like sure, like, I mean if I was in the 80s in the heart of Apartheid they were the enemy then it's fine, I would have sung that song but now (pause) white people are not the enemy (T:mm) Uhm and I don't think we should be teaching our children that you know boers are the enemy. Uhm (pause) I think we fail sometimes to put ourselves in other people's shoes and I think this applies to white people as well when they oppose things like affirmative action talk about reverse racism and silly things. (T:mm) It's just a failure to put yourself in the other people's... shoes. If I was a white person and someone was singing kill the boer, I would be very worried. (laughs)...

There is space for strong views and practising them within the organisation, by consciously participating in or abstaining from singing specific songs. A song like Dubula iBhunu is understood by Noma as no longer meaningful to the whole, the national unity of South Africa. In her rejection of the song she is standing for a nation not an 'us against them' black against white. She talks about how these kinds of symbols should be redundant in South Africa, but for that to occur one has to make it a conscious decision or act to connect with the other's humanity, positioning the self in relation to the other in order to counteract the

divisions. Noma is raising questions of what can bring people together. "...What are the discursive contexts and spaces when and where 'race' or blackness specifically can be deployed progressively to create ties that bind, and to challenge the contexts and spaces when and where blackness creates lines that divide" (Bradbury & Ndlovu, 2011, p. 17). Language is one of the aspects that can either divide or bring people together. The participants use and reflect on a particular form of English that creates political identity, 'comrade language'.

4.2.1.5 Comrade Language

The following participants talk about comrade language used by the students within the political organizations; the meaning of it and what it implies for their identities within and outside of the political environment. Noma explains the significance of the language that is shared by members or comrades and the ways in which she makes meaning of it.

Thembi: ... I noticed that you switched your, is it accent? Yes (laughs)...

Noma: Ja

Thembi: Why? (laughs)...

Noma: I can't speak for other comrades but, I think it's, it's a thing of the environment like we use it playfully, like when we are around each other, you know we like (comrade language) ja comrade leader (smiling), you know we use it playfully hmm if I am addressing comrades in a BGM I speak like this, I am not one of those comrades whose going to be like (comrade language) yes, comrades eh, I think that's silly and quite frankly I think its patronising because there are comrades who have that genuine background and who speak like that so, what are you what are you trying to say?

Thembi: Hmm hmm

Noma: ... When you imitate, imitate that accent you know...

According to the participants, most of the students, particularly leaders in the student political organizations, are from model C and or private schools, with families that are financially

comfortable. This raises questions of possible class issues in the organization. Within these schools a particular type of English is spoken which signifies that a student comes from those schools, indicating that she comes from a family that can afford this or is comfortable economically, although this may not be true for all of those who went to these types of schools. In contrast to the middle class status of these students, the struggle is geared towards the working class and poor masses, with a second language (or Black) accent. Black South African English, as spoken by the masses, is distinctively accented, particularly because Apartheid schooling and other forms of segregation meant (and for many still means) that English was typically learned in isolation from mother tongue speakers of the language. The adoption of this accent in political talk by these middle class students is referred to as 'comrade talk'. Perhaps this comrade language is a way of bridging class inequalities between members and the working class or unemployed poor whose needs are the focus of the organization. There is a social identity (Alexander, 2005) a comrade identity, that is created in the use of comrade language. Comrade language is English with a particular African accent that does not conform to the rules of Standard (white) English. Noma, according to the above, says that some comrades genuinely come from a background where this kind of English is spoken in more rural settings or impoverished township communities. In contrast, some of the others speak comrade language even though they usually speak Standard English, which contradicts the kind of backgrounds from which they come. That is perhaps not the kind of social identity that they want to reveal in the setting of political activity. The participant below talks about how comrade language has pervaded different social spaces outside of the political space.

Bonang: unconsciously (T:mm) you, you know you just get carved into it, you don't even realise but the minute I get with my friends I come back to, it's not even in my mind that, I'm with these ones I must talk like this, I'm with these ones I must talk like that. There are times I do it with my mom

(T:mm) and the time I start doing it with my mother, that's when I realised huri (that) ja that this is bad

Thembi: (laughing)

Bonang: ... I kind of told myself that, you know what, and I'm very unapologetic of it. Comrades no (comrade language) no that thing is wrong it's not English! I don't care how, what accent you use but that is not English!

Thembi: Mm

Bonang: and they were like 'hayi u snobnyani' (oh no you are a bit of a snob)...

Comrade language thus becomes part of the person, a form of identification. As Bonang says, even in settings which do not necessarily demand comrade language, she finds herself speaking it. Her political or comrade identity seems to permeate different social settings. At the same time within her, perhaps due to her educational back ground, there is still pressure to conform to the rules and conventions of Standard English. In speaking Standard English there is the danger of being classified a 'coconut', associated with whiteness; speaking Standard English might reveal someone's *umlungu* status. *Umlungu* and whiteness is associated with wealth and affluence and not the struggle (Alexander, 2007; Altman, 2004; Green et al, 2007).

4.2.2 Intersections of Race and Gender

This section focuses on the issues of race and gender and the different ways that these dimensions of identity are multilayered within the present for these young women. The first theme highlights continuities with the past in the different ways that women still occupy 'supportive and nurturing roles'. The second theme, 'sexuality and political reputation', focuses on how the private sexual affairs of women become significant in their political ambitions. Theme three 'the Barbie-doll stereotype' and theme four, 'One of the boys' both address questions of masculinity and femininity within the political space.

4.2.2.1 Supportive and Nurturing Roles

The following participant talks about ‘deputising’ as a supportive role that women often occupy within organisational structures.

Amina: Well, you see the thing about, deputising is that (pause) you don't have as much say. So say you're deputy chair. (T:mm)um(pause) you... only come in when chairperson's not available. You don't have the power to speak on programs that you will do. (T:mm) Uhm, you don't chair meetings you don't. So, in terms of that, it sort of limits the, the voice, (T:mm) of people.

Amina talks about “deputising” as the role women generally will occupy, where men take the leadership role and they direction to the organisation. The women are there to support men in leadership. There seems to be a continuation from the political struggle history of women being the supporters and men taking the lead (Geisler, 2000; Hassim, 2000). Amina talks about how deputy roles are less powerful. She says that the presence of women is not impactful, even though they are part of the organisational structure. Likewise Zimasa talks about how the organisation is a microcosm of society where there are expectations especially from the men about what women should be doing when they are in work meetings. Women are pressured to perform the nurturing and helping roles.

Zimasa: ... Women are expected to do certain things, that men can't do, if let's say we go we're having a meeting, and then maybe there's refreshments all the guys, I don't know...just decide to look at the women to say you know but can you assist us..? ...There are obviously certain types of roles that are gendered outside of political organisations but those gendered roles also find expression inside...

Based on what Zimasa says there are specific activities that it is assumed men cannot do which women can. Women are constructed as supportive, caring and nurturing (Chodorow, 1979; Billington et al, 1998). Perhaps there is that baggage from the past of being together

as black people to fight racial oppression and then how does one start fighting gender oppression simultaneously within the same “family?”. Noma elaborates on the position of women, in the organization as a kind of “window dressing”.

Noma: I think we have allowed tokenism (T:mm) and that's done more harm to the gender struggle than anything. Like just being elected into a position just because you are a woman or just because you need a gender balance and then putting women who are not qualified, not competent into an important position. I think does great harm to the gender struggle (T:mm) so that is unfortunate.

Noma talks about the practice of “window dressing”, or tokenism, which is implemented to meet gender quotas. The placement of women into positions is often arbitrary, even if they often do not have the sufficient skills, aptitude or experience; this then reinforces men’s leadership. There are some commonalities that can be drawn from policies that are used to address race like BEE; although the goal was to “level the playing fields” the outcomes have been different (Alexander, 2006). It has led to a minority black elite benefitting and worsens the crisis of class inequality (Alexander, 2006). Quite crudely, what can be deduced here is that real structural and ideological change has not occurred. At the surface level there seems to be change but men still seem to hold the power. There are commonalities or parallels in gender struggles with race issues and class inequality. These kinds of practices destabilize or endanger the gender equality movement for Noma. Bonang talks about Nkosazana Zuma and how she makes sense of her being moved away from South Africa for the African Union Position.

Bonang: We had a perfect president... A perfect female candidate (T:mm)

Bonang: (comrade language)...haaa patriarchy over took us... patriarchy just chowed us...send it there to Africa, leading Africa now. She's good enough to lead a continent but not good enough to lead

some small, tiny country down there at the bottom,...and women's league was there leading...oooh amakhosikazi, I'm like noo...there's nothing to be proud of here... This woman cannot be proper and that capacitated to lead a whole entire problematic continent, but does not have the capacity to lead one small country at the bottom of (comrade language) Africa..haaa...guys you don't take us serious. So I, I..and funny enough I was telling them, labo mama laba in the office, that mina I am not a member of woman's league (comrade language) because I don't take you serious, because yourselves, you don't take yourselves serious.

Bonang believes that rather than a sign of women's empowerment, patriarchy won when Nkosazana Zuma was appointed as president of the AU as she had the potential to be the president of South Africa, a more powerful political position. She says how "it" (Nkosazana Zuma) was reduced to a potential troublesome object that had to be sent away. Bonang talks about the contradiction of believing that a woman can lead in the African Union but cannot lead at home or there is no space or recognition that she could take vital leadership in South Africa, like being president. The problem of women not occupying strategic positions politically is understood as something that is paradoxically facilitated by women themselves, specifically the Women's League according to Bonang. She reflects ambivalence and frustration about this issue. She does not take the role of the women's league seriously and is therefore not aligned to or supportive of the organization. She argues that women have to lead the struggle for gender equality in the political arena.

4.2.2.2 Sexuality & Political Reputation

Amina talks about the difficulty of being a woman comrade compared to a male comrade as her sexuality is always considered relevant to her political reputation.

Amina: I feel like the reputation of a female can be very (pause) more easily tarnished than the reputation of a male, uhm in politics (pause). So if a female does something stupid; a slip up, (T:mm)

their reputation can be tarnished for a very long time whereas for a woman, it's not. I mean for a man

...

Amina talks about how the affairs or private conduct of men may be forgiven but not those of women. Women have to be extra vigilant about how they conduct themselves because their mistakes may shadow their political prospects. In Ramphele's (1991) experiences in the Black Consciousness Movement she talks about how she found ways to survive in the male dominated space and not be intimidated by men who often had their way. Minnie further elaborates on and points to a specific area of conduct that could ruin a woman comrade's reputation.

Minnie: uhm male uhm politicians ,if you see that a girl is powerful. (T:mm) Or she has the potential of being powerful, (T:mm) they will want to sleep with her, to kind've keep her down.(T:mm) So she can know her place.

According to Minnie when a woman comrade is perceived to be a strong political contender, the men target her sexually with the goal of damaging her reputation. What seems to be an orchestrated interaction or encounter is led by men, to assert male dominance and leadership within the organization. A woman's role is understood to be a domesticated and supportive role (Billington et al, 1998) and the men enforce or challenge women who want to take on the perceived masculine space. The penetration of her body, irrespective of whether it be consensual sex or not, or even sex initiated by the woman, is significant in that these private sexual encounters may be used as weapons to dis-empower women politically. In contrast to the views expressed above, Bonang talks about how women who are sexually expressive should be celebrated.

Bonang:...(comrade language) that's very, that's very powerful, she's a leader that woman. The fact that she's going there and 'chowing' them, she's proving a point...you are going there and doing the same thing,no one is saying anything, (comrade language) she's a leader that woman, she's very key, she knows what she wants and she goes and gets what she wants and she goes back. They like 'noo but that thing is wrong' kiri(I say) and I'm like why is it wrong? She can't lead because she slept around wena you can lead..wena ..wena you are just a born leader, you are just perfect the way you are...Kiri (I say) No..Comrades you cannot just reduce us to sex it doesn't work like that. (comrade language) Today if I decide I'm going to sleep with comrade A, I'm going to do it and no one is going to tell me anything

Thembi: (laughs)

Bonang: and my leading capacity..., should not be stated on the fact that I slept with someone. My track record in this movement must speak for itself.... I mean the stuff that you hear from these men and you think, and it's sad because you hear it from intellectuals.

Contrary to what has been highlighted by the participants above, Bonang views women's sexual freedom or dominance as a strength. One may wonder if these women who go against the stereotype of how a woman should be sexually, not fixing their sexual desires and actions to one man, are being exploited or really practising agency. Hassim (2009, p. 65) writes that women's voices are also muted in expressing their desires for sex "silence... is also part of a blanket denial of women's sexual agency." Bonang argues that women who are sexually liberated, who are not afraid to be free with their bodies should be perceived as being courageous, determined and challenging. What women do sexually should not be judged morally or politically as long as that person occupies that role, having proved herself politically within the organization.

Sexist views, or the proverbial double standard, is that women's sexual desires and actions need to be directed to one man (Weedon, 1987); women are expected to be monogamous. Women may challenge their roles as wives and mothers but there is a specific way that a woman has to carry herself sexually and that is not to be promiscuous or dominant. There is tension between the private and public domains in politics in relation to women and sex. Bonang challenges the naturalised idea that men were born to lead therefore can get away with all kinds of behaviour. When women practise certain sexual behaviours that men do they are condemned or labelled. On the other hand, sexual liberation is viewed as conquering the bodies of men, or what is perceived to be masculine space or territory; therefore that kind of behaviour should not deter from the ability for a woman to lead, according to Bonang. There are deeply rooted double standards that she is talking about. "... 'good' women are expected to be ignorant about sex, to be passive and to acquiesce to norms of masculinity that project men's needs as insatiable" (Hassim, 2009, p. 69).

4.2.2.3 The Barbie-doll Stereotype

In contrast to the asexualised 'good woman' stereotype, is the Barbie-doll stereotype which embodies the heterosexist object of male desire. This is a woman who is not taken seriously within the political space she is focused on how she looks and the social hype of the political sphere, and presents herself as or is perceived to be, mentally and politically weak.

Noma: It's the accent it's the general lack of content , it's the just wanting to be heard. (T:mm)The rolling your eyes a little more than you should.

Thembi: Oh

Noma: Uhm, it's the being somewhat permissive with the male comrades, excessively permissive, ja that's, that's what a Barbie would be.

Noma talks about women who are given the 'Barbie' label. The popular image is of Barbie as the slender, hourglass doll with blonde hair that is based on an idealised beauty located in whiteness. The beauty of black women is constructed in relation to white popular ideas of beauty (Mama, 1995) even though there is an increasing rejection of this ideal of beauty. (Ramphela, 1991, p. 217) writes about a period in the 70s when the term "Black is Beautiful" liberated black women from being defined in terms dictated by the dominant white culture". There seems to be a connection between how a woman represents herself physically with her mental and political potential and capacity. The "Barbie" is assumed not to be a serious political contender. This woman is very flirtatious or sexually inviting to the male comrades. This kind of woman seeks attention, without any political knowledge or meaningful contribution; there is no substantial depth in thinking according to Noma. What is not clear though is who is defining this category. Oneka shares her thoughts on the labels that women are given within the student organization and also uses the Barbie doll reference.

Oneka: Either the women have to be hard and be like men or you have the extreme opposite. And the babes all make up and mascara who are like 'oh my gosh' and they are just there and like Barbie, little content, not really there to, but just maybe cause their boyfriend is there or whatever the case may be. (T:mm) But there seems to be like (pause) they seem to try and force you to one of the boxes. It's either you're like, you're a Barbie...You're just doing it because you're, you're like T-shirts, you like Biko you're like, 'oh my gosh, Biko you write what I like'. Or (Thembi laughs softly) you're this male domineering kind of woman and it's like... why can't I just be me?

Oneka further illustrates or portrays a richer picture of what this "Barbie" category is about. This kind woman is focused on how she looks and is not driven into the student organization by political motivations or inspirations and does not engage with political thought in a serious and meaningful way. Contrary to the Barbie there is a masculine type of woman comrade, who is closely identified with men or embodies masculinity and dominates. Oneka talks

about the boxes or the rigidity of the categories that women are placed in within the student organisation. She experiences frustration in needing to present herself authentically and not be placed in particular categories.

4.2.2.4 One of the Boys

Anele talks about the tension of self presentation when thinking about leadership and men.

Anele: You can't be a girly girl and be a leader... If you're seen to be someone, who's into trends and has nails and has hair you're, you're not taken seriously.

Thembi: ok.

Anele: As one of the women like me now (pause) are you know like more (pause) what can I say?

Manly side; like you have to be one of the guys. You know that whole thing in society as well.

Thembi: ja.

Anele: If you're a tomboy, guys would be like, ok she's one of us type of thing.

For Anele, there seems to be difficulty or tension with embodying femininity and taking a role of leadership which typically embodies masculinity. She explains femininity as the state of being invested in one's appearance and this is perceived negatively. One of the ways in which femininity is understood as is being soft, caring emotional and therefore negatively impacting rationality (Billington et, 1998; Weedon, 1987). By enacting some kind of masculinity one becomes accepted by the men in the organization (Ramphela, 1991). To bridge the gap between this femininity and masculinity, Anele has had to minimize her femininity to gain acceptance from the men within the student organization. The feminine comrade is not taken as a serious political contender, which echoes Oneka and Noma. Minnie talks about how she balances femininity and masculinity and the gender performance she does.

Minnie: It's nice getting dolled up. I have a girly side (pause) just that in politics, uhm I can't really show my girly side a lot coz uhm girly is seen as weak. (T:mm) ... I have to kind of mimic the men most of the time you know. Even in my walk like if you see me when I'm going to a political event or meeting I have this, my friends call it the determination walk. (laughs)... And I'll wear a blazer and just so that I feel like a real leader. I won't go there in a dress. uhm I won't sit, I, I, I get there and I'm one of the boys It ,It , it (pause) gives me the confidence that I can challenge them. (T:mm) You know I don't have limitations, you know. When they jump I jump as well, you know so uhm (pause) ... I was saying the other day that I feel like I'm living a double life. When I'm with my friends and my family, I'm Minnie, when, when in politics, I'm like this (laughs) emotionless person who (pause) will do anything to protect what she believes in and she will not let anyone uhm take that from her or silence her uhm ja .

Minnie's feminine side is absent within the organization. There is a shedding of her femininity, which is constructed as "fickle and frivolous", that is reserved for her private life. The public and political sphere demands a less emotive, less relational, independent individual (Chodorow, 1979). There is a certain way to be as woman comrade that is devoid of emotion, a fighter or a soldier that will stand their ground. Minnie talks about how she gets into this role; it is seen in what she wears, a blazer, and the way she carries herself mentally and physically. This kind of preparation distances her from her feminine side as she connects with a more masculine side. Enacting masculinity or finding points of identification with men is not something new; women did that in the past during the struggle (Ramphele, 1991).

Anele talks about her experience of occupying a leadership position where men are the majority.

Anele: If you find yourself as the minority I think your work is even harder than their hmm- you know? So that was, why I always had to be the loudest voice cause I had to make up for you know ,my

size in every way. (laughs) So ja and luckily I was very fortunate to be with people that actually did respect me though.

In Anele's experience of leading, she had to exert herself, prove herself more than the men who were in the majority. One way of asserting the self to men was by being aggressive with men who did not take women seriously (Ramphela, 1991). Anele talks about her size as being small, which could speak to the small representation of women and women being small and insignificant and that she had to force her presence to be felt. Her voice became her weapon; she amplifies her voice to make herself visible. Although people respected her she feels it was unfair to have to work so hard to be heard and seen. There seems to be tension or conflict in thinking about her role as a woman in leadership. There are also connections that could be made in relation to race, if being white is linked to power, entitlement, being in the centre, the norm (Altman, 2004; Green et al, 2007; Steyn, 2001). The same can be applied to men and the system of patriarchy. If one is not that, not the centred identity there is a need to work to be heard to be recognised, to make up for or level the power differentials. Noma shares about the difficulty of being a leader and needing to balance the needs of individual groups and the needs of the organization.

Noma: As the only female in the exec,

Thembi: Ja

Noma: I've had to (pause) it's an interesting one. (pause) I've had to strike the balance between asserting myself and making sure that I am taken seriously by my colleagues and not be overly assertive to the extent that the others females in the SRC feel that I own them this permanent allegiance because we are females. Uhm so this balance between you need to take me seriously as a woman and as a leader (T:mm) ... Take your female leaders seriously...I agree with you on principle on this issue but don't expect for me to agree with you every time cos you are a woman, (T:mm) so now we have this permanent allegiance to each other. So I've had to strike a balance to avoid that, it has not always been easy because to an extent the other women who are outside the exec would rely

on me. (T:mm)(comrade language) Like you are in there what's going on comrade? You know and I'd have to and if I defend it's like I am defending the men and I'm part of the boys club and you know what I mean? ... (T:mm) But sometimes on principle you are wrong, you are woman but you are wrong. So I am going to differ with you...

In Noma's experience of leadership and being the only woman representative in a male executive, she reflects on having to balance expectations. There are expectations from the women collective to be permanently aligned to them and to the men colleagues, not to alienate them by being overly assertive or always pushing women's agendas. Dill (1983) writes about a 'sisterhood' that black women share which is understood as "a supportive feeling of loyalty and attachment to other women stemming from a shared feeling of oppression" (Hill- Collins, 1986, p. 522). There is difficulty in presenting herself in a way that is nuanced and capable of embracing multiple points of view without alienating the men or other women and still being an authentic leader. She tries to hold onto being both a leader and a woman. Noma will therefore try to measure a stance, belief or request on merit and what it means for the organisation. From what she shares, there have been experiences where she has had to defend or explain some decisions that were made that the women were not happy about. This might have resulted in questions around which side she is aligned with, the men or the women, and having to hold onto the tension or conflict presented by what seems to be opposed or divided sides.

4.3 Projecting Futures, Reimagining the Past and the Present

Similarly to the way in which the past is interwoven with the present, talk of possible futures was also alive in the present. The young women reflect on the ways that the past continues in the present but they also show their understanding of change and agency in imagining their roles in the future and what South Africa could be like. These future selves are neither

entirely positive or free nor entirely stuck in the oppression of the past. Here again there are intersections of identity as these participants position themselves as black middle class women, with 'race', class and gender increasingly more fluidly interpreted. In contrast to the tensions expressed above between class, race and gendered positions in which the participants often seem to be under pressure to 'choose' identifications and submerge aspects of themselves, such as their privileged middle class schooling or their femininity and sexuality, there is an attempt to integrate fragmentary or even contradictory identities. The themes are presented first in relation to intersections of race and class, and then in relation to how gender further complicates present and future positionalities.

4.3.1 Intersections of Race and Class

This section looks at how democratic South Africa has created spaces for thinking about black experiences and identities in different ways. The first theme is 'black movers: class mobility & new spaces'. The participants talk about their own opportunities and challenges of being exposed to and being in white spaces, having access to resources, and the felt experiences of their class mobility in relation to continued mass poverty among black people. In the second theme, 'whiteness: abelungu & coconuts', the participants talk about 'whiteness' in relation to their black identities. In the third and final theme, 'A free South Africa' the participants engage with the concept of freedom and what it means both collectively and individually in the present and possible futures.

4.3.1.1 Black Movers: Class Mobility & New Spaces

The following participants talk about moving from black spaces to mostly white spaces, the suburbs, one of the indicators of class mobility.

Oneka: For the first part of my life I grew up around a lot of black people. Like, I grew up in a well not in a bad way,

Thembi: (laughs)

Oneka: well, I grew up in Midrand there were more blacks... And then, like for the later part of my life, we like moved to these more affluent areas, so, so , so, surrounded by a lot more white people, like in my classrooms and my school as a whole...

Oneka talks about the racial contrast between the different spaces that her family lived in due to material status. In the less privileged spaces there was a black majority and later on her family moved to wealthier spaces, where there is a white majority or a bigger white population, where she was in the minority racially. Access to privilege or the divisions of being in different classes is a felt and lived experience within the student organization for the following participant.

Minnie: So we in this meeting (pause) these girls are from like middle to upper class, they went to Paris schools and got connections you know and in fact one of them, the other two were just, ja I can handle them. The other one Uhm Nomvula (pseudonym), uhm she, she in her family, like her, her grandmother once dated Thabo Mbeki (T:mm)Uhm she was also into these political stuff right (T:mm) Her uncles were also active in politics (T:mm) Uhm She has businessmen, she's connected like her cousins are someones, are married to so and so in the ANC, she's like connected big time (T:mm) So she comes to that first meeting. She's like, 'ja, I called my mom, my mom is the director at some company or whatever and... she gave me a list of suggestions for this thing that we are discussing.'(T:mm) She comes with the (comrade language) two page typed thing and she's like ja eh suggest one and I'm listening to her and I'm like what! I only have like two suggestions and I have been wrecking my head the whole week for these two suggestions and she's got like two pages and in that two pages, she covered my suggestions as well and I'm like Ok, this is bad.

At the same time, the majority remain without access to multiple resources. In post apartheid South Africa there are now intra-race race inequalities, where class differences become quite significant (Natrass & Seekings, 2001). The impact of being privileged and or politically connected or relatively poor can present itself in work interactions or meetings. Perhaps Minnie uses the comrade language to speak to an embodied of felt inequality, invading the meeting or organization due to the different levels of material wealth or class. The use of this language might serve to authenticate her comrade identity in the presence of the other who seems to have the struggle in her history and in her blood. Anele talks about the anger she feels when thinking about continued inequalities, taking into account what she saw in her childhood.

Anele: I think the anger you know, growing up as a, a black child like (pause) I'd see how my white friends lived and then I'd go back to the township and I'd see how other people lived like how I- I've always, we didn't,- weren't, the richest family but you know, we always had a comfortable life.

(T:mm) Ehmm- my mother provided for us and I see that you know there's always someone who has it worse off (T:mm) and I, I never felt that my white friends ever knew exactly like, how lucky they were and you know those things as you grow up they you know they push them to the back somewhere, but you, you take note and you know what's going on and eventually it builds up and you're like but you know this is not right, can't continue like this. You know, bebe sijwayela [they were taking advantage of us] back then and NOW! You know there's still that, you know, sense of, you know, disrespect and it has to change, you know, it has to it must (laughs) actually it must (both laugh) but ja.

Thembi: ok, so there's (pause) there's a need to change,

Anele: there's a definite need to change.

Thembi: and is the anger still there?

Anele: um (pause) it pops up every now and again you know but, with this anger it'll be like maybe particular situations. Like I hate the fact that there are still people that still go to bed without food. I hate the fact that in weather like you know (T:mm) in cold weather, people are still suffering. Like

those are the things that make me angry and not only at what happened in the past but what's happening now, current leadership you know.

Anele talks about the anxiety or internal discomfort in having access to both white and black spaces and comparing how different these two worlds are and how that keeps her angry.

There is the burden or the guilt of being black and comfortable financially, with white friends, while continuing to be in close contact to other black people who are struggling financially. She also expresses some envy or critique of “white ignorance” (Steyn, 2001) or her friends’ oblivion to their privilege and to the poverty stricken realities of many black people.

For Anele, the poverty was almost understandable “back then” therefore anger could be suppressed or clearly directed at dominant oppressive whites but now in post apartheid South Africa the anger is at times expressed or erupts unpredictably and without a clear target . It may be more comfortable for Anele to talk about the anger in relation to big social issues than direct it to white people. There is also a new target for her anger, that being the ANC led government, an organization of which she is a part. Perhaps what Fanon (1963) says, about the oppressed dreaming of and wanting to take over the oppressor’s position rings true. The implication of that would translate into superficial transformation. Minnie talks about how her father views success in thinking about white people compared to black people being homeless, she further comments on what it means to be “black and proud.”

Minnie: ...You know uhm, if he sees himself [father] in a better car than a white man, he get's happy uhm he (pause) doesn't feel that white people should be hobos so when he sees a white hobo, he ,he, he gets you know like, like why? you know (T:mm) uhm (pause) but with black hobos no (laughs), so I see that and I'm like so he, he still believes, apartheid is over but he still believes that the aim, the goal is to be as white as possible.

Thembi: Ja

Minnie: Uhm and we still see like even with the youth, the whole 'yellow bone'.

Thembi (laughs)

Minnie: So the lighter you are, the better you are apparently and uhm so it's, it's, it's, it's just eh we still see that, even though in today's society. It, it manifest itself in different ways, but we still see that and I think black people should just start being proud of who they are, I'm not saying now black people must (comrade language) all have afro's and all wear, and only listen to maskandi or anything like, but what I'm saying

(both laughing)

Thembi: ja

Minnie: it's just that they must just uhm be comfortable in knowing that I'm equal to the white man,

Thembi: Ja

Minnie: not better, that I am better than, cos some of them go to that extent of saying, (comrade language) ja I'm better than the white man...

Thembi: Mm..

Minnie: uhm you know, (comrade language) Africa is my land they are visitors in my land...

Minnie talks about how her father expresses great satisfaction when he has acquired something superior to that of the white man. He perhaps thinks that white people should not be in a position of being financially strained or quite low on the social ladder, in positions of poverty. It is understandable to see black people in positions of poverty not white people. The apartheid system allowed white people to gain socially and economically, to the disadvantage of black people, therefore it does not make sense for white people to be in disenfranchised positions. Being as 'white as possible' is perhaps connecting to what is associated with whiteness, wealth, success, freedom to reinvent oneself (Altman, 2004; Green et al, 2007). Even though the label "umlungu" is still associated with wealth perhaps there is a feeling that white people should not be poor because they had the advantage of Apartheid and historical power and associated access to resources.

Whiteness seems to continue to be valued in different ways by youth in post apartheid South Africa, like the ‘yellow bone’ phenomenon; where light skinned black people are perceived to be “more beautiful”. Specifically, the complexity of black women’s attractiveness or beauty has always been juxtaposed to or conceptualized in relation to white beauty (Mama, 1995). Minnie understands embracing or loving blackness comes from seeing black as being equal to white. There is no recognition that being black or blackness in its own right is enough, it has to be graded or valued in relation to whiteness for her. From her perspective within the student organization there is an element of elevating blackness and a need for whiteness to be devalued in order for blackness to be valued. She ends with an assertion of ancestral rights, conflating being black and African and challenging the rights of white South Africans to belong.

4.3.1.2 Whiteness: Abelungu & coconuts

The term “abelungu” literally means ‘white people’ but it has more recently come to be used to refer to those who might identify with or perhaps embody aspects of whiteness, and thus also talks to class issues. Likewise, the derogatory term ‘coconut’ (black on the outside and white on the inside) is also used to denote those who are perceived to identify with and embody whiteness. The following participants talk about how they make sense of their black identity in relation to whiteness.

Minnie: Uhm (pause) I’ve seen some people, who (emphasis) really hate white people especially in in the PYA, they hate white people, aah those people what they did to us. I don’t feel that (T:mm) I have white friends I (pause) actually compared to the typical black person I’m actually living white (kind of whispers)

Thembi: laughs)

Minnie: Uhm I don't know. I like things that white people like uhm I don't say ooh that's, that's too white, like, Im just (pause) I I live with everyone.

Minnie shows some ambivalence in terms of identification, possibly some conflict or tension between her racialised and classed positions. There is a shared social history of being black tied to oppression and the continued hatred towards white people. But there is also a world of new opportunities, different ways of interacting with different races that divides individuals or identities of that shared black history. Minnie whispers or confesses that she identifies more with whiteness, perhaps ashamed of revealing this within an organization where there is a particular version of blackness that is celebrated and enacted. She likes things that white people like, which could be music, clothes, food, aspirations a specific cultural lifestyle or identity that is linked to whiteness. This identification with whiteness could place her at risk of being labelled a 'coconut,' a person who is black but acts white. "In South Africa, discourses of whiteness as spoken by black people transcend the colour boundary to give meanings to affluence, lifestyle, and changes in traditional African behaviour. "Often black people would talk of (*abelungu abamnyama*) or 'white black persons' to relocate westernised, educated (*izifundiswa*) and affluent Africans into the white category, albeit imaginary." (Green et al, 2007,p. 395). Due to fixed ideas of what it means to be black, black people have to believe in certain ideas, behave in certain ways to align with specific ways of how to be black (Ndlovu, 2012). Minnie identifies more with white people in terms of her preferences and the way that she behaves. There is a "typical black person" way of being that she does not identify with. Anele talks about shifts in her identity; how it was influenced by being in the presence of black friends.

Anele:... I had so many white friends that I was always sleeping over somewhere (laughs)... Primary school and then high school obviously started hanging out with more black kids.

Thembi: ok?

Anele: I mean becoming more black (laughs) per say...

Anele's identification shifted from whiteness to blackness as she changed schools and started interacting more with black friends. She becomes "more black" and she laughs as she says that, bringing about a question on whether not being seen as being black enough was problematic for her back then and in the present. Anele also reveals the performance aspect of race. "In a racialized social system all actors are racialized... Because all social actors are racialized, at some level they must live and perform or 'do race'." (Lewis, 2004; p. 626). The excerpts from Minnie and Anele show some of the challenges and pressures of moving in and out of different racialized spaces and how they perhaps struggle with negotiating different spaces and the different selves that these spaces demand or bring out. It becomes difficult to have one coherent self when different spaces demand different selves (Mc Adams, 2001).

4.3.1.3 A Free South Africa

In terms of thinking about the future for South Africa, there are wishes for a society where people are equal and treated equally, this being rooted in feelings or emotions of equality as reflected by the following participants. The following conversations were founded upon this question, 'What do you wish for the future of South Africa?'

Humbulani: um (pause) before we free- um, go to the future. I personally believe (laughs) that if Chris Hani, God rest his soul had not died, he would have the minute they let Mandela out of jail(T:mm) said comrades, 'we are going to war whoever w- whoever lives, runs the country'(pause) that would seal everything. Cause right now literally, we say we're moving forward as a free democracy, um non-racial, non-sexist but (laughs sarcastically) who are we kidding? Literally we are, living, ehm in racial divisions you can't help but say this white person or this black person it's very much inherent and and um somehow, we can't move forward (T:mm) from it? (T:mm) Um, also from our um (pause)

sexual issues, gender issues as well. The oppression of women still very much exists. so e- i would hope for a, equal South Africa?

Humbulani asserts that bloodshed and war would have closed off what had happened in the past; the anger and aggression and discriminatory ideas and practices would have been released and contained within that war period. A war, for her, would have eradicated the remnants of apartheid that are present in different ways in post democratic South Africa. “Decolonization is always a violent event...For the last can only be the first after a murderous and decisive confrontation between the two protagonists” (Fanon, 1963; p. 1; p.3). In this view, freedom from the Apartheid could have only been achieved through a violent encounter. Humbulani appropriates and applies Fanon’s thinking about colonization and decolonization when reflecting on what should have happened in South Africa. She expresses that due to that war not happening, there has been no change, inequality is still present in multiple spaces. Her wish is still for an equal South Africa, a future that has not yet materialised, hope that is also expressed by the participants below.

Anele: I want a, a free society and in every word of the sense, free. I won't say perfect, cause what is perfect? (T:mm) but I do want a free society. Where you know, what we see today, in many ways we've gone back, backwards than gone forward and I just want to see a natural progression, you know leaning towards the positive...

Zimasa: I really wish, for, the ANC says that it wants a non sexist, democratic non racial (T:mm) South Africa... You know I really wish for a South Africa that does, where no one feels, that maybe thinks and feels that they are superior to the other? (T:mm) And everyone feels equal...

“The refusal to look back, the refusal to incorporate narratives of the past into our current understandings of ourselves and our society creates a kind of paralysis, paradoxically fixing us in that very past and obscuring possibilities for the future” (Bradbury, 2012, p. 345).

Perhaps what these women Zimasa, Anele and Humbulani are struggling with in terms of thinking about the future, is the sense that the past is still alive in the present. There is still a wish for equality in all aspects and a need for freedom in South Africa. There is some recognition that the past or the continuities of apartheid which limits or challenges, the possibility of creating new selves and new futures, this may come with careful and complex interrogation with the past and the inequalities that it created socially and psychologically. The idea that “we’ve gone back” speaks to the “paralysis”, that Bradbury (2012) mentions, if we do not confront the past, being stuck in that past. Although the different ways in which these women engage with the past within the present has created some shifts in identities and thinking about the self in society but there are still remnants of the past. The strong presence of the past in some instances creates a dissatisfaction of the present. The state of paralysis may often project wishes for South Africa that may have also been envisioned during apartheid South Africa. The other level though is what does this freedom and agency mean in terms of gender, especially in relation to work and the family; the following section looks at those dynamics. This speaks to the multiple layers of oppression that women may think about and perhaps challenge or be compliant with.

4.3.2 Intersections of Race, Class and Gender

These young black women are educated, politically active and have been exposed to multiple experiences and theories which may have an impact on how they construct future selves. It is evident that they are actively reinterpreting what it means to be a black woman but it is debatable whether this process is progressively fluid and empowering or whether gendered stereotypes are being recapitulated. The first theme in this section explores how the

participants reinterpret Black Consciousness theory in relation to gender struggles, suggesting ways in which feminism and struggle theory might be combined to create a non-sexist, non-racist future. The second theme, 'embracing femininity' explores how the participants attempt to re-invoke their femininity as a legitimate aspect of their current identities, they feel should not impact on their political (or other career) aspirations in the future. The third theme is 'Myself, my family, my work, revealing the continuities or discontinuities in how these young women envisage their future political and work selves in 'balance' with the domestic sphere of the family.

4.3.2.1 Feminism and Struggle Theory

At a more abstract and ideological level there is interesting engagement that is occurring with "struggle theories." This is applied to thinking and planning interventions focused on elevating the position of women. The women below look at the theory of Steve Biko in relation to their positions as women.

Humbulani: Um(pause) but ja, like um Biko said you know black men you're on your own. (T:mm) women also you are on your own. (T:mm) You know go and lead the struggle for equality. You are the only ones that can lead it, (T:mm) nobody else will do it for them and the men are very comfortable, obviously.(T:mm) oppressing you guys.

Humbulani talks about how she has incorporated Steve Biko's theories in thinking about the gender struggle. This theory was used for fighting against the apartheid system and white oppression. Now it has been appropriated and is engaged with meaningfully in thinking about the gender struggle. It is the women who are oppressed, not the men, according to Humbulani and therefore they need to lead this fight.

Janet: Steve Biko says, 'no, take control of your own fight'. Take control of the struggle. You know he says uhm (pause) the whole thing about of you mentally freeing yourself.(T:mm) You can only do things that you know, you are capable of doing them in your head.

Thembi: Ja.

Janet: Let's say it's not physically or practically possible, but in your head, you believe there is a way uhm (pause). So much more can be done and I, I can identify with that,

Thembi: Ok

Janet: I can identify with mental, human, whatever it's called, (T:mm) And taking initiative and believe in your own fight and not allowing those who don't understand what you are going through to fight...We can't have males telling us [how] we going to fight our patriarchal struggles.

Janet shows agreement with Humbulani in the way that Steve Biko's theories are used in the gender struggle. "The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed. If one is free at heart, no man made chains can bind one to the servitude..."(Biko, 1978,p.102).Janet sates that if one is mentally emancipated that opens up opportunities to change the situation of women and to fight for equality. Even though Janet struggles with remembering exactly what the theory is about she seems to have engaged with and incorporated Steve Biko's theory in her thinking about the position of women. Steve Biko's theory has been interpreted and appropriated in a way that it has become real and meaningful to these women (Ricoeur, 1981). There is a projection of the self as a woman into the text which is about black consciousness not gender and an appropriation of its meaning for their (new) purposes. This process allows the theory to be significant, beyond its original aim to fight against racism, being used now to emancipate women. Those who have not subjectively experienced womanhood, men, should not be allowed to direct women in their struggle.

Zimasa, in the following extract; talks about an intervention that is focused on empowering women through sharing information or thoughts, to think critically about their gendered positions, showing some developing feminist thinking and initiatives.

Zimasa:.. I'm involving myself in a program...

Thembi: Ya

Zimasa:.. I'm involving myself in a process rather (pause) of getting (pause) women (T:mm) to (pause) you know (long pause) be conscious (pause) one of their position as women and two as their(pause) position as activists.

The process of taking ownership of the struggle against patriarchy is demonstrated through how Zimasa has involved herself in an initiative to conscientize women as activists. Within this initiative, women discuss issues that are relevant to them as women, to assist them to think more critically about their positions within the student organizations. It seems evident that an intervention is needed for women within political organizations, though it is not clear whether this process is open to all kinds of women; rich and poor, white and black, lesbian and straight. The participant below talks about an experience of being labelled a “feminist” and what that meant within the student organization, especially in relation to male comrades.

Janet: ‘Jean seems to becoming radically feminist and na na na na na...’ these are now the male comrades...So Jean gets pulled aside by a very good male comrade of hers as well and he says.. ‘look, Jean, I hear that you on this tangent of theories...look it’s not good...’ ...‘look, this feminist thing of yours is as good as history, since when are you feminist?’ ...and you know you need the males as well, you need everyone, there’s no one who can have...the males are more, the females are more in numbers, we have a lot of females on our database, the males of course...but you need them, you need everyone to be on your side...

At the individual level, when there is an attempt by some of the women to challenge patriarchy, they might be cautioned to stay away from feminist inclined, thinking or practices, as shared by Janet. A male comrade explains to her how there is no place for feminist inclined, thinking with the student organization. The history within the ANC is that women took direction from male leadership; they were not free to follow their own goals (Hassim, 2004; Geisler, 2000). In this interaction there is a re-enactment of this by a male member, based on that thinking. Within patriarchy, the man or father leads and the woman or mother supports. Ramphela in an interview states, “the status quo is very comfortable” and that is why men will oppose changes to the system of gender relations (Yates et al, 1998). There are continuities of patriarchal ideologies from history that impact student politics at present. Perhaps if one were to complete Janet’s thought as it trails off repeatedly in the extract above, it would say “the males are more powerful”. Janet talks about how in reality there are many women within the organization but gender inequality may be silenced in personal interactions. Humbulani talks about the ways in which men within the student organization engage with perceived feminist inclined, thinking or interactions.

Humbulani: I don't know why men um are so afraid of um, feminists? But you know they obvi- they are... I remember when we wanted to start the ANC women's league at Wits (T:mm)and the men were having a field day, ‘Ja this feminist group just wanna keep all these women to themselves; this this that,...you are um preaching the rainbow nation but you wanna divide yourself ... You know men? (laughs) So uh they would always have an issue when women um (pause) get together and ga- get together, in a gathering or in discussions they get nervous like you know, what are they doing what are they thinking? (T:mm) what are they up to?

Humbulani talks about how the men within the organization become quite distressed or anxious at the possibility of losing power and have different tactics to undermine women’s interventions. The idea that women are working separately from men is negatively perceived

and framed as going against the unity of the organisation. In the past, feminism was seen as a source of division and in conflict with male leadership (Hassim, 2006). What is interesting is that the men bring in issues linked to race, ‘the rainbow nation’ to break apart or prevent women from gathering. Race discourse has been used in the past to silence women, women entering the struggle movement as black people and their gendered positions being marginalized and silenced (Mama, 1995; Ramphela, 1991). There is anxiety about what women could be planning as women coming together and working on visions together could possibly unveil, challenge and contest the patriarchal ideologies and practices embedded in the organisation.

4.3.2.2 Embracing femininity

In contrast to the views expressed above that women should subsume their femininity as somehow suspect within the political arena, Zimasa expresses some ways in which she presents herself within the organization that allows for authentic feminine presentation.

Zimasa: ... There's always, been a an i- an impression that comrades must just wear all-stars (pause) takkies(pause) and like a cap or whatever.

Thembi: ja

Zimasa: That's how it was for the most part. (T:mm) And one of the reasons I think was because women that enter into that space... with no objective to change it, (T:mm) but to be conformed by it historically. Now things have changed (T:mm) and now women are saying I'm going to enter and I'm not going to be confined by (pause) the ideas that are existing now... hence I'm willing to (pause) do what I do... I wear make-up (T:mm)sometimes a lot and(pause) I don't think I'm less of a comrade(pause) of course other people will say 'that one thinks she's better', you know?

Thembi: ok?)

Zimasa: 'She's too much of a girl', you know?

Thembi: What does that mean?

Zimasa: Cause i- apparently (angithi) it's a struggle, which is histo- which has historically been the case in the ANC.

Thembi: ja.

Zimasa: that, the, the a- the struggle was for um (pause) it's a- it's masculine. (T:mm)

Zimasa talks about how historically women within politics have minimised their femininity because the space demanded that, there was no agency for women to “truthfully” represent themselves. There is a need to question this truthful representation of self and what it means, specifically what it means for the gender struggle. “The more we seek the inner core or true self, the more we find our culture with its expectations and patterns deeply embedded” (Billington et al, 1989,p. 41). Zimasa reflects on how times are changing and how there is more agency for women to choose how to represent themselves and not be dictated to by the masculine political space. She practices her agency by choosing to show some elements of what is ‘girly’ or feminine through her application of make-up and ignoring snide comments from some comrades. Perhaps there is a need to be wary or cautious of the limits agency and the practice of it within the political setting, culture outside of politics also has an impact. Simultaneously different spaces and audiences bring out different selves or a different aspect of one’s identity (Ndlovu, 2012; McAdams, 2001; Sampson, 1989) that serves a particular function or goal at a particular moment. Therefore the ways in which women present and choose to represent themselves is complex and nuanced and has to be engaged with critically taking into account the multiple personal, political, historical and social forces at play and the freedom and limitations of different spaces. Janet talks about the significance of femininity in society and embracing it.

Janet: There’s an aspect you have as a woman that is needed in society...Don’t try and be a male comrade in order for you to be taken seriously, don’t try. (pause) You don’t have to call a comrade ‘Umchana, chief now,’ you know, be a woman, you are a woman. The only thing you need is your

capacity, your, your political knowledge and that's it. (T:mm) And he (other comrade) always says he doesn't think uMama u Winnie tried to be a man, he feels that no really she was a woman very in touch with her feminism, wore make up, was pretty wore, had kids, she was a woman, yet she led the struggle.

Janet sees the value in being a woman and therefore does not see the value of enacting masculinity and giving or assuming male labels for women comrades within the organization. She references the way that Winnie Mandela represented herself historically within the ANC, through the perception of male comrades. Winnie embodied femininity, in the way that she beautifully presented herself and embraced her reproductive feminine abilities and also being a leader. Even though women may occupy spaces which are perceived as being masculine, there is still some pressure, desire or need to conform to femininity; where a woman needs to be attractive and desirable to men (Weedon, 1987). It is interesting that Janet references another male comrade's idea when talking about beauty and the way that women should be and represent themselves. What is acceptable and or beautiful and ugly is defined by men (Erasmus, 1997; Mama, 1995, Weedon, 1987).

4.3.2.3. Myself, my family and my work.

The place of women is typically seen as being in the home with the children and the supporter of men's visions (Billington et al, 1998; Chodorow, 1979; Edley & Wetherell, 1995; Weedon 1987. "It was not just a matter of men being reluctant to share in domestic chores; we as women activists were also uncomfortable about fundamental change in stereotypical gender roles" (Ramphela, 1991, p. 219). It would be imperative to think about the kind of shifts or mutations that might occur in the future selves in relation to these traditionally expected roles for women. This is also looked at in relation to a future partner, taking into consideration how the role of women has been constructed in the past, whether

they will be challenging or re-enacting the dominant social roles of what is expected from a wife or female partner in relation to a husband or other partner. Janet below talks about the kind of partnership that she wants.

Janet: I want a marriage that, I want companionship like “, we a team,” me and my husband you know, uhm and we’re equal. And act like a man and I’ll act like woman, (T:mm) simple as that! If you want me to be your woman and you want me to, to, it’s fine I will clean and cook. Act like a man, do what a man is supposed to do, provide (pause) secure your health or be there.

In her understanding, Janet reflects ambivalence or contradiction. She wants equality but her understanding of male and female roles re-enforces gender inequalities or does not seem to challenge gender stereotypes. Men are located in public space; outside the home and women are located in the domestic sphere looking after the households being supportive and nurturing (Chodorow, 1979; Weedon, 1987). What is interesting is how she uses the phrase ‘act like a ...’ so there is a certain kind of performance that goes with a specific gender role that needs to be fulfilled or achieved. These performances are interactive and not a solo act, one is dependent on the other. Janet acknowledges that these roles are not natural, acted but there are certain roles that the specified gender are meant to perform. This perhaps shows how patriarchal beliefs and practices are embedded or locked into her experience and how women also hold onto these roles even as activists (Weedon, 1987, Ramphela, 1991). Even when thinking about these roles, talking about the theatrics and performances of these roles, they are re-enforced. Zimasa talks about her position within the ANC and how that will impact on her partner and household.

Zimasa: I don't want my husband to be as committed to the ANC like I am, because it's going to be a b- bit of a problem, (T:mm) in running the household. (T:mm) ...Because being an activist it takes away a lot of your time. (T:mm) So there's going to be- we're going to need someone that's going to

be there. (T:mm) you know? So there must be support, definitely. (T:mm)... maybe [he may] even be a member, but he mustn't be like, how you know I am.

Zimasa would like to have a husband that is loyal to the ANC but not intensely involved politically. She envisions her role as being outside of the home predominantly, therefore out of the domestic space. She understands her future husband as being a supporter of her ambitions and taking care of the home which is traditionally or socially a role that a woman fulfils. She will go for the “adventures” (Scheibe, 1986) and her man will ‘take care of the castle’. Zimasa challenges and remakes both the gender roles, to what will suit her ambitions or her political work. Her work influences the way that she thinks about gender roles. She challenges the idea of women entering the public sphere based upon their maternal social roles (Hassim 2006; Weedon, 1987; Billington et al, 1998; Ramphela, 1991). Noma talks about how she does not feel aligned to Christian ideas on women within marriage and the implications for her personally.

Noma: Uhm, I don't understand the insistence on women submitting, like why must I be the one, like why does the bible not say submit to each other? (T:mm)...Ehm does god intend for women to be equals, you know?... If God is actually the creator of the institution of marriage (T:mm)Ehm (pause) can I see myself ultimately conforming to that model? (T:mm) And the answer is no uhm I, I, I am not submissive. I can't be (laughs) like, it's like contrary to my nature. Uhm (pause) it is very hard like I said I am seeing someone now whose got subtle patriarchal (pause) uhm ways if I can says so. ...I know that in some way he is going to expect a wife who will cook for him, even though I have come home late just like you and you know a wife who will just be prepared to submit and accept that he has the final word and he's the man. (T:mm)Uhm I don't know if I can conform to that, so I don't know if I can get married. If I will get married I don't know if I will have kids...

Noma challenges Christian teachings and how the role of women is conceptualised in trying to formulate her role as possibly a wife. She really questions the god that is represented in these teachings, because of their implications for gender and the possibilities for her identity as a woman. She concludes with rejecting the model because it cannot be incorporated into her identity of being a strong woman. In her mind there needs to be equality within a marriage and expectations for men and women should be similar. There is some ambivalence or contradiction specifically about the kind of man that she is involved with, who does not seem to believe in gender equality. Further challenging or critically thinking about gender norms she is ambivalent about childbearing. Oneka talks about a way of compartmentalising aspects of herself when thinking about her future socially, politically and within the family.

Oneka: And I don't think ...being a female politician or activist certainly means that you just run around creating disorder and discomfort everywhere. (T:mm) And like woman, woman, woman for every single thing. It's a sense of equality, so if you respect me and I respect you and you value my contribution in our family and I value yours... yes by day I'm gonna go to Luthuli house and draw up policies... I don't know what he will do his lawyer stuff. And but it shouldn't affect our relations, it could.

Oneka talks about “packing away” the political role; the political woman or identity should not have a significant impact on a relationship with a future partner. Nor should the business or work experiences of the partner have serious impact on the personal relationship. She portrays a kind of woman that is not about drastically changing the status quo or bringing about anxiety and alarm that embodies gender issues in every single situation or experience. Oneka talks in a formulaic manner, “ if one gives respect then one should get respect”, in the end she expresses some doubt about this simplistic interpretation that does not take account of power or political nuances that could impact private relationships.

4.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the themes that emerged from this analysis pointed to the intersectionality of race, class and gender in the identity constructions of these young women activists. These dimensions of identity are dynamic, multilayered and were at times deeply felt by the participants as they mentally and emotionally recollected, imagined and re-imagined multiple stories and experiences in making sense of them-selves and apartheid history. The thematic analysis was woven from the past, present and future. In that analysis there were some continuities and changes through the ways in which these aspects of identity were experienced, thought about and imagined.

In imagining and reflecting on the apartheid past, race was understood through the public and distant 'grand apartheid narrative' and more personal 'family histories'. Gendered roles or positions were talked about in reference to three thematic symbols of women as nurturers, iconic wives and heroes. In dialogues about the present and the ways in which the past was recollected and reinterpreted in the meaning making process of these young black women activists, the intersections of race, class and gender were evident. The intersections of race and class were explored through the following themes: 1) Overt racism: second hand accounts; 2) The white grip on power; 3) If not (black) racism? 4) Struggle songs appropriated, and 5) comrade language.

The intersections of 'race' and gender were thematically explored in relation to: 1) supportive and nurturing roles; 2) Sexuality and political reputation; 3) the Barbie-doll stereotype; 4)

One of the boys. In anticipation of the future, the intersections of identity became increasingly permeable participants crossed boundaries and created synergies across contradictions. The intersections of race and class were discussed in terms of the following themes: 1) Black movers: class mobility and new spaces; 2) Whiteness: Abelungu and Coconuts; 3) A Free South Africa. Possibilities for future gender roles in relation to class and

race were explored through the themes of: 1) Feminism and struggle theory; 2) embracing femininity and 3) Myself, my family and my work.

It is evident that these young black women are actively interpreting their own individual life histories and the longer historical past, in constructing a sense of who they are in the present and who they wish to be in the future. Their agentic interpretations are interwoven with recognition of the continuities of power and the constraints of history.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

The aim of this study was to see how young black women within political organisations made sense of apartheid history in their roles within the present and in their projected futures. The study has revealed that although the structural system of apartheid has been eradicated, remnants of that past persist and these are made sense of in different ways within the present. In the present, the past seems structured, less complicated and clear, especially in relation to race issues. Gender issues were present but were understood as marginalized in the struggle against apartheid. In the process of democracy there have been shifts in identities related to race and gender which complicates the navigation and sense-making of the psychosocial and political space, with many points of connection and disconnection. There are multiple overlays as the participants talk about who they are; complications of race, class and gender create lines that divide and or ties that bind (Bradbury & Ndlovu, 2011).

The temporal dimension of identity was a significant factor in the framing of this research project. Making sense of time and what time does to individuals and their sense of themselves and their history provides a central organising principle for the analysis of the data. Different themes emerged within the time zones of past, present and future, as participants grappled with the concepts of race, gender and class, and their developments and progression. In terms of analysis, race, class and gender were categorized distinctly but in lived reality these are experienced simultaneously and the narrative structure of the data highlights this intersectionality. The first collection of themes was understood in reference to the past, 'Sources of the Past'. The second were rooted or focused on the present; 'Present Identities as Reinterpretations of the Past.' The third and last collection was located in the future; 'Projecting Futures, Reimagining the Past and the Present.' As seen in the title of these themes, although time is presented as separate zones, the different time zones were connected in the

process of thinking about a continuous meaning-making process in the construction and reconstruction of identities from the past, present and to the future.

“...The remembered past is situated in relation to the present in which it is recollected” (Crites, 1986, p. 158). The different ways in which race was understood in the past was talked about in relation to ‘the grand apartheid narrative’ and secondly, the more personal ‘family histories’. In reference to ‘the grand apartheid narrative’ the participants talked about how they made sense of the public and social stories about the apartheid system. This dialogue about that time period and system seemed or sounded distant and quite removed from the participants’ present selves even though it is very recent history. In the ‘family histories’ the participants talked about second hand accounts and or experiences of apartheid through close family members. These dialogues seemed very close and strong emotions were aroused within the participants; at those moments, it seemed as if the past became tangible through the family conversations and or the silences.

Gendered positions were talked about in relation to three thematic symbols of women as nurturers, iconic wives and heroes. The first theme was; ‘Women as nurturers’. The participants talked about how men were at the forefront, led the struggle and women were at the margins in the service of men. There were attempts to make sense of the polarised or much divided roles and spaces that women and men occupied. Connected to that was the second theme of ‘Iconic wives’. These were women who were prominent or strong figures within the struggle due to their husband’s status. The third and last theme was; ‘Women as heroes’. This label is quite deceptive as there was a scarcity of names within that category of heroic women, from the participants, which perhaps reveals the restrictions women faced in terms of freedom of exploration of identities.

The present is the site of recollection and the present is the site of projecting into the future, there is always the activity of zigzagging between the past and the future in the present (Crites, 1986). In their talk about their present selves, participants talk in more complex interwoven terms. Race and explicit racism is distanced in their talk by predominantly reporting the experiences of others as ‘second hand accounts’, at a slight remove; complex, harder to talk about compared to their talk about the past where apartheid is characterised by overt racialised experiences. However, participants recognise the continued ‘White grip on power’. Apartheid is over but there are different ways in which whiteness has been internalized and resources and power are still mainly limited to white people. Participants grappled with whether black people can be racist. ‘If not (black) racism’, then how might their potentially conflicting commitments to both black empowerment and to a non-racial society be held together? The participants made sense of the anger and negativity that they or other black people felt towards white people as a category, yet recognised the positive feelings experienced for individual white people. Perhaps these are some of the remnants of apartheid yet there are also shifts and ambivalence.

Connected to thinking about remnants of the past, there was the theme of ‘Struggle songs appropriated’. Amongst the participants there were divisions, tensions and ambivalence on what kinds of symbols (particularly, songs) should be shelved or remain in the apartheid past and what kinds of symbols are relevant in the presence with the aim of a united South Africa. The song at the centre of these debates was *Dubula iBhunu*. In ‘Comrade Language’, the participants talked about a language that is shared within their political organizations. According to the participants, students from private and or model c schools adopt this language that has a second language (or Black) accent. This may perhaps be interpreted as an attempt to bridge the class gaps between black people and connect to the working class, perhaps even an attempt to be ‘authentically black’. On another level within the

organizations, the language seemed to connect all the comrades. Connections in the present may need to be fostered or created in different ways, considering the class differentials within and outside the organizations.

In addition to the complex intersection created by race and class, gender is also understood in relation to race. The participants talked about the different ways in which women comrades within the political organisations continue to occupy or are pressured to occupy ‘supportive and nurturing’ roles. Although these roles are public rather than private, they remain secondary to those of men and play out in the practice of deputising and tokenism. “What is it about women that makes us need to do these things, need to feed, need to nurture [need to support]?” (Yate et al, 1998, p. 92). In various ways, there seem to be continuities or fragmented echoes from the past, in the subtle and nuanced ways in which women within the political organizations are marginalised, silenced and or pressured into maternal, supportive roles. The participants also spoke about how women’s sexuality is implicated in their political reputations in ways that does not happen with men. The participants talked about how women’s sexual private affairs can be used to damage their political reputation. Invoking the ‘Barbie-doll stereotype’, the participants explained the labelling of women who are not serious political contenders in relation to a white ideal of beauty captured in the Barbie doll. There is an inversion of that image within this space, perhaps it’s a labelling, curiosity or questioning about authenticity in relation to being black and a comrade, directed to women. The women also spoke of the pressure to be simply, ‘One of the boys’, the participants talked about the shedding of their feminine identities within what they perceive to be a masculine political space. There was a sense that being very feminine, would lead to women not being taken seriously. There was also talk about the difficulty of being women leaders in the male dominated leadership. These women have to work harder to prove they deserve to be there.

“With respect to the future there is possibility; nourished precisely by possibility, of running towards the open arms of the widest horizon, which dissolves all things and makes all things new, including the self” (Crites, 1986, p. 166). In the final section of the analysis, I explore the ways in which women’s talk is beginning to point towards future possibilities emerging in the present. Again, the intersections of race and class are evident, with new class mobility envisaged for them-selves and complicating notions of what it means to be black. The participants talked about how they make sense of moving between white and black social spaces and the impact that has on their identities as ‘Black movers’ experiencing ‘class mobility and new spaces. This theme speaks to the intra-racial differentials that occur due to class and how they negotiated that. In ‘Whiteness: *abelungu* and coconuts’, the participants conversed about what it means to be black in relation to whiteness and their ambivalence in recognising their assimilation to ‘white things’. In multiple ways, the opening up of social spaces complicates the meaning of who one is and what it means to be black. In ‘A free South Africa,’ the participants grappled with the idea of freedom, what it means for them and the frustrations and limitations of democracy in terms of class, race and gender.

“Transitional periods and democratization can benefit women only to the extent that they are capable- both ideologically and organizationally- of mobilizing around their particular concerns” (Hassim, 2002, p. 697). “Racist and sexist ideologies both share the common feature of treating dominated groups-the ‘others’ as objects lacking full human subjectivity...But if Black [sic] women refuse to accept their assigned status as the quintessential ‘other,’ then the entire rationale for such domination is challenged” (Hill-Collins, 1986, p. 518). These feminist ideas and those of Steve Biko on mental emancipation are appropriated and taken forward by the participants in very interesting and creative ways, appropriating struggle theories about race to speak to the gender struggle that they feel they are currently engaged in as women comrades and envisaging a non-sexist future. They also

spoke about interventions they are involved in, that speak to gender issues and how that creates enormous anxiety for men in the organization. Following that in, 'Embracing femininity', some of the participants talked about how they are authentic comrades but also simultaneously are women who are not afraid of, and want to show, their femininity. At some level they said there is a need for the political space to change and for women to initiate that change. Finally, in talking about their future selves in relation to 'family and work' the participants reflected on their identities and the kinds of women they imagine they would be in the future in relation to the public sphere of work and the private space of the family. It is clear that these young women are thinking about the different ways to be women within the multiple roles that they will occupy.

The future is yet to be seen, there is constant revision and meaning-making in the construction of identities. This research project has shown some of the negotiations, tensions and complexities of gendered, racialized and classed identities that these young women in political organizations embody. This sense-making, creation and recreation of identities, is ever in flux. The kind of stories that are shared and the manner in which they are told is significant and perhaps it is important to hold onto these questions, in thinking about the past, present and future. "What stories can or should we make available to young people in envisaging new possible lives? Who chooses these stories? Can we engender new alternatives simply by telling different kinds of stories?" (Bradbury & Miller, 2010, p. 13). What would be interesting and important for future research would be to explore the future articulations and life trajectories of these young women in an ever dynamic South Africa with its apartheid past.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

Appendix C: Consent to Participate

Appendix D: Consent Form Audio Recording.

Appendix A

Interview Guide

Demographical information

Name:

Age:

Organization/s:

Membership:

Number of years as a member:

Number of years in the organization/s:

Current and Past Positions:

Interview one

Tell me about your family and how life was like growing up?

What are the times or memories that you remember the most about growing up?

Tell me about any of your family members or close relatives who were involved in the struggle?

What kind of images, ideas and stories come to mind when you think about Apartheid?

Who and what kind of role models or political heroes within the struggle can you identify with?

How do you think the past should be remembered?

What kind of activities are you involved in within the organization?

What are the other women's roles within the organization and what do they do?

Tell me about the different positions that women hold and the activities linked to those positions?

When do women take the lead?

How are the different important days or dates and heroes of the struggle remembered or celebrated by the organization?

Tell me about the different events and rallies that your organization gets involved in?

What kinds of activities get done leading up to these events?

How are different tasks delegated?

Who provides the direction?

When you are in a protest march, tell me what happens?

How are the songs chosen and who starts the singing?

What songs do you like?

What kind of clothing do you wear for the different functions or occasions that you attend?

How do you see the relationships you have made within your political organizations in the future, beyond university?

What kind of wife/partner or mother do you think you will be in the future?

What career do you think you will be involved in after university?

Tell me about your future aspirations within politics?

What do you wish for the future of South Africa?

Appendix B

Participant Information Sheet

Invitation to participate in the study

Good day,

My name is Thembelihle Buthelezi and I am conducting research for the purpose of obtaining a Masters degree at the University of Witwatersrand (Wits). I would like to invite you to be a participant in my study. My research is interested in understanding the experience of young women who are active in politics and how symbols of the apartheid struggle are being used in post-apartheid South Africa.

The interviews will be conducted at Wits; in the library discussions rooms or in the offices at the Emthonjeni centre. The interview will be 1 hour to 2 hours. With your permission these interviews will be recorded so that the correct information is captured. The recordings will not be destroyed after the research is finished, because they may remain useful indefinitely. However they will be securely locked in a room or in a computer, protected by a password. Participation is voluntary; you will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way for choosing to participate or not to participate in the study. All of your responses will be kept confidential, and information that could identify you, like your name, will not be included in the research report. Direct quotations from your interviews may be used where false names/pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity. The interview material (recordings and transcripts) will only be accessed by me and my supervisor but will only be worked on by myself, which means that confidentiality is limited.

If you wish to participate in the study please sign the following consent forms and then the interview will be conducted. You may refuse to answer any questions that you would prefer

not to, and you may choose to withdraw from the study at any point. This means that recordings can be destroyed even after the interviews have been completed. It is not expected that there are any risks connected with participating in this study. However if you experience any emotional or psychological discomfort, I have supplied a contact number for the counselling service available at Wits.

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated. There are no expectations that you will benefit directly from this study. However the findings of this research will help to better understand experiences of young women within political organizations and how they engage with apartheid struggle symbols. The results will be found in my masters' research report, and in academic publications and conference presentations. You can get access to the findings by contacting and requesting the findings from the researcher. My contact details and that of my research supervisor have been provided below.

Kind Regards

Thembelihle Buthelezi and Prof. Jill Bradbury.

Tmashigo.thembi@gmail.com (researcher)

078 723 4419

Jill.Bradbury@wits.ac.za (supervisor)

(011) 7174515

Counselling and Careers Development Unit **(011 717-9140/32)**

Appendix C

Consent to Participate

I, _____, having read the participant information ,
hereby consent to participate in the *Apartheid struggle symbols study*. In doing so, I
understand that:

- a. My participation is voluntary
- b. There are no expected risks or benefits for participating in the study.
- c. I may withdraw from the study at any time by informing the researcher or her supervisor listed above.
- d. I have a right not to answer any questions that I prefer not to answer.
- e. My interview will be kept confidential, limited to the researcher and her supervisor.
- f. Parts of my transcribed interview may be selected for analysis.
- g. Where direct quotations are used a pseudonym/ false name will be used to protect my identity from the public (excluding the researcher and her supervisor).
- h. My words will be used in reporting the findings from the research.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D

Consent Form Audio Recording

I _____, consent to being interviewed by
_____ for her study on _____ being
audio-recorded.

I understand that:

- a. The recordings and transcripts will only be seen or heard by the researcher and her supervisor.
- b. My real name will not be used in the transcripts or the research report, but will be replaced by a false name/pseudonym.
- c. Recordings of the interviews will not be destroyed, unless participants request that the recording of their interview be destroyed.
- d. Recordings will be stored in a locked cupboard or in a computer protected by a password.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

