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“They will never know what we lost when we lost our home”: How Do Women in Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal, Remember Forced Removals (1960-1990)?

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“They will never know what we lost when we lost our home”: How Do Women in Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal, Remember Forced Removals (1960-1990)?

By

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15 March 2024

A research report submitted to the faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree **of Master of Arts by coursework and research** in Political Studies.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

Research Office

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)
R14/49 Isaack

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	**PROTOCOL NUMBER: H20/09/17**
PROJECT TITLE	Forced removals in the periphery: How do women in Ladysmith remember forced removals?
INVESTIGATOR(S)	Miss J Isaack
SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT	Social Sciences/
DATE CONSIDERED	18 September 2020
DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE	Approved Risk Level: Low
EXPIRY DATE	08 March 2024

DATE 09 March 2021 **CHAIRPERSON** _____
(Professor J Knight)

cc: Supervisor : Professor J Brown

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

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I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to submit an amendment of the protocol to the Committee. **I agree to completion of a regular progress report. For Minimal and Low studies, this is due annually on 31 December. For Medium and High Risk studies, this is due twice annually on 30 June and 31 December.**

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University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

School of Social Sciences

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Date: **28/08/2024**

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Dedication:

This thesis is dedicated to my late mother, Khumbuzile Alexina Isaack (1955-2020).

Abstract

This thesis focuses on the enduring impact of forced removals and the significance of land dispossession in present-day South African politics. It is based on interviews I conducted with women who experienced forced removals in the 1970s from areas surrounding Ladysmith, KwaZulu-Natal. Much of the literature on forced removals focuses on the event of the removals and less on the aftermath of the event particularly from the perspective of the women who have often had to lead the rebuilding of households, communities and local economies. Access to land and land ownership is today still a contested topic despite government initiatives to remedy the injustices of the past. Using a feminist lens in conducting this research means identifying the need to highlight and put forth women's experiences of land dispossession in ongoing land debates. Moreover, the study is a contribution to the limited literature on the long-term effects of dispossession for those who experienced forced removals in the country. Furthermore, this study illustrates the limits of the current land reform policy in addressing the far-reaching effect of the removals as is revealed through interviews with the women who experienced forced removals. In this study, I argue that the current approach of restitution cannot be successful unless it acknowledges the ongoing nature of the experience of forced removals. Remembering and referring to the past is part of the initiative to establish a better future for the vast majority of previously (and often still) disadvantaged people.

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Introduction:

This thesis is about the long aftermath of forced removals and the continued relevance of the experience of land dispossession for contemporary South African politics. It is founded on interviews with a group of women who were forcibly removed from Umbulwane, Hobsland, Utrecht and Roosboom near Ladysmith in the northern region of KwaZulu-Natal in the 1970s.

The approach used in this study is convenience sampling in a community in which I had some personal knowledge. Further, my mother had personally been a victim of the Ladysmith forced removals and I intended to use my mother in identifying surviving prospective interview partners. Sadly, my mother succumbed to Covid-19 early in the process, so I approached her circle of friends and relatives for guidance in identifying women who had experienced the removals. My selection process thus consisted of convenience sampling of surviving women in a community I grew up in, and in which I would more easily build trust and confidence amongst informants.

In a series of lengthy life-history interviews, six women spoke about their experience of removal and relocation, their long history of struggle in the decades that followed, and their hopes and disappointments in the processes of restitution that have been initiated at the end of apartheid through the land reform policy. Their stories reflect on the community they lost due to the removals, the communities they sought to recreate in the relocation area, and their efforts to rebuild their lives and make a living in an unfamiliar and inadequate environment. Their accounts reveal the nature of gendered discrimination in relation to land access and ownership that they experienced following their forced removals, drawing particular attention to the discriminatory legal practices that prevented them from owning property independent of any male relationship. Their experiences and accounts reflect and underscore how the issues they continue to face in the relocation area connect the long history of apartheid injustices with their present-day struggles. Their exclusion from appropriate employment, and housing and the effects the removals had and continue to have on their family structures and households contribute to the socio-economic issues they are faced with today.

In this thesis, I put their stories into the context set out in the secondary literature on forced removals and land dispossession. This literature includes work that was largely produced in the late apartheid period as well as a new generation of scholarship produced in the last decade. This research has enabled me to argue - as I will do in the rest of the thesis– that the earlier literature on forced removals did not engage sufficiently with the gendered nature of forced

removals and that the accounts told to me by the respondents of this study can help redress this historic imbalance. This argument has two key consequences. First, it helps demonstrate that the earlier literature on forced removals tended to treat the moment of removal as a singular wrong – an individual act of dispossession and that the restitution framework developed in the law after apartheid builds upon this tendency, as the mechanisms it employs to address apartheid-era land dispossession operate on a similar presumption. The interviews that I conducted demonstrate that this is an overly limited representation of the social, political and economic effects of dispossession. The complaints by the women who participated in this study show that the act of dispossession was (and is) an ongoing process and suggest that the existing legal and intellectual approach to forced removals is overly limited and does not acknowledge in depth the relentless ramifications of forced removals. The accounts of women who underwent forced removal highlight specifically gendered experiences that emphasize the ongoing effects of forced removals almost fifty years later. I argue, therefore, that the existing restitution approach cannot succeed without recognizing the ongoing nature of the experience of forced removals. In particular, the financial compensation offered by the restitution process is unsatisfactory. The respondents do not view this mechanism as a "fix-all" remedy but are rather dissatisfied with it in that it does not address the overall struggles they face in their relocation areas. It appears to them to offer a once-off payment that cannot redress the continuing issues in their communities, including their problems with service delivery and the violence in their communities that cannot be addressed by the existing restitution process.

In the rest of the introduction, I will outline the methodological approaches I used of in the research. This includes an explanation of the methods of research, and the theoretical framework established to situate and analyze the secondary literature as well as the interview material. I provide a detailed account of the interview process, setting out the identities of those women who were interviewed, how the interviews were conducted, and the method of analyzing the data from the interviews. Capturing the testimonies of the women in this format allows us to view their contribution to the concept of oral histories and the traditions of storytelling in a way that bridges the gap between academia and the community. Their everyday experiences speak to the significance of intersectionality in that their lives are shaped by more than one system of oppression and that their social standing, gender and race were direct factors that contributed to their oppression and continued exclusion in land ownership patterns.

In this research paper, I use intersectionality in the sense of centring the experiences of a marginalized group – black women, to showcase that the systemic inequities of forced removals

were experienced differently by black women based not only on their gender and race but also their age, class, and their location. Intersectionality suggests that social identities like class, race, gender, nationality, sexuality, and disability intersect, resulting in different experiences of privilege and oppression (Collins, 2015). Patricia Hill Collins has stated that intersectionality is not a "typical testable theory" and this is particularly true for this paper as it relies heavily on the narratives provided by the participants during the interview process. I use the narratives of the participants to highlight that their experiences of forced removals speak to more than just racial oppression under apartheid but other oppressions as well.

Methodology:

This study is qualitative and combines both theoretical and empirical approaches to research. Interviews serve as the primary source of data, while the available literature on forced removals serves as the secondary source. The literature in this study draws from theoretical reflections, critical discussions, and the vast secondary literature on the history, and effects of forced removals in the country and more specifically in the KwaZulu-Natal province. This methodology provides a deeper understanding of the processes of dispossession and allows readers to contextualize the history of forced removals within our current political landscape.

The "convenience sampling" approach mentioned in the introduction page resulted in eight informants for interviews, but in the end, I chose the six most relevant individuals for my purpose. Those six had been removed from various areas neighbouring Ladysmith but all had ended up in the Ezakheni township and therefore faced distinctive but broadly similar conditions in experiencing the same arbitrary cruelty of being torn from long-standing homesteads and having to adapt to the conditions of their new involuntary settlement.

To yield an in-depth understanding of the experiences or accounts provided by those women who were witnesses to the forced removals in and around Ladysmith, this study makes use of qualitative methods in capturing their accounts. Through an extensive interview process with six women in the Ezakheni township, I was able to gather the data outlined in this research paper, making use of semi-structured open-ended interviews with participants in the different sections of the township. This enabled multi-dimensional and comparative perspectives on the experience of the removals.

Theoretical Framework

The study uses intersectionality as a theoretical framework and oral history methodology. Intersectionality as a theoretical framework centred on the relevance of women's everyday experiences, and their role in written/recorded history sets the base for this study. Through the work of Kimberly Crenshaw, Meghan Healy, and Fanelwe Mhago amongst others who describe and analyse the social, cultural, economic, and political conditions of individuals. In sum, "intersectionality is not about identity politics but is about the social, cultural, political, and economic processes that affect our lives" (Price, 2011, p. 34). In this research paper, I use intersectionality in the sense of centring the experiences of a marginalized group – black women, to showcase that the systemic inequities of forced removals were experienced differently by black women based not only on their gender and race but also their age, class, and their location. Intersectionality suggests that various social identities such as class, race, gender, nationality, sexuality, and disability intersect in complex systems of power, resulting in different experiences of privilege and oppression (Collins, 2015). Patricia Hill Collins has stated that "intersectionality is not a typical testable theory" and in this sense, I don't use intersectionality to test the impact of forced removals on a marginalized group rather, I use the narratives of the participants to highlight that their experiences of forced removals speak to more than just racial oppression under apartheid but other oppressions as well.

To capture the relevance of the participants' testimonies, I make use of Dominick Lacapra's theory of the value of 'humanitarian testimonies' in the field of memory work and oral history more broadly – "A witness gives a testimony or bears witness to the way he or she experienced events, and it is this experience, which has an "authenticity," that at times cannot be accessed in other ways" (Lacapra, 2016, p. 382). David Glasberg's conceptualization of history, and the narratives that constitute distinctions between collective memory and public history, provide a starting point in trying to close the gap between popular narratives and the lived experiences of individuals. Drawing from Heidi Grunebaum's approach to memory work which posits the study of memory as one to be actively pursued in everyday politics, and not only in reviewing historical events. This study seeks to illuminate the significance of memory politics in the ordinary day-to-day lives of the respondents.

There is limited research that explores solely the experience of black women during forced removals in South Africa: much of the available research focuses on the collective experiences of racial groups. The individual experience is as significant as the collective experience, and

my research will investigate those experiences of individual women in Ladysmith who were removed from their homes and resettled in the Ezakheni area, and how that experience has impacted their lives, then and now. In the words of Elaine Scarry: “Whatever pain achieves, it achieves in part through its shareability, and it ensures this shareability through its resistance to language" (Scarry, 1985, p. 4). Scarry’s subject of research is specifically physical pain and its effects on the individual, but her analysis can also be relevant to the subject of emotional pain. Various works have established the long-standing effects of emotional scarring, including how events can be so traumatic that witnesses are unable to express them. In the study of oral history, testimonies hold a relevant position about the interaction between oral and written sources on historical events. Dominick Lacapra has posited that outside of testimonies' value in working through symptoms of trauma, they provide a platform for individuals to tell stories that would otherwise not be recorded in history:

> Testimony also raises in acute form the role of memory, for it is typically memory that allows witnesses to access their experience of events, and, significantly, testimony has a distinctive dimension with respect to experience with its important but problematic relation to events. A witness gives a testimony or bears witness to the way he or she experienced events, and it is this experience, which has prima facie "authenticity," that at times cannot be accessed in other ways (Lacapra, 2016, p. 382).

The value of oral testimony is not only as a supplement or correction to written histories but also as a valid approach to providing a critical analysis in the study of historical events whether they are problematic or not. It is from this insight that this research study seeks to incorporate the oral testimonies of those women who witnessed forced removals, to not only illuminate their individual experiences in the greater scheme of history but also contribute to the development of memory work in the field of oral history.

The general dominance of male writings and experiences in written history is one of the reasons that this study proposes an investigation of forced removals with a specific focus on women's experiences. As articulated by Lucky Kekana in an interview: "…stories go hand in glove with building a man and a woman ... stories cannot be separated from men and women" (Hofmeyer, 1992, p. 43). Given the societal divisions imposed on women and men, it is expected that their experiences project a stark difference based on their status in society as a group. The importance of recording those experiences that belong to a group that has been subordinated in multiple respects (women) becomes more pressing in the investigation of historical events that generally affect a collective. In her study of gender and storytelling in the context of the former

Transvaal, Isabel Hofmeyer reports that although both men and women participated in this ritual of oral history, women's stories were confined to the home whereas men generally occupied the public spaces:

> In terms of this differential definition, female storytelling inevitably suffered. Despite their acknowledged importance in education, women's stories were often regarded as a rather frivolous pastime that dealt with the imaginary and fictional. Male storytelling, on the other hand, was seen as more important, partly because of its content which dealt with the "real" world, partly because of its more sober performance, but also because it was enacted in a prestigious, public, male space and concerned itself with the socialization of men (Hofmeyer, 1992, p. 44).

Laura Evans in "Gender, Generation and the Experiences of Farm Dwellers Resettled in the Ciskei Bantustan South Africa, 1960–1976", argues that the individual experiences of forced removals were largely influenced by gendered and generational inequalities:

> While young men may have found in resettlement a way to improve their earning capacity and social status, for women and young men who never established themselves as migrants, resettlement offered respite from the spatial hegemonies of farm paternalism, coupled with greater economic exposure stemming from the loss of farm rations. The deepest impacts of 'resettlement as proletarianization' were, therefore, experienced by women and non-migrant men (Evans, 2013, p. 218).

Considering that the specific conditions in townships and other resettlement areas varied in significant ways according to the local setting, the study by Laura Evans cannot be taken to apply in the context of the KwaZulu Bantustan as it did in Ciskei. While her gendered exploration of the socio-economic context of forced removals in the Ciskei is significant indeed, however, it does not speak to the experiences of the women in the context of Ladysmith and the distinct configuration of that social environment. It is in this respect, that the study of women's experiences in the Ezakheni Township in KwaZulu-Natal seeks to widen the study of diverse individual experiences of forced removals, particularly in the region of KwaZulu-Natal.

Interviews and Participants:

Phase one of the data-gathering process was identifying a member of the community in Ezakheni who would function as a liaison between myself and other members of the community who would be prospective participants in the study. In the conception of the project, my primary chosen liaison would have been my mother, who not only had extensive knowledge

of forced removals as she had witnessed them as a young adult, but with her untimely death, I then sought the help of my aunts in locating prospective participants. The community liaison I settled on was my cousin who was well-known in the community and had access to a range of community members who pointed us in the direction of our target group. ('Snowball sampling'?)

The second phase of the project was identifying suitable participants for the study, in this case, our search was limited to women aged sixty and above who witnessed forced removals as pre-teenagers, teenagers, or young adults. The search for participants was not limited to a particular section of the township, but in the end, four out of six participants were from Section B of the township, two were from D Section and the other two were from A Section. The township is divided into five sections: A, B, C, D, and E, with sections C and D consisting of sub-sections. The sub-sections developed under different circumstances in each township and will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

Before the start of each interview, participants signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the study and giving permission for the interview to be recorded digitally via phone. The interviews were conducted in the preferred language of the participants and thus they were all conducted in the isiZulu language. All respondents agreed to their full names being used in the study, they did so verbally but also signed off on it in the consent forms.

In complying with the COVID regulations, each participant was provided with a mask to wear during the interview process which was also worn by myself and the community liaison who accompanied me to every interview. Every participant was provided with a portable bottle of sanitizer and was advised to sanitize before beginning the interview. It is worth noting that because my participants fall under the category of the elderly extra precautions were taken specifically in terms of physical contact. In some cases, the participants were in fact in possession of their own PPE equipment in anticipation of our meeting.

Using what is called the "Life History Method", the interview process took the form of a regular conversation which would allow the flow of the conversation to be partially controlled by the participant in that it would lessen any uneasiness on their side. This method is borrowed from the work of Dr. McKinley and Ahmed Veriava who similarly used the method while investigating the oral histories in post-apartheid South African townships (McKinley & Ahmed, 2008). Using such a method also allowed me as the interviewer to pose my questions in a way that draws from the general conversation to establish a dialogue that shows the

interviewee my link to the community rather than the first impression which positions me as an outsider.

Thenjiwe Mazibuko lives in 'Entokozweni Encane' which is a sub-section of Section D in Ezakheni. She was twenty-eight years old in 1976 when she and her family were forcibly removed from Roosboom and placed in Ezakheni C Section. At the time of their removal, she was working as a teacher and continued teaching until her move to Mpumalanga in the mid-eighties. Today she lives alone in a house she purchased in the year 1996 upon her return. She lost both her parents in the subsequent years, leaving her and her siblings as the beneficiaries of a sum of money allocated to their father as compensation for the forced removals which took place in Roosboom.

Bonisile Mchunu was twenty-three years old in 1972 when she was forcibly removed with her family from the rural/farm area 'Hobsland' and placed in Ezakheni C Section. She was living in a large communal area she shared with her husband, her infant baby, her brother-in-law as well as his wife, and two children. She was a housewife while her husband worked in a textile factory in Ladysmith town along with his brother. All six of them were crammed into the four-room house until her husband secured the house she lives in today, in Section B, with her children and grandchildren. Before getting married and moving to Hobsland, she lived with her parents in Umbulwane where removals also took place, although the residents of this area have not received any compensation for the forced removal. In other words, this respondent experienced forced removals twice during the apartheid years. In the case of her children, they were able to claim compensation as beneficiaries in the absence of her husband who passed in the year 1990.

Of all the participants of this study, Delisile Mathebula was by far the youngest when she and her family were removed. She also provided the shortest testimony which can be attributed to the fact that she was eight years old when the removals took place in the year 1973. She and her family were initially placed in Section A of the township but were moved two weeks later due to a ghost presence in the house where they were placed. She lives with her daughter and grandson in Section B of the township today, in the same house, she and her family were moved to in 1973. As a former resident of Umbulwane, she too is still waiting to be compensated along with other residents. Although she was still a child during the removals, her testimony nevertheless contributes also to illustrating the post-removals experience.

Sibongile Ndlovu was seventeen years old in 1972, the oldest of seven children when her family was forcibly removed and placed in Section A in Ezakheni. Her mother stayed at home, tending to their family garden, and caring for the livestock. Her father worked at 'Spoornet' which is the former name of the company 'Transnet'. Having never married, she still lives in the house in A Section with her two sons, and four siblings. Her parents, and two of her siblings, have passed on, while her sister lives in another province. Similar to other former residents of Umbulwane, she has applied and is still waiting to be compensated for her family's removal from their home more than fifty years ago.

Thuli Yvonne Khanyile lives in Ezakheni with her youngest daughter in a house she purchased with her husband. She is initially from Utrecht where she grew up in with her parents and three siblings. She was fifteen years old in 1970 when they were forcibly removed and placed in 'Osizweni' township in Newcastle, 50km away from their former home. Her story is similar to that of forcibly removed residents in Ezakheni, except for being outside of Ladysmith, thus not within the scope of this study.

I contacted Ntombifuthi Shongwe through the above-mentioned participant Thuli Khanyile who directed me to Ntombifuthi as one person she knows from Utrecht who also happens to live in Ezakheni. Ntombifuthi was eighteen years old in 1970 when she and her family were forcibly removed from their rural home in Utrecht to Osizweni township in Newcastle. She arrived in Ezakheni, E Section in the year 2000 with her now ex-husband until 2007 when their marriage ended. She has been living in a sub-section of B Section since 2007. This sub-section was dubbed "Alex" by residents of the township because of its deplorable conditions and because the poorest of the poor are housed there. The name is borrowed from "Alexander Township" in Johannesburg, Gauteng, which is famous in South Africa for being one of the worst townships to live in due to the crime rate, and overall bad living conditions. Ntombifuthi lives alone in 'Alex', having never had children. She has also not seen her parents since she and her husband moved to Ezakheni in 2007. She, her parents, and her younger brother arrived in a four-room house in Osizweni in 1970 and according to her, that was the beginning of the demise of her family life. The deplorable living conditions of their new home aside, she insists that had they not been forcibly removed, her brother would have certainly lived past the age of seventeen years. The township was different in many ways from the rural life they led in Utrecht: her brother, being taken with how fast things were in the new environment, made 'bad friends', took part in illegal activities, and died from several stab wounds at age seventeen during a robbery they'd initiated with his friends. She recalls how her parents constantly

worried about her brother, wished they had not been removed from their home, and desperately wanted to return. Her testimony is marked with anger and resentment, she is undoubtedly still overwhelmed with sadness after all these years.

Textual Analysis

The strategy I applied in analysing the extensive data reservoir is a "general inductive approach" which describes a: "systematic procedure for analysing qualitative data where the analysis is guided by specific objectives" (Thomas, 2003, p. 2). Following this strategy, once the interviews were transcribed, the first step was developing the 'objectives or categories I would be using as guides based on the key questions of this study. Within this process, I was able to develop three categories or 'themes' that were evident in each of the accounts provided by the participants, and their shared narratives which included similar processes, for instance, how the removals were conducted by the authorities, the state of the relocation areas in which they were situated, as well as their shared struggles and grievances subsequent to the removals.

In this section, I will briefly discuss the themes and what informed them, as mentioned before the participants shared their experiences of the forced removals from their homes which were unique of course but had in common shared narratives and traumas. I have not applied a specific hierarchy of importance in the development of the categories, but I think it is important to note that the overarching narrative throughout the data set was one of compensation or restitution or the lack thereof. More than three times some of the participants went straight to discussing how they were monetarily compensated for the forced removal and their dissatisfaction while those who had not received any compensation voiced their anger and disgruntlement for that fact. In even the very early stages of the analysis what became evident to me was shared anger and resentment for the removals amongst the participants which was accompanied also by a conscious or perhaps unconscious narrative of acceptance. In one way or another, each participant shared with me the memory of their lives before being removed in a way that was nostalgic but also with an air of having adapted, a kind of understanding that I can describe simply as: "That was then, the events cannot be undone, and this is and has been my life for a long time".

Compensation:

As mentioned before, all the participants were concerned with compensation in varying degrees; some were dissatisfied with the compensation they had received, others were visibly

upset about not yet having been compensated, and one participant showed great disappointment in the fact that I was not a government official coming to deliver news about her claim. Three participants who had been widowed for some years now spoke about the "unfairness" of the criteria used in allocating those who would receive compensation. This is because as widows, regardless of the nature of the marriage (in community of property or under customary law), they could not claim compensation on behalf of their deceased husbands. Those widows who were eligible to make a claim can only do so on behalf of their children (minors), adult children are allowed to file their claims but ultimately, regardless of how long the marriage, or the fact that these women were already married and living in their matrimonial homes during the forced removals, they had no claim to monetary compensation. The issue of restitution is a controversial one indeed, and it is understandable that people who experienced the removals are so preoccupied with being compensated because of the continuous cycle of poverty and social dislocation they have been living through. One participant, an elderly woman in her 90s, was living alone in a house that looked like it could have fallen on our heads at any moment, and this was the state of almost all the houses I visited while conducting the interviews.

Gendered discrimination:

More than half of the participants spoke directly of the challenges they faced particularly because of their gender, issues ranging from their exclusion in land ownership particularly as black women were excluded by apartheid law from owning land. Some of the participants referred to the disparity in wages between them and their male counterparts. One participant who referred to herself as having been a "housewife" (Bonisile Mchunu)spoke clearly about her dependence on her husband and ultimately her in-laws after the passing of her husband. She married before the age of eighteen and had been living with her husband and family on their property for some years when they were forcibly removed to Ezakheni. She could not lay claim to any compensation as a spouse, but her children were able to claim as beneficiaries and did receive financial compensation. She has gone from relying on her husband to relying on her children at the age of seventy-two years. This is not uncommon for women in black communities. Compared to their white counterparts, it is a clear indication of a double dose of inequality. While white women were allowed to inherit land legally, black women were legally excluded from this since they were expected (by traditional custom) to marry another male (a relative of the deceased husband) in the family if they wished to continue living on that property. Some of the accounts provided by the participants pointed to a general practice of exclusion from political participation or any kind of substantive community engagement

particularly because they were women and thus were expected to care for the home and their families, which was the space dedicated to women.

Prevailing Issues:

One of the prevailing issues in Ezakheni is a lack of sufficient space to house growing families. A common sight in the township is informal dwellings (zinc and wooden) in the yards of residents. One participant, Delisile Mathebula, has built a rondavel in her backyard as a space she rents out to contribute to the family income. She lives only with her daughter and grandson, so the four-room house is sufficient for them in terms of living space. This is not the case however for those families which have expanded beyond the limitations of the typical apartheid-style dwelling provided for families suffering forced removal. The relentless cycle of poverty is evident as the participants speak of the ways they have attempted to make ends meet over the years, but it is also a visible poverty. By 'visible' I mean that one only has to look at their homes and the arrangements inside to see the frugality and precariousness of their lives. One participant awkwardly apologised for not having anything to offer us to eat because "the months have been tough" and I must note that at the time the interviews were conducted there was a serious water shortage in Ezakheni, and residents didn't even have drinking water.

Chapter Outline:

The first chapter of the research paper delves into the history of land dispossession in South Africa, starting from the colonial period and continuing through the apartheid era. The chapter includes an extensive literature review on the topic of land dispossession in the country, as well as a brief history of the country's formation. The chapter also covers five case studies related to the research, including the area of focus. The purpose of including the participants' original areas of residence is to provide a better understanding of the homes they were forced to leave behind, which will help in comprehending the reality of the participants' expressions of life in their respective relocation areas. An extensive portion of this part of the literature is derived from the work of Cheryl Walker and Laurine Platzky in *The Surplus People* (1948). The chapter ultimately provides the socio-economic and legislative background for which the research can be contextualized and further outlines the significance of the study by drawing on key ideas related to the history of land ownership in South Africa.

Chapter two relates the current literature to the data collected during the interviews. This chapter begins to draw out the experiences of the participants in their relocation areas and helps us to better understand the link between access to land and gender. Moreover, it will enable us to position the experiences of black women, by tracing their exclusion in relation to their shared histories.

The third chapter discusses the relationship between gender and economic agency during the apartheid era. It does so by examining women's ability to access housing and employment opportunities. The chapter takes a close look at the experiences of women living in both rural and urban areas and aims to highlight the disparities in access to land and work opportunities between black and white people. Additionally, the chapter contains accounts from respondents who share how they were able to support themselves and their families despite facing racial and gendered discrimination.

The final chapter of the report delves into the land reform policy that has been in place since 1994, ostensibly to provide remedies for people who were previously dispossessed of their land during the apartheid era. The chapter compares the mechanisms of the policy with the experiences of those who have gone through the process. The respondents reported facing violent experiences during forced removals and similar challenges when rebuilding their lives in the relocation area. However, even after receiving compensation, many respondents continue

to face socio-economic struggles. Restitution and compensation remain contentious issues for those affected.

Chapter One:

> Anybody who is tempted to believe the Nationalist government's propaganda that South Africa is peacefully progressing towards a more equitable and humane society, complete with a new, enlarged Constitution, needs only to glance at this book in order to be disillusioned. No amount of cosmetics can disguise the true face of apartheid which is revealed by the evidence accumulated by the 'Surplus People Project' which forms the basis of this book. This evidence is more than a seemingly endless catalogue of human suffering designed to produce a purely emotional response of either breast-beating or almsgiving. It is a statement of the costs which black South Africans have had to pay, and continue to pay, for the economic prosperity of whites (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 3).

The above statement rings true today, almost 30 years after the abolition of apartheid; it speaks directly to the importance of the exploration of forced removals and its inescapable effects on the many black people still confined in townships today. There is a considerable body of literature on historical forced removals from rural and urban areas. Scholars and organizations have done extensive work in investigating, reporting and publishing on apartheid-era forced removals and their effects on the many black people removed from their homes. There exists, however, less literature on the experiences of black women who made up the bulk of removed people, since they were often 'left behind' in the resettlement areas as many black men were often constrained to become migrant workers to earn a living (Platzky & Walker, 1985). This study thus intends to expand the work on the experiences and socio-economic impact faced by black women as a consequence of the enduring effects of forced removals. The long-term exclusion of poor black women from accessing land or owning land can be traced to the sequence of laws enacted during the colonial and apartheid eras that rendered them non-citizens (in the bantustans) or legal minors in their own country. Even with the establishment of post-apartheid land reform policies that seek to rectify past dispossession, the respondents of this study continue to share narratives of enduring exclusion or the insufficiency of the government's remedies. Capturing the experiences of the women who participated in this study suggests the deeply structural dispossession effected by spatial alienation, and its trans-generational impact, given the role women play in reproductive labour.

History of Land Dispossession in South Africa:

The removal and relocation of the non-white population of South Africa in the advent of apartheid is not a phenomenon of the Nationalist government but rather a continuation of a long process of dispossession that began in the 17th century (Platzky & Walker, 1985). After Jan van Riebeeck arrived in the Cape to establish a base for the Dutch East India Company, one of his initial actions was to displace the Khoi people by driving their cattle out of their grazing land (Platzky & Walker, 1985). This displacement was formalized just two years later through an agreement which read:

> The Kaapmans shall permanently dwell on the eastern side of the Salt River and the fresh river Liesbeck, as the pastures on this side are not even sufficient for our own needs (Journal of Jan van Riebeeck, entry dated 5 July 1658) (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 71).

This agreement ultimately allowed "Only those Khoi who were prepared to work for the Company or the first white settlers were allowed to remain on their former grazing lands" (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 71). This tactic allowed white settlers to control access to land in the 17th century and inaugurated a continuing set of discriminatory practices in the centuries that followed (Platzky & Walker, 1985). To understand the policies utilized by the apartheid government we must first look at the 'native policies' established by the white settlers in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the period between the 18th and 19th centuries, white settlers had been moving further into the interior of the Cape, and as a result the Khoi and San (Bushmen), along with other chiefdoms in the north and east of the Cape, were further dispossessed of their land driving them into smaller areas of land (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Nearing the end of the 19th century, white settlers had established control over most of what is present-day South Africa, and the creation of what was called "reserves" was established (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The land was divided based on the settler territories at the time: the Transvaal and the Orange Free State which were the Boer republics, the Cape and Natal belonging to the British and finally the numerous chiefdoms retained a small portion of their former lands (Platzky & Walker, 1985). This division did not take place without contention and resistance from the indigenous people which (Platzky & Walker, 1985) noted as the reason for the establishment of "reserves": It was precisely because of this resistance that the whites did not succeed in taking all the land for themselves, but were obliged to recognize certain areas as reserves (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 72). Writing on the formation of 'Bantustans', Barbara

Rogers notes that the concept of "native reserves" is "almost as old as European occupation in South Africa" (Rogers, 1976).

Transvaal and the Orange Free State:

White settlement in the Transvaal was predominantly in the eastern and northern areas of the Transvaal as permitted by African chiefs in the area (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The Boer farms were located on the edges of the chiefs' territories which already had African people living on that land (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Most of the Boers were hunters and cattle farmers not primarily farming the land, as a result, they encouraged the Africans in the area to settle and work on it as tenants (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Their rent could be paid in either labour or produce. This is considered the early beginning of the labour tenant and sharecropper systems (Platzky & Walker, 1985). As a consequence of British expansion which led to their occupation of the Transvaal from 1877-1888, the Boers launched a series of conquests against the independent chiefdoms leading to further loss of land on the part of indigenous Africans (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Due to resistance from the African chiefs, the Boers were unsuccessful in acquiring all the land for themselves thus the first of a few African reserves was outlined in 1876 (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Ultimately, only 2 120 square miles of the total amount of land in the Transvaal was declared as reserves (Davenport & Hunt, 1974, p. 9).

In the Orange Free State, the Boers were more successful in dispossessing the local population of their land (Platzky & Walker, 1985). As a result, only two reserves were created in the Orange Free State territory by 1905 totaling a mere 128 square miles (Davenport & Hunt, 1974, p. 9). The first reserve, located in Witziehoek on the northern edge of the Drakensberg was comprised of a few farms which the Free State government recognized as belonging to the Sotho chief Mopeli in 1857 (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 73). The second reserve was in Thaba 'Nchu and belonged to the 'Barolong' people who had settled there in 1833 under Chief Moroka (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 73). In 1884, the Boers annexed the territory and acknowledged two small African locations and 95 farms owned by individual Barolong landowners. The majority of the land, however, was reserved for the Boers (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 74). By the late 19th century, most of the African communities in the Boer republics resided on lands controlled by white settlers. However, according to Platzky and Walker (1985), although some Africans were coerced into entering labour tenant agreements with white landowners, many others managed to maintain a significant degree of economic self-

sufficiency (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 74). Only a select few Africans had land ownership rights; purchasing land was restricted in both republics:

> In the Orange Free State freehold title among Africans was confined to the few Barolong farms that were not bought out by whites. In the Transvaal Africans could only acquire individual title to land under a complicated and restricting system of trusteeship – the land had to be held in trust for them, by the Commissioner for Native Affairs (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 74).

The Cape and Northern Natal:

In both the Cape and Natal, the policies towards the indigenous populations developed differently than in the Transvaal and Orange Free State. According to Platzky and Walker (1985), the 'native policy' in the Cape was based on more liberal principles compared to the other settler territories. In the Cape, the economy was stronger, and the settler population was more established with a “liberalizing influence” from merchants and missionaries on the indigenous population (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 75).

Throughout the years, the Eastern Frontier in the Cape experienced a series of wars between the settlers and African chiefdoms residing in that area. Consequently, by the 1800s, most of the land along the west of Kei River opened up for white settlement (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The Mfecane wars were a series of Zulu and other Nguni wars, as well as forced migrations, that took place in the second and third decades of the 19th century. These events significantly altered the demographic, social, and political landscape of southern and central Africa, as well as parts of eastern Africa (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025). During the colonial period, some Africans sided with the white settlers, resulting in the creation of reserves for them amidst white-owned farms. However, similar to other regions of the country, the reserves were not sufficient to accommodate all the people who were previously residing west of the Kei River (Platzky & Walker, 1985). By the end of the 19th century, most of the African population in the Eastern Cape was residing on land now owned by the settlers. The ‘native policy’ deployed here was based on the principles of Sir George Grey who was Governor of the Cape from 1854 to 1861 and held the belief of “civilising the indigenous African population to create an enduring and peaceful master-servant relationship in a civilized context” (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 75). As a result, some Africans on white-owned land were full-time servants, cash tenants, or sharecroppers, while others held individual titles to their land unlike the widespread labour tenancy developed in the northern territories (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The policy was implemented to limit the authority of the "haughty, hereditary chiefs" while simultaneously

promoting the growth of a restricted group of African small-scale landowners and food producers who could have a vested interest in colonial society (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 76). Sir Grey had hoped that those Africans who could not access land to own would be forced to work for the white settlers in the area (Platzky & Walker, 1985). While the land policies were partially effective as African chiefs and other individuals whose land was at risk resisted, the native population in the Eastern Cape was integrated into the settler communities much earlier and more extensively than any other region in the country. From 1853 onwards, Africans who owned land and met certain education standards were granted the right to vote alongside white citizens. However, the number of eligible black voters was deliberately kept low to prevent them from outnumbering their white counterparts (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Whereas in the northern territories, the general rule was "No equality in church or state" (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 76). Due to the lack of military power, the colonial administration of the Cape could not acquire land for white settlement on the east of the Kei River and so to maintain their authority along the coast the territories were annexed and brought under British control as reserves (Platzky & Walker, 1985) In contrast to Natal, African chiefdoms in Eastern Cape lost more land despite greater and more unified reserves (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

The British administration in Natal faced several challenges that weakened their position. Firstly, there was a refugee crisis to contend with, which put a strain on resources. Additionally, the administration was reluctant to spend more money on the colony. Finally, to the north of the Tugela River lay the powerful Zulu Kingdom, which would prove difficult to conquer (Platzky & Walker, 1985). They addressed the refugee problem by designating unproductive land as reserves, avoiding extra administrative costs in the Natal colony (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

In 1887, after the Anglo-Zulu War, the British annexed the Zulu Kingdom and created scattered reserves, totaling less land than previously held (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The British declared 13,882 square miles as reserves by 1905, leaving the rest of Natal for white settlement or state land (Davenport & Hunt, 1974, p. 9). Unlike the Cape, the colonial administration in Natal incorporated traditional forms of government by including chiefs in their administration system. This allowed for the African population to be governed by customary law alongside their legal system (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The purpose of this system was to reduce administrative costs and ensure order. The Secretary of Native Affairs at the time believed that the Zulu power had taught Natal Africans to obey their rulers without question, which is why this system was implemented (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Many white farmers in Natal stopped

farming and moved to towns, allowing African landowners and market farmers to take over the produce market in order to pay the required taxes (Platzky & Walker, 1985) By the 1860s, some small-scale producers had started buying land by forming syndicates with missionary support, despite living on either white-owned, mission land, leased land or state land (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

By 1910, Africans in Natal had acquired almost 160 000 hectares of land which were located throughout the former colony:

> This was the origin of the major category of black spots in that province fifty years later. Matiwane's Kop, Roosboom, Steincoalspruit, Action Homes, Free State, Jubilee, Hlatikhulu, Meran, Thembalihle, Hopewell, Prospect Farm and Besterspruit – these and all other freehold farms later termed 'black spots' by the Nationalists were bought during this time by means of a title deed that assured new owners that the land would be theirs 'in perpetuity' (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 79).

Mineral Discovery and Cheap Labour:

The latter half of the 19th century proved to be a turning point in South Africa due to the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and later gold in 1886 (Guiding SA, 2011). The discovery of diamonds in what is now the city of Kimberly in the Northern Cape was the beginning of major economic changes in the country:

> South Africa's diamond-mining industry dates back to 1867, when diamonds were discovered near Kimberley in the Northern Cape. The Kimberley diamond fields, and later discoveries in Gauteng, the Free State, and along the Atlantic coast, emerged as major sources of gem-quality diamonds, securing South Africa's position as the world's leading producer in the mid-20th century (Guiding SA, 2011, p. 1).

The discovery of diamonds changed not only the landscape but also the lives of the different groups of people who lived in the area. The site of the diamond discovery belonged to a group of people known as the "Griquas" and their area called "Griqualand West" (Heritage Publishers, 2020). The Griqua people were of mixed-race ethnicity and are believed to be the first people to start digging for diamonds on the southern bank of the Vaal (Heritage Publishers, 2020). The leader of the Griqua people, Nicolaas Waterboer, allowed Africans to mine in the area without charge while requiring white diggers to seek his permission before mining on the south bank of the river (Heritage Publishers, 2020). Following the first discovery, more diamonds were found on farms that lay 30km south of the Vaal River and these farms belonged

to the Boers and governed by the Orange Free State (Heritage Publishers, 2020). The ownership of the land in the area was disputed by various groups, including the Griquas, the Batlhaping, as well as the two republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State whose territories were adjacent to the Vaal and Orange rivers (Heritage Publishers, 2020) Ultimately, the Orange Free State government was the first to declare laws on diamond mining, which resulted in prohibiting African diggers from obtaining claim licenses (Heritage Publishers, 2020). Governor Sir Henry Barkly of the Cape intervened and established a committee to resolve the dispute over land ownership and control of the diamond fields (Heritage Publishers, 2020). The committee, which was headed by the Governor of Natal, Robert Keate, ruled in favour of the Griqua people and this meant that the Griquas would receive the land where diamonds were discovered, including the area where Kimberley was later built (Heritage Publishers, 2020). The Griquas were not helped by the agreement as they constantly clashed with the diggers over claim licenses, exacerbating racial tensions between black and white miners (Heritage Publishers, 2020). This led the Griqua leader to seek British assistance, leading to the annexation of Griqualand West by the Cape Colony in 1871, which enabled the British to control the diamond fields (Heritage Publishers, 2020). In 1888, Cecil John Rhodes established the mining company "De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd" which went on to dominate the diamond industry in South Africa (Israeli Diamond Industry, 2023).

The discovery of diamonds in South Africa shifted the country from an agricultural to an industrial society, a transformation that was further accelerated by the discovery of gold in 1886 (Potenza, 2019). The discovery intensified British ambitions to create a federation of its colonies and the Boer territories, which was unsuccessful until the British annexation of the Transvaal in 1877 (National Army Museum, n.d.). Following the military conflict between the Transvaal Boers and the Bapedi people of the eastern Transvaal, the British seized the opportunity to annex the Transvaal territory under claims of creating stability and economic growth in the region (National Army Museum, n.d.). Between 1880 and 1881, the Boers rebelled against the annexation by the British. In 1881, in what is known as the "Battle of Majuba Hill", the British army was defeated, forcing them to withdraw from the area. This conflict became known as the "First War of Independence" (Byrnes & Library of Congress Federal Research Division, 1996).

The discovery of gold deposits in the Witwatersrand was a major economic and political development in the history of the country. Although Africans had been mining and trading gold for centuries, the discovery in the Witwatersrand led to British companies taking over the gold

mines (Byrnes & Library of Congress Federal Research Division, 1996). The gold discovery, made by two diggers underground at a farm called “Langlaagte” in the Transvaal, was bountiful and led to the development of various mining towns along the curve of the gold reef which would later be named the “Witwatersrand” (Rand Refinery, 2013). The discovery further intensified the existing tension between the Boers and the British mining companies over the control of the Witwatersrand, leading to the ‘Anglo-Boer War’ of 1899 (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Following his appointment as prime minister of the Cape, Cecil John Rhodes had succeeded in manipulating laws in the Cape to benefit his mining company and the industry as a whole – forcing more Africans into cheap wage labour on the mines and railways (Potenza, 2019). Rhodes not only opposed the policies of Boers in the Transvaal but planned to overthrow their government and seize control of the gold mines to further the interests of the British mining companies (Potenza, 2019). In 1885, he resigned as prime minister of Cape after an unsuccessful attack on the Transvaal Republic, known as the "Jameson Raid". (Potenza, 2019).

The “South African War” or “Anglo-Boer War” fought between 1899 and 1802 solidified the British Empire’s ambitions of unifying the territories in South Africa under a political Union (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The Boer army had gained several victories at the beginning of the war but that soon ended when the British army not only received reinforcements in the form of more soldiers but also proceeded to burn down many farms belonging to the Boers (Byrnes & Library of Congress Federal Research Division, 1996). It is reported that the victory of the British army is attributed to this strategy of torching Boer territories:

> The British ultimately succeeded in breaking this resistance, but only by adopting a scorched-earth policy. In 1901 and 1902, the British torched more than 30,000 farms in the South African Republic and the Orange Free State and placed all the Afrikaner women and children in concentration camps, where, because of overcrowding and unsanitary conditions, more than 25,000 perished (Byrnes & Library of Congress Federal Research Division, 1996).

In May of 1902, the war was concluded with the signing of a peace treaty known as the “Treaty of Vereeniging” bringing the two Boer republics under British rule and significantly excluding the black population from acquiring political rights (Augliere, 2018). The formation of the Union of South Africa in the year 1910 ensured the domination of all non-white people by the white minority when Great Britain passed the “South Africa Act” (South African History Online, 2016). The Act united the colonies and the republics under British rule except for “home-rule” for the Boer republics while consequently only property-owning black Africans in the Cape colony were granted the right to vote (South African History Online, 2016).

The Making of Modern South Africa and Migrant Labour:

Following the developments outlined above, the African population was pushed into further marginalization as new devastating policies on land were declared by the new Union of South Africa (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Platzky and Walker (1985) note that: "Gold and cheap labour to mine it have been the two major commodities used in building modern South Africa" (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 80). Due to the rapid growth of an urban population that opened new farming markets, white commercial farming developed (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The demand for land had intensified and white farmers across the country used their political power to further limit the access smallholders and peasants had to the land (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Many white farmers were against the reserve system including cash tenancy and sharecropping as they viewed these systems as limiting their access to land and labour that they felt belonged to them (Platzky & Walker, 1985). To retain and acquire more land for themselves, the Orange Free State government in 1885 had an 'anti-squatting' law passed that would only allow five African families to rent or share crops on each white-owned farm (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Those Africans living on state-owned land in the Transvaal were required for the first time in 1903 to pay rent followed by the reactivation of anti-squatting laws in 1908 (Platzky & Walker, 1985). In Natal during the 1890s, the administration prohibited individuals from owning land in the mission reserves. Later in 1903, the Lands Department was instructed to decline any bids made by Africans during public sales of state land (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

As opposed to the view held by white farmers about the reserves, the mining industry was in favour of the system as it would grant them access to cheap labour which they needed for the mines (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The reserves would make way for workers to become migrant labourers as their bases would be in the reserves where their families would be situated, keeping general labour costs low (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The low wages offered by mine owners would be justified on the basis that the workers' families in the reserves were making a living off the land further cutting costs by not having to provide housing or schooling for the families of the workers (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The migrant labour system made it ever more possible to exploit workers as they could be easily replaced, making it difficult for them to ask for higher wages or better working conditions (Platzky & Walker, 1985). According to Platzky and Walker (1985), the system of migrant labour was accepted to some extent by rural residents who were not prepared to permanently leave their homes in the reserves. These residents were willing to leave the reserves temporarily in order to earn wages that would cover their taxes and provide for their families. Mining companies in the Cape were able to further their interests through the

passing of the “Glen Grey Act” in 1894 (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The Act would introduce individual land tenure in the place of communal tenure and would allow for a limited system of self-governance primarily in favour of those who owned land (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Due to the mass resistance from the rural people, the Act was applied in only a few areas although the authors noted the far-reaching impact of the Act:

> Segregated African reserves to supply the towns with a migrant labour force, with limited forms of local government within them, would be the policy goals of the extremely powerful mining and industrial sectors of the South Africa economy in the first half of the 20th century (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 82).

The strategic relocation of black people from their land during the Anglo-Boer War in the Orange Free State is an occurrence less spoken about than the impact of the war on Boer farms (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The authors have noted the well-detailed conditions of the concentration camps in which the Boers were confined. By contrast, however, the black people removed from white-owned land and placed in the thirty-one concentration camps established for them met a far worse fate (Platzky & Walker, 1985). When the war ended, the large concentration camps were disbanded and those people were distributed to white farms across the province but, many remained stranded and in poverty in the smaller camps for some years after the end of the war (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Waves of land dispossession continued to take place into the 20th century, accelerated during the apartheid period.

The formation of the Union in 1910 did not bring an end to the contestations of the various white interest groups in the country (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Although the white ruling group agreed that a uniform ‘native policy’ was necessary, they could not agree on a standard policy due to the different African administration systems that had been established in the four territories before the creation of the Union (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

The first government of the Union of 1910 was the South African Party of Louis Botha and Jan Smuts which was also the party of the mining and industrial interest groups and thus their native policy was based on ensuring a stable supply of labour for the industry and curbing the growth of African middle class (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The political power of the farmers was also taken into consideration and consequently their efforts to quash the independent African peasantry in rural areas were supported by the Union - hence the introduction of the “1913 Natives Land Act” (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

1913 Natives Land Act:

This Act is considered to have been the basis of all subsequent legislation concerning native policy (Platzky & Walker, 1985). This is because it 'lawfully' restricted Africans from acquiring land anywhere except in the reserves they already occupied including renting any land in the future (Platzky & Walker, 1985). It also meant that in future, those Africans living on white-owned land as tenants or sharecroppers would ultimately be relocated into reserves unless they were labour tenants or full-time wage labourers (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The Act favoured both farmers and mining by limiting African living areas and ensuring an abundant labour supply (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The Land Act of 1913 allocated only 7% of the land in South Africa to Africans, while the rest was reserved for the white minority, exacerbating the system of migrant labour (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Although the Union recognized the inadequacy of the land they had allocated to Africans, it was undecided on which other areas would be declared as part of the reserves, so the decision was left for later (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

> The Natives Land Act thus turned into law the process of dispossessing Africans of their land that had been going on for the past 200 years. Law, not war was the final means of conquest (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 85).

In 1916 the "Beaumont Commission" was established to recommend which other areas of land could be added to the scheduled land list of 1913 (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The commission proposed that an additional 7 million hectares of land be declared as part of the reserves and this was met with immediate rejection by the farmers who did not want to let go of any more land (Platzky & Walker, 1985). As a result, the proposal was rejected and instead, the government appointed five local Committees that would review the Beaumont Commission's recommendations (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The local committees successfully allocated just under 6 million hectares of land, instead of the original goal of 7 million hectares (Platzky & Walker, 1985). In 1936, the recommendation was passed into law although it had been applied even before legislation was passed (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

The *Natives Administration Act* of 1927 was the first step in establishing a unified native policy across the country as it empowered the Prime Minister and his cabinet to rule in all African areas. Furthermore, section 5 of the Act provided that the Prime Minister may:

> Whenever he deems it expedient in the general public interest, order the removal of any tribe or portion thereof or any Native from any place to any other place within the Union upon such conditions as he may determine (p. 88).

The Act limited regular courts' powers in African affairs, boosted traditional chiefs' authority, and undermined non-traditional organizations like the ANC. (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Most importantly, section 5 of the Act paved the way for the removal and relocation of Africans that would take place in the future. In 1936, the persistent disagreement regarding the treatment of native Africans among the provinces was finally resolved when General Hertzog's coalition government reached a compromise. The deal involved African people losing their right to vote in the Cape, and in return, the reserves would be granted additional land allocation (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The South African Native Trust (Bantu Trust/Development Trust) was also established in the same year to administer the released land thus becoming the registered owner of almost all the reserves instead of the occupants receiving title deeds (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The Land Act of 1936 ensured the exclusion of many African farms as well as state-owned land that Africans had already been occupying from the list of areas that would be part of the reserves (Platzky & Walker, 1985). As a result, many African farms became 'black spots' in white areas and Africans living on state-owned land became illegal squatters, despite many having lived in these areas for generations (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

The reserves:

By 1939, the land for the incoming apartheid government's "Bantustan policy" had already been outlined. The establishment of reserves was rooted in conquest and colonization, serving the interests of the white minority. (Platzky & Walker, 1985). In 1944, the Department of Native Affairs released a report on the conditions of the reserves in the Northern areas saying: "Areas of relative agricultural wealth – many had been grain and cattle exporting regions in the 19th century – had become places of frequent scarcities and famine" (Native Affairs Department, 1944, p. 93). The Native Economic Commission in 1932, described the situation as a "race against time to prevent the destruction of large grazing areas, the erosion and denudation of the soils and the drying up of springs" (Native Economic Commission, 1932, p. 93). The deterioration of crops, coupled with increasing landlessness in reserves, threatened both political stability and migrant labour (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The people who could no longer sustain themselves through agriculture were compelled to relocate to urban areas and work in factories. This situation caused concern among government planners as it went against the Union's objectives (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Instead of allowing people to move freely off the reserves or increasing the amount of land available to them, the Union decided to cram more people into the already crowded reserves. Platzky and Walker wrote:

> Their solution was betterment planning, the first of which were introduced in the 1930s and 1940s: cattle-culling, the fencing off of fields and grazing land from residential areas, the moving of people into villages set away from the farming land (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 93).

The government's attempt to increase agricultural output through land-use control failed to address the issue of overpopulation, which only worsened over time (Platzky & Walker, 1985). In resistance to the new controls, people in the reserves continued to migrate into urban areas in search of work. This led to widespread urban landlessness and a massive housing crisis that the Nationalist government inherited in 1948 (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

The KwaZulu homeland government had too little power to coordinate developmental projects in their own domain, either way, the key decisions were largely taken by the white people beyond their control. Further, although half of the populations of the homelands are permanent residents in urban areas, the central government denied the homeland administration of any substantial urban roles (Butler, et al., 1978).

Case Studies:

This section is dedicated solely to discussing the areas of removal from which the participants of this study originated. The focus is on four areas, this was not an intended approach of the study as there were no restrictions on the criteria of the participants' origins, thus the focus areas developed naturally from the data gathering process based on where the participants of this study were forcibly removed. It is important to note that not all the participants of this study are from areas that explicitly experienced removals, in the case of two participants we will be discussing an area that was under the threat of removal which ultimately did not take place for reasons that will be discussed later. The focus areas which will be discussed are Roosboom, Umbulwane, and Utrecht.

Umbulwane

Located in Ladysmith, Northern Natal, by 1980, the community of Umbulwane had a population of about 1000 people (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Umbulwane was originally a black ‘freehold’ area with “small wattle-and-daub” houses which were scattered across the area on the outskirts of urban Ladysmith (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 266). Platzky and Walker (1985) conducted a survey in the area and found that 41 families, mostly African but including some Indian and coloured families, owned land there. The area had other inhabitants who were tenants of the landowners. Even though some of the people living there were classified as

"coloured" by the government, they were Zulu-speaking and had integrated into the community despite being considered a separate group in the eyes of apartheid planners (Platzky & Walker, 1985). At the time of the survey, it was one of the fourteen areas designated as black spots and under threat of being removed elsewhere in the district of Ladysmith (Platzky & Walker, 1985). The residents of Umbulwane had settled in the area and paid rates, but officials refused to recognize it as an African residential area (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Despite being ratepayers, the municipality refused to provide essential services such as water, sanitation, roads, and waste collection to the community. Instead, it was marked for future industrial development (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Despite living in Umbulwane for more than 25 years, some for almost 50 years, the residents were classified as illegal squatters by the government, despite having reported their long tenure to the Association for Rural Advancement Land Rights Advocacy organization (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Many of them had been forced to move to the area because they had already beenevicted previously from white farms, or their homes were destroyed by government policies of removals (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

The first sign of impending removal for the community of Umbulwane came in in June-July of 1980 when officials arrived and began painting house numbers on their properties (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Platzky and Walker cite a memorandum from Umbulwane residents which noted the experiences of this community:

> On the 19th August 1980 we saw the Municipality and the Drakensberg Administration Board as well as police, all armed with guns, and a bulldozer. They started to break down houses. Most of the owners of these houses were not home but at work or fetching wood. When they came from work, they found their houses broken down. Some were left with only one small room (Memorandum from the people of Umbulwane, 1980).

Only the houses belonging to tenants were demolished, and the community was verbally warned that officials would be back to complete the demolitions if they had not moved within the following month (Platzky & Walker, 1985). A town clerk later claimed that despite not giving the community notices in advance, they had only demolished unoccupied houses:

> I am involved in the removal of the illegal structures, and the health hazard… the people do not fall under my jurisdiction. I am not putting out people – just demolishing unoccupied illegal structures (Sunday Tribune, 1980).

In October of 1980, officials from the Municipal and Administration Board returned to paint new numbers on the houses of some tenants; although this time they used red paint, rather than

the white paint used on their first visit in the area (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Additionally, landowners were required to obtain licenses from the Drakensberg Admission Board in order to rent out portions of their land (Platzky & Walker, 1985). From the very beginning, some of the landowners recognized the threat posed to tenants as a threat to their own ownership and began organizing to resist the demolitions (Platzky & Walker, 1985). Landowners sent a memorandum to the chief commissioner for Natal asking that the demolitions be halted and that in future they should be notified in advance on matters that concern them and their community (Platzky & Walker, 1985). As word got out about the demolitions happening in Umbulwane, newspapers in Natal and Johannesburg started covering the events of the area. This publicity, along with the strong levels of community organization, had a significant impact on the local administration, leading to the cessation of demolitions in October (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

In February of 1981, Pieter Koornhof who was Minister of Black Affairs at the time, acknowledged the receipt of the memorandum from the residents of Umbulwane stating that the matter was under review:

> If the people are eventually resettled they will be removed depending on merit to appropriate accommodation at Ezakheni or to such accommodation as may be arranged by the people with the chiefs concerned (Koornhof, 1981, p. 275).

In March of 1981, the community of Umbulwane received an official response in the form of a letter which Platzky and Walker (1985) have described as intentionally divisive, since it sought to drive a wedge between the tenants and landowners. The community sent a reply in June of 1981 that voiced their dissatisfaction with the administration's response to their memorandum, and which read in part:

> Umbulwane has not been set aside as an urban Black residential area, but it is incorrect that Umbulwane is not owned by Blacks. As we explained in our memorandum it was bought by our grandfathers more than 70 years ago. Perhaps the government is unaware that Umbulwane has been paying rates to the local authority up to now but getting nothing from the Town Council in return. We have no services at all (Platzky & Walker, 1985, p. 276).

In April of 1982, Koornhof confirmed to a newspaper that Umbulwane and other areas in Ladysmith considered black spots would be moved after deliberations with the community leaders and the KwaZulu government:

> The actual removals would only take place once the necessary housing facilities, water-reticulation, sanitation, school and clinic facilities, shops, roads and other services had been provided and made available (Natal Mercury, 1982, p. 277).

The community of Umbulwane was puzzled as to why they could not receive these services in Umbulwane particularly because they had been paying for them and asking for them for many years now (Platzky & Walker, 1985).

Utrecht

Located in Northern Natal and occupying what a local newspaper described as: “the top right-hand corner of a triangle comprising Dundee, Newcastle and Utrecht” (Worley & Rundgren, 2020) the town of Utrecht is one soaked with history. We won't delve too deeply into the town's history for this study. Instead, I will provide a brief overview of the events that led to the forced removal of black people from the area. In what was Northern Zululand at the time, Dutch Voortrekkers entered the region in 1837 and in 1838 they fought with the Zulu over territory in what is known as the “Battle of Blood River” or in Isizulu “Impi yase Ncome” (Ladz, 2017). Following the voortrekkers victory, the Boer Republic of Natal/Natalia was formed covering the regions between the Tugela and Umzimvubu rivers with Pietermaritzburg as the capital (Ladz, 2017). The British government in the Cape had never recognized the republic and in 1844 formerly annexed the territory, causing many of the Boers to move north over the Tugela River where they initially occupied the land between Klip River and Mzinyathi (Buffalo) River (Coleman & Garstang, 2014). The "Klip River Republic" lasted only a year before British authorities shut it down. This led the Voortrekkers to settle in an area between the Mzinyathi (Buffalo) and Ncome Rivers, which was undoubtedly Zulu territory (Coleman & Garstang, 2014).

The Governor of the Transvaal at the time (1852), Andries Pretorius, objected to the Voortrekkers settlement in the area as it did not fall within the borders of the Transvaal and did not want to begin a conflict with the British (Potgieter, 1976). In 1854, upon gifting the Zulu King Mpande kaSenzangakhona 100 cattle in exchange for grazing land, the community along the Mzinyathi (Buffalo) River became the “Republic of Utrecht” (Potgieter, 1976). Named after the Dutch city in Holland where the Voortrekkers came from, the Republic of Utrecht was formerly recognized by the Transvaal Republic in 1855 and 1860 and became part of the Republic of Transvaal (Potgieter, 1976). In the latter half of the 19th century, the Utrecht sub-district was born, and inaugurated the subsequent land disputes between the Zulu kingdom and

the Transvaal settlers who had established farms on Zulu territory, and later asserted “boer ownership” in 1887 (Surplus People Project, 1983). Through this encroachment on Zulu territory, many of the African population living in these areas continued to “live on the white farms as labour tenants or rent-paying tenants” (Surplus People Project, 1983, p. 19).

To house the families that were being removed from white areas, eMadadeni (1960) and Osizweni (1969) townships were established in the Newcastle area (Del Grande, 2009), one respondent of this study hails from the Osizweni township where she and her family were relocated upon removal from a Utrecht farm. In the present, Utrecht or now “Emadlangeni”, falls under the “Amajuba” District Municipal area as one of the three sub-districts established in 2001 (Del Grande, 2009). The municipal areas were established by the democratic government after 1994 with the “intention to create wall-to-wall local government for citizens as an attempt to overcome the inequities of the dual system of the past” (Del Grande, 2009, p. 36).

Thuli Khanyile was relocated from Utrecht to Osizweni township in Newcastle with her family in 1970 and although these are two separate areas in Northern Natal the conditions in these relocation sites share the same deficiencies. Talking about the day of the removals, she said:

> They offloaded us, basically throwing our things out, and they weren't white, they were not the boers, they were black. They drove off to the next stop as soon as offloading was done, we were just meant to figure out how to fit all of us in that one-room house. And those houses are not like the houses here in Ezakheni, there was no concrete on the floor just a huge gaping hole and we were told to sleep there. We had to get wood first, we left our wood in Utrecht. The next day my mom and grandmother started to cover up the hole. And Newcastle was far, it's too far just to go buy one cement bag. There was a bus, you could get on in the morning and it took you to Newcastle (town), you would only be back in the late afternoon or early evening, around 4pm/5pm (Khanyile, 2022).

Hobsland (Vulandondo)

In the period between 1950 and mid 1960’s the rural community of Besters on the outskirts of the Ladysmith town was forcibly removed and relocated by the state to join another rural/farm community in Hobsland (Dlamini, 1999). The two communities share a common history of being forcibly removed from their land with the Besters community suffering that fate twice; both communities were subsequently forcibly relocated to Ezakheni township (Dlamini, 1999). The history of the former Hobsland community is a bleak one. Although there was much

resistance by residents, the record of their removal clearly shows the cruel ways those complicit in apartheid operated. Not only were they blatantly lied to by administrative workers, but the residents were also extorted and exploited despite legally owning the land and, as they further compromised and asked for the most basic concessions in exchange for leaving their homes. According to a Liberal Party booklet on "blackspots" published in the 1960s, the land on which the former residents of Besters lived was acquired in 1908 by a syndicate which purchased the land from a Mr. Daniel Bester and until 1963 was known as Kumalosville:

> In January, 1908, a Mr Daniel Bester sold 250 acres of land to an African syndicate whose trustees were Chief J.H. Kumalo and Messrs. T. Kumalo and E. Lutango. Kumalosville was born. In October 1963, over 55 years later, the demolition squads of the Nationalist Government's Department of Bantu Administration moved in, and Kumalosville died (Brown, 1974, p. 4).

The first official visit to the Kumalosville residents was in 1952 when two officials from the 'Bantu Administration Department' announced to residents the government's plan to purchase their farmland in exchange for a larger space elsewhere. Upon the official visit a delegation was elected to go view the Hobsland area and they returned with news of larger plots and were under the impression that was the deal they would be getting with the state (Brown, 1974). In September of 1954 however, it was announced that there would be no compensation whatsoever for the relocation and as expected, this was rejected by residents (Brown, 1974). In 1955 the Natives' parliamentary representative at the time submitted the community's' conditions if they were to be moved. From the time of their submission in 1955 the residents received no response until another official visit in 1959 when they were presented with new terms:

> Compensation for land, improvements and what it called "inconvenience". A free 1/2-acre plot at Hobsland… The right to buy a further 1/2-acre at Hobsland for R110… It should be noted that, while in almost every respect Hobsland is a less desirable place to live in than Kumalosville, the Government offered R42 an acre as compensation at Kumalosville and asked R220 an acre at Hobsland! (Brown, 1974, p. 5).

Under the new terms, compensation with land equal to what was being lost would only be given to men who owned 40 acres or more. Additionally, the relocation incentive promised six years prior, which included the possibility of receiving something bigger elsewhere, would no longer be provided (Brown, 1974). In 1960 and 1961 the residents received final notice from the state

and while they questioned the compensation proposed by the state, their land was expropriated. They were relocated to Hobsland in 1963 (Brown, 1974). Then, in 1972, just nine years later, records show that over 400 families were forcibly relocated from Hobsland to Ezakheni township, despite Kumalosville residents having been promised permanent residence upon being relocated to Hobsland in 1963 (Lincoln, 1977). The authorities justified the relocation to Ezakheni by claiming that the Hobsland farm area was needed by the town of Ladysmith for the construction of a dam, which would result in the landowners losing their freehold rights to the land (Msimang, 1979).

Bonisile Mchunu, who participated in this study, was twenty-three years old in 1972 when she was forcibly removed with her family from the 'Hobsland' farming district and placed in Ezakheni C Section. She shares a similar story about the issues related to the dam in that area:

> First, they installed taps in the yards, I remember the first house to get a tap was kwa "Jakajaka". After that they told us the dam we lived next to was going to overflow and burst and that we would drown and that was the reason they gave us for the removal. You know till today that dam has never burst it is still intact. They also said they were planning to build a township for the coloureds only but that didn't happen. Instead, they allowed other people to come and build their houses there, some were coming from Roosboom (Mchunu, 2022).

Roosboom

> "So that is why I say: You people who are still at your own places, stay there! Sit tight!" (Mngadi, 1981)

The removal of people in Roosboom is one of the most documented cases within the literature of forced removals in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. In the early 1960s, the threat of the removals was fast circulating in the community, but it would only be a reality once the Ezakheni township was fully established (beginning in 1972). The first strategic move in which Roosboom stood (and still stands today) was implemented by the State through the use of the Local Health Commission. In 1960 the Commission expropriated the land by putting it under its control subsequently the houses in the area were counted and numbered in preparation for the removals. The process of the removals happened at an exceedingly fast rate in that a year after serving the community with the expropriation notices in 1975, the area had been completely evacuated by 1976 in the face of little resistance (Surplus People Project, 1983).

Former landowner and resident of Roosboom, Mr. Elliot Mngadi, in 1981 spoke at a meeting held in Ladysmith sharing his and other former residents' sentiments on the relocation area:

> I am just pointing out a few things that are so bad there. I don't know how to word it, how to tell you how dissatisfied with that area. And yet as it is we are stuck with it. That is why I would like to advise my friends who are still in their own 'black spots', not to leave those 'black spots' even if they come to shoot you! (Mngadi, 1981).

The new township was not ready for the first waves of removal victims. The first batch of people who were relocated to the Ezakheni township were housed in temporary tin huts. Those interviewed for the Surplus People Project report had varying complaints about the conditions in the township, but a major complaint was the lack of adequate housing: "We would like to live in houses, not in these tins" (Surplus People Project, 1983, p. 334). The housing subsequently provided in the Ezakheni Township was the standard four or five-roomed house that stood on a small plot., Among the many disadvantages of the new location was the distance from the limited employment opportunities and other scarce amenities in urban Ladysmith. The cost of bus fares and the badly built roads added to the dissatisfaction of residents, which resulted in a sustained bus boycott. Eventually, in 1982, a well-tarred road was built between Ezakheni and Ladysmith. There was little employment to be found inside the township which forced many of its residents to seek work in the town of Ladysmith. Alongside water shortages and lack of electricity, residents were finding it hard to adapt to the new environment. Eliot Mngadi described the township in this way:

> People are crowded like sardines. Even worse, it's dark at night. No electricity. The result is that after dark you cannot just walk in the streets there. And, a part I don't understand, out of every ten people there, eight have guns. I know they don't have licenses, but still, they have guns (Mngadi, 1981).

The households that had been surveyed under the Surplus People Project in the township of Ezakheni indicated various origins before their relocation. Out of the 96 surveyed households, 78 of them indicated being moved from a black spot in Roosboom, and about half of them had resided in their previous locations for over twenty years and the relocation to Ezakheni resulted in the rupture of long-established social fabric (Surplus People Project, 1983). Most of the participants in the survey also indicated the relocation as a coerced one, with 73 households citing they'd been moved by a government truck without warning. Many of the relocated households complained about the lack of land in the township which prevented them from

keeping stock or ploughing, which had formed a significant part of their lives prior to relocation (Surplus People Project, 1983). Of the households interviewed 50 out of 96 indicated that they had received compensation for the relocation which they thought was inadequate; however, they had little resources to challenge the authorities in court and had already been intimidated to a point of terror (Surplus People Project, 1983). It was not uncommon for Ezakheni residents to speak of their previous homes with a sense of yearning, Elliot Mngadi was quoted to have said:

> At Roosboom I had planned for my old age – I am well over sixty – that I would just keep five cows and my chickens. You know, when you have your own milk, your own chicken; a best friend, I slaughter a sheep. In winter I slaughter a beast for my children – because it's cold, the meat would not spoil quickly. That's the life I had planned for my old age. But now, in my old age, I have to start afresh (Mngadi, 1981, p. 338).

In terms of levels of education, the numbers from the survey indicated an overall low level; however, the sample revealed that the number of women who at least acquired standard 9 surpassed that of men. 295 females compared to 239 males indicated some level of education, which may not be surprising, considering that the sample group was predominantly female (Surplus People Project, 1983). Unemployment was rife, and although women made up a significant percentage of the employed population (43%), they also formed part of the group with the highest unemployment rate at 27, 9% compared to the 15% of men (Surplus People Project, 1983).

Relocation area: Ezakheni Township

The Ezakheni Township was one of the first major townships established outside of Durban and situated in the KwaZulu territory with more than 50 000 occupants at the time (1983). Just 25km away from Ladysmith, Ezakheni was created for housing the African labour force and their families (Platzky & Walker, 1983). Alongside serving the industrial interests at the time, the establishment of Ezakheni was a means of appeasing the white farmers in Klip River and Elandslaagte who were unhappy with the black spots in their area. The Ladysmith Gazette (which still exists today as the local newspaper) wrote: "Since the 1950s the farmers of Klip River have made available productive agricultural land for the purpose of extending the area of KwaZulu. This was done on the understanding that the land would be used for the resettlement of the residents of various black spots in a geographically consolidated area" (Gazette, 1980). The removals into Ezakheni began in 1972 and continued well into the 1970s

with five major communities being relocated there: Vulandondo, Umbulwane, Rietkuil, Roosboom, and Criemen. Vulandondo was cleared of inhabitants to allow for the creation of a dam; those from Umbulwane were moved under the category of “illegal squatters”, and the people from Roosboom and adjoining areas (7 353 people) were relocated in 1975-76 (Platzky & Walker, 1983).

The conditions in Ezakheni Township are similar in many ways to those experienced in other relocation sites across the region. Indeed, residents found ways to adapt to their new environment and build new lives in the township, but many of them had a sense of loss they carried well into their lives. The loss of livelihoods, land, and communal bonds they had established over the years had all been disrupted under the state's removal program. The following account is of the experience of Grace Mbuyazi from Lake Bhangazi located within Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park in Kwazulu-Natal (Skelcher, 2003). Grace recalled her community as one that was self-subsistent, with plenty of food and a healthy population (Skelcher, 2003). In 1974, without notice; government vehicles arrived in Lake Bhangazi and forcibly removed people at gunpoint. Many ran away and left behind their belongings, while few were allowed to transport their livestock (Skelcher, 2003). These people were taken to overcrowded reserves where they were under the leadership of a different chief and had to beg for land to build new homes or kraals (Skelcher, 2003). Many people were dumped on roadsides and left to wander about in search of their families and others simply lived as refugees with the hope of one day returning to Lake Bhangazi (Mbuyazi, 2001).

All the participants of this study shared similar if not identical experiences in terms of the general conditions in the relocation townships. Bonisile Mchunu recalls how dissatisfied they were with how small the houses they were put in were:

> More than anything we all cried about the loss of our land, the space, we didn’t suffer like this. It helped that we were all in the same section, but it was small, man. Back in Hob’s Land the children had their own section, so did the young adults and the elders. Now we were sleeping on the floor, not privacy, my mother-in-law got the big bedroom, and my brother-in-law got the other one. My husband and I slept on the floor in the lounge, we had to jumble the children onto the kitchen floor, that’s where they slept, and it was dangerous (Mchunu, 2022).

Delisile Mathebula, who was a pre-teen at the time (10 years old), was removed and relocated with her family from Umbulwane to Ezakheni in 1972. She described the relocation area in

two ways. First, she spoke of the hunger she and the rest of her family experienced once they arrived in the township:

> We didn't have livestock like cows or chickens, but we did have a small garden in our yard. Myself, my brother, and mother tended to it. We mostly had spinach and tomatoes, but our neighbour grew carrots, so we would make monthly exchanges. We didn't go hungry in Umbulwane but in Ezakheni I remember being hungry a lot (Mathebula, 2022).

She went on to say that:

> I remember being happy about not having to go and collect water at the dam, we didn't have to do that here. Back in Umbulwane that was my job, often with my mother and brother but my sister was still too young. We had a tap in the yard in the new house, I was glad I didn't have to walk that long distance to the dam and back home (Mathebula, 2022).

The above testimony speaks to the nature of township life, where although there was an added benefit of not having to fetch water from the dam, the overall lives of the removed people were characterized by poverty. The means for sustaining themselves and their families were no longer accessible to them.

Chapter Two: Land Rights and Gender

In this chapter I am going to focus on the gendered impact of poverty. The respondents of this study were unanimous in describing how their experience of forced removals was that of impoverishment, amongst other narratives. Their testimonies provide a view of the continuing precarious socio-economic landscape in their relocation areas, highlighting the lack of structural change in South Africa despite the political transformation that took place in 1994. The gender power relations remain more or less the same and many women in South Africa lack access to the resources that they desperately need in order to grow their economic and social agency.

The continuous cycle of poverty is evident as the participants speak of the ways they have attempted to make ends meet over the years, but also it is a visible poverty. By 'visible' I mean that one only has to look at their homes and the arrangements inside to see that there is a clear lack – a general lack, of possessions, of food etc. One participant awkwardly apologised for not having anything to offer us to eat because "the months have been tough" and I must note that at the time there was a serious water shortage in Ezakheni, and residents didn't even have drinking water. One of the respondents in this study shared her experience of arriving in Ezakheni around issues with water and space, all these years later the community is still battling the same issues around overcrowding:

> It was hard for us, the house was too small, and my brother-in-law who was older than my husband wanted to return (to our original) home that very night… We really got to see hard times, things were really hard here at first, we liked the way we lived before, it was good, we were all together, with all our children. We had to collect wood though, the electricity was installed a while after (Mchunu, 2022).

She noted to me that even prior to their relocation the residents who were able to go see the township came back with news of how small the the houses were:

> But before that some of the residents hired a minibus and went to go see what the township looked like, we all thought they were exaggerating cos they were so used to the vast space, they just complained so much about the small space and the small houses (Mchunu, 2022).

She relayed that a few days before their removal from Hobsland they had to get rid of their belongings and property in some way and that meant selling them:

> Maybe a few days before, and we all rushed to sell our things, it was a bargain for the buyers really, our pots our vessels. And in Ezakheni there wasn't even space for a chicken coop, we had to sell our chickens. We were not eating meat for a long time because we couldn't afford it, there was no money to go into town to buy anything, it was bad for a long time (Mchunu, 2022).

In South Africa, poverty takes on a racial, gendered and spatial nature as (Meer, 1997) reminds us. She points out that poverty in rural areas located in the former *bantustans* takes on a more extreme form as a result of the apartheid government's removal policies:

> According to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) study 53 per cent of South Africa's population are classified poor, experiencing high unemployment, hunger, and malnutrition… A higher proportion of working-age women live in poor households, and a higher proportion of the poor elderly are women. In addition, women suffer from substantially higher unemployment rates than men (36 per cent vs 26 per cent) (Meer, 1997, p. 135).

Thuli Khanyile's family had been moved to the township of Osizweni near Newcastle from a Utrecht farm and, although she reckons life in Ezakheni now is better, her testimoy speaks to the poverty in relocation areas that women and children were faced with:

> We knew each other, we were all from the same area, so we helped each other, if you didn't have mielie-meal you asked, we shared, that was our life. A life of being poor. And there were no schools, I was 15 - I had to go to school and there was no school. My grandmother sent us to one called "eNhloniphweni", it was far, we ran there. You couldn't walk, you had to run, or you'd be late. School ended at 2 pm, you would get home you eat just pap, no bread not like here in Ezakheni. We didn't eat in the morning before school, there wasn't enough food. If you had two cents you could buy a *vetkoek* but I didn't have two cents, many of us didn't (Khanyile, 2022).

The fact that women were not allowed to own property contributed to the significant gender-based disparities that existed between men and women. These disparities were largely based on the idea that women were expected to be homemakers. The "capitalist-patriarchal system of law and governance", which was the basis of colonial and apartheid South Africa, enforced the domestication of women and ensured that men had dominant access to resources. This system protected men's privileged status in society (Kariseb & Muhumuza, 2018, p. 13). This understanding of the underpinnings of the oppression described above allows us to understand the link between women and poverty, specifically why women experience higher levels of poverty. Building on the work of Naila Kabeer, Shamim Meer wrote: "Poverty arises from

unequal social relations which dictate unequal relations to resources, claims and responsibilities" (Meer, 1997, p. 135). The ability to exercise agency over one's life is determined by access to resources, amenities and decision-making power, but women have been systematically excluded from these resources, with the devasting effects visible across society. The sections below expand on how the experience of forced removals deepened the precarity experienced by women (and hence by their dependent families)

Access to land and land ownership:

The broader societal context in which removals were conducted, and which to a large extent persists today, needs to be understood in order to show how removals and spatial apartheid deepened the gendered experience of dispossession and poverty. In rural South Africa, specifically in the KwaZulu-Natal province, land is allocated to male household heads either via chiefs or through inheritance. Women rarely have control or rights over land which ensures that women remain dependent on men. Female-headed households suffer from being unable to have even indirect access to land. As a result of the devastating effects of apartheid policies, combined with patriarchal social relations in South Africa, few African women own land and even fewer effectively control land (Bob, 2000). The multiple burdens on women are particularly acute due to women's economic dependence on men, reinforced by cultural traditions and religious practices that dictate women's relationships and roles in society, as well as the relationships to resources, especially land. There is a persistent gap between women's legal rights and their actual ownership of land, and between ownership and control. This inequality is mainly due to social, administrative, and ideological factors. Women are generally at a disadvantage compared to men in terms of status, property rights, and representation and authority within their community (Bob 2000). Power relations from the household to the highest public level impede women's ability to lead productive and fulfilling lives. Extensive research conducted around the period of the democratic transition in South Africa shows that in comparison to men, women were (and arguably still are) generally at a disadvantage in terms of control and access to resources. including land (Agarwal 1996; Carney 1993; Kabadaki 1994; Rangan 1997; Small & Kompe 1991).

Shamim Meer points out that the political change in 1994 had little impact in terms of economic change for much of the population that had been dispossessed in the colonial and apartheid eras (Meer, 1997). In rural areas of South Africa, women faced limited access to land due to their gender and social standing in the community. Despite making up the majority of the population, they were only allowed a small portion of the land. Despite being skilled agricultural producers,

many women were confined to cultivating subsistence crops for their families. During the apartheid era, women were compelled to manage rural properties while their husbands and sons worked in mines and cities. Customary laws further prevented women from owning land, and they required permission from their husbands or guardians to obtain effective land rights (Commission for Gender Equality, 2009).

The right to allocate land in rural communities is primarily held by men, which also defines their overall status and primary rights within the community. Full citizenship rights, such as building a house, cultivating crops, controlling earnings from the land, accessing public resources, and participating in public discussions, are reserved for male heads of households who have been formally granted land rights (Commission for Gender Equality, 2009). On the other hand, women have secondary rights to land, which mirrors their secondary status in other community activities. As a result, women are considered subjects or dependents rather than full citizens, both within their households and the wider community, as they are dependent on the formal rights holder (Commission for Gender Equality, 2009). In 2003, a decade into post-apartheid South Africa, Statistics SA conducted the General Household Survey which found that: "Around 41% of rural women over 18 years old were neither household heads nor married to the household head, meaning they had no rights to own land" (Commission for Gender Equality, 2009, pp. 23-24).

The abject poverty in the Ezakheni township is currently still visible in almost every way. The participants of this study were elderly women and only one out of the six women I spoke to was able to live a somewhat less pressured existence. She worked most of her life and at seventy-two years old she lives alone in a house that she owns upon overcoming many obstacles to acquire it. When asked about her family's movement once they were relocated, Thenjiwe Mazibuko informed me that in fact the house they were allocated was so small they couldn't possible live in it:

> My father arrived a few days later from St. Chads and informed us that he was going into town to the authorities' office to gather information and inform the authorities that he would be moving us to his brother's house in St. Chads which was bigger because we had a large family, The authorities agreed for us to depart from the house they had placed us in and thus my father moved us to St. Chads (Mazibuko, 2022).

She and her family returned to Ezakheni a few years later and I asked if they had bought a house and how they were able to facilitate this move to which she responded:

> No, we built from scratch, my father and I put together our earnings to build. In fact, I found the plot. By then I was no longer teaching and living in Jonono skop, I was now teaching in Ephumuleni here in Ezakheni, so my father tasked me with finding a plot. I couldn't purchase the plot myself as a woman, so my father did (Mazibuko, 2022).

Many other women that had no access to employment and those who did, have not been able to secure a home that they can say they own for many reasons but more so due to the burden of poverty in their lives. (This section is interesting for a discussion on post-removals adaptive strategies – illustrating the value of access to employment for women (e.g. as teachers) but still requiring the authority of male figures ("my father") to give effect to these adaptive strategies)

A volume of literature illustrates the continued exclusion of women in accessing land thirty years after apartheid, resulting (among other factors) from a lack of structural change in the South African economy. The Commission for Gender Equality has in fact noted that the legal system and the practices in general society continue to hinder women's rights coupled with the inability to own and control property, making it impossible to participate in a meaningful way in the economy:

> In South Africa many women do not have legal ownership rights to land on which they live and work because they are dependent on spouses and land ownership patterns through relatives due to the plural legal system and customary law (Moleko, 2013).

The land ownership pattern today in rural communities is unfortunately still reflective of the "disproportionate and oppressive" pattern of the past. The Commission for Gender Equality has made it clear that land ownership rights in customary law should be revised in terms of the discriminatory gender practices which are a barrier for women in the regard of land ownership (Moleko, 2013).

Under customary law in South Africa, women were denied property rights and were considered minors under the custody of their male relative or husband (Actionaid.org, n.d.). Various literature points out that in precolonial Africa there is evidence that systems of customary law granted women access to land and land ownership. However, those systems fell away with the advent of individual property ownership (Actionaid.org, n.d.). In fact, writing on the creation of Bantustans in the earlier part of the 19th century, Barbara Rogers wrote:

> The forcible separation of women from men, and children from parents; women in particular are regarded as superfluous appendages of men and increasingly shipped off to Bantustans or

> the transit camps where they are expected to maintain children, old people, the sick and handicapped. The men are in the towns for the sole purpose of serving whites (Rogers, 1976, p. 14).

During the apartheid era, in some areas land tenure rights were upgraded to ownership rights, but only men were recognized as the heads of families and legal owners of land. This had a significant impact on black women, who were unable to access or acquire property during apartheid (Mavhinga, 2018). More than half of the participants of this study spoke directly of the challenges they faced particularly because of their gender, issues ranging from their exclusion in land ownership. Some of the participants referred to the disparity in wages between themselves and their male counterparts. One participant who referred to herself as having been a "housewife" was Bonisile Mchunu, who spoke clearly about her dependence on her husband and subsequently her in-laws after the passing of her husband. She married before the age of eighteen and had been living with her husband and family on their property for some years when they were forcibly removed to Ezakheni. She could not lay claim to any compensation as a spouse, but her children were able to claim as beneficiaries. She has gone from relying on her husband to relying on her children at the age of seventy-two years. This is not uncommon for women in black communities, and in comparison, to their white counterparts, it is a clear indication of a double dose of inequality. Despite significant legal changes, the situation for poor rural women in KwaZulu-Natal has remained largely unchanged. Gender and land access are major concerns in land reform programs. Women continue to be in a less favourable position than men when it comes to access to land and other resources.

> Black women are the mainstay of peasant and simple commodity production on land. Yet their link to the land is inextricably dependent on men through whom access to land is rooted in 'white law' and indigenous law (Marcus. 1991:27).

Under current South African law, couples married in community of property (as opposed to by antenuptial contract) own all their assets jointly and both must consent to major transactions But for black women married prior to 1988, the husband owned all matrimonial assets and could sell them without consulting his wife. This changed only recently withSithole's landmark High Court ruling which overturned the discriminatory law (Harrisberg, 2020). Some of the accounts provided by the participants pointed to a general practice of exclusion from political participation or any kind of substantive community engagement particularly because they were

women and thus were expected to care for the home and their families, that was the space dedicated to women.

Colonial and later apartheid law ensured the continued exclusion of women from land ownership, for instance, the “1913 Natives Land Act” in the colonial period and later the “Black Administration Law” legalised the exclusion of women from land access and ownership under their name (Kariseb & Muhumuza, 2018). The “Group Areas Act” of the apartheid-era resulted in many forced relocations of people and restricted women of different racial groups from access to land (Kariseb & Muhumuza, 2018). The law on succession or inheritance excluded women inheriting property and under customary law only male children could inherit property making it impossible for women to inherit property of a deceased relative or husband unless there was a will (Kariseb & Muhumuza, 2018). At present, this is of course no longer the case, however a substantial number of women still effectively remain excluded from property and land ownership (Kariseb & Muhumuza, 2018). Women are key environmental managers and consumers. Their vast knowledge about the land they use is key to sustainable development in rural areas. The provision of women with land rights through the land reform program. either individually or through a system of group formation. is seen to be a way of contributing towards women's empowerment, both socially and economically (Bob, 2000).

Property utilization:

Alongside inescapable poverty some of the prevailing issues in eZakheni are spatial, a lack of sufficient space to house growing families. A common sight in the township is back-rooms or shacks (zinc and wooden) in the yards of residents. For instance, one participant, Delisile Mathuba, has built a rondavel in her backyard as a space she rents out for extra money. She lives only with her daughter and grandson, so the four-room house is sufficient for them in terms of living space. This is not the case however for those families which have expanded beyond a certain number over the years. The changes that occurred in the lives of the respondents as a result of being forcibly removed were major and, as I discovered from their accounts, very difficult. The process of being forcibly removed from their homes without warning nor being provided adequate time to gather their belongings would undoubtedly make their stay in the relocation area much more difficult.

Ranging from the state of the four-room houses they’d been brought to stay in, to forming new relations within this community, which was different in terms of the actual environment, but also in the context of having new neighbours meant that their social lives had been completely

upended. Most of the participants spoke about how their family life or structure had changed drastically upon arriving in the township. The very structure of the houses they were put in resulted in scattered families and overcrowding due to the size of these houses. Moving from living in a spacious environment where a large family was able to stay together and sufficiently provide for themselves in one yard to a house with only two bedrooms and barely enough land nor fertile soil to grow a vegetable garden. Those large families could either separate (if they could) by living with other relatives or as in most cases, stay in these small houses cramped together, and unable to do anything about it. All the participants recalled the difficulty in adapting to their new environment as well as having to contend with a changing family structure as a result. From their accounts, one can point to a shared difficulty in terms of the spatial environment, but also in then creating a new life within this space.

Thenjiwe Mazibuko's account of their home in the relocation area notes the big difference in the space and lack of fertile planting land:

> In Roosboom our house consisted of a kitchen, pantry, two bedrooms and a dining room. We had a big yard with a garden where we planted more vegetables. The house in Roosboom was substantively bigger than the house we were moved into. I guess another big difference is the building material used for the houses, the house we moved into was built with bricks as opposed to the mud we used. But other than that, our previous home was much better, we didn't even have enough yard space to start a garden in the house here (Mazibuko, 2022).

The landscape of the townships in South Africa provides residents little to no flexibility for expanding their structural homes due to the spatial disposession. Families are cramped in small living arrangements with consequences for scattered (and sometimes resultant dysfunctional) families, and the transmission of inter-generational trauma. and the cycle continues for each generation because of racial, economic discrimination. Having several generations of people in one living space, with no potential for employment due to lack of education and therefore skills, is by design of the colonial and apartheid policies and which continue to endure these decades later.

Forced removals effects on families/households:

Sibongile Ndlovu was seventeen years old when she and her family were relocated to A section in Ezakheni, despite this young age, her recollection of the day they were lined up to be transported by trucks to a new area is harrowing. She too, felt a loss of community and home, saying:

> We didn't know our neighbours, all of us were scared and my mother cried a lot because my father was not there. Only my grandparents and they were too old to help her the way she needed. We didn't even get to take all our belongings and we saw my father 3 weeks later (Ndlovu, 2022).

Various authors have conceptualized the concept of a community in relation to forced removals, in a way that depicted its complex construct, while also relating the implications of disrupting the "people-place" relationship that had formed.

> Forced relocations had severe implications for people's sense of belonging to place and connectedness to people. It is therefore not surprising that community psychology in the South African context developed as a discipline in the 1960s and 1970s, in response to conditions of political oppression and the glaring racial disparities that came about as a consequence of apartheid (Yen, 2007, p. 45).

Marc Fried argues that forced removals are "the most serious forms of externally imposed psychological disruptions and discontinuities" (Fried, 2000). Communities are considered to be physical environments that characterize people's sense of familiarity, shared history and identities which they've developed in a collective and discursive mode (Devine-Wright, 2009). Many authors in the discipline of psychology have relayed the significance of communal physical settings, stating that these communities are significant because they provide a setting where people intermingle; "When this frame is changed through relocation, cognitions, affect and behavior may change as well" (Fairbrother P, 2013). Research has illustrated the ways in which people who were marginalized and disconnected between generations, regarded the significance of community in the later stages of their lives (Vera Roos, 2014).

Sibongile described the day of removal as one of the most traumatic events in her life:

> A white Toyota truck/lorry approached our house that day. We had already spotted them collecting people in "Good Hope' which was not far from our Roosboom. We were in despair, crying and asking "What have we done?". The trucks were in a convoy, when one stopped at our house another would stop at the neighbors and so on. The trucks were being escorted by the police in yellow vans, the police would signal which house to stop at. The police would approach the house first, they got off their vans with sjamboks, and if you resisted in any way you would be beaten with the sjambok. They didn't speak, they explained nothing about where we would be taken. If you dared to ask a question you would be beaten (Mazibuko, 2022).

Her recollection of events is eerily similar to that of Roosboom community leader Elliot Mngadi, who is quoted in the works of Platzky and Walker, describing the similar experiences of many Roosboom residents. Sibongile continued:

> What was worse is that following the police vans and moving trucks were bulldozers. They would demolish the house once we were all packed into the truck. We were thrown into the trucks with our belongings. They didn't care that our things were breaking, as they were made of glass or clay, they just threw stuff into the back of the truck. For each police van, they allocated three trucks so once three houses had been packed up the police van would escort those three trucks out of the area (Mazibuko, 2022).

Elzette Steenkamp writes that the identifying relationship between self and place in South Africa is distraught as a consequence of the history of disposession by colonial forces and later the apartheid government. Processes of segregation, forced removals and disputes over land separated the person from the environment which they inhabited (Steenkamp, 2011). The concept of belonging did not only apply to shared cultural or national identities, but also to the natural environment. People did not only mourn the loss of communal bonds as a result of forced removals but also the loss of the connection they had established in their shared environment. The experience of forced removals and resettlement does not just begin and end with the violent dislocation of people from their homes, but it disrupts the formation of one's identity as well, proving to be an inter-generational process (Steenkamp, 2011). Approaching the subject of land as more than an asset or mere property, and the loss of land as more than just losing an asset, is a central theme in this study. Various works in the field of history and politics have sought to draw a link between forcibly removing people from their homes and the loss of history, family, and identity.

Sibongile Ndlovu relayed her experience of the loss of "Ubuntu" and social cohesion in the relocation township:

> I don't blame anyone because it was hard for everyone how can you help someone when you don't have anything? It's like we forgot we are all suffering and only saw our suffering. It wasn't like that before, we were united, but now it's everyone for themselves (Ndlovu, 2022).

The historical context of male authority over land, traditional patriarchal norms, together with the torn social fabric of communities and families, work to erode the agency of women left behind to care for their families and to reconfigure their social relations in relocation areas.

Chapter Three: Economic Agency and Gender

The operation of apartheid was predicated on separation (as the word 'apartheid' itself reflects), and the subsequent unequal distribution of societal resources. Separation operated at multiple levels: the separation of ethnic or racial groups, the separation that was intended within families, and the separation of communities from the sources of sustenance and identity. Without this separation, apartheid would not have succeeded for as long as it did (and indeed still does) in oppressing entire groups of peoples. Meghan Healy (2017) described apartheid as a "gendered project" due its vision and execution of separating African men from their families, ultimately leaving African women to sustain their families and reconstitute cohesive communities. This chapter focuses on the strategies afforded by the women left behind in the 'homelands' while men went to work in the urban areas. How did women manage their families prior to being forcibly removed and how did they continue to do so in the harsh circumstances in their relocation areas? The chapter will discuss the unwaged economic and reproductive labour of women, the ways they were able to care for their families using land, until they no longer could in the spatially constricted conditions of the relocation areas. Additionally, I will discuss the impact of no longer being able to rely on the land to provide. As described in detail in the previous chapters, the respondents of this study were young adults who had just married, or who were still unmarried but had begun working, while others were teenagers during the period of removal from their homes.

Women under apartheid:

During the apartheid era in South Africa, African men would travel from their dormitory townships to work for white employers in cities and on mines, while their family homes would be in rural ethnic "reserves" called "homelands" or "Bantustans". This system relied heavily on the labour of African women, who were expected to maintain their families in the increasingly overcrowded rural areas while their male counterparts migrated for work. Women were responsible for reproducing the workforce inexpensively, all while instilling a sense of ethnic difference in their children. Similarly, "Coloured" (mixed-race) and Indian women were charged with social reproduction in segregated rural and urban areas. Although white women had the right to vote and the freedom of movement, they were still constrained by sexually oppressive laws (Healy, 2017). Faced with continual resistance, apartheid's gendered vision of production and social reproduction met its ultimate failure. This failure can be attributed to black women's refusal to be confined as they continued to move into urban areas despite the laws intended to limit their mobility. Another reason is because some women organized across

ethnic and racial lines, and their campaigns against the multitude of oppressive apartheid policies slowly undermined apartheid (Healy, 2017). Women's contributions in the struggle against apartheid have often been ignored or underestimated. Healy (2017, p. 6) argues that this is because "women's political style emphasized personal and familial concerns" but considering that apartheid was prefaced on changing how black families lived, the actions of women were always going to undermine the apartheid system from its core.

The presence of black women in the cities was viewed by government officials as a threat to 'geographical separation' as it would lead to a stable black urban population which may later demand permanent residence in a white cities and towns in defiance of apartheid spatial planning. (Landis, 1975). In the reserves, black women faced the same disabilities as those in the cities but particularly the denial of land rights and local job opportunities (Landis, 1975). Government policy on land in the homelands was that one who was not a citizen of that homeland could not lay claim to land. However, even when an African was a citizen (of a supposedly independent Bantustan), they were still unlikely to own land. Considering the issue of scarcity of land in the reserves, land allotment was a troublesome issue that the authorities managed by refusing to allocate land to women (Landis, 1975). In the case of the death of a landowning male, his widow, by law, was entitled to continue to occupy that land so long as she did not remarry or leave the homestead. If the widow were to leave the homestead in order to find work elsewhere, she would then forfeit the rights to the land and the family homestead – a significant economic and social asset (Landis, 1975).

In the reserves, whilst women were not permitted to look for jobs in the cities, they were also restricted in their search for the few existing local jobs in the reserve. Most jobs were reserved for men either by custom, employer, or other job-related requirements (Landis, 1975). Landis also notes that African women were typically less mobile than their male counterparts, especially widows, who dared not leave the house to be in proximity to employment or else they would lose the right to farm on family land. African women were mostly hired for the lowest paying jobs in the adjoining white area to the reserve or were paid less than men for the same job. In many cases the costs of commuting exceeded the wages earned, so that taking up the employment was futile (Landis, 1975). As a consequence, those women who were able to find employment in the reserves worked either as domestic servants or labourers on white-owned farms and these are considered to be "the worst paid jobs" available to black people (Landis, 1975, p. 3). Only a handful of black teachers and nurses were able to escape the 'occupational mould' for rural black women and even then, were paid less than their

counterparts for the same job in the cities. Thenjiwe Mazibuko who is the only respondent of this study who had managed to work outside of the home reportedly earned R37 per month as a teacher at a primary school in another reserve in 1976:

> It wasn't a lot of money at all. My father was also a teacher, but he was teaching in another town and earned R11 more than I did. It still wasn't enough to make ends meet and nobody except myself and my father worked so we always tried to stretch the money. Things got worse when they moved us of course (Mazibuko, 2022).

Landis described the housewife as "the typical fortunate woman in the reserves" (Landis, 1975, p. 3), who lives out her life in the reserves caring for her children and possibly other dependants while her husband works in the city. She is surrounded by a community of mainly women, children and the aged who are no longer useful in the cities, all of them lumped together to fend for themselves with the crops from the family plot. The "less fortunate woman in the reserves" Landis reports to be one: "resettled there when her family – owners of a small farm in a black spot or labour tenants or squatters on a white farm – was evicted and forced to go to an already overcrowded reserve" (Landis, 1975, p. 3). Those women who have been resettled are often not eligible for farming or grazing land in the new area or if their head of the family is lucky, they may be able to rent one small plot. Ultimately the fate of these women is defined by their gender or by being in relation to males who are also disenfranchised. The lack of local job opportunities in the reserves and the consequent poverty led to many deaths and malnutrition in reserves across the country where women and children suffered the most (Landis, 1975).

In the urban areas residence was mainly determined by two laws: the "Bantu Labour Act" and the "Urban Areas Act" (Landis, 1975, p. 4) accompanied by the many of regulations issued under them. Under Section 10(i) of the Urban Areas Act, Africans were not allowed to remain in urban areas for more than 72 hours unless they possessed a permit. Additionally, only three categories of Africans were allowed to stay in urban areas without a permit:

> (a) any African who has resided in the area continuously since birth;
> (b) any African who has worked continuously in the area for one employer for at least 10 years or who has lived continuously in the area for at least 15 years, continues to live there, and is not employed outside the area, and who has not at any time since the commencement of the period been convicted of a crime (minor offences excepted);
> (c) the wife, unmarried daughter or son under 18 of any African qualifying under (a) or (b) if she or he entered the area lawfully and ordinarily resides with the qualified African (Landis, 1975, p. 4).

This law played a significant role in the forced relocation of numerous black individuals from cities to rural areas, which resulted in devastating consequences for families and communities. Moreover, the rigorous enforcement of the above specified section made it significantly harder

for black women to stay in urban areas compared to men (Landis, 1975). For almost a decade, women were not allowed to enter urban areas legally since permits were not issued to them. Even those who had been living in the area for years were forcibly removed upon discovery. Moreover, the number of women and children who had been residing in urban areas without leaving for schooling or work was limited due to the lack of work opportunities and housing for women compared to men. This was according to Landis in 1975. The most obvious effects of this section were to prevent African women from changing jobs or protesting their low wages including looking for better housing outside of their initial residence. Furthermore, the section, along with other government policy in the urban areas limited marrying across "national" lines or location borders (Landis, 1975). Black women in urban areas also had to ensure that when out of work they didn't partake in any activity (participating in strikes or other movements) that would allow one to fall under the definition of "idle Bantu" in section 29 of the Urban Areas Act or else they would be removed from the area (Landis, 1975).

When I inquired about her involvement, if any, in social movements at the time, Thenjiwe Mazibuko who worked as a teacher in the 1970s said:

> Oh no, that was not allowed! It was a risk; you didn't want to lose your job if found to be part of anything like that. Some of my relatives and neighbours were always striking or something similar, you went to jail for doing that! (Mazibuko, 2022)

Respondent Bonisile Mchunu had been mostly a housewife but managed to work as a domestic worker upon her family's removal from Hobsland. She participated in the Ezakheni bus strike of 1979in response to an intended increase in bus fares (Brown, 1979, p. 12). The residents of Ezakheni refused to accept the proposed increase and declared that they would prefer to walk. The boycott of the buses was successful in preventing the fare increase.

> We refused that increase, I attended all the meetings that were held prior to the boycott and there were lots of women, there were men as well but many of us were women and we just couldn't afford the increase. We walked from Ezakheni to town, can you imagine? All of us walked, your mother was there too, we went on strike as a community. The police were patrolling, some of us got hurt but we didn't back down until they agreed to not increase the fares (Mchunu, 2022).

This respondent is one of many women who worked as domestic servants in white households or white farms. Many of them of them travelled to work if they didn't qualify to reside in the home of their employer. Many of us had parents or grandparents who worked as domestics and stretched their small earnings to sustain families. The difficulty of lawfully staying in an urban area as a black woman was only the first of many hurdles relating to job procurement in urban areas. Prospective employers could not legally hire an African woman unless she was in

possession of a permit from the municipal or district labour officer who could, for various reasons refuse to issue her that permit, making the task of staying in an urban area almost impossible. Some of the reasons for not issuing the permit range from “not having any of the innumerable other permits” to “likelihood that employment will threaten the State or public safety (a provision applicable to “agitators”, strikers and the like)” including lack of appropriate housing for the employee (Landis, 1975, p. 5).

Those Africans who have been refused a working permit for whatever reason could be referred by the labour officer to other work, sometimes in the same area but often at white farms if it was harvest season, or they may be removed from the area along with their dependants (Landis, 1975). Interestingly, the Chief Bantu Commissioner is required to confirm the removal of Africans who otherwise qualify to remain in the urban area under section 10(I) (a) or (b) which would be mostly men but not those who would qualify under paragraph (c) – mostly women (Landis, 1975). This is to say that the apartheid State ensured through public policy that African women had no alternative for assistance should they be at risk of removal from an area.. It's important to note that in addition to the various regulations that Africans were expected to follow if they wanted to live and work in urban areas, a labour officer could go beyond simply refusing to issue a permit. They could also prohibit the applicant from continuing to work in their current job and cancel their employment. This action would begin the process of forcing the African back into the reserves. As a result, this threat hung over any African who may have considered protesting against unfair working conditions, wages, or participating in any political activity (Landis, 1975).

Housing impediments for African women and their dependants:

According to Landis' (1975) observations, African women faced unique challenges due to the persistent shortage of housing in urban areas. The lack of adequate housing had serious consequences, such as the denial of work permits to those who didn't possess proper accommodation. This meant that African women were always at risk of homelessness if they left an area, they couldn't legally re-enter. Additionally, the administration had built hostels for African men but didn't extend the same facility to African women. This policy created further difficulties for black women who struggled to find affordable and safe accommodation. A black woman faced arrest if found to be cohabitating with her husband in the domestic workers’ quarters or even if found in his men-only hostel. (Landis, 1975). Thus, black women were positioned in apartheid society in a role where they have to fight for employment, housing, fair wages, and still be expected to fulfil their role as caregivers to their families.

From 1968, women were prohibited from being registered tenants in the townships serving white urban areas, meaning that if a woman who has been legally living with her husband in the township becomes widowed or divorced, she would be evicted along with her dependants (Landis, 1975). If she's been living in the area by virtue of section 10(i)(c), she would be expelled along with her children to the reserves or a "resettlement centre" (Landis, 1975, p. 5) If the woman is widowed or divorced but still meets the qualifications to live in the township, she would be given a "lodgers permit". However, this would still result in her being separated from her children, who would subsequently lose their right to ever live in the urban area again (Landis, 1975). Ultimately, the death of a husband, his evection or the breakup of a marriage holds far worse consequences for the wife: "An unhappily married woman may be forced to suffer her husband's conduct in silence, lest he desert or divorce her, with all the consequences that might have for herself and her children" (Landis, 1975, p. 6). Ntombifuthi Shongwe explained how much worse her life became after her divorce from her husband:

> When I was still with my husband, at least he brought money into the home. Now I am here with no work and it's hard. I wish all the time that maybe I should have stayed with him, but I couldn't have children and that made him violent. There were no jobs for people like me who didn't go to school, I just made things worse for myself (Shongwe, 2022).

Rather than just considering the history of women's struggles, theories of intersectionality require us to recognize the interconnectedness of people's experiences, especially those of black women. Intersectionality is the interconnectedness of social characteristics like race, gender, class, and sexual orientation. It is a tool to understand systemic injustices and social inequalities that occur on multiple levels (Segalo, 2015). Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) has argued that intersectionality conveys how black women in particular continue to exist at the crossroads of oppression. Her assertion is supported by the vast literature pertaining to women's struggles, both during apartheid and in post-apartheid South Africa. This is further evidenced by the testimonies provided by the respondents of this study who have experienced discrimination and injustice on several fronts in their lives. For Thenjiwe Mazibuko this statement rings true as at the time she was a black woman working as a teacher and earned much less than white teachers and black male teachers, she said:

> I was earning less than the black men who taught at my school, all of us black women were paid less than everyone else. What's more is that, although I put up half the money to buy our house with my dad, I had no share in it as I was not allowed to own a house as a woman (Mazibuko, 2022).

The interconnectedness of oppressions is also evidenced in Bonisile's testimony in which she claimed:

> Although I was already living in my husband's homestead when we were forcibly removed, I was not included as a beneficiary when they logged a land claim post-removal. Although I was his wife and had lived with his family for many years, they only included our children when filing a claim so I could not receive any money when they were paid out (Mchunu, 2022).

Employment impediments:

Employment or other economic opportunities for black women were extremely limited during apartheid but were nevertheless far better in the cities than in rural areas. Statistics in the 60s showed that although 27% of all black women lived in town, they made up 47% of all African women who did paid work, meaning that "one out of three women in the urban areas was gainfully employed" (Landis, 1975, p. 6). As mentioned before, African women's employment opportunities were limited to jobs that nobody else wanted and ones that paid far less in general. Even in the case where black men and black women held similar jobs, an apparent discrimination in pay and working conditions still existed (Landis, 1975).

A survey conducted in the 1970s showed that there were no black woman lawyers, judges, magistrates or engineers amongst other professional degreed jobs, although the survey showed a few black woman doctors (Landis, 1975). Black women were relegated to menial work, mostly work associated with the household economy where black women were in domestic service, childcare and food production (Landis, 1975). It is well established that Africans had a much lower income than their white counterparts during apartheid, and one may even argue that continues to be the case today. A survey showed that 70% of all Africans in urban areas received an income that was below the poverty line, an amount that would not be able to sustain a normal family (Landis, 1975). Families in urban areas were struggling to remain together in these economic conditions, while families in the countryside and the townships were struggling to survive with the limited economic resources they had.

The respondents of this study have all shared their hardships of being removed from their homes and the difficulty of starting anew in their respective relocation areas. Sibongile's family had been living in Umbulwane since long before she was born. She grew up and went to school there until her family was removed and placed in Ezakheni. Being the oldest of her siblings and a woman, under customary law, she would not be eligible to inherit her family's property in Umbulwane. Today she still lives in the house they were placed in at Ezakheni with her children and grandchildren. One of the questions of this study is how the women removed to relocation areas like Ezakheni managed to reconfigure the social fabric that was disrupted by the removal. Her testimony above speaks to the difficulty of reconfiguring their lives, their

livelihoods, and the hardship of not have the freedom to participate in the economy to sustain themselves:

> I didn't know if I was happy or sad in the beginning because my friends were there, but the adults were stressed, and we didn't understand why at the time. I think I thought maybe one day we would return to our home, but as the years went by, I even got married. It was difficult because we couldn't help each other, everyone was poor, we stopped sharing like before. Before we would share whatever vegetables we had planted in our gardens. [But in Ezakheni] There were no gardens anymore and my mother had to find work. I stopped going to school so I could also find work, but it was fine because the school was far anyway. Nobody could help anyone the way we used to (Ndlovu, 2022).

Ntombifuthi Shongwe is one of two respondents in this study whose family was removed from Utrecht to Osizweni township. Today she lives in the worst section of the township which, as noted earlier, is known as "Alex' because of the exceptionally poor conditions. She described the difficulties they faced when they arrived in Osizweni:

> We didn't have much back home, but it was so much worse in Osizweni, there were no shops nearby and even if there were shops there was no money. My father was away working so he wasn't even there when they took us, and he only came back at the end of the month (Shongwe, 2022).

Thenjiwe Mazibuko, whose family was removed from Roosboom, observed that previously they had been using communal fields to plant crops that each household would be able to harvest from. This was now impossible in the township because the land just wasn't available. This fact contributed immensely to the poverty that families experienced in relocation areas. Thenjiwe had this to say:

> We missed being able to grow our food, we mostly used the fields to grow vegetables that would sustain the family and I would buy some groceries here and there at the end of every month to send home. My father took care of the fees for my siblings who were still in college (Mazibuko, 2022).

It is important to acknowledge the common pattern of discrimination against African women in both waged and non-waged work conditions. Unfortunately, this problem was not limited to a specific area or region, and it became even worse when African women were taken away from their homes. In fact, Landis (1975) provided an example of how African women prisoners were paid the lowest possible amount for various tasks they had to perform while incarcerated. These payments were often referred to as "gratuities". Another example of discrimination against black women was the provision which by law terminated the employment of African women in public service and black colleges in the event of their marriage, while the same provision wasn't applied to male employees (Landis, 1975).

Noted sociologist, Professor Simon Burton summed up the predicament of black women under apartheid:

> Women carry a double burden of disabilities. They are discriminated against on the grounds of both sex and race. The two kinds of discrimination interact and reinforce each other. Colour bars retard the process of female emancipation by impeding the progress of the whole race … Equality can become a reality … only when both men and women have become full citizens in a free society (Burton, 1975, p. 6).

There is much work left to be done in our post-apartheid society in ensuring that women have access to their rights as full citizens of this country and especially as economic actors. Although the situation has improved in the post-apartheid era, the progress that has been made, and recommendations for the future, will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Four: Land Restitution, Rights, and Agency After Apartheid

The previous chapters have provided the historical background of South Africa which engineered the subjugation and dispossession of black people in the country. This chapter will focus on the policy of land reform and restitution in post-apartheid South Africa. I will discuss the impact of the policy, its shortcomings, and the need for a gender-sensitive land policy in tackling the inequalities of past dispossession and removals. For the purpose of this study, this chapter will focus mainly on the policy of Land Restitution as that is the remedy that the respondents in this study were seeking. The apartheid regime had always experienced resistance to their policies, but this was intensified in the 1970s and 1980s and the apartheid government responded with violence, arrests and even unlawful strategies in an attempt to repress the resistance, almost leading to a civil war in the 1980s (Du Plessis, 2004). Following the 1990 unbanning of the resistance organisations, the release of Nelson Mandela and other leaders, multi-party negotiations began, resulting in the "transitional" or interim Constitution[1], the first "free" or democratic elections in April of 1994, and a new Constitution[2] in 1996 (Du Plessis, 2004).

Land Reform in democratic South Africa:

The need for land reform was widely recognized at the onset of our democratic transition, and for good reason – there had to be remedies for the dispossessions and injustices of the past. The African National Congress (ANC) pledged to redistribute 30% of all cultivatable land within

[1] RSA Government, *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of* 1993 (Assented to 25 January 1994. Date of Commencement: 27 April 1994).
[2] RSA Government, *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996* (As adopted by the Constitutional Assembly on 8 May 1996, and as Amended on 11 October 1996).

the first five years of its governance. However, the target to achieve this was later changed to 2015 (Du Plessis, 2004). The three main instruments of the land reform programme were: land redistribution, land tenure reform and restitution (Du Plessis, 2004). In 1994, the interim Constitution of South Africa mandated the creation of an Act of Parliament to establish a process for restoring land rights. Later that same year, the *Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994* was passed, representing a significant moment in the country's history (Du Plessis, 2004). The commitment to reform on the ANC's part came to include also three additional considerations besides addressing the injustices of the past: "reconciliation, stability to underpin economic growth, and improvement of household welfare" (Mhago & Samson, 1998, p. 3). At the time, the authors also pointed out the contradiction of the commitment to land reform while also upholding the right to private property which is entrenched in our Constitution, and which includes the agreement to only expropriate land when "necessary" (but without stipulating the criteria for 'necessity'). Commentators at the time noted that the commitments read as contradictory at best and, impossible at worst (Mhago & Samson, 1998).

Restitution, Redistribution and, Tenure Reform:

According to official government policy, the purpose of the restitution programme is to: "Restore land and to provide other restitutionary remedies to people dispossessed by racially discriminatory legislation and practice, in such a way as to provide support to the vital process of reconciliation, reconstruction and development" (White Paper on South African Land Policy, 1997). In the beginning, the restitution programme had two specific limitations. Firstly, people who were dispossessed before 1913 were not considered eligible for restitution. Secondly, the policy was time-bound, which meant that land and restitution claims could be lodged only between 1995 and 1998 (Mhago & Samson, 1998). In 2014, the time frame for lodging claims was extended to 2019 although dispossession suffered before 1913 remained excluded (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014). According to Du Plessis (2004), the 1913 time-limit received widespread criticism because of its implications for those who were displaced before 1913. As a result, the redistribution program and tenure reform were partly intended to compensate for this gap.

Interestingly, from as early as 1998, the restitution programme was already receiving criticisms for its implementation process. Mhago & Samson (1998) reported that the restitution programme was slow-paced – many claims had been lodged while few had been processed and officials in the Department of Land Affairs were encouraging groups to drop restitution claims and opt for redistribution which many desperate people did. An important distinction between

the two measures included that under the restitution policy, claimants did not have to pay for land they were allocated, while in contrast, they would have to use pay-outs to buy land under the redistribution programme: "The result is that they must pay for the land because under the redistribution programme, the objective is to give poor people access to land" (Mhago & Samson, 1998). Jean Du Plessis outlined the requirements for a claimant to qualify for restitution as: "a). Should have been dispossessed, b). of a right, c). after 19 June 1913, d). as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices" (Du Plessis, 2004, p. 4). Additionally, a claimant must not have received just compensation in terms of the Expropriation Act (1975) and must have lodged the claim between May of 1995 and December 1998, initially giving applicants just three years to file their claims (Du Plessis, 2004). In cases where it is not possible to restore the lost land (e.g. because it is already legitimately owned by others), an alternative "equitable redress" is put in place. The responsibility of providing alternative land, paying compensation, giving priority to development assistance, or a combination of the above, lay with the State (Du Plessis, 2004). The role of the State is such that all restitution claims are against the State, not individuals or other entities. The State is responsible for funding the entire process, implementing it and acting as a respondent should claims be taken to court (Du Plessis, 2004). Furthermore, current owners of land being claimed are eligible for "just and equitable" payment should the land in fact be granted to a claimant (Du Plessis, 2004). Three institutions were established to handle the restitution process as prescribed by the interim Constitution: The *Commission on Restitution of Land Rights*, the *Land Claims Court* and, the *Department of Land Affairs* (Du Plessis, 2004). By the time the first deadline for restitution claims had passed in 1998, more than 63 000 claims had been lodged (the number has risen since the extension of the deadline). Many of the claims are in urban areas and made by individuals or single families, but a significant number of them are also in rural areas and are group claims representing thousands of families (Du Plessis, 2004). Du Plessis (2014) noted that although the progress was slow in the beginning, the restitution process delivered some positive results: five years into the process only 50 claims had been resolved but by 2003 it was reported that 36 488 claims were resolved.[3]

In 2014 the *Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights* released a "Citizens Manual" detailing the background and processes for the restitution policy since the deadline for

[3] Thoko Didiza, Minister of Land Affairs, during her budget vote in Parliament, April 2003, as reported in IRIN, *South Africa: Long Road to Empowerment under Land Reform* (available at www.irinnews.org/webspecials/landreformsa/South-Africa.asp).

restitution claims had been extended from 1998 to 2014. According to the Citizens Manuel, roughly 8 471 land claims that were lodged before the 1998 deadline had not been resolved or were only partly settled by 2014, hence the extension (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014). The unresolved claims would be processed alongside the new claims, but payment priority would be given to claims lodged before the 1998 cut-off date (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014). As of 2014, the total expenditure for the land restitution policy was reported to be R24,4 billion, inclusive of R7,963 billion paid as financial compensation and, R1,458 billion awarded as grants to those beneficiaries who opted for land restoration (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014). According to Nomfundo Gobodo, the Chief Land Claims Commissioner at the time, "If claimants who opted for financial compensation had chosen land restoration, an additional 1,99 million hectares of land would have been restored" (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014).

The citizen's manual defines a land claim as:

> A written request made by a person, a direct descendent of a person, an estate or a community for the return of land, rights in land or other equitable redress that has been lodged with the Commission of Land Rights in the prescribed manner (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014, p. 3).

A land claim may only be lodged once by an individual or community who was dispossessed of a right to land without fair compensation after 19 June 1913 (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014). The manual also outlines five categories of claimants: an individual stripped of their land right, a direct descendant (wife or children) of the person with the land right, a company or a trust, an executor of an estate in the case of a deceased person, and finally, a chosen representative of a community (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014, p. 4). There are fourteen lodgement offices altogether, one in each of our nine provinces. In KwaZulu Natal claims can be lodged in the offices in Pietermaritzburg and Vryheid (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014). Depending on the category under which a claimant falls, there are certain essential documents that they must provide when submitting a claim. These documents include a certified copy of the claimant's identity book or Smart ID card. If the claimant is submitting the claim on behalf of their family or community, they must provide a letter signed by two witnesses granting them power of attorney. In case the claimant is the executor of an estate, they need to provide a letter from the Master of the High Court to confirm their position. If the claimant is submitting the claim on behalf of a community, they

must produce a written decision from a community meeting that has been signed by the facilitator, along with other necessary information (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014). The required information for lodging a claim is listed as such:

- The description of the property, e.g. farm name and number or erf or stand number in an urban area,
- Information about the department or state organ that acquired the land, e.g. Department of Native Affairs,
- The year of dispossession,
- What compensation was paid out at the time,
- Particulars of the person who lost the right,
- Particulars of the claimant and the capacity in which you are acting, e.g. community representative, son, executor of an estate etc,
- History of land dispossession.[4]

As previously mentioned, the deadline for submitting land claims was extended to 30 June 2019, and claims were to be lodged physically at the designated lodgement offices (Commission on Restitution of Land Rights, 2014).

The redistribution programme was intended as the main mechanism for people to (re)gain access to land. Eligible individuals (married adults or ones with dependants) could apply for a once-off R15 000 grant to purchase land (Mhago & Samson, 1998). Moreover, if married, the household should have a joint income of less than R1 500 in order to qualify (Mhago & Samson, 1998). A few concerns were raised regarding the program, including who qualifies as an eligible individual and the fact that the purchase would be based on "market price". As such, the current amount of R15,000 would be insufficient to fund appropriate housing (Mhago & Samson, 1998). The most complex of the programmes, tenure reform, meant to provide equal renting rights to all citizens and accompanied by a specific commitment to gender equity (Mhago & Samson, 1998). Due to the dual system of governance created by the establishment of homelands, coupled with the post-1994 government referring to former homelands as communal land, it became necessary to establish a system that would secure ownership, access, occupation and use of the land for residents in former homelands (Weinberg, 2015). The legislation was criticized in terms of what constitutes tenure security for women. Mhago &

[4] As outlined in the Citizens Manual, *Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights,* 2014, at 6.

Samson (1998) noted that the legislation provided women access to land only if they are staying with their partners or children and not independently so as to foster physical, social and psychological security.

Criticisms and Challenges:

As previously mentioned, the broad land reform policy was widely critiqued, but also each programme under the policy received specific criticisms. It is fair to say that implementing restitution in the country would be a difficult undertaking; it was after all an attempt to redress decades of dispossession and forced removals of peoples. One of the challenges in the restitution process is the need for a significant amount of documented information to properly evaluate a claim and reach a fair resolution. This involves a resource-intensive process of collecting and assessing evidence for events that happened a long time ago, often involving large groups of people and multiple parcels of land (Du Plessis, 2004). For instance, some of the required information includes: the nature of the dispossession, in which period was a claimant dispossessed, if they ever received compensation and how much was it, including assessing where the land being claimed is and whether restoration is possible (Du Plessis, 2004). Furthermore, since private property is protected by the Constitution, current owners of the land being claimed are able to dispute the claim or would they be willing to voluntarily sell the land (Du Plessis, 2004). Additionally, there are financial concerns that arise while processing a claim. These concerns include determining the total value of the claim and deciding whether any previous compensation should be factored into the claim processing process (Du Plessis, 2004). Typically, claimants don't have all the essential information required for their claims to be processed, and in some cases, the records are either inaccurate or non-existent (Du Plessis, 2004). Occasionally, two or more claimants claim ownership of the same land, which results in questioning the validity of all the evidence received and makes the verification process even more strenuous and prolonged.

The restitution process was complicated by the involvement of multiple institutions. During the initial years, there was a lot of duplication and guesswork involved due to the fact that the Commission, Land Claims Court, and the Department of Land Affairs had their own distinct sets of rules and procedures for handling a claim (Du Plessis, 2004). While it would have been a good idea to establish an independent commission to handle investigating and resolving claims, it would have needed to have autonomy, judicial and financial powers, along with adequate resources. Unfortunately, the commission that was established only had investigative powers and limited resources, which meant that it could only make recommendations to the

Land Claims Court and the Minister (Du Plessis, 2004). When cases were referred to the Court, it utilized a more stringent mechanism in reviewing evidence, resulting in a "legalistic more than a developmental approach" (Du Plessis, 2004, p. 8). As the Commission lacked financial authority, it relied on the Department of Land Affairs. However, this institution represented the State in cases referred to the court, leading to distrust and disputes among the institutions (Du Plessis, 2004). The type of claims that were made for restitution posed a problem in the process. Most of the claims that were resolved were from individuals living in urban areas, and they were settled through financial compensation. Some non-governmental organizations have criticized this trend of only providing compensation as a solution. They argue that it's an easy way out for the government instead of returning the land to the rightful claimants, and it doesn't help to change the racial patterns of land ownership (Du Plessis, 2004):

> As of the end of 2001, less than 2% of the land has changed hands from white to black through the land reform programme … While monetary compensation is a form of redress, it is not land reform because it does not involve the transfer of land rights. The urban bias of restitution delivery also means this programme has so far done little to transform rural property relations, with most rural restitution claims still outstanding (Thwala, 2004, p. 9).

While above assessment is undoubtedly valid, it is however also true that many claimants prefer redress in the form of financial compensation, especially in cases where the next generations have made a life for themselves in their resettlement areas and do not wish to relocate. All the participants of this study clearly stated that they have no wish to return to their former homes and instead would like payment because they've been in their new homes for many years and the prospect of uprooting holds only more problems for them. In rural land claims, claimants often prioritize reinstatement of their original land, which can pose challenges for support and development needs (Du Plessis, 2004). For instance, some of the contested land is in remote areas making it difficult and expensive to service, while others are in the middle of highly developed commercial farmland (Du Plessis, 2004). One of the legal challenges to the restitution process is that claimants can only acquire land on a "willing seller" basis from current owners or have their matter referred to court which increases costs and slows down the restitution process (Du Plessis, 2004). Rural claims also generally constitute more claimants and larger areas of land which poses more complex development issues that require a wider range of competencies and input (Du Plessis, 2004).

Participants experience and understanding of the land reform policy:

The respondents of this study all have in common the forced removal from their homes. Two out of six of the respondents have lodged a land claim through a community representative or

as a representative of their family and received financial compensation. Two of the remaining four respondents have lodged claims and are waiting for their claims to be processed. The two participants who have not lodged a claim have not done so for a few reasons. Ntombifuthi Shongwe and Thuli Khanyile lived in Utrecht before their removal to Osizweni township in Newcastle and neither has lodged a land claim based on the process provided by the citizen's manual. They no longer can as the 2019 deadline has passed. Both respondents reported not having hope of receiving financial compensation anyway, since they felt many years had passed, and they didn't think the government would ever compensate them. But they also had no idea how to lodge a claim or what a land claim entailed. Overall, the individuals surveyed lacked a working knowledge of the land reform policy and the Restitution Act. Although they recognized that the removals were unjust and caused them harm, they were not fully informed about the processes available to address their grievances.

Bonisile Mchunu who was removed from Hobsland, a farm area, is adamant that even today she can still point out the exact location of her homestead. Bonisile lodged a land claim with the help of a community representative. Interestingly though, she as the wife of the man removed was not considered as part of the beneficiaries. The requirements for a land claim clearly state that a spouse is eligible to claim. While she and her sister-in-law did not receive any compensation, their children did:

> Yes, we fought for that, there was even a lawyer involved. My sister-in-law and I could not claim though, since we only married into the family, we had no claim like the sons and daughters of the home (Mchunu, 2022).

Bonisile's claim ended up in court because the current owners of the farm area from which they were removed contested the claim and were not willing to sell or move. She went on to say:

> When the money came it was already divided and allocated to the rightful recipients, and you know they kept all our information, all stored in Pietermaritzburg and they would ask you where is so and so, so they know who we are and if they wanted to find us pay us properly for taking our homes. Each person received R321 000,00 It is true, I know the young woman who works for the committee, and they helped us apply (Mchunu, 2022).

Under the regulations, she herself was not eligible for compensation, but her children were, and they duly received the money. When asked how she had personally experienced the system, she responded as follows:

> What can I do now? I am old and I just want my children to be okay. I cannot fix what happened, it will always be so painful, it was my home. My children won't understand, they grew up in this township, and they will never know what I lost when we lost our home. At least they are giving us something, back then we were just sent away, I never imagined we would be paid anything, it's better than nothing (Mchunu, 2022).

Bonisile's testimony is, I'm sure, not uncommon when it comes to matters of past dispossession, she knows and understands quite well that the removal from her home was unjust and like many claimants, she did not seem well informed about the processes of restitution. What is clear is that "they will never know what I lost when we lost our home", and that the material dispossession (and the material restitution) is unlikely to address the profound psycho-social trauma occasioned by the forced removals, and the subsequent consequences for individual psyches, family life and the inter-generational transmission of trauma.

Thuli Khanyile and Ntombifuthi Shongwe were neither interested in finding out about restitution nor did they believe they would ever be compensated. Both respondents expressed that even if given the option to return to their homes, they see no point in doing so as they don't live in that district anymore. Both participants are originally from Utrecht, from where they were removed and placed in Osizweni, and since then they have married and had children. Ntombifuthi is divorced, without children and her parents passed on many years ago. When asked if she had ever lodged a land claim, her response was:

> I didn't even know what that was until other neighbours were talking about it. I still don't understand exactly what they mean, I have not been back to Osizweni in many years. When my parents died there was nobody left behind and I was already married. Sometimes I think I should have gone back there to ask community members if they were ever paid but it's been so long, I really could use the money but I'm sure I would die before getting paid (Shongwe, 2022).

Ntombifuthi displayed a lack of knowledge and trust in the restitution process. The fact that she had moved away from the relocation area years ago also created a mental disconnect between the life she has been living in Ezakheni and the events of the removals. In her case, because she doesn't have children and is divorced, she would not be eligible even as her husband's beneficiary as he was also forcibly removed. With no form of income, Ntombifuthi lives a pained life, one of immense poverty in the worst area of Ezakheni township.

Thuli Khanyile, also originally from Utrecht, later forcibly removed to Osizweni, now married and living in Ezakheni, displayed more anger than the other participants. Thuli expressed that

she was aware that people in her old neighbouring township were compensated but nobody she knows of in Osizweni. She angrily expressed that no money could make up for what she and her family experienced, particularly the difficult life they lived in the relocation area:

> Today a cow costs so much! We had to sell our cows when they were removing us, R10 could buy you a cow, that's a bargain! Will they pay us back for those cows as well? We suffered so much, so much was taken from us. They can't give us our land back but for me, even half a million rands is not enough. We are owed more! (Khanyile, 2022).

Thuli has not lodged a land claim, and she was unaware of what the process entailed. In fact, she and other members of the community were told they would have to pay money in order to lodge a claim:

> Even now they hold meetings, they said each house should contribute R100 so we can pursue a case but that also just ended up in thin air. Others didn't have to pay money for anything so why must we pay? How can we pay money even though we are the ones who were wronged? I won't pay anything; they can keep their money. It's not like they were going to pay us anyway (Khanyile, 2022).

The lack of understanding of the restitution process further deters eligible claimants like Thuli and Ntombifuthi from lodging a claim. The two participants who are still waiting for their claims to be processed are originally from Umbulwane. Delisile Mathebula is the youngest participant in this study, she was eight years old when her family was removed and placed in Ezakheni. Her parents have since passed away, but her mother was still alive when they lodged a claim:

> They gathered all of us in the hall and there was a man who explained to us that we could get paid for the removals. He didn't say anything about going back to Umbulwane, he said we had to provide information to complete the application and we would get paid. It's been many years, but we have not heard anything. If my mother had already passed, I probably would not have applied, I don't remember much about the homestead, I was so young. I heard they even want the house numbers; how would I have known that? I just hope they pay us before I die or at least give the money to my children (Mathebula, 2022).

Sibongile Ndlovu is amongst the many residents of Umbulwane who are awaiting compensation since they lodged land claims with the help of a community leader. She hopes that she and her siblings will be able to benefit from the claim through financial compensation. She continues to live with her four siblings in the house they were placed in after the removal

from Umbulwane. Sibongile demonstrated a good understanding of the land claim process as she was the one who submitted it on behalf of her family. When asked about the process of gathering all the necessary information and documentation required to file the claim, she replied:

> It was a lot of information, I had to keep going back to ask the elders in my family questions. I was seventeen years old when we were removed so I remember a lot, but it has been many years since then. My parents talked often about our home in Umbulwane, it helped that they shared this information with us, I hope it is correct. I know where the house is, I can show you today, but many things have changed in that area, the people we knew who were able to stay behind have died (Ndlovu, 2022).

Thenjiwe Mazibuko whose family was removed from Roosboom is one of the two participants who have received financial compensation. Thenjiwe and her siblings were assisted by a community member in getting information about lodging a land claim for their parent's property in Roosboom. She reported that:

> In 2005/2006 we were called by Moses who was the principal at Ekhuleni High School around that time. He informed us that we could claim compensation. He was able to get the officials who dealt with compensation to come to us and explain the process. They held regular meetings in the township hall located in C section where they would provide us with information on the process of putting in claims. After some time, we were given forms to fill out. My father passed away in 1996 and my mother in 1998 so as the first-born child it became my responsibility to put in the claim. In 2007 my siblings and I received R36 000 each (Mazibuko, 2022).

When asked if the amount was satisfactory, she replied:

> No amount of money can ever be enough for what happened. Compared to what others received it wasn't a lot but back then in 2007, it meant so much that we even received the money. Today the money is gone but we still have the memories and pain of what happened with us. My parents died without seeing a cent of that money and that hurts more, it was their house and our home, and we will not get it back. At least if they paid us back then when they were moving it would have helped us even more (Mazibuko, 2022).

It is worth noting that in 1992, some families from Roosboom were able to reclaim their land according to the recommendations made by the Advisory Commission on Land Allocation (ACLA). The news of their land restoration was announced on December 11, 1992. It is

interesting to know that Roosboom, along with Charlestown, is one of the only two communities out of the nine that had their land restored (AFRA, 1993).

In February of 2024, it was reported that: "The South African government has to date spent R25 billion to settle land claims. Hectares bought and transferred to land claimants equate toR3,9 million" (Botha, 2024). During a media briefing in Pretoria, Minister Thoko Didiza of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) revealed that a total of 1,494 land claims were settled between 2019 and 2023. The Minister also reported that since the commencement of the land restitution programme, 83,067 land claims had been successfully settled between 1995 and 2023. This equates to a 94% success rate for old-order claims, with 2.3 million people benefiting from the restitution program (Botha, 2024).

Conclusion:

The forced removal of people during the apartheid era has had far-extensive implications on families, communities and the overall socio-economic consequences of those who experienced the removals. Forced removals affected people of different race groups, and the separation of people from their land has caused an ongoing crisis for future generations despite not personally experiencing the removals. The legacies of the past dispossession ripple through generations. As has been stated in previous chapters, while men had to form the bulk of the migrant labour system, women were left behind in rural homesteads to care for their families and thus were at the forefront of forced removals. In this thesis, I have argued that the literature on forced removals has focused on the event of removals and not its long-term effects on those removed. As a consequence, the remedies for addressing forced removals will continue to fall short if they do not acknowledge the lasting effects of the removals are on-going and need to be addressed alongside financial compensation. For this research, I conducted interviews with six women in Ezakheni township, Ladysmith. Although their removals took place in geographically separate areas, their shared memory of the forced removals reveals a generic experience in the pattern of the dispossession event and its subsequent consequences. It became clear that their being black and female played a significant role in the discrimination they faced, including how they remembered the past. The interviews revealed their struggles to create good lives in their respective relocation areas, those who received financial compensation do not consider it to sufficient in the face of poverty, violence amongst other societal issues they have faced in the last fifty years. The experience of the six informants do not of course claim to represent the experiences of the multitudes who suffered removals during the period discussed

in this paper. However, the insights arising from the accounts outlined above, raise valuable questions that could inform further studies of the gendered experience of women in the apartheid removals project.

The capturing of their testimonies allows us to draw a link between the past injustices and their current socio-political standing. This link also highlights the gap between some form of financial compensation for their dispossession and the deeper psycho-social impact of the removals on individuals, families and communities, and their dislocation from the land. Furthermore, these injuries to personal and familial well-being have the capacity to be felt in complex ways by succeeding generations, not least economically and in terms of social mobility. Indeed, any effort in retrospect to estimate the extent of the personal and societal trauma and loss is likely always to come up short – both for what it meant then and for how it echoes into the future. Bonisile's words resonate throughout this study: "They will never know what I lost when we lost our home".

The study highlights the importance of addressing the gendered experiences of forced removals during apartheid and their ongoing effects on marginalized communities. It also underscores the role of memory studies play in addressing the legacies of apartheid. The findings have implications for policymakers and civil organizations working to address the enduring effects of forced removals, particularly regarding gender-based discrimination and socioeconomic inequality, and the consequences for subsequent generations.

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