

Chapter Seven: Ethnographies of Violence: The Making of Political Identities

7.1 Introduction

On my first visit to Mpumalanga township in September 1993, I was told ‘we can’t take that road, it’s in the Inkatha area and only for Inkatha people. We don’t know what would happen to us’. More than two years after the last major incidents of political violence, space was still deeply politicised. As a result, place was still being ascribed with a political identity and individual political identities were being read off one’s residence of, or, even presence in, those places.

This chapter concerns itself with the last two questions this thesis intends to investigate. Why did ordinary people come to identify with either the UDF or Inkatha,¹ and, how were these political identities produced?

Through its discussion of the new meanings and identities attributed to Mpumalanga in the context of political violence, this chapter continues to demonstrate the ruptures the thesis seeks to establish. Political violence was the outcome of the articulation of multiple trajectories (local, provincial and national) that intersected at the point of place (ie the local). What resulted was a form of political conflict that was qualitatively and quantitatively different from the conflict that had preceded it. As chapter four demonstrated the Mpumalanga area has a long history of conflict which did include violence. What changed abruptly in the mid-’80s was the decisive overthrow of established methods of conflict resolution and ways to contain the excesses of violence. As in previous chapters, this chapter reveals the intensity of the political violence and the new forms of politics that emerged in the post-’87 period.

¹ Given that most of my interviews and focus group discussions are with women who lived in UDF areas, the empirical material will concentrate on the experiences of those who supported the UDF.

In my discussion of the different spatialities of the violence and the marking of boundaries between territories aligned to one or other political group (see chapter six) I have begun to demonstrate the profoundly spatialised form of the violence. Here, I extend and elaborate upon this discussion. I do this from the perspective of the residents of Mpumalanga township. Everyday life became politicised. Spaces were politicised in ways that linked their meaning to the political identity of those found in that space. Thus, the spatialisation of the political violence resulted in the production of new political identities.

The masculine identities that pre-existed the violence were already edged with the propensity for violence (see chapter four). This propensity was exploited by the situation of political violence and became a central quality of these new political identities, which, while on the one hand, were political in that they were UDF or Inkatha, were also, on the other hand, deeply violent. Furthermore, embedded in their violence were fundamentally dehumanising attitudes towards women. These incredibly violent masculinities were at the heart of the production of the new intensities of violence.

Key to the production of these new identities was the creation of boundaries between places. Boundaries were created and maintained by social relations of power and exclusion. Some people were seen as belonging and others as not. And, some felt they belonged and others felt they did not. As I will demonstrate in this chapter the marker that indicated belonging was based on political affiliation and identity. For example, if unit three was UDF then those who lived within it were UDF. Yet, the chapter shows that these markers did not immediately affect all residents of the township. Residents were drawn into the web of political violence and identity, at different times, according to age and gender, rather than their political affiliation; ie initially a person's age or gender rather than their political affiliation was the cause of the question 'who are you?' being directed at them. Eventually it was directed at everyone. Furthermore, a

person's prior political affiliation had little bearing on them becoming UDF or Inkatha during the violence

The question left to answer is how does the production of space and place articulate with the co-production of political identities? For Mpumalanga residents' bodily survival depended upon a changed sense of self and in the process a redefinition of one's political identity. I suggest that the construction of coherent places and identities are intertwined processes. Just as places are actively made both in imagination and through material practice (Massey, 1995b:48) so are political identities. The politicisation of space became closely linked to the politicisation of identity. The issue of 'who you were' as a political actor was paramount and subsumed all other aspects of one's identity. As a result of the political violence, the meaning of place became overwhelmingly determinant of inhabitants' identity. It overrode all other identity markers. Attempts to stabilise the political identity of places went alongside attempts to stabilise the political identities of the inhabitants of those places. Identities, I argue in chapter one, must be actively constructed. The reconstruction of both place and identity happened alongside the formation of boundaries, the enforcement of 'new rules' of living, the 'othering' of political opponents and their spaces and through the lived experiences and situated practices of political violence.

Political violence was a lived experience for all residents of Mpumalanga Township. No one was allowed to be politically neutral, and no one, unless they left the township and cut all ties, could escape the violence. However, there was a range of responses to the common situation of the politicisation of space. Firstly, there was a choice of whether to stay or move and different people made that choice differently. Secondly, amongst those who stayed, it must also be acknowledged that for some this element of self was straightforwardly performative. For reasons of survival there was a need to perform a different sense of self. And thirdly, there were those whose political identities were fundamentally remade by the political violence. Nevertheless, no matter where an

individual fell on this spectrum, what the political violence did was to politicise the issue of ‘who you were’ in a new way. One couldn’t be indifferent, neutral or uncertain.

The chapter begins by examining the way in which political organisation and violence began in the schools. At this point only the youth, in particular the male youth were implicated. This discussion corresponds with the first spatiality of the violence, as identified in chapter six, organised around the spatiality of the body. The second section re-looks at the second spatiality of the political violence – the household. Here I discuss the way in which the political identity of the youth was transferred to that of their household and family. The families of the youth were seen to share their political affiliations. In the process political violence crossed the age and gender boundary. As the violence reconstructed these spaces, they became differentially unsafe depending upon age and gender. Furthermore, males and females encountered different dangers associated with the violence, females had the additional hazard of sexual violence alongside the physical violence associated with war. In the third section, I focus on the way in which the space of the township became re-territorialised – the third spatiality of the violence. Borders were constructed, separating areas on the basis of their control by one or other political group. In the process place was purified and acquired new identities. All residents were called upon to declare their political affiliation. The final sections examine the lived experiences and situated practices of political violence and how these became implicated in the construction of political identities. These practices, discourses and power relations reinforced and thus internalised the political identities that had been thrust upon many residents. In this situation identities are not ‘open, shifting and porous’ as much of the literature suggests (see chapter one). But their meaning, like that of the spaces they occupy, became singular with little tolerance for alternatives.

7.2 Organisation / Violence Starts in the Schools

At the beginning, when it started ... when it began, it was at the time when Ulundi said

that in schools teachers must teach Inkatha as a subject.² That was when the whole thing began. So the teachers went to Umlazi³ for training. They were trained on what were they going to teach the pupils under Inkatha. And that was when we saw children going out on to the sports grounds chanting Inkatha slogans, then we realised that that was the beginning of this whole thing. After that we saw two boys, named Zakhele Nkheli and Nqobizezwe Nkheli, running around the township with these Inkatha people. At that time there were councils, there were elections for councils under KwaZulu government. So we respected all that was happening here because it was said that this was the KwaZulu government township, this township was meant for KwaZulu. As time went on, one day we saw school children *toyi toying* at schools. Especially those from Ukuza High School. Then they, the children ... [conversation breaks as someone else arrives] ... whilst the boys were *toyi toying* in the afternoon chanting Mandela slogans, we as parents could not understand what was going on because all we knew was this Inkatha. Even though we knew that there were some people who were arrested a long time ago whom we did not know when were they going to be released and come back to us. ... What caused a division in this area was that the boys from this side [referring to unit one south] did not want to listen to Zakhele Nkheli and Nqobizezwe Nkheli on what they had to say about Inkatha. They were against that, they wanted to talk about Mandela. This went on and on. (Focus group discussion, Connie's group, Con1#1-2:2-3)

As the discussion in chapters four and six showed the schools were an important site in the development of a counter ideology to that of Inkatha. A large proportion of Azapo's membership were scholars and Cosas had a small but active presence in Mpumalanga schools. Furthermore, it was Azapo's scholar membership (Azasm) that challenged the Azapo leadership's response to Inkatha's increasingly violent attacks on their membership. They argued for a more confrontational approach to Inkatha where violence would be met with violence (see chapter four). In addition scholars were dissatisfied with the conditions at schools; the high failure rates, corporal punishment etc. It is not surprising therefore that the Hammarsdale Youth Congress (Hayco) was launched from the Mpumalanga high schools, the majority of its small membership male scholars.

The first members of Hayco were comrades in the sense which Marks (2001:51) uses the term to describe those youth with '... a deep concern for justice and a fairly high level of political insight into the workings of the apartheid state'.

² In 1979 Inkatha introduced *Ubuntu-botho* as a compulsory non-examinable subject in all KwaZulu schools under the Department of Education and Culture. According to Mdluli (1987:61) a key factor in its introduction was student resistance in urban schools in the mid-to-late 1970s. *Ubuntu-botho* was part of Inkatha's ideological strategy to 'control youth who had rebelled against parental authority'.

Many of the founder members being former Azapo members had been schooled in the Azapo education programmes and had developed analyses of the racial nature of South African society. Other members coming from Cosas brought with them a non-racial politics and a rhetorical knowledge of the Freedom Charter. Despite the rhetoric the Freedom Charter 'provide[d] the youth with a clear set of ideals and an all-embracing philosophy' (Carter 1991:207).

Given the pre-existing political tensions in Mpumalanga and Hayco's intention to challenge Inkatha more robustly it was not unexpected that Hayco and Inkatha youth were immediately combative (see chapter four). Nonto⁴ had arrived in Mpumalanga in 1986. She was from Swayimane and had come to live with her aunt and uncle, as they were childless, and, to continue her high school education. She described the atmosphere that she found in Mpumalanga.

... there was these small symptoms that there is something that is going to happen, or there is something that is going to take place. This unusual thing, even the atmosphere of the two politics, of the two political parties were not right. Because the main road has divided then. There was that small tension, north not going to south, south not going to north. When they meet [the] other they give the one the cold shoulder, not knowing what the hell's going on. Although they were not shooting each other, but there was that small tension. (Interview Nonto, Nond1#1-2:3)

As Nonto's comment illustrates the spatial differences were already evident prior to the severe ruptures of 1987. However, while there was a diffidence to places perceived 'to belong to' the other group, the firm boundaries of the post-'87 period, as well as, the politicisation of those spaces was not evident.

The conflict escalated rapidly in early 1987. In February and March a number of prominent Hayco members were killed. Many of them were well known in their schools. Hayco soon retaliated killing Inkatha members. As a result of these attacks, the Hayco leadership fled, taking refuge in Clermont. Around mid-July Hayco members returned to Mpumalanga in order to defend their families from attack (see below) and the violence resumed with even more ferocity (see chapter six for a more detailed account of this period).

³ Umlazi is a township in the south of Durban (see Map 1).

⁴ Names have been changed to protect the true identities of participants. Nonto is the name given to interviewee NL1.

The elders were concerned about the escalating violence amongst the youth. As is recounted in chapter six Inkatha elders debated their response to the attacks by UDF-linked youth. Many were reluctant to endorse a violent response. The parents of UDF-supporting youth called community meetings. They wrote letters of complaint to the KwaZulu Government requesting an end to forced recruitment and asking that particular Inkatha officials, like Nkheli, be restrained from violating their rights (Focus group interview: Mrs Mthembu, Mth2#1-3:23). Other parents decided to seek help from UDF structures outside the township, and the help they received ensured they became aligned with the UDF.

... we went to Archie Gumede, it was Thobile, and I, and the other boy who stays down there, Gobo's boy. ... one night at about twelve midnight we went to Archie Gumede. We asked the owner of the combi to take us there to ask for help. We told Archie that we were dying and we are asking for help from the UDF because we do not know what to do. There is no UDF around here, nothing of that sort. Ever since we went to see Archie Gumede, he took away our children, some of the boys he took to Clermont, [and] he bought food for them and washed their clothes. After that, the other parents also took their children to him. In [court] cases and funerals he would help, in funerals he helped with the money for the burial. In cases he would help with the people like Mlaba, he took the cases to lawyers like Mlaba at Casanova⁵ to handle them. That is how the UDF helped us a lot, and that is how we associated ourselves with the UDF in Durban. (Focus group interview, Connie's group, Con1#1-2:5)

As places where youth from all sides met the schools were the first battlefields. It was here that both sides tried to recruit members to their respective organisations. Later they served as conscription points for the armies of thugs that would carry out attacks, and they were easy picking grounds in the campaign to eliminate those of the opposing political group. Thembi⁶ was living with her family in unit four at the time the violence started. She had just started high school (standard six) at Ukuza High School in unit one south (see Map 7). She explained her first encounters with political violence.

... Usually wars start at school. Okay, the UDF and Inkatha sometimes schooling, because I can say it was [unit] one north and [unit] one south they used to meet at the point, the point was school. They used to fight, the other members who were around [the area] there if they were UDF or Inkatha they come to help their party. There war broke

⁵ Casanova is the name of a clothing shop in Grey Street, Durban. Grey Street being part of Durban's 'second CBD', and primarily consisting of Indian run shops and businesses. I suspect the inference here is that this was an 'Indian' law firm, which would suggest links with the Natal Indian Congress, an affiliate of the UDF.

⁶ Thembi is the name given to interviewee TN1.

out and then the school was closed at the time. Teachers and others evacuate. Others were killed there at schools. Sometimes at school, I see cars parking outside the gate. Then guys coming with the guns, coming to the class without talking to the principal or the teacher, sometimes the teacher is busy on the board writing some notes or explaining something to peoples, they used to come to the class and say 'you guys, you come here'. No other way round for you. Must go to them. Either they killed you, or they take you and kidnap you. And sometimes they used to take you to the cabin, taking your private part alive, you alive making *intelezi*, the strong *umuthi* to make them to be brave, to be strong warriors. And then they leave you dead, then they take you to the forest and throw you away. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#1-2:12)

The stories of many of the young women I interviewed are similar. Central to their narratives are attempts by members of both Hayco and Inkatha to recruit the male youth to their organisations. Alongside these recruitment attempts were attacks at the school premises on members of the other political group and those seen to be supporting them. Dudu⁷ lived in Georgedale and attended the high school in the area. She described the situation at her school.

It all started in 1987, it was 1987 I was doing standard seven at that time. At Amatshezulu High School. It all started there. I can say at Georgedale ... the youth started as Inkatha. ... they jump at ANC. So that is where the violence start. The youth of Inkatha usually came at school, maybe at this time [11.00ish] or early in the morning and search for the boys who were wearing t-shirts, maybe written by the ANC leader or what-you-call yes, and there's another thing. If they wear *takkies* there are *takkies* that were used by *amaquabane*, I can say that. ... They were *mbotiba*, they call them *mbotiba*, they black and white. So, if you are wearing those *takkies* that mean you are an ANC. They came at school and they took them [the boys] by force. (Interview Dudu, Dud1#1-2:2)

Thoko⁸ stayed in unit one north. She attended Sobozongezo High School.

... I was at school during that time where some guys they used to talk about the politic, I am IFP, I am ANC that's why really to me it happened at school ... [unclear]. And guys stopped, tried to stop coming from one north, stop those coming from [unit] two, they say you are ANC this side we are IFP at one north. That's why the violence occurred at school and the principal had to close the school. (Interview Thoko, Tsh1#1-2:3)

Nonto attended Ukuza High School in unit one south. She recounted her experience.

... It was [all]right in 1986 but in 1987 yes things changed. Because it happened when we were in the classes, it was about nine to ten [o'clock], before break when we were still sitting in the classes. We see the crowd of people coming in at the gate, we do not know what they want, they were saying slogans, they get in the classroom, they took one of our

⁷ Dudu is the name given to interviewee DM.

⁸ Thoko is the name given to interviewee TN2.

students, they go out with him, they stab dozens of time, stabbing dozens of time [at the school?] inside the school. And we drop out of windows, screaming and crying, running away. And that boy died at school in front of our eyes. The way the blood goes like a river. And there after teachers close the office, lock themselves, others crying, that crowd comes out without saying anything. (Interview Nonto, Nond1#1-2:4)

Phumla⁹ attended Chief Luthayi High School in unit four. She described an incident at her school.

... We were at school and we saw lots of people fighting, and guns, they were killing each other. So, the police just came that time. The teachers send us home. Everybody was like running, jumping, because the police now, they didn't know who's wrong, who's fighting, they were just shooting everybody that time. Even me, I got hit here because I was running and I fell down that time. (Interview: Phumla, PM2:4)

Thando¹⁰ told of a Hayco meeting at her school early in 1987. They were trying to recruit students to their organisation when her uncle, Daluxolo Luthuli a well-known Inkatha member,¹¹ arrived.

... then my uncle came. Because they know, some of them they know him. So he came here, they started to be very noisy. They said they didn't want this person here, because they were also coming to campaign for the IFP to the same school. So now some people, they didn't want to - Some they want to join IFP. Some they don't know what is going on. So we want to go and join. It's my uncle, so I have to support him. I have to go and join to under his Party. Then that's where everything started. They started to throw stones on him. We are fighting just in one school, fighting to the school and burn the school. So, that's where it started to be worse and some people come and attack my house, ... (Interview Thando, Tho1#1-2:16)

In telling these stories of their first encounters with the political violence, many of the young women recounted events quite matter-of-factly. They talked about these and other very brutal events with little emotion. This was in contrast to the older women who had expressed intense anger and sadness at how they had suffered at the hands of Inkatha.¹² But all of them (young and old) voiced confusion at what was happening. Most of them were politically unaware and they didn't understand what had led to this violent turn of events, which made it

⁹ Phumla is the name given to interviewee PM2.

¹⁰ Thando is the name given to interviewee TM.

¹¹ See chapter five for a discussion about the role Daluxolo Luthuli played in the violence.

¹² I suspect the different responses had to do with the different times at which these groups were interviewed. At the time of the focus-group interviews with the older women the violence was still very fresh and the effects and impact still very close to their daily lives. The older women talked about those close to them who had been killed but they also mentioned the very real deprivation they were suffering as a result of having lost houses and material goods during the violence.

even more difficult for them to respond, at the time, in any coherent way. The young women described being terrified by the events they were witnessing. For most of them, their immediate response was to run away from the scene, screaming and crying. Many of them talked about being too frightened to return to school. Mbali¹³ pleaded with her mother to stay home from school as she didn't know when she might be 'pointed out' (Mba1#1-3:3).

One group of parents suggested that Inkatha's tactics were directly responsible for youth joining Hayco and by implication aligning themselves with the UDF.

This is because UDF did not exist here in Mpumalanga, it came into existence with the children who did not want to join Inkatha because they did not like its actions. Because after you have joined you were instructed to go and attack somebody's house, raped the old ladies, commit housebreaking and do all other funny things. And the children didn't like that. UDF came in when your child is schooling and runs away from them [Inkatha], they would be labelled UDF. (Focus group interview, Edith's group, Edi1#1-2:5)

Initially the assassinations and fighting were between known and self-acknowledged members of the UDF and Inkatha. Both organisations were determined to recruit members to their cause. In this atmosphere of intimidation, fear, and attempts to recruit the male youth, both sides exerted pressure on all male youth to declare a political allegiance. Failure to do so led to the conclusion that you were aligned to the other side and therefore needed to be eliminated.

Many boys did become involved, and most of the young women I interviewed spoke of older brothers or cousins who were known as comrades (or Inkatha as the case may be) (see interviews: Phumzile,¹⁴ Dudu, Nomvula¹⁵, Thando, Nonto, Thembi, Thoko, Mbali, Phumla). However, not all boys were eager to become involved. They were then coerced into becoming aligned with one or other faction, and often did so only to protect themselves or their families. Dudu explained how her older brother, who was later killed in the violence, became involved with the comrades.

... He wasn't active that much, he was forced by the youth. Because they know him,

¹³ Mbali is the name given to interviewee MM.

¹⁴ Phumzile is the name given to interviewee PM1.

¹⁵ Nomvula is the name given to interviewee NK.

because he was a familiar boy. He was playing soccer so it was easier to take him. And my mother was so frustrated about that but nothing that we do was going to do, so he was forced to go there because if he doesn't we were going to be attacked at home, all of us. [Attacked] as Inkatha if he's not going there. Although he was an ANC. (Interview Dudu, 1#1-2:5)

Mbali gave a similar story about her two brothers involvement with the IFP.

.. fortunately they didn't burn my home because my brothers, they were scared of them, they just went with them and they said 'Ja, IFP too'. Because they just want to survive. (Interview Mbali, Mba1#1-3:5)

In order to avoid them becoming involved Thembi's mother used to send her sons out of the area if she sensed there was going to be trouble.¹⁶

... wars used to start in the afternoon, round about five, or at night. They (her brothers) used to visit my aunt who was staying at Georgedale. My mother said 'mmm, I can feel that something could happen today, ...', they take their goods, their uniform with them. Okay their clothes to change after school, they packed it with their books, my mother give them money, okay, if you come from school you must go to Georgedale. School breaks at half-past two, round about three we can see or hear others insulting others, okay, my mother can say give me the money then go and visit your aunt at Georgedale so that you can be safe for this. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#1-2:11)

At first the violence only involved the male youth. They were expected to have a political allegiance. Neutrality, as the stories above show, was not tolerated. Female youth, children and adults were excluded from this struggle for political allegiance.

When the violence starts, they were dealing with boys, they just don't recognise girls. (Interview Mbali, Mba1#1-3:9)

... Children used to join organisations without the knowledge of parents. (Focus group interview, Mrs Mkhize's group, Mkh2#2-3:1)

Nonetheless, girls were not excluded for long. They were not expected to be involved in fighting but they were expected to declare and show their loyalty either to the comrades or Inkatha. Phumzile lived in unit three and attended school in unit four. She was a member of the school choir; they used to meet after school to practice. However, all choir members came under increasing pressure to attend UDF meetings instead. This pressure didn't only come from the comrades but also from male members of the choir.

¹⁶ However, this strategy was short-lived. The family was eventually forced to flee their home in unit four. They relocated to Georgedale where both boys became involved with UDF comrades.

... [they were saying that] they would prefer for us to go there [to the UDF meeting] like, I mean, boys. Boys they would like us to go because they too, they were like ANCs, I mean, members. So they used to say like, 'let's go there'. (Interview Phumla, PM2:5)

Nonto remembers being told by three boys that there were 'not happy' as they did not 'understand me what politically am I'. They then questioned her, asking her about the political affiliation of her family at home in Swayimane. She informed them that the need to either belong to different parties or to declare loyalty to one of them was unknown in rural areas and that her family did not belong to any party. They indicated that they would investigate the truth of her statement, and then turned their attention to her beliefs.

They ask me, 'do you like UDF? What do you say?' ... There was going to be a meeting at community hall. So they told me that if you are a real, real UDF member we are going to be with you to that meeting. Then I say, 'ok I will be there. Fortunately I will try by all means to be there'. Then I think they were satisfied. Because from that [time] onwards they don't have any problems. We just talking, brothers and sisters. (Interview Nonto, Nond#1-2:10)

Initially the discussions about political allegiance and membership was restricted to the high schools. But it was not long (a matter of months) before the need to declare a political allegiance affected all children at school no matter their age. Mbali was in standard one (grade three) and ten years old in 1985¹⁷ when she first remembers violence starting. She attended a lower primary school in unit three. She remembers youths of sixteen and seventeen coming into the school and raping young female teachers in front of the children (Interview Mbali, Mbal1#1-2:4).

It was this random uncertainty to the violence that caused Mbali to ask her mother if she could drop out of school for a while; ultimately she ended up missing two years of schooling. She explained that everyone was terrified of these youth (she is talking about the Inkatha-linked youth) who carried knobkerries, guns and knives. Their brutality silenced any opposition as scholars were too afraid to draw

¹⁷ Recollection of dates and ages is a problem here. Working from the date of birth she was indeed ten in 1985, however there is little other evidence to support her claim that violence in the schools was evident at this time. She might though be remembering a school boycott, which was organised by Hayco soon after the organisation was formed (see chapter four) or she might be remembering the roadblocks and attack on Azapo members soon after Victoria Mxenge's assassination in 1985.

any attention to themselves. Their only response was to run away. They received help from no quarter. The police who were meant to protect them were complicit. Any attempts to report the actions of these youths were interpreted to mean that you were an UDF-supporter. Most parents were just as terrified and instructed them to be quiet.¹⁸ This feeling of utter helplessness in the face of such terror, perhaps helps to explain the warm reception and support given to the 'UDF boys' when they 'returned from Pinetown' to fight Inkatha (see below).

Mbali explained that even though the violence started amongst older youth as younger children they were soon embroiled in the stories of allegiances.

... other children were very clever then, because most of them were older than us. Like children who were doing standard one, standard two, they were older because most of them were fourteen years, fifteen years. They just see what is going on, and they just came to our classes, the lower classes, and they will ask us one-by-one, 'do you belong to ANC or IFP?' Maybe you just shut your mouth first. What are you going to say? And because our parents told us at home, we must say we are nothing. And you say, 'no, I don't know what's happening. I'm nothing. At home we are nothing'. And maybe one of them will say, 'no, you are just lying. I know you. I saw your brother in a group of ANC. You are an ANC'. Then you cry because you say, 'no, I don't know. My brother is not an ANC'. 'Oh, if he is not an ANC, he is an IFP'. And you say, 'no, he is not an IFP, he is nothing'. And they say, 'no, you are lying. We will come at your home today, tonight, and I will tell my brother to burn your house'. Then you go home crying. 'Why are you crying?' You just tell them why am I crying, and they'll say, 'oh'. Because you are not safe whether that child, that particular child will tell their brothers. So my parents start to pack things that we will need and just run away to hide because we don't know whether they will come or not. (Interview Mbali: Mbal1#1-3:6)

In the process of the organisation of schoolboys into political gangs, attacks on pupils at school, and the defence of those schools, the schools themselves began to acquire a political identity. On the one hand, this identity was synonymous with the political affiliation of the dominant group at that school. But soon the identity of the school and thus its pupils became aligned with that of the unit in which it was located. If a pupil lived in an area with a different political affiliation, they were forced to leave that school and find another place to study.

... if the school is dominated by the ANC, everyone should be ANC because if you are not you being killed, even ladies. (Interview Dudu, Dud1#1-2:4)

¹⁸ Parents did have different strategies, particularly if they were politicised. One woman who was a NOW member visited a lawyer and got an interdict (not that it helped), others became more involved with assisting the comrades.

This situation was particularly difficult for scholars living in Inkatha areas. There were no high schools in unit one north, and it became impossible for those scholars to continue with their high school education.

The teachers were not excluded from this process of identity-making. They were drawn into these tangles of identity between the political identity of the school, the area in which the school was located and the emerging identity of the area in which they lived. A teacher explained how they were moved around to facilitate this process.

... Every year I was still teaching at ... at unit one there was nothing there either.¹⁹ But later on when the violence started, I was supposed to come this side [to unit three] because we were not allowed there. ... Yes we were all transferred because we couldn't stay there at their HP and stay in unit three and teaching in unit one. ... (Focus Group Interview Mthembu's House, Mth2#1-3:4)

The process of identity-making was used by youth to dismiss the authority of teachers. School pupils disobeyed school rules and disregarded the voices of their teachers. If teachers did attempt to impose discipline on the pupils this was taken as a sign that they belonged to the other side, leaving the teachers open to physical assault, rape or death.

... everyone was silenced. They were thinking of their lives. Ok it will be helping this boy who have stand up and leaving the class room it's an IFP member, ok, ok this means teacher is an ANC. When I stood up from the classroom and maybe he ask me nonsense, 'Where I'm going, I must sit down', ok which means this one's an IFP. Ok this boys which is running out is ANC, oh the teacher will ask, 'where are you going? Sit down, I'm still teaching'. Oh it seems that you are IFP. That's why you are asking me the silly questions, 'aye leave me alone IFP'. The teacher will not go to tolerate such things. So better they zip their mouths. For the sake of their lives. (Interview Nonto, Nond#1-2:10)

These stories illustrate a number of dynamics significant to the broader argument. As chapter four demonstrated there was a small group of highly politicised male youth in Mpumalanga. On the one side were members of Inkatha, and, on the other side were those sympathetic to the ANC and charterist politics. As the conflict, which included the killing of opponents escalated, these youth began demanding political support of other male youths. This involved significant

¹⁹ The name of the school is inaudible on the tape.

coercion and intimidation. These events sowed intense fear and confusion amongst many of the young women. With no protection or support from teachers or police, they adopted different survival strategies. Some attempted to evade involvement through ‘ducking-and-diving’. The response of others was clearly performative, yet as time went on and the conflict intensified, their involvement with the youth and the violent politics of the day seemed to shift and deepen their political affiliation and identity.²⁰

In these early days, this process was confined to male youth. But within a few months, young girls were also being asked to declare ‘their politics’. Thus, the demands of political identity began to cross the gender boundary. Yet, as many of the young women indicated, their response was also performative – they attended the meetings in order to placate ‘the boys’ and protect themselves. As young men were being killed, parents began to be concerned. In order to obtain assistance they made contact with the UDF, both through this assistance and the behaviour of Inkatha youth, they began to align themselves with the UDF.

As a result of the worsening situation most schools in Mpumalanga closed for the rest of 1987 and education was disrupted. Perhaps, the authorities hoped that by closing the schools the violence would abate. Paradoxically it allowed the violence to escalate as it gave the youth the free time to continue to organise and fight each other.

... no more school. Because we, the crowd for UDF by that time coming together and saying no we are going to pay, we are going to revenge, we are going to do what they do. So the tension was very, very, very strong because here in school, both parties were inside in the school. (Interview Nonto, Nond1#1-2:5)

7.3 Violence and political identity follow the boys home

In the wake of the attacks at schools and their closing the male youth began to organise outside of the schools.

... The other started to camp, no longer sleeping in their homes, collecting boys, ‘stay here boys, maybe these people are coming’. And the other side, ‘stay here boys maybe

²⁰ In particular I am thinking of the stories of Mbali (whose brothers did initially become deeply involved with Inkatha), Thembi and Dudu.

today's coming to revenge'. ... It started with the boys. Ok they come house by house, and take the boy, take the boy, they were not begging them, 'oh just now please my friend it's just going ...', they just get in and grab 'Aye come here', you don't know what is happening, 'Let's go, let's go'. (Interview Nonto, Nond1#1-2:6)

By mid-'87 violence was no longer confined to 'boys' in the schools or on the streets. Many of the UDF-linked youth had fled the township and Inkatha-linked youth now went looking for those they wanted to kill at their homes and in the streets (see chapter six). At first, they only looked for the particular person, but when they did not find the boy they wanted, the other members of the household came under attack. In the process the entire household was tarred with the same political brush.

... when Duma's house was attacked they demanded the child of the house, the child ran away because he didn't want to join them, ... They came again to Duma's place looking for his child, when they arrived the child had ran away again, they told him that he was to die in the place of the child because he hid his child. It continued like that. (Focus group interview, Edi1#1-2:1-2)

The families of these youth were seen to share their political affiliations and the household became the target.

... it's how we were divided, that it was known that here we were identified that when my child go out to help Inkatha that means I am in the Inkatha, and my child runs away that means that I am ANC member ... (Focus group interview, Edith's group, Edi1#1-2:7)

Them [Inkatha], they told us because your children are on that other side and belong to that party so you are also part of them. And we automatically accepted that, and we said, 'yes we are'. (Focus group interview, Church group, Chu1#1-2:13)

For many older women their knowledge about the conflict came through their role as mothers. A young man brought home the political identity he had acquired in the schoolyard and/or street, and the entire household was judged to share it, making all its members vulnerable to attack. Mrs A from unit one south described her situation.

... my children were involved in the structure called UDF which I didn't even know what it meant ... so then there was this mobilisation from ... this person who wanted to go into the intersection where some other road comes to the location, so they went there to sort of block the UDF from coming into the area. My children did not go there and that is where the whole discrimination began. And then we were attacked. Saying that my children are comrades. In our being attacked. They will call us at home to say they are coming today. I remember that once they phoned and said they were coming. When I came back from work, they stopped the car and shot it. (Focus group interview: Connie's Friends, Fri1#1-2:1-2).

The intrusion of such political stances, brought by the youth into the domestic space of the household, also unsettled the practice of *hlonipha* and patriarchal gender relations. Many parents, in particular fathers, were indignant that youths should be defining the politics of the household. Thoko explained the situation in her family. All the family, except her elder brother, supported Inkatha. This caused divisions amongst her family. They were forced to flee their home as other Inkatha supporters labelled them UDF and their house was fire-bombed. While her mother was inclined to support her elder son, her father was angry with him.

... father stick to the point that you are wrong, don't do that because you sell us. They are going to kill you on your side. (Interview Thoko, Tsh1#1-2:8)

In an attempt to escape the wrath of their fathers and/or protect the household many young men had fled the township, but as these attacks demonstrated this did not necessarily secure the safety of their families. Instead, when the house and its remaining residents were attacked, the women were often raped. In these cases, the attacks on women were a direct product of their relationship to men – as mothers, wives or sisters. For many women these attacks were their first knowledge of the violence.

The ways in which political violence affected men/boys and women/girls was different. These differences were seen not only in its timeframe but also in its modality. Sexual violence and rape against women became a feature of many of these attacks. Most of those interviewed described a situation where rape was commonplace.²¹

... those Inkatha people, they attack us. ... because they said they were looking for him,²² 'you're going to give us the information'. So now, we had to run, in the middle of the night. They went there to rape us too and even by the time they hit my grandmother. And my grandmother did not want them to take us, because they want to rape us. So they hit her with a sjambok in the head, and my grandmother falled. By that time, the policemen flash light all over the area, then they ran away. (Interview:Thando, Tho1#1-

²¹ As many of the interviewers lived in UDF-areas, in their experience the rapes during this phase of the violence were committed primarily by Inkatha-linked men.

²² This refers to her other grandfather who fled an IFP area; he had been staying with them.

2:17)

... first they come to grab boys and leave the women and the children as the time goes on they change their minds. What they are doing now, they get in the house and grab the girls, not the women, they grab the girls and stay with the girls. Who is going to disturb? Who is going to stop because once you open your mouth you be found six feet underground. Once you open your mouth, you close your eyes. They [Inkatha] take the girls and go with them to the camp. What's happening at the end of the day, most of the girls became pregnant, whenever that girls became pregnant, that guys told the girl if ever you say to your mother that I'm the cause of that rubbish you'll find yourself in hell. (Interview: Nonto, Nond1#1-2:6)

At the time when Inkatha raped, our children had run away to Pinetown. That is why they came back from Pinetown to defend. Because they heard that their mothers were being raped, houses burnt and their fathers killed. For example if they came for Zweli and did not find him, his father would be killed and they would say that he had hidden him and he would have to die in his place. All that led to their coming back from Pinetown to die now 'let us fight and die once', they said. (Focus group interview: Mrs Mthembu's group, Mth2#1-3:27)

Other stories give greater prominence to the site of the household and place the role of women more at centre-stage. They tell how women came to be making major decisions themselves, the consequences of which would put them and their households into conflict with Inkatha. In most cases these decisions involved their authority as mother: refusing to allow their daughters to be dragooned into becoming Inkatha camp-followers providing sexual services to their fighters, or questioning the activities of Inkatha and in the process being labelled UDF.

When violence began it started by the emergence of a group that called itself Inkatha Freedom. This group took young ones from as young as twelve years, both girls and boys at night. They organised meetings, which took up late at night. We, the people who had grown up in this area and knew the policy of our fathers, did not agree with this. Then our children were labelled as comrades. Inkatha also started making demands for donations. It was not clear what the donations would be used for. Because I was very sceptical about all these things, I would ask them what the demands are for. They started to victimise me. I was the first of all the others. I remember it was December 25. We were sitting in the house. We saw people attacking it. That was the very beginning. They continued and they used to harass my children when they passed near my house. I was by then locking them inside when I went to work. One day as I was coming from work I met one of my children at the bus stop. She said there was chaos back home, these people had come and smashed things and had nearly killed her father. ... (Focus group interview: Mrs Mkhize's group, Mkh2#1-3:7-8)

Now our children were meant to have sex with them [Inkatha]. If you tried to refuse they asked you, 'how do you think the boys would enjoy themselves?' We, mothers, all of us refused this, [and] we hated it. They then started attacking houses. They would smash windows, and break everything up. They would beat everyone up and rape the girls and leave chaos in the house. (Focus group interview: Mrs Mkhize's group, Mkh2#1-3:14-15)

One day they came, a guy from KwaMajola and said that he is asking for boys. That guy is Inkatha. They said there was going to be a meeting at the school at night. Then I told this boy to talk with their father, I will not talk anything. This boy said he does not care about their father but he is telling me. This boy left running. My husband arrived he

tried to find out about this thing. He looked at this thing and he found that it was okay. This boy who has passed away used to school there.²³ Then they attended this meeting. After that they were always 'on the way'.²⁴ They will go to many places maybe they will be taken to iNkandla. Until I received a message saying that I must stop my children from taking these trips. It was said it is better for children to study at home than to be always travelling. Then I stopped my children. When I had stopped them, people started shouting at me again. Even when they go to the shop, they will point them with guns. (Focus group interview: Connie's friends group, Fri1#1-2:13-14)²⁵

Paradoxically, the withdrawal by UDF-aligned youths from these spaces had made them more vulnerable to attack. It was the early period, before UDF-aligned youths returned to take control of their neighbourhoods, which many women describe as the time of greatest chaos and most frequent rape. It was in an attempt to protect their households from such attacks that the young men returned from 'exile'.

Many, many boys ran away [from] there. ... So that's why they just phone their families, to know what is happening there. And their families tell them that, 'no, its worse now'. ... after that those boys who ran away came back to help those, to help those boys who were fighting with the Inkatha. (Interview Mbali, Mba1#1-3:8)

Now because they are being killed they have [to] ran away. They started coming back. And they all came back. They were kept by Archie [Gumede] in Clermont. They came back hot as chillies, ready to fight. (Focus group interview: Connie's Friends, Fri2#1-2:32)

Many viewed these 'boys' as heroic rescuers. They returned from the relative safety of Clermont in order to protect their communities. This discourse of the 'boys' was particularly significant when older women discussed the events of that time. When reflecting upon the sense of confusion that existed amongst ordinary residents during this time, one can understand how and why many in the community welcomed them back, and ultimately, despite the excesses of the comrades, saw them as protectors (see below).

²³ Mrs C had already lost her eldest son; he had been shot dead by a neighbour's son (linked to Inkatha), after the family ignored a warning to leave the area.

²⁴ Direct translation, it means 'travelling around'.

²⁵ Mrs C's story is one of intense harassment. After this incident, the family was subject to constant police visits; her remaining son was detained by the police on many occasions. Her husband was not able to attend work regularly as he was staying at home to guard the family. One morning while on his way to work, her husband was followed by a car containing Nkheli and some of his boys, he was shot dead a short distance from their house. She continued to be harassed by both police and 'Inkatha boys', until the UDF took control of her area. She broke down crying many times while telling this story, saying her heart is still sore at the lose of her husband and son. After a while, we terminated the interview, saying we would return another day.

Groups of male youths located themselves in abandoned houses or moved into households near the border. Their job was to secure these boundaries, to watch out for and repulse attacks from Inkatha, and to attack Inkatha in turn.

It is not that our group was clean, honest and glorious. Because of their being abused. There are other parents who fail to control their children. Down here near my house there are burnt Inkatha houses. These children, it was them who were initially attacked by Inkatha, and they also lost their heads and they wanted to revenge now. (Focus group interview Connie's Friends group, Fri2#1-2:22-23)

Through these battles, the violence began to redefine the geography of the area.

Mbali, who lived in unit three and six, both ultimately UDF-areas, described this process.

... But people who were IFP, they saw that, 'no, here we have no chances. So we'd better move somewhere, because now they killed us'. ... [Was there a big battle or was it just slowly that they moved out?] Just slowly. Their families just ran, they went. I would just see, we just saw trucks. Then they put their things there and just went. But not the same day, ... Some of them will go on Monday, some of them go on Tuesday, but it only took a month, just went within a month. (Interview Mbali, Mba1#2-3:1)

Certain areas became Inkatha areas and other areas UDF areas. This process created enclaves of safer space.

There was still violence, but it was not the same, because ANC rules now. The ANC ruled there. So it was better because we were in school safely but we knew that we mustn't go [out] at half-past five or six o'clock, we must be at home at three or four o'clock. It was not safe because IFP came over our areas at night to find those people who are walking on the streets late and kill them. But it was safe during the day, like afternoon or morning or whatever. It was very safe. (Interview Mbali, Mba1#1-3:9)

The process of 'cleansing' an area was fluid and contested for some time. The streets also became dangerous and unsafe places. Walking along the streets meant being vulnerable to attack.

Going to places was non-existent, because if you go you had to be careful that you are really protected because groups were in all the streets. (Focus group interview: Connie's friends, Fri2#1-2:1)

Well-known Inkatha warlords cruised the streets in their familiar cars, identified by nicknames. While their purpose might have been to kill specific 'comrades', they also abducted girls for sex. One of the more notorious stories, recounted by a number of informants (Interview: Thembi; focus group interview: Connie's

friends, Fri1#1-2:3; and focus group interview: Connie's group, Con1#1-2:20) involved two young girls from unit one north.²⁶

... they are travelling to school [in unit one south], they were confronted by three guys. They said you girls, you are the members of the UDF. They said no that is my family, it is my family who stay there. I can't live without my family. That's why I am staying there. Even though they were not UDF or ANC or whatever, these girls were taken by these three guys who take them to the bush near the township called Georgedale. They take them on Friday and take them to the cabin, the Inkatha cabin. They were raped there, were sjambokked, everything was done to them. Aye I can't mention everything that you can think of that was brutal or tyrannical. ... They take these girls with a car to the bush. They raped them until they decided to kill them. Nozihlele was cutted his head out from her body and Stella was cutted until her head didn't come out. They think the throat was cut off but not. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#1-2:4)

Drive-by shootings were commonplace, some aimed at specific targets, others random.

Gender and age affected the way in which different groups managed their access to the unsafe space of the street. Groups of mostly male youth gathered on street corners, ready to accost and attack those suspected of supporting the other party. They challenged the right of others to refuse them access to the streets, observed and challenged passers-by, and called on girls for sex. Boys across the political divide expected girls to be sexually available on demand. Reluctantly many girls acquiesced, concerned about the effect of a refusal on the safety of the family at home.

I was so scared to go outside ... I was so scared, because once we were getting outside, you were having a problem with the guys. Maybe they come to you and talk about things to you. Maybe some of them touch you, you see. And some often rape you. (Interview: Phumzile, PM1:1).

The street became reconstructed as a site of masculine power, whether it was an area controlled by the UDF or Inkatha (or the police who also moved across these spaces). Boys – whether Inkatha or UDF – patrolled and guarded the street, challenged strangers to declare their politics, and asserted their gender power by

²⁶ This incident was widely reported in the press and was the subject of testimony at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Special constable and Mpumalanga resident Israel Hlongwane later admitted to the abductions, rapes and murder. He implicated Zakhele Nkehli in his testimony claiming the two girls were UDF spies, and saying that he acted under Nkehli's orders in killing them. Nkehli, he said, wanted their blood for *umuthi* (see Hlongwane TRC affidavit).

proposing or abducting young women and raping them. As masculine protectors of this space they protected the houses from attack, and guarded the integrity of women – albeit selectively – by escorting them to and from potentially unsafe places as well as running errands.

Our brothers went to our school to guard us, they were security. They just did look after us, ... go with us to school. [Was this your brothers or just boys in general?]. Any boy but who belong in our area, ja. Who were in the group. Any boy. But they just quit school and just surrender them to guide us as their young sisters. They just left schools and just do that. (Interview Mbali, Mba1#1-3:9&11)

Xaba (2001:109) suggests that ‘struggle masculinity’, characterised by its anti-authority stance (implicit here is opposition to patriarchal authority), opposition to apartheid and political militancy, coexisted with a street-gang *tsotsi* masculinity he calls ‘street masculinity’ which was ‘disparaging towards women’. Thus, he argues struggle masculinity also incorporated these ‘negative attitudes and behaviours towards women’. Yet, the discussion of pre-violence township life (see chapter four) illustrates that these ‘negative attitudes and behaviours’, which included coercive sex and rape (including gang-rape) were more deeply embedded in township masculine culture than the allusion to their roots in street masculinity suggests. Xaba’s discussion of ‘struggle masculinity’ doesn’t seem to take into account the excesses and extremities of the political violence itself on the construction of these masculinities. The effects of these excesses were acknowledged by the young women interviewed.

It changed the boys in so many ways. They became wild animals. Even my brothers I was scared of them. The way they were. They became the wild animals and they just wanted to kill. If they are together, they were talking about ‘who are we going to kill today?’ And ‘when are we going to burn that house?’ ‘Which unit are we going to kill people who are Inkatha?’ Things like that, always they were just talking about killing, killing. So we were scared of them because we thought maybe they would kill even us. The way they were talking about killing. They were just wild animals. They didn’t even bath their bodies; they were just dirty and stink, all things like that. They were just like wild animals. Always talking about killing, killing. So, we were just scared of them because they were just like wild animals. Ja. So I can say the violence changed them. Because if there were no violence, they would be not like wild animals. They will be maybe good boys going to school, educated, whatever. But the violence came over them. It changed them. Changed them to be wild animals because they will kill. Ja. Always there was just a smell of blood everywhere. (Interview, Mbali, Mba1#2-3:9)

There was that animality both sides ... (Interview, Nonto, Nond#1-2:9)

Generational differences undercut women's relationship to the comrades. Young women had to cope with the demands for sexual favours from the comrades, but this was not the case with older women. As argued, political violence turned generational relations upside-down. Regardless of their politics, many older women experienced the youth as 'disrespectful'.

And people! And now this disturbance between the parents and the children during the time of violence, violence made the children aware of that the parent is nothing, he or she is not clever, the one who is clever is the child. (Focus group interview, Mrs Thusi's house, Thu1#1-3:21)

Another woman who was herself politically active through her participation in NOW and whose children were comrades said,

In a way I always say that we were lucky because if we talk to these children [in my area] they listen, if we go to the rallies children smoke dagga, if you discipline them they get shocked because they are not used of being discipline[d] by old people. Old people are now afraid of children. (Focus group interview Connie's friends, Fri2#1-2:31)

Nevertheless, the comrades were not a homogenous group. On the one hand, there were the well-disciplined comrades with an unambiguous and developed ideological commitment to political change and social justice. But, as time went on, these young men became few and far between. It was more likely that these comrades were in the leadership, having been amongst the founders of youth movements. A year or more into the 'civil war', many of these young men were either dead, gone into exile or detained, depriving the comrades movement of its political and moral leadership. While the UDF-youth leadership did try to discipline youth who raped and abused women (Interview Buthelezi; interviews Thembi, Tha1#2-2:3, Mandisa, MN:7-8) this did not always happen. Due to the chaotic situation, there weren't tight organisational structures amongst the comrades and they operated as small independent and spatially dispersed groups, making such discipline both random and difficult to implement.²⁷ Mbali (see above) spoke about the effect of the excesses of violence on the psyche of those involved; and these excesses played themselves out in a number of ways, further distorting and exaggerating the already existing, frequently violent, patriarchal relationships between men and women. Others, amongst the comrades, were

²⁷ Sitas (1992:632) also alludes to the loose 'fragmented' organisational structure of the comrades movement. But he doesn't distinguish between the comrades and the *com-tstotsis*.

com-tsotsis. While the *com-tsotsis* fought Inkatha, they also used the generally chaotic situation as a cover for criminal activities. Many of the more politically disciplined comrades viewed those who raped women and stole goods as *com-tsotsis*. Other residents distinguished between the comrades and the *com-tsotsis* and attributed the excesses to the later.

The *com-tsotsis* were came at home and asking impossible things. Unnecessary. Unnecessary things and you say no, its not the way now, they are abusing you now. Maybe sometimes they will came and ask money that you didn't know [about]. So, they came even at night, whereas the comrades they didn't do that, at night it was not safe to open for the people whom you don't know. So they came at night say we want this, we want this. Maybe they will, sometimes they will knock and say we are comrades, maybe they want your TV or your radio or your what they will take it. They were *tsotsis* ... (Interview Dudu, Dud1#2-2:1)

When the leader of the ANC punished them, they leave that party and they form *com-tsotsis* ... It was the *com-tsotsis* [who were raping]. Because they don't like discipline. If you discipline them they form that groups. They think you're not working with them. Now they form their groups, called the *amacom-tsotsis*. I don't think they [UDF comrades] are raping. I don't know so. Don't think so. Because they know discipline. (Interview Mandisa, MN:7-8)

Violence crossed the gender boundary before the generational boundary. Mbali explained why after they had slept away from their house, it was their granny who would go back to check if it was safe for the family to return.

... they didn't recognise grannies or grandpas. They were dealing with youth, like my mother. My mother, I can say she was still young then because I think she was 25 or 26 then. But she was, she belonged to youth. So that's why we used to tell my Grandmother to go and check there what had happened, because they just don't recognise them, Ja. They were dealing with youth. Ja. (Interview Mbali: Mbal1#1-3:7)

But as political violence began to re-territorialise the space of the household and the street the number of attacks on older people increased.

7.4 Remaking place and political identity

In Mpumalanga Township, as in much of Natal space was re-territorialised by political violence. In this process the meaning of places was fixed, resting on a fixed and singular identity – the political affiliation and political identity of its inhabitants. The creation of such identities was about closure, about the marking, creating and finally the sealing of the boundaries that divided one political space from another. This involved a process of 'cleansing' the area of those who did not share the same politics (see above). Those who did not, or were not seen to, share and support the political beliefs of the area had to leave. As the violence entered

the third phase in which spatiality was reconfigured (see chapter six) so it became impossible to reside in an area that was seen as having a different political identity from your particular household.

Many families received threats informing them that unless they moved they would be attacked and killed. These threats were frequently, but not exclusively, linked to the active political involvement of a male member of the family. Phumla, who lived in unit three, explained that her elder brother's involvement in the UDF led to her family having to flee. He had become politically active and was known as a UDF comrade. Early one morning they found a letter under their front door warning them they should leave the area as Inkatha is looking for him. The letter said that if Inkatha came to the house and he was not there, then they would kill the rest of the family. Her mother immediately took the other children and fled to her sister in unit four. Her brother asked some of his comrades to stay with him in the house. Inkatha did not attack and after a few days the other youth left. But Inkatha youth saw her brother in the street and shot at him, badly injuring his hand. Once UDF youth had gained control of unit three, they approached her mother and told her that the family should return home. The UDF now controlled the area and they would be safe. She finished the story by saying that her brother

... is the one caused the problem because he joined the ANC, he couldn't have a choice, he has to join one of them, you see. (Interview Phumla, PM2:5)

The belief that the male youth defined the political identity of the family was paramount. With the exception of this brother, the rest of Phumla's family believed they were politically neutral. This was not so in the case of Thoko's family. All of them except one son were Inkatha supporters but still they were forced to flee. Thoko lived in unit one north. Here Inkatha youth had the upper hand.

People they came at home. Inkatha people they came at home and said you have got a UDF person. We are going to [petrol] bomb you with your son or with your brother. So that is why, when we are planning to wake up early in the morning and fled to [unit] four. They bomb our house but only was burning, the dining room was bombed. And the neighbours who was IFP, they didn't help. So by the way, by that time [we had] fled to [unit] four. (Interview: Thoko, Tsh1#1-2:4)

The family's troubles did not end once they sought refuge with her aunt in unit four. They still could not shake the political identity of UDF.²⁸

There was still the same thing at unit four where violence although we were not involved like at [unit] one. Cause we were born and bred at [unit] one and they all know us very very [well], and at [unit] four they knew us half-way. There some people ... they don't want us, they say we must go back to where we belong. ... People, the community at [unit] four they tried to take us to [unit] one north ... 'what are you doing here?', 'you don't belong here', 'they not born here, go to your home'. We are threatened everyday. When we sleep they take the stones put it on top of our house. (Interview: Thoko, Tsh1#1-2:5-7)

As a result, the family approached the wife of unit one north Inkatha leader Sipho Mlaba. As she was related to them, they asked her to plead their case.

We tried and convince them that we are not a UDF, members of the UDF, we said we are the IFP, we want to stay in our place. ... And they saw and understand their mistake. (Interview: Thoko, Tsh1#1-2:7).

The family were allowed to return to their burnt-out house in unit one north.

However, they were estranged from the elder son. Not only was he not welcome in unit one north but the family, in particular her father did not want anything to do with him. In their eyes he had betrayed them.²⁹

Mrs X also fled her home as a result of her children's political activities.

My children joined an organisation, maybe ANC, without my knowledge. So it was discovered in that Inkandla area,³⁰ then I had to send them away, before they were hacked, I had to send them away. I remained alone, but finally I realised that I was also in danger. I could not just be alone. I left the area. I left the area because I realised that my life was no longer enjoyable. I don't fit into that community. I had to follow my children. Further, I could no longer be able to go to work because I had to pass an area dominated by the comrades. I also realised that the life I was living there was not good anymore because even my children had already made a choice to live differently. I followed in their steps. I had to decide what to do, so finally I belonged to ANC. Now I am homeless. (Focus group interview: Mrs Mkhize's group Mkh2#2-3:1)

Some residents used the violence as a way of resolving neighbourhood disputes or petty jealousies. Mrs C (see Focus group interview: Connie's friends, Fri1#1-

²⁸ At this time unit four contained pockets of both UDF and Inkatha areas. As Inkatha youth leader Zakhele Nkehli lived in unit four (see chapter four and six) much of unit four provided a strong support base for Inkatha.

²⁹ The family reconciled after the violence when the son returned and apologised to his father for the mistakes that he had made. (Interview: Thoko, Tsh1#1-2:5)

2:15) claimed that her family was labelled UDF because the neighbours were jealous of their success. While still young they had managed to build themselves a house much larger than the neighbours' and her children were always well dressed. It was easy to carry tales to the youth accusing a neighbour of being either UDF or Inkatha. Seldom were such tales verified.

It happened like that, it happened like that. It happened a lot, if you could a person didn't like you he will say anything about you. He will say she's Inkatha, or she's involved with Inkatha person or I saw him or I saw her speaking with Inkatha. So the boy will come and attack you. Having no proof of that, because that person is an enemy to you, you don't like him, maybe he want to kill you. ... There are some people who they trust, if that person say its true. They didn't do that much investigation, if they say you are Inkatha they will go there and attack the whole house because maybe you have bad people who are called *amathakathi*, witch, ja witches, you don't even have that proof that she's a witch and you tell the boys that she's a witch and they will go there. Ja you are a witch and they will kill her. (Interview: Dudu, Dud1#1-2:14)

The redefinition of places as either Inkatha or UDF areas meant that no family or person could avoid assuming the political identity of that place. It did not help households to remain aloof from the political divisions and affiliations that were happening around them. Some families thought that by avoiding contact with either political party they would be left alone, and their safety assured. However, neither group allowed such a situation. If one or the other group did not see that a member of the household was actively supporting them, it was presumed they supported the other party. Thembi's story illustrates this point. She stayed with her mother and three brothers (two older and one younger) in unit four.

We had the members of Inkatha, by the time there was violence there was UDF. ... So we didn't participate to any party, by not participating they [Inkatha] think[s] we are the members of the UDF, although we were not. So as if to them we are siding with the other parties because we don't like what happened to peoples and we did see what happened to peoples who joined the parties. And we decided with my family, my brother, my mother, to stay, not to join any party. ... Unit four was not divided into south or north. It was divided by lines.³¹ I can say this three lines here are for Inkatha, those two lines there are for UDF. They were separated like that. ... Our lines were regarded, because we didn't participate, we didn't participate at the parties because of our non-participation they regarded us as UDF members. Ok, they bombed the two houses near my home. Our home, oh, our home was in the middle, the other house on the side was bombed, the other house on the side was bombed but they tried and run away. But the little girl of my neighbour died there. 'Ok', my mother says, 'we can't live here no more, we must try and go to our aunt at Georgedale'. We take our properties; we hire a van at night, the

³⁰ Inkandla is another name for the informal settlement of Woody Glen, situated between unit three and four (see chapter three). This was a strong Inkatha area under the leadership of Mrs Xulu.

³¹ By lines she is referring to rows of houses.

following night because we knew that they were coming for us now because they have solved our neighbours. We evacuate to Georgedale. While we at Georgedale, we said, 'ok, we were nearly bombed or nearly killed by Inkatha member, it is better for us to join the UDF party because at unit four we were nearly killed by the Inkatha members'. There we participated as UDF. (Interview: Thoko, Tha1#1-2:2-8)

In this situation where the residential areas were being divided up between the parties it was impossible to avoid being aligned with one or the other of the political groups. Mandisa³² reiterated this point.

... you must have to join one of the parties. Not two of them. You must join the one [party] ... the party of one north, the main party is Inkatha. Inkatha Freedom Party. At one north you must be joining Inkatha. If you ... live at one north, you say 'I'm ANC', you must leave there. They're going to fight you and to burn your house and to kill your family persons. Yes. You must live there as you are Inkatha. You like it or you don't, you must live there as Inkatha. (Interview: Mandisa, MN:4)

... the bridge was the main road. When you are coming down, when you get in Mpumalanga there is a main road you go to the taxi rank from Mcoyi [shopping centre], then you walk down straight until when you get the taxi rank, when stop and go back to rank. So there was that bridge, knowing ok if you are living here you are this, if you living by this side you are this. It doesn't care that already you don't like this party. But if you living in that place you are forced to be that. ... as I was staying in one south I was forced to be UDF. (Interview: Nonto, Nond#1-2:7&8)

Many people moved and/or lost their houses because of this. Mandisa (Interview Mandisa, MN:4) indicated that her family moved from unit one south (a UDF area) to unit one north (an Inkatha area) in 1987. Her mother was an Inkatha member and they moved to one north 'because I'm safe when I'm in there'. Dudu said that as the ANC became stronger in Georgedale so Inkatha supporters were forced to run away 'to the Inkatha place where the Inkatha is lives there' (Interview: Dudu, Dud1#1-2:6). Mrs T moved from an Inkatha area to a UDF area, 'I said to myself, 'no, it is not good for me to stay on that side', as I knew what organisation I was.' (Focus group interview Mthembu's group, Mth2#1-3:8)

In the process of the violence shifting to its third spatiality – that of capturing territory (see chapter six) the political identity of individuals and households was becoming synonymous with the area in which the household was located. Mpumalanga township divided up as follows unit one north, and sections of units four and six and Woody Glen were Inkatha areas. All those who lived there

acquired the political identity of Inkatha. Units one south, two south, three, sections of unit four and six and Georgedale were controlled by UDF (see Map 7). All those who lived there acquired the political identity of UDF. The geographical area in which the individual lived determined their political identity.

Mrs Mthembu: When this whole thing started those who stay across the river facilitated the division into two camps. They simply labelled us. When we heard it we accepted it peacefully and our youth had our full backing.

Mrs Radebe: She is talking the truth because we knew nothing about it. ... There is a neighbour of ours who ended up leaving after calling us comrades and we did not know what this meant. We would ask him to tell us what this meant because we were all in the home, myself, my husband and children were all around the house. He would simply say we are comrades. One day, as he was not well educated, he said, 'you are UDF'. Awu! UDF! What is UDF? I said I wanted to know. I went inside the house and asked the children because they are educated. I said, 'what is this thing called UDF?' They asked me who had said that. I told them it was the man they used to call uncle. They told me to ignore that because he was mad. I really did not know what it meant. I was so cross my daughter, because I did not know the meaning of a comrade. As the time went on we were told that if someone shouted there are the people from mud house³³ you must run away. If you heard that they were chasing the comrades you should also run away because you will die as you are also a comrade. We were simply running away not even knowing what a comrade looked like. (Focus group interview: church group, Chu1#1-2:14-15)

These stories illustrate the different responses to the politicisation of space that occurred alongside the violence shifting to its third spatiality. Yet, common to most of them is the element of coercion, often undercut with fear, involved in 'choosing' a political identity. As one or other side won the battle to control that space, so families and individuals had to decide whether to stay and accept that political identity or move somewhere else. Yet, despite this chaotic, terror-filled, and confusing situation people still made choices about where to stay. And in the making those choices, they made choices about where they wished to align their political identity. For example, once UDF controlled unit three, Phumla's family decided to return home; similarly, Thoko's family decided they did support Inkatha and were prepared to make a final break with their UDF-supporting son and brother in order to plead their case and return to unit one north; Thembi's family 'remained neutral' while living in unit four, realising they were being

³² Mandisa is the name given to interviewee MN.

³³ She is referring to the Woody Glen area. This was an informal settlement.

targeted as UDF and deciding they didn't want to get involved on the Inkatha side they moved to Georgedale where her brothers became comrades; and, Mandisa's family decided to move from a UDF area to an Inkatha area as they were supporting Inkatha.

7.4.1 Borders and boundaries

The construction of borders and boundaries between places was essential to their redefinition as either UDF or Inkatha places. Boundaries had two purposes. Firstly, they defined territory over which to wage battle. But secondly, they enabled the construction of an internal unity for both the meaning of place and the identities that were constructed alongside. Boundaries also enabled the creation of the oppositional 'other'. 'Us' and 'them' are key to the creation of identities. Identities, as discussed in chapter one, are formed in relation to one another. They emerge through difference. Discourses of the other as cruel and barbaric were important elements in the creation of these boundaries.

Power was another crucial component in the construction of these places and identities. The ability to enforce the observance of a boundary was an indicator of the power wielded by both Inkatha and the comrades. Observation and surveillance were key components, however, they were also enforced by violence. Both Inkatha and UDF enforced the 'rules of violence' equally against those within their territories and those outside these boundaries. Their gaze ensured residents obeyed the rules and contributed to the creation of docile subjects. Yet responsibility did not lie with the *amaqabane* or *otheleweni* alone, ordinary people participated in and were implicated in their creation.

Borders were clearly defined. According to Dudu

... They write it. Maybe in the shop, or in the stop, the bus-stop or taxi stop. ... You would see the youth that, you will see when you are going to that place, that street, they will shout at you, 'Hey, hey' there was a restriction on the roads, that Inkatha doesn't go here, ANC doesn't go here. It was like that. And they know each other, we know each other, that one is an IFP, that one is an ANC. (Interview Dudu, Dud1#1-2:6)

The borders between UDF and Inkatha areas were rigidly enforced. Gangs of young men who both watched for, and repelled attacks, patrolled them.

... like they're patrolling, the whole night they'll be sitting there, looking if there's nobody comes this side, in order to kill somebody or to go to somebody's house. Like I'm saying they [Inkatha] shoot my brother. If there was a chance for them to come again, they would have come. And even with the cars it wasn't easy, because, you know, Mpumalanga is not a big place, as you go one side and the other side. If they're standing there, you can't. You can't pass; no matter you want, with the car, you can't pass. They will see you and they will kill you. But it wasn't easy for them to get inside. So you are safe for that. (Interview Phumla, p.10)

Going into areas that had a different political identity from the one in which you stayed was under threat of death. Mandisa who stayed in the Inkatha area of unit one north explained what happened to her neighbour's grandmother.

One day the neighbour's grandmother went to church ... When we want something there is no stores, there's no butcher. Stores they have. And that grandmother she say 'I want to buy meat'. When I come back from church, I will prepare for my family. ... When we got there, she was dying, she was dying. Some small boys, they came. They said, they ask her, 'Where are you living?' and you know the adults they say, she say, 'I'm living at one north'. 'You know that we kill Inkatha when they come here'. She say, 'I didn't know that thing' and she was Inkatha. ... And they throw stones and they, she died, with the church's uniform. ... And the violence continued to go on, ... You must stay there, when you're there you must stay. You're not going to buy meat. When you want meat you must stay. (Interview, Mandisa, MN:5-6).

... if you go to the IFP area if you are ANC. Definitely there you are going to be killed. And if you go to the ANC area, if you are IFP, definitely you are going to be killed. (Interview Thando, Tho1#1-2:2)

If shops, schools or churches were in the other area, then they were out of bounds, with the boundaries being enforced by both sides. A woman, who lived in what was first an Inkatha and then an UDF area, described her experience.

We were not allowed to go there [to the shop], one used to be stubborn by going there. One day when I was here at the corner carrying a checkers [plastic shopping bag] and I met MaHadebe. She said to me, 'where do you come from mother of Ntombi?' I said, 'I come from Msinga'. She said, 'don't you know that we are not allowed to go there'. I told her that I did not quarrel with Msinga'. She said, 'you see if you do like this I can tell the boys'. I told her, 'you can do whatever you like to do'. (Focus group interview, Edi1#1-2:15)

The situation was particularly difficult for those people living in unit one north as most of the shops were in UDF-controlled areas. As the war proceeded and UDF took control of larger areas it became more difficult for unit one north residents to leave their enclave. They were forced to approach Sipho Mlaba, the local Inkatha leader, for assistance.

Actually its so difficult ... you must go to him [Mlaba] and talk, 'we want something to eat now.' And they have, he has more cars in his house. And they give them to the people to go out. But you must hide yourself until you go there and you move back. (Interview Mandisa, MN:6)

If the access road out of the township crossed another area, it was difficult to get to work or even to buy food. Many people were killed when the taxi they were travelling in passed through an area which had a different political identity from the one in which they lived.

Taxis from Pinetown were not yet divided at that time. If you were coming here to unit one maybe your taxi would pass by Khanyile's place, an Inkatha place, it's near unit one. Siphso Mlaba's people some of them would come here, the others would go to the other side, if you were from unit one a person from Siphso Mlaba's group could see you. They would say, 'this one, who is he or she?' 'He or she is from a certain place. Get out.' You would get out and they would kill you there and then. If you are from unit three and the taxi goes to unit one first, you must tell the driver that, ... 'let me get out, you will pick me up when you come back'. The drivers already knew that. If you were near Mcoyi they would ask, 'is there no one from unit three who is a comrade?' 'I am here'. 'Get out we will pick you up when we come back.' (Focus group interview, Mth1#1-2:30-31)

Eventually public transport, buses and taxis also stopped crossing the boundaries. After workers on the Rainbow Chicken Employees bus were attacked and four women killed (See interview Mandisa, MN:7), Rainbow Chicken arranged for the bus to travel under police escort and to collect and deliver workers door-to-door. People had to find another – usually longer – way around, run the risk of being killed by sneaking through, or else lose their jobs, as Mandisa commented 'many peoples they didn't work in that time.' (Interview Mandisa, MN:6).

One of the difficulties all young people faced was in attending school. As discussed above schools acquired the political identity of the area in which they were located. Those pupils who were resident in areas that had a different political identity were barred from attending. Thembi had the following to say:

... it was difficult for us as ladies to go to school. If we go to school, we are checked. What unit are you going to because, the township is divided into units, ... if you are going to south it means you are UDF, if you are going to north it means you are Inkatha. It was impossible for me from north to go to school at south. And if was impossible for the one who came from south to go to school at north. If you are found there, coming from south, you was killed or sexual harassment. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#1-2:3)

Furthermore, getting to school became difficult and dangerous. Many children walked to school and this involved walking across areas with different political identities. Mandisa attended the Chief Luthayi High School in unit four. She lived in unit one north, which was an Inkatha area, as was the section of unit four

where her school was located. However, the lack of transport made it difficult for her to attend school (Interview Mandisa, MN:5). As she was having to walk to school through a number of different units with contesting political identities, she decided that walking to school was too dangerous and so she went to other schools asking to be accepted there (Interview Mandisa, MN:9).³⁴

It was not only the violence that resulted in school children being unable to attend schools. The violence affected schooling in other ways – primarily it broke down the discipline in the schools.

... the school, the children were too few. Too few. The school days I think it's Monday to Friday. But maybe if you are at school on Monday, aye on Tuesday, aye no I'm not going to school today. Ok Wednesday, maybe you go to Friday and Monday. Ok, maybe on Tuesday and Wednesday. Others doesn't come until now. As I explained before there was that tension [at] school if you want to leave no-one is going to ask you where are you going. Ok, now its eleven o'clock, ok, I feel like going to home. Take your books, you take your bag, then you go outside the gate. Doesn't matter that the teacher in front [is] busy teaching. He knows when he or she is going to ask you [where you are going] what will follow him or her. Teachers [have] got no say, teachers [have] got no rights. Ok, maybe you are sitting here, oh here comes the crowd, ok it's mine, ... going down or up the road, ok let me join them. Take your books, take your things, getting in, get into your bag, ok now I'm moving, here's my party, until the end of the year. (Interview Nonto, Nond1#1-2:9).

Male youth were required to participate in defending their area and attacking the opposing political group. Thembi explained her brother's involvement with the comrades after her family moved to Georgedale, fleeing from unit four.

... they go to war at Georgedale because they were the group of people who they called the 'house-guards'. They were in groups, group one today we will be the night watchmen's, group two today there divided. So it was easy for them to join or to participate. Because they were divided into groups, because at Georgedale we have unity were one party. That was an ANC. And by that mean we are ANC. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#2-2:3)

For many of these youth their identity as comrades was bound up with their gender identity as masculine. Dudu (Dud1#1-2:14) revealed what it meant to her boyfriend³⁵ to be a comrade

So I was furious now because I didn't know the reason why he came back, why? Because he was already at this school at Stanger. So he left the school ... So he say,

³⁴ She eventually found a place at a school outside of Mpumalanga.

³⁵ He was later killed in the violence. His house was petrol bombed and both he and his father died in the flames.

‘what am I going to do? I’m supposed to do. I am a boy. I have to attend. I have to attack, I have to attack, if they attack us I have to protect myself’.

Implicit in Dudu’s statement is the belief that being a man and a comrade means being ready to go to battle. Key to the construction of these identities as men and comrades was the notion of ‘being brave’ and thus not ‘being a coward’.

Tellingly, both men and women subscribed to this idea. Their peers of both genders called young men who refused to fight cowards.

There are ... few of them [the boys] who would like to study hard, who didn’t like it, to join politics; they’re always in the class. ... they were calling the boys who stayed in classrooms cowards. (Interview Phumla, PM2:14)

During battle, women used the insult of ‘being a coward’ to spur the men onwards to victory.

If we were talking to them at a meeting we say, ‘hey you, you mustn’t be defeated like this. Like yesterday, you were defeated. You must go braver now. You must attack these guys and kill them.’ They said, ‘ok, if we don’t go there we will lost respect with these women. Ok, let us go and fight.’ They used to go there and fight. ... [In battle we used to insult them to get their bravery up.] Hey you, coward, *igwala*, go there. You used to recognise me that I am a coward, so I must fight to the last atom of my energy. Ok, they used to go there and fight. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#2-2:11)

Dudu, despite having suffered great personal lose in the violence, as both her older brother and boyfriend were killed, described her other brother who refused to fight as a ‘coward’.

... that one, he’s a very coward. So he also hides himself, ... so he wasn’t interested to go there. And mother was forced to take him to relatives in Cape Town to hide him there. (Interview Dudu, Dud1#1-2:4)

For many young men the calling upon this signifier of manhood, courage as opposed to cowardice, was critical to their involvement in the violence and thus their assumption of a political identity. Waetjen (2006:111), in citing an interview from Campbell, makes a similar point that fighting was seen as a ‘rite of passage’ from boyhood to manhood. This construction draws on both gender and generational identities in that boys or girls were allowed to be cowards, but not men.

Part of the process of claiming places was the shouting of insults across the borders.

One day we were sitting outside there, just after the death of Mr Mbatha, they were

cheering and shouting saying, 'where is your Mbatha', they had just killed him they were saying 'he-he where is Mbatha, we are coming in there and someone else will follow Mbatha'. (Focus group interview: Edith's group, Edi2#1-2:12)

There were times when the youth maybe from this side would go there and shout to the other side 'hey come guys we are ready for you, how about a fight today'. ... (Focus group interview: Mrs Mthembu's group, Mth2#2-3:2)

Women played an important role in supporting the boys who guarded these borders. They extended their role of mother to incorporate these boys: a role extension that had two implications. First, 'mother' became socially rather than biologically defined, since, in situation of conflict, any boy became the son of any woman. Secondly, mothering happened across different sites, the street as well as domestic space. Mothering would include feeding and caring for the youth, accosting police who might be harassing them in the street, hunting for them at police stations, supporting them in court appearances and finally, if the worst happened burying them.

So the fighting boys ... I told them that they should come into the house. ... You find that they are hungry those people. You know the sleeping of a hungry person, sleeping helplessly on the grass. So I would tell the children that use the big pot to cook, that we do not use when we are alone. ... I dish stiff pap, I dish curry. We took out the curry pot, I said, 'here it is', they were satisfied. There is a child I have seen yesterday. He ran away and arrived here at home, and said he does not want to go back home. He asked to be my child. (Focus group interview: Mrs Thusi's group, Thu1#2-3:12-13)

As 'little sisters' young women were also drawn into caring for the youth.

If a guy comes with his washing and says 'I didn't sleep yesterday, I was a night watchman. I want to rest a little bit, may you please wash this washing for me'. 'With a please brother.' Washing it, drying it, ironing it. Afternoon, 'here is your washing'. 'Thank you sister.' That is how we participated as young ladies. (Interview TN, p.3)

Identities and meaning of places are also created through difference. Not only were 'they' UDF because 'they' lived in a UDF area but they were UDF because they were not Inkatha. According to Thembi (Interview Thembi, Tha1#2-2:10) Inkatha members were cruel; they initiated the tactics of the political violence ie rape and the burning of houses. Discourses of the 'other' as cruel, exceedingly violent, pitiless, and ruthless were an important element in the creation of these boundaries – both physical and metaphorical. Feelings about Inkatha amongst those living in UDF areas were extremely strong and very emotional

I hate Inkatha. I'm sorry because I'm telling you that, it doesn't matter. I don't want

Inkatha. They can kill me if they like, I won't be Inkatha member, they cruel people like Mlaba. (Focus group interview: Connie's group, Con2#1-2:12)

We didn't like Inkatha because the Inkatha people started killing us, so we were retaliating (Focus group interview: Connie's group, Con1#2-2:1)

Even now I work with them [Inkatha], I don't like to talk to them because sometimes they talk worse about these things [the violence]. ... at that time I had a smell of those people. I was there [at work], then they said, 'oh, we will clean this place up, we are going to eat Kentucky'. Then I hate them more.³⁶ (Focus group interview: Mrs Mthembu's group, Mth2#2-3:24)

There were many derogatory names for Inkatha members.

... [they] used to be called *okloba*, they were dirty, don't like to wash themselves, don't like to change clothes. And UDF members, aye the guys are very smart, who are clean, who like themselves. But they give that name *okloba* putting you know that gall bladder its very bitter if you taste it. You call them *ufuthi oklobo* or *ufuthi* the one who like a balloon, if you are inflating a balloon, the gall bladder inflates like a pig. ... And what I can say I like UDF by that time because the guys they respecting themselves. Unlike *okloba*. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#2-2:10)

Another insulting name used for Inkatha members was *otheleweni*. This referred to the method of killing people by throwing them down a cliff.

Other community members suggested that Inkatha supporters had no self-respect unlike the UDF comrades.

Can you see that Zweli [pointing to a UDF comrade]? He liked himself that he wouldn't retaliate by doing something like that [rape]. What they [the comrades] did was that they pointed you and they shot you as they were shooting, but they would not rape because their intention was that they liked themselves and they knew that raping was a filthy thing, you know. Ja, it was something they wouldn't do, our side they never did that. (Focus Group Interview: Mthembu Group, Mth2#1-3:27)

7.5 Lived experiences of political violence

As discussed in chapter one Pred (2000) suggests that a consequence of social crises is that central taken-for-granted meanings become unhinged and problematic. This results in new or transformed practices and discourses. New identities are constructed and derived in practice. What I suggest here is that

³⁶ The interviewee was talking in English and much of this is her direct translation. By saying she 'had a smell of these people', she means she knew them well because they worked together at the same school. 'We will clean this place up', means that they will get rid of UDF supporters. 'Eating Kentucky' - Kentucky is short-hand for fast-food Kentucky Fried Chicken, this is a reference to necklacing, burning the body. Its difficult to know how this allusion arose but it was quite widespread. Killing opponents was celebrated (often joyful songs would be sung over the

political violence was one such social crisis. Residents had to develop new 'rules' of living. For many of them this had profound consequences for their political identities. Political identity might have been conferred on residents according to how territory was divided up between the two parties and where they lived, but it was the experience of living with that identity that forced many residents to internalise it and to recognise themselves as that being.

Most of the older generation had unquestioningly joined Inkatha (see chapter three) when it had launched a branch in Mpumalanga. For example, the Church group, a focus group of more than twenty women, confirmed that most of them had been Inkatha members before the violence. They explained that it was the only organisation and they were initially confused when they first heard about the UDF (Focus group interview: church group, Chu1#1-2:13). Now they are, like many of the older women who participated in the focus groups, staunchly UDF/ANC. They explained the reasons behind the shift. Primarily, Inkatha's brutal behaviour caused them to question their loyalty and membership.

That time they started shooting these Hayco boys. That is how we noticed that there is something wrong here. Ja. There is something. That is when I noticed that 'ah here is something going on'. (Focus group interview: Connie's group, Con2#1-2:4)

I was once a member of Inkatha because it was the first organisation that was formed. It was said that we will unite, it was good. But when we were beaten and ordered to speak, there is a new Inkatha, then I was surprised about this. It was said that children would be taken to the training camps and stay there in the *veld* with boys, and it was said the mothers will be left alone at home. I was surprised as to what type of Inkatha is this. Because even people started complaining about this Inkatha. I stayed without knowing where I belong ... I then join the new organisation ... (Focus group interview: Edith's group, Edi1#1-2:20)

Their identity as mothers frequently gave them reason to question Inkatha's inappropriate sexual demands of their daughters and hence its overall ethos (see also focus group interview: Mrs Mkhize's group, Mkh2#1-3:7-8). However, their identity as mother also frequently meant that they chose the politics of their children rather than split up the family or abandon their child.

If you've got a son or a daughter, if your child has gone to the other group, you have to support because you know that your child is supporting there – my daughter went to

'boundaries' informing the other area of a killing), as was the chasing out of political opponents. Besides the obvious, the reference to Kentucky might also be a reference to a party.

UDF, they were know that when I'm living there³⁷ I am UDF because I can't throw away my child and go with Inkatha. (Focus group interview: Edith's group, Edi1#1-2:19)

Mothers it seemed were more likely to support their children's politics than were fathers (with examples above of fathers responding to their children's political activity and its implicit challenge to their patriarchal authority by forcing them to leave the family home).

The interviews suggest that political loyalty and identity did become paramount. In some situations, it superseded other relationships and identities. Some families evicted their children if they supported the opposing group (as in the case of Thoko), and there were stories of brothers killing brothers.

... [the] Mkhize boy was standing there, his brothers came this side, Philani and Nathi. They shot him. ... when he told them 'no it's me, it's me, it's me', they shot him. They said, '*voetsak you qabane*'. Their brother. ... That boy had run away from home because he didn't like this organisation, this Inkatha, so he was staying here at Xaba's house. So he went that side, they came shooting, shooting, shooting. And when he ... because he was seeing his brothers, he said, 'oh my brother', then this one said 'oh *iqabane*', they shot him. It was so bad as like that, that you had no, there was no brothers, no sisters. (Focus group interview: Connie's group, Con1#1-2:22)

The rest of the group confirmed that the meaning attached to being a member of a political organisation was often more significant than family ties.

Relationships were clouded in an atmosphere of intense suspicion and distrust. This was to be a feature of the violence throughout and the roles played by the Caprivi Trainees and other third force activities encouraged it (see chapters five and six). Hayco leadership had already been divided by rumours alleging that its president was a spy (see chapter six), resulting in his own comrades killing him. Despite the 'cleansing of areas' there were still very real fears of spies living amongst you who would take information to the other side (Interview Nonto, Nond#1-2:11). There was a constant need to prove and continually reaffirm one's loyalty. If you were not seen to be with one side, the conclusion drawn was that you were with the other. This atmosphere fuelled the need to declare political allegiance and played a role in fixing identity. It was necessary to actively show

³⁷ This woman lived on the border of a UDF and Inkatha area. Initially her street was in an Inkatha area, her house was attacked when her daughter was accused of supporting the UDF. Her

one's loyalty by attending meetings and participating in the activities of the comrades or Inkatha youth. The need to demonstrate loyalty affected all residents regardless of age or gender; however, the ways in which this loyalty was demonstrated differed according to age and gender.

As outlined above male youth were expected to defend their area and participate in attacking the opposing political group.

All households were expected to have representation at the regular community meetings. Mandisa, from unit one north, explained the pressure on herself to be seen to be active in Inkatha youth. When nobody from their household attended Inkatha meetings her mother was questioned and their political loyalty queried.

... when they finished meeting, they came to our home, ask why we don't see anybody in this house. Why? Who are you? Which group you fall into? (Interview: Mandisa, MN:14)

Initially the youth demanded that her younger, ten-year-old brother attend the meetings. When her mother protested that he was too young, they then demanded that her eldest daughter (ie Mandisa) should attend the meetings. Despite her reluctance to become involved, as 'I don't like any parties' she was forced to attend Inkatha meetings. Her sister and brother did become active with Inkatha youth; however, she was able to persuade her mother to let her leave the township in order to continue her schooling elsewhere.

Thando who lived in the UDF-controlled area of Georgedale alluded to similar dynamics. She explained that the comrades also required attendance and participation at community meetings.

... we have to go to the meeting whether you want it or not. And if they uphold you to be something in the meeting, maybe to be a leader of that group, you have to do that. They didn't ask you. They want you to do it, whether you want it or not. They force the women to go to the meeting during the night. If you say you have a baby, you have a little girl baby, they say you must go with her. You must go with the baby or must leave the baby there and go to the meeting. And all of you must say your point. But if you just keep quiet and listen, they say, no, we just want to hear every views of them then can take it to the other member of the other Party. Then you have to participate in the meeting forcedly. You can't decide that, oh no, I'm not going to say anything and I can't

daughter left home to join the comrades. Later, her street became controlled by the UDF and she played a very active role in supporting the comrades.

do anything. (Interview Thando, Tho1#1-2:7)

Amongst youth living in Inkatha-controlled areas one way of showing loyalty was to leave school and dedicate time to fighting. There were strong sanctions and even violence against those who escaped the disrupted education offered by Mpumalanga schools and were schooling outside the township. Mandisa explained that she stayed with a relative during the week and came home to Mpumalanga at the weekend. When she reached the industrial area of Hammarsdale (about 10km before Mpumalanga township) she would change from her school uniform into 'smart clothes' in the public toilet, as she didn't want the other youth to know that she was attending school.

They want you to stay with them. And move, and *toyi-toyi*. You're doing *toyi-toyi*, and I don't like that thing. That's why went out at Hlangeza High School. Doing my standard seven. ... One day I came and I take out [my uniform] at the toilets, at Hammarsdale, take out my uniform and wearing smart, so they don't see me that I came to school. When the taxi reach me there, then I saw the big group. They say, 'hey, you, come on. You're going to school. But us, we didn't go to school'. Aish! I'm afraid. I'm so scared! I came and walked slowly. They say, 'oh'. Some of other girls there, they say, 'you go heavy'.³⁸ We want you to go to have the meeting with us. I saw you. You schooling. You are not sit with us here'. And someone say, 'you go heavy because your brother and your sister is here with us. If you didn't, you must walk'. Aish! The other girl, I didn't know, she know the situation there. They walk with the uniform and they take out the uniform and they move in the road. Nothing, wearing just the body. (Interview Mandisa, MN:10&11)

This punishment of forcing errant female scholars to walk naked through the streets - called 'modelling' - while being beaten was carried out by young girls.³⁹ If the culprit was a boy he would be punished by boys (Interview: Mandisa, MN:10).

In UDF-controlled areas there was greater tolerance for those who left the township in pursuit of education. Dudu explained that a topic of conversation amongst her friends was how they would manage to complete their education given the violence. They decided leaving Mpumalanga was the only solution.

³⁸ I asked her what 'you going heavy meant'. She explained it meant she had a miracle, as her brother and sister were involved with Inkatha youth in the area she expected that they would save her from punishment.

³⁹ While this practice was common in many of Natal's townships at this time, it seems to have been confined to Inkatha areas (Mandisa was from unit one north). I remember first hearing about it, at the time, in the context of Pietermaritzburg's townships. There it was used specifically as a

When her mother agreed to send her away to boarding school her friends were supportive (Interview: Dudu, Dud1#1-2:9). However, friends were not the comrades and while those who left to continue their education were not physically threatened, those who remained behind treated them with derision and contempt. Boys were taunted that they were *amagwala*⁴⁰ and were expected to join the fighting when they were home on holiday. Another common insult was to call them (both boys and girls) 'supry' which meant a 'superior person'. The allegation was that because they were attending school, while their compatriots protected the area from Inkatha, they saw themselves as 'a better person'. (Interview: Thando, Tho1#1-2:11)

Young women were expected to show their support for the comrades by attending the funerals of those comrades who had been killed by Inkatha or the police. Dudu explained that young women were expected to be *toyi-toying* in front of the crowd of mourners as it was hoped that this would deter the police from opening fire on the crowd. Attending funerals demonstrated loyalty and political identity.

... because if there's a member of ANC, comrade has died surely you have to go there [to the funeral]. Everyone, everyone. They came even at home and take you. Because if you didn't attend that means you are another party, you belonging to other party. That they don't like. It was very difficult. (Interview: Dudu, Dud1#1-2:2)

However, Dudu admitted that, as time went on, what began as coercion turned into willing support.

... when it started we were forced. When the time goes on and maybe it's your colleague or your friend he has died there we were willing to go there, in the funeral because it was your willingness. (Interview: Dudu, Dud1#1-2:5)

Young women were also expected to show support for the boys when they were in battle. As Mandisa explained they did by calling out sounds of support and cheering when one of the opposing force were killed.

... [Girls] they make a noise, 'Kiri, kiri, kiri!' Yes to support the boys. Ja, they make the noise. When one of the other parties died, they shouted then, 'We are the heroes'. (Interview Mandisa, MN:19)

punishment for girls who were behaving in a culturally inappropriate way. Thus it does seem to be a gender-specific punishment designed to humiliate and discipline women.

⁴⁰ Cowards.

Failure to follow the boys into battle resulted in one's political loyalty and identity being questioned.

Because if you don't follow them when they're going to fight, you, you must say why you don't follow us, when they go in that. You must ask. If you don't like, you must go. You must go, to save your life. (Interview Mandisa, MN:19).

Following traditional gender roles women tended to those who had been injured in battle.

... If somebody was shot, maybe he was not dead. You have to take, you have to learn to take the bullet out and wrap them so, and do anything, clean the [...], take those who are dead with you. You keep them somewhere else so that the IFP people don't see him. Because they are going to burn the body. (Interview Thando, Tho1#1-2:14)

The comrades enforced their authority over the areas they controlled. This was done by controlling who could and could not enter an area (as discussed above) and by controlling the lives of those within the area. The comrades maintained community discipline by trying to remove criminality from the area. In the absence of policing they attempted to maintain tight control over their areas. As discussed above, this often put them in conflict with other youth and resulted in break-away groups of *com-tsotsis*. Partaking in the disciplining of community members who had 'done something wrong' was another way of showing that you identified with the community politics and were loyal to the comrades.

... Maybe if somebody is found doing [criminal activities], maybe there is someone who is breaking the house up, ..., the person was called, they have to discipline her or him. They tell maybe, ... each of you must give her three strokes. Even if they don't want to, they said, 'You must do it, why you don't want to do it'. If your brother kill[ed] somebody, they said you must be the first one to kill him. If your brother, if your brother killed somebody else, there they caught him, then you are the one that's going to kill him. If you don't want to, they are going to kill you also. Then have to do it. ... You can do that and everybody must do that. ... (Interview: Thando, Tho1#1-2:7)

For most residents of Mpumalanga in UDF-controlled areas their relationship to the comrades was a double-edged sword. It was generally supportive as they were seen to be protecting them from something far worse – Inkatha, but it was undercut with fear. Dudu claims that most Georgedale residents supported the comrades as they were protecting them. The comrades went house-to-house asking for contributions, which residents complied with. But Thando explained that the compliance was always accompanied by the knowledge that if you didn't yield revenge would be extracted.

... Then those people want some money, they they have to go door-to-door to collect the money, official and the people in the area. So, we have to give them money. If there is some of them want some clothes to wear and they don't have some, because some of them don't have parents, some parents died, been killed by IFP members. So we have to look their, that group of that area has to look over those kids. So if they want clothes, they have to collect money to you and you have to give them money. ... You must give them that money, even if there is nobody who's working in that house, you must try. Because if you don't give that money, which means you are IFP, they are going to attack you, they're going to maybe burn the house. So you have to try your best and do it. If they want to stay in the house, maybe you will have seven-room house, maybe you are four in the house, they can demand half of the rooms to be theirs. You can't say anything. You have to live with them, have to cook for them, wash clothes for them, do everything for them. (Interview: Thando, Tho1#1-2:10)

As described above a key factor in 'being UDF' was displaying unquestioning support and loyalty to the comrades. For women this loyalty and support was intrinsically bound up to their gender identities. The violence allowed the assertion of a particular kind of masculinity - one that had ultimate power over women, that ruled with an iron fist and that would be disobeyed on pain of death. Nonto said,

... by that time if you are being called by the boys, you always smiled although you don't say nothing but your smile. Because by that time they are taken as God. If the boy talk to you, you come attention, you talk to him friendly, because you are begging to be alive. Whatever he say, whatever he do doesn't matter, you accept what he say. (Interview: Nonto, Nond1#1-2:11)

In the interviews many young women spoke about the fear and reality of rape and sexual violence. Being with the comrades meant denying the boys nothing – if they wanted food you made it or stole it, if they needed a place to stay you organised it, and if they wanted sex you supplied it.

... And some of our ANC boys, they used to have the camping areas. If they come through the house, now the boys used to be rude, even into us, also the ANC. They can come in the house and ask for the girls. 'We want so-and-so. You can come and then stay with us. You can help us to, because we don't have the women to sleep with, we are going to sleep with you'. They ask you to your parents. ... the parents say, 'I don't want my children'. They said, 'Why? Because she's a comrade, we are the comrades. She's supposed to help us'. ... So, we have to fight for the life every time. And we have to hide, if you are a girl. If they wish, if you are going to the road, if they saw you, they said, 'I wish to sleep with you', then they're going to come in the middle of the night and ask for you. Even they didn't ask, they just take you and go with you. You can't say anything. Your parents can't say anything, because if they said anything they're going to be burning, they're going to be killed. So now you have to obey their thing, what they want from you. Do what they want so that your family can live there, can be safe. (Interview: Thando, Tho1#1-2:7)

Any questioning the comrades' right to sexual access was taken as disloyalty and tantamount to 'being Inkatha'. Phumla illustrated this through the experiences of herself and her friend.

... we was young, they [UDF youth] can just take you as your girlfriend. You can't say no. If you go to the police and charge them, they will say you are against them, how can you go to the police to charge them? ... We can't charge them, like one of my friends, they took her one day, they rape her. She went to charge them, they went to her house, they killed everybody, because they say, it means she's not, she's like Inkatha because she went and tell the police that thing. (Interview: Phumla, PM2:3)

Fear of a similar outcome following an encounter with the boys led her to leave Mpumalanga. She was walking home from school with a number of older girls.

... nearby my school there was a place, they will call it *Ngotha* in Zulu, where the ANC boys staying there. So one day the guy called me, he said I must come, he wants to talk to me. Those, I mean, all the girls, they told me, 'You mustn't go there, because there it's only boys'. So that, the way they were, those girl were laughing because that guy was like keep on asking me to come there and I just told him, 'I've got toothache, I can't come there'. So they were laughing. He just came in hits me badly. Then I went home, I told my brother, because he was the member of ANC now. I told him, 'Your friends there, they hit me because he was [...]', he wanted to know who was that person. Then I went with him, I show him. So they, there was a disciplining if you do something wrong to one of, you know, because they were calling me, I'm an ANC member because I'm, my brother is here. So they gave him [the boy who assaulted her] that punishment. From there, he was looking for me. He told me straight he will kill me, because the way they were hitting him with the sjambok, maybe twenty. So, he said he will caught me, so my mother decide[d], because I'm not walking with my brother all the time. Even those people who were discipline us sometimes they wanted even to kill them now. Because they want to do what they want to do. They're violent. They kill so much of people, so they got more hurt. So from there my brother told me, 'Please just go and stay to my auntie's house, then you look for a school there. Because I'm not walking with you every day. He can just come and rape you and do what he want[s] to do. You can't do anything because they're used to doing that things. (Interview: Phumla, PM2:16)

While Phumla's account does reiterate the distinction between comrades and *com-tsotsis*, it, nevertheless, still demonstrates the gender power that young men wielded. The anarchy resulting from the violence had substantially increased the gender power of young men in relation to young women.

The fear of sexual demands inhibited young women from participating in political structures in their areas. Phumzile belonged to the school choir. She explained that the male members of the choir were eager to attend local UDF meetings, however, she and her friends were not.

... they used to say like, 'let's go there'. But we [the girls] didn't like it because even they, if we then in that meetings, the boys was like naughty, if maybe that guy loves me, he can't tell me nicely, propose me. It's like he can just take me to his house and do what he want to do to me. I can't go to the police because they will say I'm against them. You,

that's why we didn't like it. Once we finished school we have to go [...], (Interview: Phumzile, PM1:5).

Thembi gave a very different account to the other young women. She indicated that young women played a supportive role to the boys guarding their areas

... other women's participated in things like organising *intelezi* for UDF members ... we used to participate by cooking food for them, for those who evacuated from the location to stay here in cabins, cooking them food, if it was, um we acted as one big family. If a guy came at night, I knew he was staying at one north, his family were killed, sometimes their home was burnt, he came at night [makes knocking noise] 'Thembi can you give me some food'. 'okay with a pleasure'. Giving him food, drinks, if he likes to sleep organise a bed for him ... That's how we participated. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#2-2:3)

She also indicated that girls would wash and iron for the boys who were defending the area. Thembi denied that UDF comrades sexually harassed girls.

They used to make sexual harassment to those of Inkatha. But aye, they were not always like that. Those who were found doing that were disciplined. There were disciplinary committees of UDF. Looking after those, if you find an Inkatha girl it's better to kill her rather than to harass her by sex. There were disciplinary committee of that. (Interview Thembi Tha1#2-2:3)

Upon further questioning, Thembi said the concern was that guys who 'sexually harassed'⁴¹ Inkatha girls would get used to this behaviour and thus would be tempted to also 'sexually harass' UDF girls. For that reason it was better to kill the Inkatha girls, as there was little chance they would kill UDF girls. In a perverse way this explanation does recognise the gender power politics that became embedded in the political violence. Yet, for those young women who became intimately involved with the violence and the comrades (as Thembi was), it was difficult to acknowledge the gender violence that became integral to the construction of masculinities at the time.

This period was a time of terror and horror for most of those living in Mpumalanga township. Daily living was completely unpredictable; furthermore, they were forced to witness deeds of brutality on a regular basis. The trauma of the violence remains with them today. Nonto explained how the things she saw then still haunt her.

Whatever I see, even now I've not forgotten. Just, just, see if you are walking, when you are walking maybe one of you meet a corpse. When you look at the other side

⁴¹ This seems to be a euphemism for demanding sex or rape.

'whoa, this one another corpse'. It's not a joke to see eighteen corpse a day. It's not a joke. Even now, till the end I won't forget. (Interview Nonto, Nond#1-1:6)

Thembi alluded to similar feelings,

... this thing disturbed us. Because if I am talking about this thing, I used to feel very unhappy. Because I see how my colleagues, my relatives were brutally killed. (Interview Thembi, (Tha1#1-2:11)

The constant harassment by both Inkatha and the police made the lives of many wretched. Mrs C's (see above, interview Connie's friends, Fri1#1-2, Fri1#2-2, Fri2#1-2) story is a typical example of what happened to those who were targeted as enemies by Inkatha. Frequently, as in her case, alongside attacks by Inkatha (see above) the police also harassed the families of known comrades. Mrs C was not even able to bury her husband in privacy, on the eve of the funeral she and her children were detained by the police – the accusation being that they were supplying guns to the comrades. These incidents still disturb her.

Most of those I interviewed had lost close family and relatives in the violence.⁴²

These events still cause them pain and suffering. Thembi shared her anguish at the death of her boyfriend;

He was killed by the younger brother of his father. Because he was a UDF member, his father's younger brother was Inkatha. ... It was terrible. Very terrible. I was badly affected. ... several times, months, some years, if I'm talking about this thing it makes me feel very unhappy. Because I miss him. Because of the violence. (Tha1#2-2:8)

Likewise Mr M talked about the lose of their son,

... this violence changed life. ... maybe we are seated at the dining-room. If maybe it happens that a wife keeps quiet, you can see that she is thinking. The picture of her child who died comes back, then she keeps quiet. You realise that you have all been talking and everything was ok, they you will see her keeping quiet to herself and maybe that came to her mind and she would go to bed. If you try to figure out maybe you realise that you have been discussing about violence, then it will come to your mind that she lost her child in that violence ... (Focus group interview: Mthembu's group, Mth2#1-3:21)

There was a sense that the experience of political violence had damaged all those who participated. Everyone mentioned the psychological side effects of those

⁴² Analysing the interviews with the eleven young women reveals a shocking picture: only three of them lost no close relative during the violence, four of them had brothers killed, two of them had their boyfriends killed, two lost close relatives and one's brother is now disabled after being shot. Its difficult to do similar calculations for the older women as the participants were many and not everyone spoke on all the topics.

times. Mrs C, an older woman from one of the focus groups, said that she lost so much weight she became a size 30 dress (Focus group: Connie's friends, Fri2#1-3:2). Thoko said her mother suffered from stress because of the difficulties of that time (Interview Thoko, Tsh1#1-2:5). Thembi says that her mother is still suffering from 'post-trauma' and won't return to the house they abandoned in unit four,

She said she can't go back there. Because what she saw there, killing of people brutally, burning of houses, burning of people, seeing the person running with fire on his body. She's suffering from post-trauma. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#1-2:10)

Thembi explained how the violence changed her. She said that since she was a child she had attended church and was very well behaved, she didn't 'go to *toyi-toyi*'. But once they had been forced to flee, witnessing the horrors that they had, she became a changed person

... when I left town [unit four] to Georgedale, when there was a *toyi-toyi* I used to go there. When there is an insult, I used to go there, behaving like barbarians. Talking insults, aye. Violence did change my life. But, I can say by education I do recover bit-by-bit to go back to where I was before violence. But, aye, I was by that time; I become angry as if I can kill another person because of my anger. Seeing how other people were killed. ... Violence changed my life, but I am recovering now. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#2-2:2)

Dudu concurred

... it changed the character because you became wild now. You know how to do things that you didn't know before, didn't do before. (Interview Dudu, Dud1#2-2:5)

Everyone agreed, that it was the 'boys', who were fighting, who changed the most. Nonto explained

The children become tough, become cruel, become brave to do whatever is unexpected to do by the child. I think it affects [them] too much. ... Being a fifteen old boy [who] is not afraid to stab anybody. When he sees a person knowing that this one is not my party, without asking help anyone, he just ... shooting that police or stabbing that [person], is too young to do that. That is why that thinking is unexpected to do with the young. Because if a person is normally growing up, without a political disturbance that person knows, no this one is a person, this one is a human being, this one needs to be treated like that, no I can't do that to a human being. (Interview, Nonto, Nond#1-2:4)

Ultimately much of the township supported and identified with the UDF. Despite the superior fire-power of Inkatha and the support they received from state security forces, the comrades controlled most of the areas. The question that remains is why in this atmosphere of terror and uncertainty, where at times the

behaviour of the comrades invoked fear, and where it seemed as if they compelled support through intimidation, did these women identify with the UDF? I would suggest that there are three reasons for this.

Firstly, The terror that Inkatha unleashed needs to be acknowledged. For many the alternatives were unthinkable. The period when 'the boys were in Pinetown' was very difficult, upon their return they were welcomed as the heroes who were going to save them. Paradoxically, once the initial battles with Inkatha had been won, the areas became safer.

They blamed Inkatha for the violence and everything they lost. And as such, they could not support such an organisation.

Women A: Gatsha started at first and trained the police force called *oblom*, he put the ZP [KwaZulu Police]. The ANC had no one when it was still called UDF. So in all that, in those tryings our children fought hard. They sweated; we were losing day by day. Day by day they died, we cried. God, but in one defeated cries. Today it is still him.

Women B: What does the world say? What does the Zulu nation say? King! Oh! Country! Buthelezi. I do not know what I can say.

Women C: Chief Buthelezi, Gatsha.

Women B: No he is not the chief. He is a big *induna* of men.

Women C: Oh he is in charge of men?

Women D: Gatsha is not the king but he is a leader of Inkatha, of Inkatha members. It's not that he is the king of all the Zulus.

Women B: The *induna* of men. Yes King Zwelithini, Gatsha is an *induna* of men.

Women A: But he has killed no. We have no homes because of him. Mah he has finished the country. (Focus group interview: Mrs Thusi's group, Thu1#2-2:20-22)

Secondly, in the minds of many there were distinctions between the comrades and the *com-tsotsis*. Many of the excesses were blamed on the *com-tsotsis*. The comrades protected them from Inkatha when no-one else did. Furthermore, amongst the comrades were their brothers, sons and lovers. The lives of those they loved were being lost and endangered (see footnote 42) at the hands of Inkatha (or the police who were seen to support Inkatha).

And thirdly, it was the relationship between violence, place and identity that in turn cemented support for the comrades and thus confirmed political identities.

We knew as we know that we live in this place, this place belongs to UDF not Inkatha. There are no Inkatha people in this area. They are only UDF. So we knew that our children are UDF. (Focus group interview: Connie's group, Con1#1-2:23)

Thando explained that they supported the UDF because their homes and the place where they stayed were under attack. She said that they were not forced to support the UDF but

... we are fighting for the place to stay. So now we have to fall to other party because you have to stay within that area, because that's where you were born, you can't go anywhere.

She went on to say that,

... by that time I was so young, I believed in anything. . . Because they told us that you have the ANC's fighting to the white people because you are being oppressed. By that time I didn't saw that thing that I am being oppressed. I am being or doing anything. I just know that if you are ANC are fighting the IFP people. If you are ANC party, you have to fight the IFP people. I didn't know that be there was conflict because all those people, ANC and IFP they are black. Why are they fighting? I can't answer. ... I was so confused because I don't know what are you fighting for. I only know that I have to fight for the place to stay, I have to fight for my party. You have to fight, like it or not, because it is the place where you are staying. (Interview Thando, Tho1#1-2:9)

Other informants reinforced the relationship between the spatiality of the violence and their political identity as UDF (and then later ANC) supporters. But underlying this was the reference to what Inkatha had done to them.

... Yes, I was a UDF supporter. As I said before the main road was the bridge as I was staying in one south I was forced to be UDF. Although I don't say that I was, I was not like it. I was like to be UDF. I like the UDF so but by liking it there is no reward that I got at the end. I just like it because it was the majority by that time. I was too young. It was not clear in fact what is UDF, what is the main cause of the UDF, what is the purpose of that UDF. I was still young but I saw ok, this brother I know, this my aunt, this my uncle, oh they are UDF, please this is the right thing. That's why I became a UDF by that time. ... now I'm a member of ANC, full member of ANC. Why becoming full member of ANC. I think because my relatives, the blood of my relatives that was split off, I can't leave, I can't leave it. So that's why I like UDF. The boys that were fighting by that time, stand the truth. Stand by us. They never leave us even times, times of trouble. There were times when the IFP comes and they were ready from line to line, line to line, line to line. Killing whatever is coming from. By that day they were killing even women. ... So what I realised then is that they are no longer fighting as they political parties, now they are destroying the world we got. (Interview Nonto, Nond1#1-2:8-9)

While we at Georgedale we said ok we were nearly bombed or nearly killed by Inkatha members, it is better for us to join the UDF party because at unit four we were nearly killed by the Inkatha members. There we participated as UDF. (Interview Thembi, Tha1#1-2:8)

Yet, despite this support for the UDF, for many this was a politics without much ideological content. Support for the UDF was primarily based upon the need to protect one's home coupled with the need to defeat Inkatha.

It does need to be acknowledged that for some their identification as UDF was very shallow. It was an identification imposed upon them by the circumstances (the spatiality of the violence and fear). Phumla is a good example of this. She was fourteen years old at the time and didn't understand the politics,

How can a ten-years girl or a thirteen-years girl know what is politics. I prefer maybe twenty-one years, but I don't know who teach them what is, when they know what it's all about. What is happening at all? Like even now, I don't know what is happening, so I don't think a girl of the age of thirteen can know what is happening. They just say, 'I'm running, I'm this', you can just see, if you ask them, then they're ... she won't tell you. She don't know. Even though the boys do, there are boys who do know what it's all about. (Interview Phumla, PM2:27)

She blamed her brother, who was a comrade, for the situation the family found itself in; and, she feared the comrades. She persuaded her mother to let her leave to continue her schooling⁴³ and as a result was labelled Inkatha and couldn't return home for two years. Today she is politically uncommitted and feels the violence has destroyed trust between her and her brother as she 'doesn't know him'.

This discussion of the 'lived experience of political violence' demonstrates the spectrum of responses to the politicisation of space. Once space was claimed and identified as belonging to Inkatha or UDF those who resided in it were expected to adopt that political identity. For many this particular aspect of their identity did not become an all-consuming passion. They found ways to escape the violence, usually to pursue their education (with all the aspirations that contained). But for those that remained there was the constant need to show / perform their identity. This involved attending meetings and funerals, supporting the fighting youth (or

⁴³ While this was her first account of why she left, later in the interview she said that a comrade harassed her, and then hit her when she refused his advances. When she reported this to her brother he took it up with his comrades and that particular youth was disciplined with twenty lashes. Thereafter that boy vowed he would 'catch her' (Interview Phumla PM2:16). Ultimately her story is full of contradictory emotions, going back and forth, blaming her brother, blaming Inkatha, saying that the comrades protected them, and then saying that she feared them and was frightened to ask anything.

fighting themselves), bowing to the authority of the comrades, and for young girls providing them with sex. Any divergence from this performance would result in accusations of being Inkatha with the resultant consequences. In the context of political violence the often abusive gender relations of the pre-violence years had intensified. Youth had taken over the patriarchal mantle of the father and demanded absolute obedience and respect. But the 'father' is often abuser and protector simultaneously, and this was the case with the comrades. Ultimately they protected their communities from Inkatha. And it was this protection and the fear of what Inkatha represented (the other) that solidified support for the UDF, later translated into the ANC, and confirmed their political identity as UDF.⁴⁴

7.6 Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide an answer to the last two questions that this thesis intends to investigate. Why did ordinary people come to identify with either the UDF or Inkatha, and, how were these political identities produced? I argue that the construction of coherent places and identities are intertwined processes. I suggest that the re-territorialisation of space in Mpumalanga, and the new political meanings ascribed to these spaces, whereby during the period of political violence the political identity of place assumes overriding importance over all other meanings and identities are central in understanding this process. The construction of territories and boundaries secured a support base in a situation where the political affiliation of residents was not initially certain. It also enabled a clear identification of the other. Thus, I argue that the construction of identities is a process that involves articulations with boundaries, power, difference, otherness and situated practices.

The chapter shows how political violence began amongst youth in the schools. However, very quickly thereafter it was assumed that the families of those youth shared their politics. Once political violence left the space of the body, it crossed age and gender boundaries. No longer were male youth the only targets. Initially

⁴⁴ While the commitment to that particular identity as opposed to other components of one's subjectivity might vary, Mpumalanga Township has remained a firm ANC stronghold throughout

many older residents had supported Inkatha. But the killings of youth and Inkatha's brutal tactics including the rape and sexual coercion of young women caused them to reconsider their support.

The re-territorialisation of space in Mpumalanga resulted in the meaning of places becoming fixed, resting on a singular identity – the political affiliation and identity of its inhabitants. The cleansing of areas was central to this process. This involved the intimidation and / or burning out of those who it was felt did not share the political beliefs of the dominant political group. Neutrality was not an option. No family or person who wished to stay in a place could avoid assuming the political identity of that place. As Mpumalanga divided into areas under the control of either the UDF or Inkatha, boundaries and borders between these areas were established. Both Inkatha youth and the comrades ruled through a reign of terror. Areas were demarcated as either belonging to one or the other. Those outside were not allowed to cross and those within were expected to visibly demonstrate their loyalty. Territory was constantly fought over, and the borders moved as the UDF expanded its control and influence. The establishment of borders allowed the creation of a 'them' and 'us' and aided in the creation of political identities. This was particularly relevant in this situation of political violence where the content of these political identities was more about what 'we' are not, rather than what 'we' are.

The politicisation of space meant that residents had to develop new 'rules' of living. Political identity might have been conferred on residents according to how territory was divided up between the two parties; but, as the movement of internal refugees within the township illustrated, many chose whether to support the party that was gaining power in their area. The experience of living with these identities eg demonstrating loyalty, attending funerals, defending areas from attack etc, forced residents to internalise them and to recognise themselves as that being. In many situations, political identity superseded all other identities.

the various national and local government elections since 1994.

For many, particularly women, their relationship with the comrades was a double-edged sword. On the one hand, the comrades defended their areas from attack and ensured some level of safety for residents. On the other hand, they demanded much from residents, particularly young women whose relationship to the comrades was always undercut by fear for their personal safety and rape. Yet they supported the comrades and by extension the UDF. Ultimately they were fighting for 'a place to stay'. The alternative if Inkatha won territory was further cleansing and the loss of their houses – 'a place to stay'. This relationship between place and identity is what cemented their political identities.