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'Gendered histories and the politics of subjectivity, memory and historical consciousness - a study of two black women's experiences of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process and the aftermath.'

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DECLARATION

This research report is a presentation of my original work. Wherever contributions of others were involved, every effort is made to indicate, clearly, with reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.

The work was done under the guidance of Prof Cynthia Kros, at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Palesa Letlaka

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the research participants who were willing to share their life experiences and be part of the writing of women into South African history. I honour their journeys and I hope they will celebrate their own unique lives as African women who have emerged triumphant from oppressive histories.

It is to them that I dedicate the following stanzas from the poem '*There is Brokenness'*, by Rashani:

There is a hollow space
too vast for words
through which we pass with each loss,
out of whose darkness
we are sanctioned into being.
…….
There is a cry deeper than all sound
whose serrated edges cut the heart
as we break open
to the place which is unbreakable
and whole,
while learning to sing.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 LOCATING THE RESEARCH QUESTION

South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the twenty-first of its kind, was arguably the most ambitious to date and has been lauded in many parts of the world as a new model for confronting a politically violent and divisive history. The televising of the TRC hearings contributed to its role as a powerful media spectacle in South Africa's reconciliation endeavour and, arguably was the most powerful vehicle for the manufacturing of consent for the new South African nation. The TRC and the work it has produced has necessarily become a subject for historical investigation and the problem of truth in South Africa's TRC has delivered a wide range of inter-disciplinary opinion, locally and abroad.

The concern around the TRC and gender was initially pursued in 1996 by a small group of individual feminist activists, which later grew to include non-governmental organisations (NGOs), women's organizations and the Centre for Applied Legal Studies (CALS) at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg. This process produced a submission to the Commission of a paper on 'Gender and the TRC' which made recommendations to the TRC to improve women's participation in the process by utilizing a gender sensitive framework in the treatment of witnesses, and in the analysis of evidence and the approach to the thirty years of history to be reviewed by the Commission. Goldblatt & Meintjes (1999), who prepared the submission on behalf of the loose coalition of NGO's and women's organizations, cite how they wanted to highlight the importance of women's experiences being 'reflected in a manner that

drew attention to the nature of gender identity and subjectivity in society.' However, the facilitating legislation was not interpreted by the TRC in the manner recommended.

In response to civil society inputs on the dangers of a gender-insensitive approach, the TRC convened three special hearings for women. Procedural changes were made to encourage women to come forward and speak of their experiences as victims of gross violations of human rights. The hearings sought to create an enabling environment for women to talk about their experiences and the impact thereof; to expose crimes committed against them; to name their perpetrators in some instances; to ask for financial and therapeutic assistance in some cases, and to assert their roles in the national struggle for liberation. However, very few women came forward to testify, a total of forty people testified or offered submissions to the hearings at the three hearings, and only a minority of these women were prepared to speak publically about sexual violence perpetrated against them. In some cases men spoke on behalf of women - their living relatives: wives and sisters. Geographical inconsistencies were also evidenced in the fact that the Women's Hearings were not conducted in the Eastern Cape, which raises further questions of the efficacy of the TRC Women's hearings.

Many women who spoke at the TRC were wives, mothers and daughters of men who were killed and even though many of these women themselves suffered severe harassment or detention by the police - as the Apartheid regime also targeted the family of activists as a tactic, these female relatives of men who were killed or detained were not encouraged to speak publicly at the TRC of their own experiences of brutalisation. This reduced their status to secondary victims.

Although some of the recommendations from the 'Gender and the TRC' submission were adopted by the Commission, namely changes in the statement taking protocols and the institution of separate Women's Hearings, it proceeded in what Olckers (1996 : p62) argues was a 'gender neutral' way. Moreover, Olckers asserts that because no distinction was made between women and men's experiences, the male norm and male experience took precedence as the dominant point of view (1996: p 62).

The TRC Report on the Women's Hearings concludes that the "definition of gross violations of human rights adopted by the Commission resulted in blindness to the types of abuse predominantly experienced by women. In this respect the full report of the Commission and the evidence presented to it make it very clear that while women are not the only sufferers, they bore the brunt of the suffering" (TRC Report, Vol. 4).

Assessing the TRC Report, Goldblatt & Meintjes (1998) cited the Commission's failure to adopt a gendered analytical framework to guide its work as resulting in the historical erasure of women's experiences under Apartheid. They further assert that the single chapter in the TRC Report dedicated to women's experiences treats women as a separate category resulting in their marginalisation; whilst the TRC's failure to provide any analysis of the political and social context of the specific nature of the gendered experience of women and men has resulted in a deficient and androcentric view of the Apartheid experience.

The truncated aggregation of South Africa's past under Apartheid informed by the TRC's already inscribed binary framework of victims and perpetrators led to the homogenisation of

black women's historical experience to that of secondary victims, or that which is concretised to sexual violence. The question that emerges from the above is whether the TRC really closes the door on the past or leaves it subject to continued contestation? The answer most obviously is no. Would it be appropriate to suggest that in South Africa the critical historical paradigm requires a pluralistic model of resistance that allows for historical heterogeneities of black women - in order to look at how black women within the dominated and oppressed categories make themselves subject? The present research attempts to explore these questions.

1.2 RESEARCH AIMS

Participants selected for inclusion in this study are comprised of two black women who have both narrated their personal testimonies in self-authored narrations in the play *This Story I am About To Tell* and who testified at the TRC, one of whom testified as a secondary victim in the Open Hearings, and the other as a Primary victim in the Women's Hearings. The particular focus of the research is the exploration of gendered histories and the politics of memory, subjectivity and the location of agency and historical consciousness. The analysis of gendered lives involves taking gender to include: sexuality and reproduction; sexual difference; embodiment, the social constitution of male, female, intersexual, other, masculinity and femininity; ideas, discourses, practices, subjectivities and social relationships (Ramazanoğlu, Hollard, 2002). Drawing upon gender theory, it is possible to conceive of the social subject and relations of subjectivity to sociality in order to explore identity formations of women as historical subjects.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The study is comprised of five chapters. The current chapter forms an introduction to the study as well as providing an outline of study, aims and objectives. Chapter Two, begins with a review

of the relevant literature relating to the study on the South African TRC; memory and oral history, gendered subjectivity; narrativity and the self. The significance of the research is drawn out against this background. Chapter Three describes the manner in which the research question is empirically explored. The theoretical framework discusses the nature of the sample, interviews, and the qualitative method of analysis. Chapter Four discusses the significance of the findings and analysis and also includes a discussion on the limitations of the present research and suggestions for future research. Chapter Five discusses the conclusions of the research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS AND STRUCTURE OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 Definition of concepts

Subjectivity

In the context of this study diverse meanings of "subjectivity" are considered. Passerini (1998) defines subjectivity as the 'symbolic activity which includes cognitive, cultural and psychological aspects. …subjectivity has the advantage of being a term sufficiently elastic to include both the aspects of the subjective being contained and represented by attitude, behaviour and language; as well as other forms of awareness such as the sense of identity, consciousness of oneself, and more considered forms of intellectual activity. The importance of this term, moreover, is that it embraces not only the epistemological dimension but also that concerned with the nature and significance of the political. …Nevertheless (I) believe it to be of great importance that the writing of history today should take into account this problem of subjectivity and subjective liberation' (Passerini, 1998: p55).

2.1.2 Structure

The literature review begins with a review of relevant TRC literature. The review then discusses oral history and memory. Following thereafter the review discusses Post-Structuralism which is used as an entry point into the theoretical framework.

2.2 TRC LITERATURE OVERVIEW

Initially, from prior to the TRC's inception, there had been two broad sources of information on the TRC : namely the media and academia. Media coverage of the Commission was extensive, on television, radio, newspapers and magazines all of which reported on the proceedings of the TRC. The media created a forum for many voices including: victims, perpetrators, experts, civil society, citizens and politicians; and allowed for public debate by bringing the debate into the homes of many.

2.2.1 Evolution of the TRC literature

The Commission has been the focus of academics working in the disciplines that encompass history, politics, sociology, theology, economics to psychology. Bearing in mind the rapid planning and institutionalization of the Commission, a significant amount of the earlier published academic literature is concerned with a theoretical yet to be instigated Commission - with a large concentration on the practicalities of implementing the TRC. As the Commission came into being there was a shift in academic concern to the actual process of the TRC. The TRC Report was published in 1998 Vol. 1-5, and Vol. 6 and 7 in 2003. After the TRC the shift in academic interest moved to reviewing and critiquing the process and the TRC report. In later years academic output shifted to reflections on the TRC process and its legacies/impacts in South African society. The TRC literature is extensive, therefore for the purposes of this study and space restrictions the literature review shall only extend to a limited number of literature relevant to the study.

In the run up to the TRC, a number of disciplines were involved in defining and justifying the institution (cf. Asmal, Asmal and Roberts, 1996; Boraine, Levy and Scheffer, 1994). It has been asserted by various scholars (Asmal *et al*.; 1996; Hamber, 1995; Godwin Phelps, 2004) that it is by the process of unveiling the truth and re-addressing the past, the process of speaking about the past, that the individual starts to heal. It is within this mode of personal testimony of re-narrativisation, which is important to psychological healing, that the ritual of confession is cathartic in itself. Various scholars from the field of psychology however, warned that the magnitude of the healing required could not be addressed only by the TRC. Hamber (1995) addresses the notion that the TRC created a space for healing, but expresses concern in that it is the only space available for psychological redress of the past. Hamber (1995) suggests rather, that the TRC be seen in concurrence with other mechanisms for healing including organizational, structural and individual centered intervention approaches.

Mamdani's (1998) critique of the TRC revolves around what he terms "distinctive features" of Apartheid: "there were victims, there were perpetrators and there were beneficiaries" and uses these three categories to comment on the weakness within both the structure and process of the TRC. Mamdani (1998) questions the narrow definition of victims as encapsulated by the TRC focus on individuals who suffered gross human rights violations during Apartheid, the political activists who told their stories at the Human Rights Violations Hearings, and admits that this group is an important one. He argues however, that a much wider category of victim has been discounted by the TRC, namely those who have been victimized through "structural injustice." Mamdani (1998) sees the term "beneficiaries' as linked to the white community and seems to cover those who benefitted from Apartheid both legally and illegally.

Mamdani (1998) does not contest the Amnesty Committee's 'working definition' of perpetrator which focuses on individuals who have committed gross human rights violations for political objectives. He does however, caution against the "binding nature" of its decisions and the attendant possibilities of miscarried justice whereby perpetrators may not fulfill the criteria for amnesty but still be granted it. Mamdani's (1998) critique suggests that the TRC invited the beneficiaries to join victims in indignaion against the perpetrators, in that the beneficiaries have created a fissure between their own position and that of the perpetrator that is indistinguishable from the distance between victim and perpetrator. Mamdani (1998) asserts that that the beneficiary-victim versus perpetrator binary and the contracting responsibility of beneficiaries are unintended consequences of the TRC. It is important to note that Mamdani's critique is contentious. His ideas have been met with criticism by certain academics and members of the TRC itself. Boraine (1998) cites examples of monetary atonement and humbled apology as a sign that certain "beneficiaries" are accepting responsibility for their role in the past and in the present.

Other scholars of the TRC turned their focus to the issue of the "truths" that the TRC examines. Jeffrey (1999) critiques the inadequacy of the TRC procedures and conclusions demonstrating how the TRC failed to observe basic legal principles of impartiality and admissible evidence and drawing attention to its irregularities and contradictions. Jeffrey's (1999) critique categorises the TRC's differentiation of truth into four orders to the conventional legal requirements of 'factual and objective truth'. The TRC, according to Jeffrey (1999: pp131-133), added 'social or dialogical truth' (as derived through 'interaction, discussion and debate') and 'narrative truth'

(stories, perceptions and the meaning of facts 'within the context of human relations'). These allowances for such forms of untested assertions leads inevitably to obfuscation and bias.

Mamdani (1999) argues that the truth of the TRC 'makes most sense when understood as an institutionally produced truth' that was predicated on narrowly defined boundaries of power and which sought to fortify the new power by reinforcing 'political compromise with a compromised truth' (Mamdani, 1999: pp. 177- 179). He asks what is the truth of Apartheid, if gross violations such as the 3,5 million forced removals occurring in 1962 to 1980, the understandings of gross violations to be including the dispossession of land and the Group Areas Act, the 'militarization of labour' through pass laws, and the violence enshrouding the enforcements of these Apartheid strictures were excluded; and that incorporating these would have produced a different kind of truth and a redefinition of our understanding of the victims of Apartheid. Mamdani (1999) argues that because the TRC was so engrossed with a highly individualized notion of truth and responsibility, it failed to focus on Apartheid as a system of power, and attendant to this, Mamdani (1999: p178) argues that Apartheid would have been seen as "a reality that produced racialised poverty alongside racialised truth" and the reality lived by the majority. With regards to justice, Mamdani (1999) highlights that the TRC began with the assumptions that truth and justice can be alternatives, but later, as the critical response to the TRC evidenced, what emerged is that truth is not an alternative but is a precondition for justice. He argues that by delineating reconciliation as the point of transition of 1994 (South Africa's first democratically elected government) points to the TRC's misjudging the assignment of reconciliation that was required, because to reconcile is to restore: and yet South Africa's transition had to create something that

was never there before (unlike in other transitions). As such, Mamdani (1999) proposed that what was achieved as reconciliation is a code word for reduced truth in the TRC.

In theory the TRC valued four types of truth – factual/forensic, personal/narrative, social and healing/restorative. Various scholars have argued that there were "only two archetypes of truth under which all others assembled" (Posel, 2002; Wilson, 2001). Posel (2002: pp17) provides a critique of the TRC Report taking a three-pronged-approach epistemologically in respect of the contestedness of truth: methodologically, with respect to appropriate methodological pluralism and substantively in the need to anchor the actions of individual victims and perpetrators of gross human rights violations in the Apartheid system. Posel (2000: pp18) argues that a largely descriptive version of the recent past was thus produced due to the epistemological and methodological choices of the authors of the TRC report which incapacitated the link between subject and object, agent and structure. Bonner and Nieftagodien (2002) analyse how the TRC in its investigation of events on the East Rand from the late 1980's to the early 1990's was unable to grapple with complexities of social causation, where individuals are caught up in structural processes that stimulate and limit their actions in a manner which undermines their agency.

The TRC literature shifts over time saw various scholars re-look the human rights issues around the TRC. Wilson (2001) addresses the TRC in relation to human rights, he suggests that during the transformation from an authoritarian regime human rights can play a vital role in establishing accountability and the rule of law, however, he questions what human rights discourses and

institutions in democratizing countries can actually accomplish. Wilson (2001) posits that truth commissions are one of the main methods in which a "bureaucratic elite seeks to manufacture legitimacy for state institutions, and especially state institutions" (Wilson, 2001: p. 19**).** Wilson argues further that the TRC is an institutional phenomenon born at a particular moment within South Africa's history and was presented as a mechanism to assist the transition from Apartheid to the "new" South Africa. Furthermore, Wilson argues that the Amnesty Hearings were a "theatricalisation of power of the new state…Perpetrators were compelled to speak with the confines of a new language of human rights, and in doing so recognize the new government's power to admonish and punish." (Wilson: 2001, p.20). Wilson (2001) suggests that in the long run the power of truth commissions is symbolic, as they have limited power to carry out reforms of the judiciary processes and they can only make recommendations which they can often not follow through on, as is the case with South Africa, or which are often ignored as in El Salvador. Wilson argues that the "symbolic impact of these commissions lies in how they codify the history of a period".

The TRC has been presented as a vital mechanism in expressing the identity of a traumatised country, a pathological society, which must be healed during the time of transition. Implicit in its quest for truth and reconciliation is a notion of psychological health, of healing for the individual and healing for the collective. The theme of dialogue and social healing has been addressed by various writers in the context of the TRC, Gobodo-Madikizela (2006) in discussing the possibilities for trauma and healing defines a process of 'rehumanisation' wherein the irreconcilable yet inextricable stories of the victim, victimizer and bystander meet: questioning whether it is possible for a victim to language trauma unless a perpetrator acknowledges their

deeds through public accountability, and accordingly if whether a bystander can fully confront their role as a beneficiary and the possibilities of their choices unless they bear witness to testimonies of victims and perpetrators. Addressing the wider notions of reconciliation Foster (2006) suggests that the terms 'healing' and 'reconciliation' may be regarded as conveying overlapping meaning, in that 'healing' suggests the more personal workings of inter-subjectivity whilst 'reconciliation' may be regarded as wider aspects of inter-group relations suggesting reconciliation as a type of social healing.

Regarding the subject created from the TRC's work Ross (2003) examines the production of women's voice and identity - specifically women as victims in the TRC's work. The TRC linked voice as being able to tells one's story with their re-establishment of human and civil dignity, personal and national healing and with the formation of post-Apartheid identities. Ross, highlights the speaking of pain as a difficult endeavour. Gross violations of human rights concentrated on 'bodily integrity rights' that, Ross argues, privileged the experiences of men, and largely the sensational proportions of Apartheid rather than its more widespread impacts on experience and subjectivities. The author argues that the separate chapter dedicated to women in the TRC Report, saw the development of 'women' as a category particularly favouring sexual violence whilst silencing other kinds of experience. Ross (2003) argues that 'women' became a category of critical difference which simultaneously homogenised women's varied experiences.

Ross (2003A : p.102) argues that the TRC eluded political activism in its focus on "the victim'….and that the elicitation, condensation and crystallisation of testimonies in circulation

led to different forms of violence being obscured" wherein violence is typified to that which is inflicted on the body, and is further concretised to sexual harm. Subjectivity as expressed in the testimonies heard at the TRC is subject to many interpretations, and the reception fields of where testimonies are heard, is important. Ross (2003A) posits that literature generated from testimonies "tends to totalise: to assume that the subject is the same as the testifier" and that the testimony describes the self conclusively. Ross (2003A) further offers that concordance over time may be less crucial than mapping the "shifts of interpretation, the process of social reworking, the grounds of acceptance on which narratives come to rest, and the light these shed on understanding and remaking the face of suffering" (Ross, 2003A : p.102).

Godwin Phelps (2004) provides a useful argument on the value of an official audience linking the validation process that is fostered for all of the citizens of a society in the arena of a truth commission forum, "The victims regain dignity and autonomy by correcting for themselves the false message about their worth, which seems far superior to the State's doing so. The victims themselves, with the support and acknowledgement of the State, repudiate the misrepresentation of the regime's violence fostered. …Allowing victims to tell their stories in a State-sponsored setting is ..a critical form of justice" (Godwin Phelps, 2004: p. 61). Furthermore, Godwin Phelps (2004) surmises that many truth commission reports contain aspects of historical inquiry and critically examine events and ideologies leading up to the violence and oppression that personal narratives reveal. She asserts "...the history contained within a truth commission report is not just the story about *that (*former) State. It is also a constitutive history of *this* (emerging) State (Godwin Phelps, 2004, p. 80)".

Of this 'emerging State' Posel (2006) argues that the civic confessional has been one of South Africa's repertoires for re-entering the global arena and rising above its international pariah status in that the global connection, recognition and identification enabled by the TRC's globally televised spectacle, in effect served the purpose of bringing South Africa into the global community of suffering. Utilising Focault's theory of the confession in the production of Western modernity and the production of "confessing societies" Posel (2006: p 67) argues that in a society such as South Africa's, which had long been accustomed to "political and cultural conventions of secrecy, the *politics of speech* (sic) are at the very centre of the post–Apartheid project: challenging past presumptions of silence and concealment".

Contained within the politics of speech are the deep politics of silences and the question arises as to whether the TRC was an amplifier of silences. With respect to the fragmentary nature of narratives Jolly (2008) writes about the TRC's failure to give proper hearing and due record to the testimonies of women in respect to anguished memory, where trauma may be rendered into fragments and relative "incoherence". She writes about the case of Seipati Mlangeni, the widow of slain activist Bheki Mlangeni, who was with him when a cassette bomb exploded his head via earphones as he turned it on. Here, the discontinuities between 'Self' and utterance rendered her testimony into relative incoherence due to extreme emotions and Jolly asserts that less attention was given to Seipati Mlangeni than other secondary victims at the hearings. Also addressing these errors and complex nuances of interpretation of anguished memory, Krog, Mpolweni and Ratele (2009) examine the distortions of translation and failures of cultural understandings and representations of traumatic memory surrounding the testimony of Mrs Konile, a mother of one

of the "Gugulethu Seven" who were murdered by security forces and whose families first saw and heard of their brutal deaths on television news.

2.2.2 Augmentations to the TRC record

The historical record produced by the TRC is being augmented and contested by not only the Academy but also by members of the public, this is evidenced in the small but significant increase in autobiographical books after the TRC. These include Jaffer (2003) and Henry (2003) who write about their personal experiences of testifying at the TRC.

Perhaps one of the most contentious books to come out post the TRC is by Antjie Krog, a journalist who covered the TRC Hearings for two years. Krog (1998) in her book *Country of My Skull* offers a subjective account of the significance of the TRC hearings, written after serving as a special reporter on the TRC activities for SABC radio and spending months in intimate contact with the TRC's proceedings nationwide. Krog employs post-modern techniques of self-remembering, fragmentation and reflexivity, providing a testimony of the author's own implication in the reality of the metanarrative of the TRC's production of various truths for public consumption. However, a notable feature of Krog's book was her use of victims' testimonies in her book, where she edited and re-interpreted actual testimonies from the TRC, therefore in part fictionalising them. By her own admission she describes the book as "my own highly personalised version of the experiences of the TRC, "*Country of My Skull* is NOT a journalistic or factual report of the Truth Commission" (cited in Cole (2010). One of the testimonies that Krog re-interpreted was that of Yazir Henry who addressed this in his book detailing his experiences of the TRC. He calls into question the ethics of appropriating

testimony for poetic licence, media freedom and academic commentary. Henry (2003) argues that testimonies being on public record "does not address the rights of self-authorship and the intention of the speaker, reclamation of one's voice and one's agency. This ethical dilemma also needs to be addressed as a meta-analytical and methodological question, by theorising the relationship of the layers of listening and subjective hearing positions (proximity and relationality), mediations, disseminations of testimonies and voices of the listeners and the readers." (Henry, 2003: 27). Cole (2010) advances that another unforeseen consequence of Krog's book is that many scholars and the media in their writing have referred to the testimonies rendered in this re-interpreted manner as primary sources and have not consulted the actual testimonies of the victims, and thus a ripple effect of distortion of testimonies has been produced in scholarship.

2.2.3 The TRC and the media

Television viewers worldwide were able to witness the TRC as a 'compelling drama of exposé confession, and at times, repentance, broadcast live on national television as well on global networks such as CNN and the BBC' (Posel & Simpson, 2002). McEachern (2002 : p 40) argues that the media event of the TRC – functioned as a "shamanising" media event, whereby "Shamanising media events thus do not just halt the everyday, they do not just interrupt daily routines but they actually disrupt taken- for-granted ideologies and paradigms of societies themselves. They force new ways of looking and thinking from within their own performance".

Fullard &Rousseau (2008) dispute the success of this "shamanising media event" in their examination of various critiques of the TRC, they argue, like Wilson (2001), that the efforts of

the TRC to situate the commission in a human rights framework had unintended consequences for various interest groups and stakeholders. Fullard & Rousseau (2008) posit that the human rights framework of the TRC created disruptions for one such stakeholder namely: the ruling party of the ANC and its heroic history mythology, as evidenced in the court action by the ANC on the eve of the TRC Report handover. Fullard & Rousseau (2008) contest that the TRC itself was a manufacturer of the founding myth of the new nation thus serving its political function and mandate from the new government: which was to function as a nation building exercise. Fullard & Rousseau (2008) argue furthur that despite shifts within the TRC and relationship with the new government, it was largely discarded by the State after its enactment, and that from the State's viewpoint at least, it is a miscarried project of nation building.

Drawing upon the lens of performance, Cole (2010) contends that the Commission, as a very public spectacle, within the performative realm, "served as the literal and figurative stage for South Africa's political transition.". Cole argues that the TRC *enacted* state transition as a performance via various mechanisms, these being media and the unprecedented access given to the TRC enabling the transmission and production of new truths to be broadcast under a new democratic order. Translation was also another mechanism of transition as the TRC was broadcast and reported in all official languages in South Africa via the TRC's apparatus for interpreting African languages and was the first of its kind as an interpretation service in South Africa. This created a mediation of the testimonies and thus production of particular kinds of truths (Cole, 2010: p 68). She further argues that the national experience of witnessing the TRC in performance as an "embodiment, storytelling, emotional expressiveness, media spectacle and public participation" implicated everyone who experienced it. Cole further argues that the TRC

as a performative vehicle of such immense proportion produced inconsistencies of multiple public interpretations and that the images that emerged of the past from the TRC were "partial amalgamations, fragments, mixed genres with multiple genealogies" (Cole, 2010: p160). Cole (2010, pp159-162) posits that the performance of the TRC, with its unearthing of the many strata of meaning that the public hearings brought forth, provides us with a kaleidoscopic vision of the TRC, South Africa, transitional justice and the complexities of meanings produced by the Commission.

2.2.4 MEMORY AND ORAL HISTORY

In the TRC Final Report the Commission defined its mission as one of restoring memory "The Commission chose", in the words of Krog (cited in the TRC Final Report p. 112) the "road of …restoring memory and humanity".

History and memory are central to today's historical debate. Portelli (1998) writes, 'memory is an active process of creation of meanings and the changes narrators make to their memories reveal an effort to make sense of the past. We then learn not only what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing and what they now think they did.' (Portelli, 1998: p.67). The problem in the use of history is that it is simultaneously structured and varied implicating the relational centrality between memory and history, between individual and collective.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission heard personal narratives (i.e. memories) of Apartheid from victims and perpetrators, Minkley and Rasool (1998 : p 89) assert this was an

attempt to try and remake the collective memory of South African's through the use of their 'counter-memories'. They further assert that in the narratives of ordinary people's lives we can see some of the major forces of history at work, large social forces that are the real key to understanding the past. Truth Commissions, Wilson (2001) asserts, play a vital role in fixing memory and institutionalising a view of past conflict because popular memories of an authoritarian past are multiple, fluid, indeterminate and fragmentary.

Within oral history the issue of memory has featured progressively as a topic for detailed consideration. The sometimes simple view of memory as merely reflecting reality has been challenged in a number of ways by the work of Passerini (1979, 1990, 1992) Grele (1985), Portelli (1990, 1991) and others. These writers point to questions of subjectivity, performance and collaboration in the interview situation and memories 'suppressed' as if nothing of consequence has happened in a period.

Certain periods may be given changes in meaning and importance as individuals continually reinterpret or assess their 'past' – thus the timing of narrative is not simply chronological (Skultans 1998). Frisch (1998) argues that bringing together memory, experience and history alongside a detached view gives an important means of observing how people carry their culture and history. Passerini and Portelli brought attention to how omissions and re-ordering of memories occur and that these are of considerable importance in understanding how individuals form their concept of past events (Passerini 1979, 1990: Portelli 1990, 1991).

Grele argues that by recognising the ideological context of the oral history interview, oral historians have a way of dealing with the mass of information provided by the informant. By

addressing the complex issue of historical memory oral historians can begin to reveal the deeper structures which inform what seem to be unconnected words or parts (Grele, 1998, pp. 48-49).

What is apparent in the study of memory as emphasized within oral history, is that we are not simply dealing with individual memories but also group, generational, and more formal public accounts – these interrelate with individual memories in complex ways (Perks & Thompson 1998).

2.2.5 GENDERED SUBJECTIVITY

The focusing and investigation of issues of gendered subjectivity and its multiple and varied dimensions of other social influences has well been explored by researchers with an interest in identity in different disciplines. The relative importance of gender in developing a much broader understanding of both individual and collective identities has now become a well-established practice.

2.2.6 POST-STRUCTURALISM

2.2.7 The Subject and Subjectivity

Hollway (1989) emphasizes subjectivity to be played out through self-awareness processes and our relations to multiple dynamic discursive practices, wherein individual and collective constructions of selves are shaped. Subjectivity is also gendered, although in a non-deterministic, or homogeneous and monolithic manner (Hollway, 1989; Mama, 1995). The reproduction of gendered subjectivity is an exclusively social construction that is both in relation to and in opposition to dominant discourses on gender, sex and sexuality (Shefer 1999). Much feminist work

on gender identity has focused on the idea of embodiment whose dynamic and mediatory inferences are held partially to overcome the dualisms of mind and body, determinism and practice and the material and not material (Braidotti, 1994, Butler, 1993).

Post-structuralist theory sees subjectivity as constantly in process, being constituted and reconstituted through whatever discursive practice is accessible in the individuals' social interactions. In this regard, subjectivity is always relationally produced (Henriques, et al 1984 Burr, 1995). Identity is therefore in this sense externally influenced or derived. It is never from within the individual. Thus, because situations, contexts and modes of representation are never stable or truly objective, it is inevitable that that these identities reflect this flux and contradiction.

Contradictory discourses may produce contradictory identities and constructions of self. The reproduction of subjectivity may sometimes be exploited to serve dominant group interests. This is effectively achieved when individuals adopt dominant groups' ideologies as their own (Weedon 1987). The individual comes to perceive such ideology as internally derived and independently chosen by her/himself. Alternatively, the existence of a discursive space within which individuals may contest a prescribed subject position, would easily facilitate a creation of other subject positions. Foucault (1972) emphasized the concept of 'resistance' as part of his theorization of power, wherein all power produces counter discourses that in turn create new knowledge, truths and therefore new powers.

Post-structuralism has also been significant in its deconstruction of the notion of a unitary, non-contradictory and rational subject. In the words of Weedon (1987: p 22) post-structuralism generally assumes that "meaning is constituted within language and is not guaranteed by the subject which speaks it". Michel Foucault has been instrumental in putting forward the idea of a non-neutral knowledge production system, and more importantly, the role of power relations in this re-production. Henriques et al., (1984) however pointed out that post-structuralism may be somewhat limited in its theorising of the subject and subjectivity.

2.2.8 Researching gendered subjectivity

Research from a post-structuralist approach attempts to examine gendered identity and subjectivity by exploring the manner in which it is constituted within and through the relations of power and discourse. Various post-structuralist psychology scholars have engaged with gender in their work (Hollway 1989; Mama, 1995; Skeggs 1997). Hollway (1989) focused on gender identity and sexuality as an exploration of the development of subjectivity amongst heterosexual couples. The study was particularly significant for its utilisation of a non-unitary, non-rational character of subjectivity, its social and historical production process as well as the role of power relations and their reproduction in intimate relationships. Hollway (1989: p.284) in a re-evaluation of the feminist notion of 'female consciousness' has pointed out that women relate to men through a multiplicity of discourses (which very often may not accommodate any concept of sexism) and position themselves within such discourses, and thus may individually or collectively deny or downplay any event of sexism. Female consciousness is thus much more than an "unmediated product of experience". What should be emphasised therefore, is the role and influence of *culture and meaning*, because meaning is negotiated and based on an individual's interpretation of their world and whatever available discourse(s) at a particular

moment, thus the attribution of experience can easily become "the most crucial site in the political struggle over meaning" (Weedon, 1987: p. 79). The process with which an individual attributes meaning to an event and/or experience will therefore determine the active or passive stance she will adopt in resisting dominant constructions.

Also utilising such a concept of non-unitary, non-rational subject, Mama (1995) conducted a study exploring the gendered identities of black British women, however, with a particular focus on the social factors of race, class and geographical location. Mama (1995) writes that the combined effects of race and gender oppression with the class divisions of late capitalist society constitute what has come to be known as 'triple oppression', derived from dualistic structuralist and Marxist tradition of social theory. This is an attempt to theorize and respond to the multiple oppression of exclusion and marginalisation experienced by many black women. She cautions against this triple oppression being conjured as the notion of a 'monolithic social structure bearing down on all oppressed groups and black women especially (Mama, 1995: p.147) and that it is also necessary to be mindful of how the structuralism of race, gender and class can provide its own limitations, due to its limitation in exploring the psychology of black women. She states further that this thus fails to account for the dynamic and creative manifestations of black women's subjectivity, innovation and resilience in ways of living and being.

Reinforcing the importance that the social category of class plays towards the development of subjectivity, Skeggs (1997) investigated the experiences of working class women in Britain and the processes within which the category 'woman' are produced. Much focus has been given to

previously marginalised groups of people as subjects of research and attempting to explore the construction of their subjectivities as they invent and experience it. In some trends of research in gendered subjectivity by post-structuralist psychology scholars have focussed on an interrogation of the boundaries of subjectivity, through an examination of the intersections and ambiguities of race, ability, identity and gender (Letlaka-Rennert, 1996; Skeggs, 1997; Letlaka-Rennert & Helms 1997; Carstarphen, 1999; May, 2000). Much greater focus has been given to previously marginalised groups of people as subjects of research and attempting to explore the construction of their subjectivities as they invent and experience it.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the development of oral history as a field of study Portelli (1991) writes that research has focused mostly on genre in oral history: the use of folklore and anecdote, the influence of other oral or written forms of discourse such as epic, the novel or mass media: the analogies and differences between orality and writing and so on. Portelli (1991) argues that oral history 'tells us less about *events* than about *meaning.* …Interviews often reveal events or unknown aspects of known events: they cast new light on unexplored areas of the daily life of the non-hegemonic classes..... Oral sources are credible but with a *different* (sic) credibility. The importance of oral testimony may lie not in its adherence to fact but to rather its departure from it, as imagination, symbolism, and desire emerge' (Portelli, 1991, p.50 - 51).

Feminist historians have played an important role within the field of historical inquiry inspiring new interest and debate surrounding oral history. Traditional historiography has always neglected women's lives and feminist historians recognised that the dominant ethos of the historical discipline could be contested through oral history as it offered feminist historians an avenue to redefine the centre of history by incorporating women's voices. To conceptualise the oral histories in the proposed study listening to women's narrations will enable the historical enquiry to see how these women understood, negotiated or challenged dominant ideals and to offer insights into lives that were characterised as marginalized.

3.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.2.1 BUTLER'S READING OF CONCEPTS AND IDENTIFICATION AND POWER AND POWER IN RELATION TO GENDER AND GENDERED SUBJECTIVITY

Embodiment has been the focus of much feminist work on gender identity. Butler's work on gender identity has focused on the idea of embodiment which styles a notion of gender identity as a lived set of embodied potentialities rather than as an externally imposed set of limiting norms (Butler, 1993, Braidotti 1994). The themes of textuality and power figure in Judith's Butler's work as well (1990, 1993, 1995). Butler argues that the philosophical underpinnings of our modes of thought give the impression that the material and subjective reality of our bodies are somehow natural or inherently given, as if a simple fact. In examining these assumptions she argues that the body is mediated, as *psyche and soma*, within and through the entwined relations of power and discourse. Butler (1993) engages with Foucault's (1977, 1978, 1982, 1991) argument on power in her attempt to think through the interdependence and interpenetration of nature and culture. Her aim is to explore how the relations of power and discourse mediate and confer our bodies or being, that is the manners in which identity is brought to life through discourse.

3.2.2 Discourse, Power and the Body: Gender Performativity

Butler (1990, 1993, 1995) engages with gender through her reading of the classical psychoanalytic concept of identification and Foucault's (1977, 1978, 1982, 1991) critical analysis of the relations of power. She argues that the body assumes or appropriates its gendered investiture (understood as the sense in which bodies are invested with and by power/knowledge relations) within these relations of power and discourse, through the process of identification. That is, identification mediates the "subjectification" (the ways a human being turns themselves

into a subject) of the body that occurs within and through the relations of power and discourse (Butler, 1993: p. 15). It follows that an individual participates in this very investiture and is not mechanically propped, as it were, by the relations of power and discourse.

The concept of identification allows Butler (1990, 1993) to carve a space to explore gendered identity and subjectivity not as a stable identity structure without fissure or change, but rather as the continually reiterated and negotiated effect of the relations of power and discourse. These relations of power and discourse are not homogeneous or monolithic. Butler (1993) argues "… to say that there is a matrix of gender relations that institutes and sustains the subject is not to claim that there is a singular matrix that acts in a singular and deterministic way to produce a subject as its effect" (Butler, 1993: p.8). That is, the relations of power and discourse produce the field of *sanctioned* modes of subjectivity in relation to what is *culturally* constructed as that which has to be disavowed.

Since the investiture of the body is not singular in nature, there are different possible modes of subjectivity within societies. The nub of Butler's (1990, 1993) argument though is the regulation of these possibilities within and through the relations of power and discourse. It follows that an individual's identification or "identificatory practices" (Butler, 1993: p. 3) are regulated. The crux of Butler's (1990, 1993, 1995) argument on identification and power is the "performative" (Butler, 1993: p. 2) nature of gendered identity and subjectivity, that is, the stable sense one may have of being male or female is a *continually* reiterated and negotiated effect of event within and through the relations of power and discourse.

This iterability implies that 'performance' is not a singular act or event but rather a habitualised production. This repetition is not performed by a subject, rather this repetition is what enables a subject and constitutes the temporal condition for the subject. Butler's (1990, 1993, 1995) formulation of the idea of the performative endeavours to move past understanding the construction of gender identity as a uni-directional process of imposition by conceiving of it in

terms of the temporally more open process of repetition. Repetition designates both a process of intense corporeal inscription and also an essential instability at the heart of dominant gender norms. According to Butler's formulation the possibility of agency emerges from the moment of indeterminacy inherent in the process of reiteration. Every performance of identity is also always potentially disruptive or disturbing.

The predominance of the symbolic in Butler's formulations has been critiqued by various scholars. McNay (2000) comments that the limitations of Butler's work on embodiment is that it remains largely in the symbolic, or more narrowly a linguistic, conception of the construction of corporeal identity. Furthermore, that whilst all social practices are to some degree linguistically mediated, they are not necessarily linguistic in nature, here McNay cites as example that the patterns of employment discrimination or economic exclusion are deeply sedimented, complex and reproduced in ways that the linguistic model does not adequately capture.

Elliot (1996) comments that Butler's emphasis on performance tends to limit analytical attention to imagination and the role of imagination. Elliot (1996) also comments that Butler precludes understanding of the self in terms of inner desires, psychological identities or emotional needs, as such, people only come to see themselves as possessing inner lives and psychological identities through sets of repeated gender performances. Benhabib (1995) and Fraser (1995) comment that the subsumption of Butler's material within the symbolic has a correlation in the reduction of the broader issue of gender hierarchies to that of the construction of sexual identity. The effect of this is that agency is narrowly conceived in terms of linguistic effects or as a positionality within language and is operationalized often by the delimited realm of sexuality.

In later work Butler (1997) addresses the issues of her alleged conflation of the material with the symbolic through a re-elaboration of the notion of the performative in terms of speech act theory. Butler addresses the criticism of the lack of social-historical specifity in the idea that the performative is through the assertion of the significance of the discrepancy between the symbolic and practice. Butler's (1997) reformulation is based around the central thesis that speech is always, to some degree, out of control, rendering it susceptible to processes of unauthorized appropriation and, hence resignification. She contends that acknowledgement of this volatility, the excitability of discourse, frees speech from the pervasive intentionality of the reputed autonomous subject. Butler's (1997) insistence on the gap between speech and conduct thus expands an understanding of political agency beyond institutional and judicial arenas, giving provision to 'ways of restaging and resignifying speech in contexts that exceed those determined by the courts' (Butler, 1997: p.13).

3.2.3 Implications of Butler's work for the present research

It follows from the above discussion that an individual engages at some level with his or her culturally mediated experience of being a male or female, that is to be conforming, affirming, resisting or dissenting to these experiences. Accordingly, empirical research needs to pay attention not only to the content of a subject's narratives but also to the narrative process.

3.2.4 RICOUER'S READING OF CONCEPTS OF NARRATIVITY AND AGENCY AND HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN RELATION TO GENDERED SUBJECTIVITY

The issue of the identity of the self, significantly the question of its coherence has been somewhat ignored in the post-structural stress on the conflicting and dispersed nature of subjectivity. Ricoeur's (1983, 1988, 1991, 1992) conception of the narrative structure of the self suggests a dynamic basis to agency - here the narrative as a universal feature of social life and through it, the Primary mode through which the grounding of human experience in time is understood. This temporality of the human condition cannot be spoken of in direct discourse of the phenomenon, and must be mediated through the indirect discourse of narration. The idea of temporal density is at the core of narrative identity and suggests one way of conceptualising the mediated nature of gender in late-capitalist societies.

Narrative gives form to identity and through it a form of self-identity is expressed which is not dependent on external imposition, thus narratives' dimension of subject formation offers a wide-ranging account of the creative and autonomous aspect of agency. The narrative interpretation of experience points to the symbolic nature of human action, in that if it can be narrated it is inherently symbolic in nature. According to Ricoeur narrative self-formation is never complete, this is important in that it suggests the impossibility of closures to the construction of the self. The implication of Ricoeur's idea of narrative as an intricate element in the symbolic construction of identity mediates the tension between the essentialist and constructivist approaches to identity.

Feminist scholar McNay (2000) argues that "the inherent temporality of the concept reformulates this dichotomy between fixity and contingency so that the formation of the subject has the dynamic unity of narrative configuration. This dynamic concept of unity establishes a potentially fruitful convergence with feminist attempts to understand gender identity as durable but not immutable" (McNay, 2000: p83). These tensions inherent in the concrete negotiation of increasingly conflictual female roles have informed the work of various scholars on gendered identity as a process in which the interlacing and conflictual practices of self-representation are both the effect of representation, and that which remains beyond representation (De Lauretis (1987, Butler 1990, 1993a, Pellegrini 1997,).

Ricoeur's ideas on the notion of creativity have been discussed by many writers (Kearney *et al* 1996). According to Ricoeur (1994, p. 126) thought imagination inhabits an indispensable role in action; creativity denotes the extent to which the imagination, as it operates in anticipatory consciousness, makes up action in that there is 'no action without imagination'.

3.2.5 Agency and gender formations as durable but not immutable

McNay (2000) argues that Ricoeur's idea of creativity as a theory for agency has not been widely considered within social theory and that there are three key points that underpin the 'anticipatory or projective function' of imagination in the comprehension of action. For Ricouer (1994) imagination occupies a fundamental role in the choice of an action through the imaginative enactment of different possible courses of action that will determine the choice of action. Here, Ricoeur, by emphasising the latent element of creativity within action offers a more dynamic model of social reproduction, which to a degree, resonates with the concern of

feminist theory to understand gender formations as durable but not immutable. In Ricoeur's formulation this more creative notion of agency is formulated through temporalisation of autonomy.

In the essay 'Imagination in Discourse and Action' (1994), Ricoeur extends the exploration of the idea of the productive imagination from a theory of semantic innovation in metaphor to the idea of agency. For Ricoeur action can only be understood with reference to the anticipatory or projective function of imagination. This requires four key considerations - first, imagination plays a central role in determining a course of action, individuals take actions by imaginatively considering other possible courses of action. Second, it is within "the luminous clearing" established by the practical imagination that it is possible to distinguish between the various incentives of an action such as desires, ethical, logical or physical limitations. Ricoeur states that "The imagination provides the mediating space of a common "fantasy" for things as diverse as the force which pushes as if from behind, the attraction which seduces as if from in front, reasons which justify and establish as if from underneath" (1994: 126). Third, it is in the realm of practical imagination that individuals try out their capacity to do something in the sense of 'I could have done otherwise if I wanted'. The role of the imagination at these three levels pertains to the phenomenology of individual action. The fourth level is where imagination plays a crucial role in the mediation of intersubjective relationships. For Ricoeur a critical hermeneutics cannot remain at the level of individual action.

Ricoeur's formulation of the central role of the imagination in action suggests forms of relation between self and other or intersubjective relations. He proposes that the historical field of action

is only understood through the placement of categories of common action upon the temporal fluidity of experience, thus then it 'establishes the relations between contemporaries, predecessors and successors partially through the transmission of tradition…in some sense, establishes the other as another self like myself' (1994: p128). This means that imagination makes up not only individual action but also intersubjective relations and collective forms of action.

Whilst Ricoeur's idea of narrative identity does impart a valid interpretative analysis on the active role played by the subject in the process of self-formation, McNay (2000) points out the weaknesses in Ricoeur's thought which tends to disregard a close analysis of the ideological and institutional context in which narrative forms operate. Feminist concerns with understanding how gender differences are transformed into inequalities addresses the connection between narrative and power more explicitly and in this respect serves to counterbalance the emphasis of text as a model for action in Ricoeur's work.

3.2.6 Implications of Ricoeur's work for the present research

Ricoeur's situation of temporal complexity at the core of narrative identity offers a way of conceptualising the mediated nature of gender identity and the uneven and non-synchronous nature of change within gender relations. Furthermore, Ricoeur's (1994) highlighting of the role played by imagination in the institution of intersubjective relations concurs with various feminist attempts to conceptualise agency in other than rational or instrumental terms (including Min-ha 1989, hooks 1990, Wallace 1993), and provides a viable framework for the interpretive understanding of agency in the proposed study.

3.3 PARTICIPANTS

3.3.1 Description of participants

Thandi Shezi.

She testified in the Women's Hearings of the TRC although she had initially decided that she would not participate in the TRC hearings at all. Her activism started in 1982 where she later joined the underground structures of the ANC and was later detained. She authored and narrated her role as herself in the play *This Story I Am About To Tell.*

Catherine Mlangeni

She testified at the ordinary hearings of the TRC where she testified as a secondary victim, as the mother of slain activist Bheki Mlangeni. She was politically radicalized by her sons after having been active as a branch member in liberation structures namely, the ANC Women's League. She authored and narrated her role as herself in the play *This Story I Am About To Tell.*

3.3.2 Procedure

The participants were identified from the play *This Story I Am About To Tell* as women who had self-authored and narrated their own stories in the play and as women who had both testified at the TRC. The research participants were briefed on the aim of the research and their rights. The researcher, who is a female, conducted the interviews. The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed for the purposes of analysis. The transcriptions were done by the researcher. One interview is entirely in isiZulu and the English is translated from the isiZulu transcript, the other interview is mainly in English and peppered with isiZulu words or phrases by the participant.

Ethics clearance has been obtained

3.3.2 The participants were given consent forms to consider in their own time. The forms contain the description of their rights as participants and the aim of the research. [see to Appendix A, part 1]

3.3.3 Instrument

Structured interviews were conducted on the basis of an interview schedule (see Appendix A, part 2). The aim of the interviews was to elicit the participating individuals' subjective accounts of their lives and experiences as black women who were activists and had appeared at the TRC as victims of gross human rights violations.

The transcribed interviews are presented in Appendix B (part 2a and 2b).

3.3.4 Method

An essential characteristic of qualitative research is that the researcher attempts to understand people in their own definition of the world. The naturalist method, as presented by Lofland and Lofland (1995), is an omnibus procedural guide. They draw particularly on the methodological development in ethnography, grounded theory and the sociological school of symbolic interactionism to provide a systemic method of conducting qualitative observation and analysis. They argue that their method of analysis is applicable to qualitative field studies and research based on an interactional context such as an interview.

For Lofland and Lofland (1995) naturalist means "…minimising the presuppositions with which one approaches the empirical world" (Lofland & Lofland, 1995: p. 7). This demands the suspension of our assumptions on what constitutes our social world, which guards against reifying and inputting our assumptions on the data.

3.3.3 A life-course approach was utilised, the life-course with its emphasis on the interrelationships of individual, family and historical time opens up the possibility of a more detailed analysis of the integral elements of individual lives. Life course analysis emphasizes the availability of options and individual choice.

It follows that one should reflect on the research setting and process. As Lofland and Lofland (1995) argue, the research setting, whether a laboratory or interview, cannot be seen as a neutral space. Lofland and Lofland argue that the research setting is a "social arrangement" (Lofland & Lofland, 1995: p. 147) and as such is "incessantly fabricated" (ibid). Narratives, then, do not subsist in a social vacuum. Therefore, one needs to explore the narrative and interview process.

Process concerns the manner in which such phenomena as hesitations, ambivalence, ambiguities, tensions and moments of doubt are borne out or articulated in the participants' engagement with the researcher and research questions. The emphasis is on the word engagement, which means an active and negotiated process. As Lofland and Lofland (1995) state, "meaning is not inherent in reality but imputed" (Lofland & Lofland, 1995: p. 16), and is thus "fragile" and precarious" (ibid).

Lofland and Lofland (1995) divide their method into the processes of focusing, categorisation and integration. These processes are discussed in sections 3.4. to 3.4.1.4 The procedure is discussed in detail in sections 3.5 onwards.

3.3.5 **Process**

3.3.6 Focusing

Lofland and Lofland (1995) argue that the research focus should be clearly articulated, as it makes clear the frame or mindset with which one approaches the data. They suggest that one describes one's focus in terms of the level of social reality one is exploring. More specifically, one should describe the level or unit of social organisation. Social practices are defined as "recurrent categories of talk and action" (Lofland & Lofland, 1995: p. 103) which the participants regard as a "normal and undramatic feature of ongoing life" (ibid). The researcher

singles out and dwells on these features as being "remarkable (and of) analytic significance" (ibid).

One should also specify the aspects of the unit of social organisation one is focusing on, for example, the meaning or emotions invested in social practices.

3.3.7 Categorisation

The process of categorisation elucidates the focus on one's research. The process entails the segmentation and coding of the data, which gives a certain organisation to the data. The codes or categories for coding the data are developed through the processes of induction and deduction (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). Induction is where one immerses oneself in the data and limits one's preconceptions or assumptions from determining the data. Deduction is where one's engagement with the data is pre-determined by one's theoretical assumptions or past experiences.

These processes of induction and deduction are not independent or separate. This follows from Lofland and Lofland's (1995: p. 105) argument that there can never be a pure inductive process. A researcher's experience, personal or epistemological, does influence his or her immersion in the object of analysis in some way. Thus there is the interplay of inductive and deductive processes.

3.3.8. Integration

On completion of the segmentation and categorisation process one begins to explore the inter-relations or patterns between the categorised data. This process is synthetic in nature and entails a spiral-like movement of attending to the categorised data, forming tentative links between categories of data and forming links between links.

The process begins with the analytic work of drawing memos. Memos are the sense the researcher gathers by a continuous re-reading of and engagement with the categorised data.

They are the researcher's "ideas about the patterns and meanings in the data" (Lofland & Lofland, 1995 p. 109). Through the exhaustive cycle of sorting, editing and sifting through the various memos one forms an "inter-related set of memos that form a coherent analysis" (ibid).

3.4 Procedure

3.4.1 Focusing

The unit of social organisation the present research explores is gendered histories and consciousness, that is, the varied and recurrent ways one perceives and accounts for one's gender and lived experiences in one's life history. The research focuses on the subjective meanings that individuals hold in these practices.

3.4.1.2 Categorisation

3.4.1.3 *Units of segmentation*

The unit of segmentation for the individual transcripts is themes. As one reads the transcribed interviews one demarcates the individual themes that emerge, which are key sentences or phrases. For the purpose of coding a distinction is made between major and related themes. The segmented thematic units and related process units are presented in the analysis of the data.

3.4.1.4 *The framework of categories for coding the segmented data*

As one demarcates the thematic and process units, one notes the tentative abstract 'classes or sets' that begin to emerge from that process. For example, a class or set is suggested by the emergence of several thematic units and focus on the differences among individuals. These sets are either elaborated on specific categories or discarded as one continually immerses oneself in the data.

The final categories are presented in the analysis. The process categories are represented numerically and thematic categories alphabetically.

The categories of data are presented below in section 3.5.1

3.4.1.5 Integration

The process of integration is two-pronged in the present research. The first step is the tentative exploration of the meaning and patterns that emerge from the categorised major and related themes in each transcript. These tentative memos are presented in the analysis.

The second step is the exploration of the meaning and patterns between categories, with each category containing themes from the two transcripts. It is spiral-like movement and begins with several readings of the categories data. Through this reading and re-reading one tentatively notes the inter-relations that emerge. One reflects on these memos and attempts to form a coherent set of inter-relations.

3.5 ANALYSIS OF DATA

Subjectivity is not only dynamically formed but also continually changing and being constituted and reconstituted, from one instant to another, as well as over longer periods of time. Once one has taken this view of subjectivity as being continuously constituted throughout life (Weedon 1987; De Lauretis 1987; Mama, 1995; and see theoretical discussion above) then it follows that is can be studied at any time in the life cycle.

3.5.1 Presentation of categorised data

The categorised data are presented through successively attending to the individual questions of the interview. The purpose is to keep the narrative flow and order of the transcribed interviews within which the different themes emerge. (See Appendix B for Framework of Categories)

Category "B" (Education)

- Descriptions of experiences within the educational environment.

Section: Education

3.5.1.1

Mlangeni was removed from school by her mother at the end of Std. 5:

119. CM: *I did Std. 4 and Std. 5 and I could not go any further and my mother said she couldn't take me to school anymore.*

120. PL: *Your older sister, was she at school?*

120. CM: *She had also been taken out. You see there was this thing that disturbed the older people that if you were a girl you shouldn't go to school because you would get pregnant and all sorts of things and so on. There was a priest who taught us at school asked if I could go back to school to see him, "I will teach her"* he said. *And I think when my Mother talked with her friends they would say "Whooo!, where will you get the cows (lobola) from?" And that's when I couldn't go any further because my mother said no. A girl has no use for school.*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni dissents with the view regarding her education termination as a girl. Also she relates the issue of lobola, as a possible concern of her mother, alluding to economic gain that girls provide to families, and that possibly that an educated girl could price herself out of the available market of suitors.

Mlangeni's mother decided on another course of education for Mlangeni, which was traditional Initiation school for girls as per baSotho custom for three months, she narrates:

160. PL: *How do the baSotho practice this?*

160.CM: *They tell you that you are grown up now, this and that you don't do. You don't sleep around and go with boys and not come back home (decorum). You must sleep at home. When you leave this place there will be young men who will proposition you. When you like one he will take you.*

161. PL: *So who teaches you?*

161.CM: *There are those designated people who do these teachings.*

162. PL: *Oh so you have left home? You were at another place?*

162.CM: *We are at another place..you must do this and that and when you live here you will do this and that.*

163. PL: *How long did you stay there?*

163.CM: *We stayed for three months.*

164. PL: *Three months?*

164.CM: *Yes*

165. PL: *But they don't do anything to the body?*

165.CM: *No. They don't do anything to the body.*

166. PL: *So it's the same that if you leave you are eligible to have a boyfriend?*

166.CM: *You can be propositioned thereafter. And we know that so and so is with so and so*

167. PL: *Were you happy to go there?*

167.CM: *I was. I had been taken out of school and my whole interest had been school I was told "you are grown now you must stop going to school and enter another stage"*

so it was not good to argue with my mother who had raised us. We did not like to contradict her. Her word was the last one.

168. PL: *What was it liked in those three months?*

168.CM: *It was nice. We were a group, we did the same thing together. Our families brought us food until the day graduated, the place was in Nquthu where we lived.*

169. PL: *Are you working? Is there any work that you do during that time?*

169.CM: *No there isn't. We just learnt what we needed to know for when we left home. What we would be doing thereafter. That is what we learnt.*

170. PL: *How do you view this practice?*

170.CM: *I saw it as a good thing because it teaches you. It teaches you about when you leave to go to your family home how you must conduct yourself. You mustn't do all sorts of things.*

171. PL: *You see it as a good thing, an important/necessary thing?*

171.CM: *Yes. It's important. I wish that time could happen with these kids nowadays.*

Tentative memo:

In Mlangeni's responses to the sequence of questions around the traditional education the prevalent theme is of conformity due to parental pressure and identification with the outcomes of Initiation school teachings.

Shezi started her Primary School education in Soweto (79.TS – 110.TS Appendix B part 2b) but was subsequently sent to KZN after the 1976 Soweto Uprisings where she went to High School.

Regarding peer pressure as a girl, Shezi narrates:

130.PL *What kind of social or peer pressure do you remember as a girl? As a teenager, in High School?*

130. TS: *I can't remember that one because I grew up as a tomboy. I always associated myself with boys and I would talk the boy's language, I was always fighting, even with boys…I think I still have a scar from one of those fights ..(she starts looking on her upper arm), where is it? There was one big scar from a fight … anyway, so I wouldn't know what pressure girls were under because it was never my thing.*

Shezi narrates who her favourite teacher was:

122. TS: *My favourite teacher was Sir Vilakazi. He was teaching me History. He was my favourite because he used to cry when I used to argue with him about Jan Van Riebeeck. So I liked that one (laughter), to be in power.*

Tentative memo:

Shezi's response in 130.TS relates that she "acted" like a boy, was one of the boys and she narrates herself as tough, and resisting conventional gender demarcations.

In Shezi's response in 122.TS she says she liked to 'be in power' she seems to relish being able to defy a teacher, at least with regards to history content citing contestation to settler history, and was able to make her teacher cry. In both narrations she represents herself as independent and physically and intellectually tough. The theme of rebel emerges.

Section: Marriage/Partners

Category "B" (Intimate relations)

- These are descriptions where the participants describe the quality of their intimate relations and their subjective sense of being female within those relationships.

3.5.1.2

For Mlangeni the route to her marriage came at age eighteen, two years after she had been taken out of formal school and sent for three months to traditional school for Initiation by her mother.

174. PL: *How did you meet your husband?*

174.CM: *He had relatives in Natal. I think that they also liked me and said "Here is a girl who is respectful and so on" is the way they spoke. And as time went on my mother also said "Take this man. You can see that he is self-sufficient".*

175. PL: *Was he not your boyfriend?*

175.CM: *He was. Well not yet, he was still asking me out. You know in the rural areas they talk with your parents and say "We want this child" and my mother also encouraged me "It perhaps will also help us to improve our condition."*

179. PL: *So, nobody forced you into marriage?*

179.CM: *No, my mother spoke very earnestly with me. When I heard her reasons I thought 'Well my mother is struggling with money, maybe things might get better.'*

180. PL: *So there was some pressure to say it would be good if you could do this ?*

180. CM: *Yes, there was.*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni struggles to admit that there was some pressure for her to marry, seemingly for economic reasons as well, to make things better at home, her husband as son-in-law would somehow be able to alleviate economic pressures at home.

Mlangeni relates that the early years in her marriage were happy, Mlangeni was age twenty–two and had had two children when they moved to Springs, where she was able to have her own house with her husband and their family. During this time she had never formally worked. (209. CM – 212.CM Appendix B part 2a).

Mlangeni describes their leaving Springs to go to Soweto, she narrates:

216.CM: *(short pause) we stayed for, how long?, because …(long pause), I was breastfeeding Thabang when we got here (she puts her hand on her breast and holds an imaginary baby) When we left Springs to come here. (long, long pause), (sighs) eyi…*

217. PL: *Are you allright Mam'Catherine?*

217. CM: *Yes… It was very hard….it was hard…*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni recalls time in a very bodily manner, she genders her body in a biological sense, touches her breast, the working breast that breastfeeds, her hand over her heart area - in memory possibly of the hardship, Thabang her son was born in 1956 and was her third child. The family's economic resources were stretched as Mlangeni's husband did not have regular employment on the railroads.

Shezi's responses to intimate partners and child rearing is described, she narrates:

168. PL: *And partners? Did you have any partners, boyfriends around '86?*

168. TS: *No, I had two kids by then, you see in 1982 when I was in High School I was pregnant with my first child, and then in 1984, by the time I took my first born for the ceremony of Imbeleko, (traditional baptism ceremony to announce child to ancestors) my second born came in. So I left my kids when they were very young.*

176. PL: *And were you with the father of these children?*

176. TS: *No, he's an IFP member…*

177. PL: *Your children's father?*

177. TS: *Yes, him.*

178. PL: *So, what do you mean he is an IFP member?*

178. TS: *I got him in Natal, so he was IFP. He remained an IFP member.*

179. PL: *So he was your boyfriend then?*

179. TS: *Yes.*

180. PL: *But you met him but he was already in a different political party?*

180. TS: *I met him in school, we grew up together, you see when you are at school, every child is an IFP*

181. PL: *So, did you continue after you had Ayanda?*

181. TS: *By then I was too deep into politics. I had to tell him to go to hell and I will raise my kids.*

182. PL: *And was he involved in any way with the children's support?*

182. TS: No, he thought he was punishing me.

Tentative memo:

The theme of political identity as a core identity which informs her choices emerges from Shezi's relating the reason for termination of her significant relationship: she was "*too deep into politics*" ,which were ANC politics. She describes her termination of the relationship in fiery terms and says her children's father thought he was punishing *her* by not providing for the children, suggesting that his punishment was ineffectual and she was stronger and not affected by this.

Section: Work

Category "C" (Work)

- Descriptions around work and financial decisions.

3.5.1.3

Mlangeni describes her years of marriage as happy but there was then a deterioration in the marital relationship as Mlangeni's husband was drinking heavily and stopped contributing finances to the family upkeep (Appendix B part 2a, 232. CM – 238.CM), she had to seek employment.

Mlangeni started working in 1956, at the age of twenty-four she started off working as a domestic worker working seven days a week although she was not a live in worker, she had had three children at this point, two were attending school and the third one was a less than a year old. (261.CM - 275 CM Appendix B part 2a) Mlangeni's next job was at a garment factory

where she worked for the next thirty years. During this time she joined the Garment Workers Union of African Women, about the outcome of earning her own money , she relates:

276. CM: *I bought my children food, clothed them, all these things. Even at school…the fees*

278. PL: *So who decided what should be done with your money?*

278. CM: *I did. I decided what must happen with my money. It was me, because that one (her husband) didn't ask me about money because he didn't give me money. Only when he felt like it. He didn't even ask me what I did with the money.*

Tentative memo:

The theme of increased autonomy emerges with Mlangeni being able to decide what she wants to do with her money earned. There is also a marked transition in terms of her role, she had to become a provider for the family, as her husband was no longer providing. There is a shift in traditional roles in the home and power relations.. The whole responsibility of parenting has fallen onto Mlangeni it seems.

When Mlangeni retired in 1986, a shift of focus happened for her in how she re-defines her concept of work, she narrates:

313. CM: *I never worked. I got deep into the struggle, that was my work.*

314. PL: *What do you mean by this?*

314. CM: *I became political and became active, I was deep in, (she makes a gesture with her hand of immersion) fighting in the struggle.*

Tentative memo:

The theme of activist as self-identity emerges from Mlangeni's re-definition of work. There is a bodily re-enactment in her description of her immersion into activism, she describes how she was "*deep*" in the struggle, and relates herself as a fighter "*fighting in the struggle*".

For Shezi her responses to questions regarding her work history similarly define the struggle as her work, she narrates:

162. PL: *So, during this time, '82 you came back, during 83-86, were you working or were you working in addition to doing this stuff in the movement?*

162. TS: *In the ANC they had a strategy. They would look for a job for you, and place you in a certain company. I was working at Embassy Leather Luggage where my sister was working, that was my first job, where we were doing handbags.*

163. PL: *So were you really going to work? Were you a worker?*

163. TS: *I was not a worker per se.. I was undercover. People would think that I'm at work, but I'd be on a mission. It was a sort of a cover. Mr Swartz also understood what was happening because Mr. Swartz was also supporting us.*

167. PL: *What was your free time like?*

167. TS: *Do I even remember having any free time? I don't remember. Because I was always on a mission here, a DLB there (a dead letter box), information there, fetching ammunition there, deploying, so I was like, all over.*

Tentative memo:

Similarly with Shezi we see the identity of activist/combatant as self-identity emerge from her description of what "work" was to her. She describes her activities as an undercover operative and the missions she was undertaking as being constant.

Section: Political Exposure/Activism

Category "D" (Political identities and intersubjective relations)

- Formation of political identities. Intersubjective relationships provide an ensemble of meanings on gender and prescribe, inform or challenge the manner of being a certain gender.

3.5.1.4

Mlangeni had relocated from Springs in 1956 to Jabulani, Soweto, in the ensuing years she narrates:

334. PL: *So who taught you about politics?*

334. CM: *When I arrived here the first person who told me was this woman Winnie. Here at Jabulani there were no women who were active. Somebody would shout: "Women come out and hear how people are living here at in this country", here (in her area) nobody did anything but drink…and they would say "Hey women! Rise up!"*

335. PL: *Did Winnie Mandela say that?*

335. CM: *Yes*

336. PL: *When was this now?*

336. CM: *It was around the early '60's. It was then that Mama (Winnie Mandela) started going around here. We were in the shacks/squatter camps, she would go here, and go there , all over . We discovered that we needed to form an organization so that when one is upset/feels pain to talk to mothers and support each other.*

337. PL: *Did she call you to gather often?*

337. CM: *No not often. She would encourage us to form groups. So we grouped ourselves. The biggest thing was the difficulty with our husbands. They would beat their wives and we would go and diffuse the problem. Nobody was going to look after us. It was up to us to do that. "(sighs). "This is life. The children cannot grow up this way. We would persevere" those that succeeded and got jobs would work. We helped each other.*

340. PL: *So what times did you meet?? When did you meet?*

340. CM: *We met at around this time (late afternoon into early evening). There where were so many groups, that we were meant to choose one group. So our Winnie was ANC, which meant that our group fell under ANC. We admired her work, she was active. No matter what was happening, or a funeral she would be there.*

Tentative Memo:

Mlangeni relates that her first exposure to political awareness was from her hearing Winnie Mandela canvassing women. She narrates her perception of the groupings of women enabling

some sort of collective power "*It was up to us*" to be able to attend to such disputes. She relates great admiration for Winnie Mandela, and refers to her as *"our Winnie"*. Possibly Winnie Mandela, who was only a few years younger than Mlangeni, also reflected a model for the alternative Mother.

(Note: Winnie Mandela was living in Soweto, the Treason Trial was over in 1961 and the accused released, between March and December 1961 she enjoyed 'normal' family life with Nelson Mandela and her children. In 1962 she was subjected to uninterrupted legal orders of banning and restrictions. She started work clandestinely for the ANC, which included participating in underground meetings and printing and circulating pamphlets. Source : Mandela, 1985)

Mlangeni responds to the questions of which mass protests she remembers being part of, she narrates:

578. CM: *When I came to Johannesburg, I started working, and as we were working we joined unions and they taught us that there are things that are allowed, and other things which are not allowed. If there were marches happening in the Women's league, we used to go there. Even when we were marching to Pretoria, I was there.*

579. PL: *Oh, you were there, at the Women's March?*

579. CM: *Yes, I was there. But we were not the famous women who were known at the time. But we were with them, the (ANC) Women's League, and we had our uniforms and we knew on which days were wearing what kind of uniform. We had*

dedicated ourselves because we had agreed that we would accompany them to Pretoria.

580. PL: *So, you had joined the Women's league at that time?*

580. CM: *Yes, I was a member.*

581. PL: *So, you were a union member and a member of the ANC Women's League, and where the two groups would go together, would you go together as workers or as women?*

581. CM: *As workers. But you must remember were both women and workers.*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni's responses (578. CM – 581. CM) reflect the simultaneity and interconnectedness of subject positions as a woman and a worker (which enabled a position of new empowerment for her in the home arena) and interconnectedness of her selfhood and the collective.

Mlangeni had retired from formal employment in 1986, she describes her new work, the theme of activist as site of as self-identity emerges, she narrates:

341. PL: *When did you become politically active?*

341. CM: *(long pause) In the 60's we were not too clear. We just followed Winnie without really understanding. I started understanding properly when my children had already grown up into their teens saying "Mama why are you not doing anything? Mama what are you doing?"*

345. CM: *Yes (pause) I had some work that I was doing. I was a recruiter, I was on the Street committee, and what else, and the time of the rent boycott. Then that's the time I started working/being active.*

356. PL: *What kind of things did you do as women activists?*

356. CM: *We helped the poor. The very poor. The orphans. We would go around asking from people to donate and we would give the poor children, and those who did not have food. You would also contribute what you could. That's how we carried on.*

357. PL: *In the ANC Women's League what are the things you talked to people about? Did you help them or did you tell what the situation of the country was?*

357. CM: *We did talk about the situation of the country. "Can you see what these people are doing?"*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni relates a long trajectory of her political consciousness and development, from the 1960's where she says she says her political understanding was poor through to her growing political consciousness and activities in the mid 1980's.

Although Mlangeni had been involved in the ANCWL from the 1960's, her son Bheki contributed to her political development, she narrates:

378. CM: *Yes, he too was involved in the struggle, from when he was in High School. He also used to ask "Mama why are you not doing anything? You can see what the other mothers/women (aboMama) are doing, what's going on?". That's when I realised that I had to.*

Tentative memo:

It appears that Mlangeni's son, Bheki, who was also politically active, was a distinct influence in the process of the political radicalization of her female selfhood (see also 313.CM). The entry point into this radicalization of Mlangeni is as a mother. Motherism as a political way of being represents her immersion into activism.

Within her social milieu Mlangeni relates her experience of others reactions to her political activity she narrates:

358. PL: *Did you find people, maybe your family or your friends and neighbors who did not approve of your activities?*

358. CM: *Even these, they didn't like it. These (pointing to the neighbouring house on her left).*

359. CM: *They would say "You are making noise, Bheki is going (to jail), you are making noise. You are ignorant/uneducated (amaQaba)'". All sorts of things. "Can't she see how her children are? They are ignorant (she makes barking/chanting noises imitating freedom chant from toyi toying), What is that? What does their mother say? Even their mother is doing that! Oh no!".*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni relates a steadfastness in her deepening political activism and political identity. She relates that she was toyi-toying as was her son Bheki, being mocked by neighbours for participating in and displaying this type of radical protesting, and experiencing derogatory epithets (amaQaba/uneducated), this suggests the emergence of a radicalized self.

Mlangeni's husband did not join the struggle,

361. PL: *So you say you after you retired, your work became the struggle and what about your husband?*

361. CM: *My husband, what I liked about him was he didn't prevent us from meeting at home. He didn't object to anything, he didn't object to anyone sleeping at our home. He allowed it. He had no problem with it.*

Tentative memo:

In response to how her husband received her political activism, Mlangeni says "*He allowed it*" which suggests she thought that he had the power within the relationship to <u>not</u> allow it. It seems that Mlangeni always represents her husband's responses to things as a bit surprising, paradoxically is she saying he wasn't much of a man?

Mlangeni was a victim of repeated police harassment as the mother of her activist sons (two of her sons were politically active see transcript [Appendix B, part 1a, 379.CM, 383.CM]) she narrates:

384. CM: *They harassed me, they harassed me! They would come here in a convoy looking for one person. One name: Bheki. One day they came here after we had just finished eating…they harassed him and I said I'm also getting in the car. There was a time when they took children and they never made it to the police station, they'd die on the way. And I said "No! I'm going too. I am the mother here! Do you hear/understand me properly?!" I left with them. I refused to stay behind and threw myself with my body inside in the police van, two, three times, in out, in out. (she makes physical movements of launching her body forward into the imaginary van). In the police van I said "You take them somewhere else. The others don't come back. People like you take them away. So why must we remain behind? Let's follow our children!" So we can hear what you want from them… I had never stood up to a man… a man … to policemen before..*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni directly contests political authority and power and gendered power of the policemen not only in action but in speech "*No! I'm going too. I am the mother here! Do you hear/understand me properly?!"*.

Mlangeni narrates raids of the police to her home, she narrates:

589. PL: Did the police often come to your house?

589. CM: They used to come and I used to tell them that I am uneducated and I don't know what these pamphlets were about, and I'm not even sure what he (Bheki) is

studying, so I don't know. I just know that he is studying at school, but I don't even know what he is studying for.

590. PL: *So you used to make yourself out to be a mother who doesn't understand anything?*

590. CM: *Yes, a person who doesn't understand anything. But inside, I knew exactly what was going on. At times they would arrive and raid the house – at times they even used to throw me around on the floor, kicking me, and my husband would say that I'm stubborn. Why don't I just keep quiet? And I would ask him, "Why should I keep quiet?"*

591. PL: *So you used to talk to them? (the police)*

591. CM: *Yes, I would talk to them, I would tell the other one, maybe the black police, tell these ones that I don't know what they are talking about, when they are saying that Bheki is the one that is telling people not to pay their rates. And what I'm telling them, I'm telling them whatever I chose, so when they tell me their own thing, I'd say I don't know. When they say Bheki is the one not allowing people to pay their rents, I didn't know what that meant and I told them that.*

592. PL: *Your husband, when they arrived here, what did he used to say?*

592. CM: *He wouldn't say anything, he would just keep quiet.*

593. PL: *Would they beat him up too?*

593. CM: *No, they would see that he is quiet. They would see which is the one that jumps around a lot.*

594. PL: *And that was you?*

594. CM: *Yes. They used to say to me, that I'm the one who taught these children these things, "We are going to sort you out".*

595. PL: *And you were not scared?*

595. CM: *No, I didn't have that fear anymore because I could see now that the situation is tough, and things are really difficult for us. Even when they came one day and took Bheki and them, I insisted that I want to go with. I told the police that I am going with them. I know you want to go and kill them. You take them and you don't return them. I would ask them, "Are you going to kill the children?" And they would say no, they wouldn't. I would say to them, "We will all die together".*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni narrates that she would tell the police "*I'm telling them whatever I chose",* choice of words, could read as exercise of control. Mlangeni's description of physical violence from the police is characterized by understatement, although the content of the description is clearly violent. This seems to suggest a taken-for-grantedness or inability to recognize or acknowledge the violence that was directed to her body. Mlangeni relates herself as contesting police authority through speech and action and her husband as passive in the face of police harassment in the home. She relates herself even willing to risk death with her children as a mother fighting the system.

Over the course of years Mlangeni's son, Bheki, was arrested and jailed during the State of Emergency for a year. Mlangeni describes how her harassment continued even when Bheki was in jail, she narrates:

403. CM: *They came! They still came even when he was not around. They would say "We want to destroy this house so he can stop being a know-it-all where he is."*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni relates continued harassment and intimidation in the domestic sphere in the house even when Bheki was imprisoned, demonstrates State tactics of targeting of the family.

Bheki Mlangeni was subsequently assassinated via the means of a cassette bomb that had been mailed to him that exploded when he put on the headphones to listen to the cassette. He had completed his Law studies at Wits University and had been practising for six months as a Human Rights lawyer at the time of his assassination. He was living at home with his newly wed wife Seipati.

On the day of the day of Bheki's death, Mlangeni was at home, she narrates:

409. CM: *I was here. I heard this loud noise that I didn't recognise. I was not well at all day, I was here at home… that day, that day and went back to work (activism) distressed. I heard this noise and my daughter-in-law Seipati rushed in "Mama…" I can't even hear what she is saying: "there's Bheki in the garage". I go running out to the garage and they hold me back: "No…at home at your house". When I arrived they said "Don't come in. It's bad" I threw myself with my whole body in there and saw him. (sigh and long pause)…seeing is believing.*

Mlangeni would later witness, on that day, the remains of her son's exploded head being scraped off the walls and floor by the police, she narrates:

411. CM: *We stayed outside. They were saying that there was another bomb that was going to go off. We got help when Winnie (Mandela) came and she said these people…and it was raining and we were sitting outside. And we came into the house. Winnie came and we saw people (police) picking up pieces of his remains (she stands up, makes physical gestures demonstrating scraping at a wall towards and bends down towards the floor.)*

Tentative Memo:

Mlangeni (79 yrs) who walks slowly with a walking stick, stands up and demonstrated these movements she saw, trauma and memory and the body here also narrates. Her narration of trauma contains unfinished fragments.

Shezi became politically active in 1983 at age twenty-one, when she joined the ANC aligned Soweto Youth Congress (Soyco) which had been set up in 1982 to accommodate youth who were not at school. She had been studying matric in 1982 in KZN and returned home to Soweto when she fell pregnant in her matric year, she narrates:

150. TS: *I left actually in Matric, 1982, I left because I was pregnant with my first born. I came back to Johannesburg. In 1983 I joined Soyco, the Soweto Youth Congress, in Emndeni I was the secretary, from '83 – '85. I was now doing woman political, woman emancipation, and forming the street committees, by now…*

Shezi elaborates later in interview what "woman political" meant, she narrates:

211. TS: *I was first the secretary, then I was (doing) a publicity, and then I was doing political education for women emancipation. The young girls and the mothers, I would educate them that the woman's place is not only in the kitchen, you have to be in the forefront of the struggle.*

212. TS: *…so those were the places where we would carry our bibles as if we are going to church, we had no pen and paper to write anything. Everything that you were told you had to remember.*

Tentative memo:

Shezi relates the political education she gave as "*woman emancipation*" being defined as women in "*forefront of the struggle*", the emancipation is not linked to fighting patriarchy it seems.

Regarding the gender demographics in Soyco she narrates:

217. TS: *Actually the ratio was balanced. There were females and males, it was balanced, though mostly it was males, but there were a lot of women.*

224. PL: *Did you perceive any differences in the forms of activisms and tasks between males and females?*

224. TS: *No, we were all equal. We were all given equal tasks.*

225. TS: *Well I was treated normally as their equal. Because even my point of view was taken. If I'm wrong I'm wrong, if the males are wrong, we will always argue, and*

we'll come to the point where we'll compromise, but I'm not a compromising type you know, I end up being victorious where ever I go.

228. TS: *"…No, we actually had a workshop in the night, of saying we are all equal and we are all going to respect each other. So we were doing all our things under the respectful manner.*

Tentative memo:

Shezi again represents herself as tough and uncompromisingly challenging the status quo of male power and authority, and that there was an intervention in the leadership structure that women, or herself at least, had to have their contributions equally respected. It seems her positionality has changed somewhat compared to the High School self she related, she is no longer one of the boys.

Shezi was recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) in 1984.

214. PL: *So your say that you were recruited in 1984 to MK, and how did your activities change?*

214,TS: *So in 1985 I had to be removed from being a Secretary (of Soyco) because I had to go to Zambia to go and train as a special operative. The special operatives, where the people who were carrying ammunition into the country, and also looking for safe bases for trained cadres.*

152. PL: *So, how long were you in Zambia?*

152. TS: *In Zambia it was crash-courses. You would go in for six months and come back. They didn't want to keep us there for long because they didn't want people to suspect that something was going on. We'll go for six months in Zambia, then Botswana. You'll find that they'll tell you that "Cadre, next camp is in Botswana", you will stay there for three months and come back. When you come back, you come back with ammunition for the people that you have to deploy.*

153. PL: *So, what kind of training did you get?*

153. TS: *We were trained, how to open a sector, if you find that you are cornered because you don't have to disclose the information, so, it's either you submit or you fight. If you submit you are arrested and you have to die with the information. We were trained in Makarov, how to dissemble and assemble it, hand-grenade, how does it work, RPT 7, you name them…*

Tentative memo:

Shezi relates her military training in a very list like fashion, almost point form, there is also a language shift from her description of her Soyco activities which involved more first person singular, whereas when she describes her experiences in MK she almost exclusively uses the plural "we". Perhaps an identity shift, militarized identity formation?

Regarding the gender breakdown in the MK sectors she was now part of Shezi narrates:

233. TS: *Gender in the sector was a… you wouldn't have too much because we as females were sometimes perceived as the weak, you know they said the police can slap you with a one klap and you'd divulge all the information. So in your sector you look for the people who think…. they can be able to stomach (police brutality)….*

Tentative memo:

Shezi narrates the kind of woman who was recruited into MK, those who could withstand police brutality if apprehended, implying that she was that kind of female.

Regarding her family and the community and the reception to her activism Shezi relates:

200. PL: *So at home, did anybody know or nobody knew?*

200. TS: *About my activities? My mother knew but she didn't understand. You know the level of education of my parents..they knew that I was active in politics but they didn't understand what I was doing. The first time that my mother discovered that how advanced I am in politics, ….so I was coming back from Thokoza, after destroying the hostel in Thokoza, the famous one with ammunition, and I had no chance to take the bag where it had to be hidden. So, fortunately the only place I could hide it was my mother's bed. So I took off the mattress and the blanket and I laid down the AK's, the Makarov, put the blanket, and put everything back in place. But, I was slow to remove them. My mother during the weekends, she usually cleans the house. When she does the spring cleaning in her bedroom, I was not there. I left early that morning. There was another mission I had to carry out in Duduza, to distribute ammunition.*

…Only to find that my mother will pick up the bed, trying to do spring cleaning, moving the things around, she found the ammunition. They say she didn't say anything, she didn't shower, she just locked the bedroom and went straight to her brothers in Vosloorus and told them that," Here is this child, she is trying to kill us… going to get us killed." . When I come back in the afternoon, I'm wondering why so many of my Uncles cars were there, parked outside our house.

When I got inside the house my mother cried. I apologised to my Uncles, my Uncles used to be able to hit us, but my Uncles… especially Uncle Jan, the one younger than my mother, he said "No, they must leave my niece alone". He asked me, "Where are they going?" (the guns). We took them with his car to where they had to go to, and he said, nobody is going to beat you up, my niece, "Mayibuye" (she almost whispers this last word and tears up).

202. PL: *So, after this, was there stress at home?*

202. TS: *No, actually there was not stress. My Uncle actually explained to them the situation and everything, and that is when they become aware and they understood what role I'm playing. He even mentioned my brother and sister who we re in exile.*

203. PL: *So they had already gone to exile, these are your younger siblings?*

203. TS: *Yes, in 1983.*

204. PL: *Where did they go?*

204. TS: *Lusaka. My sister was doing standard Eight, my brother had finished Matric.*

205. PL: *Did they go together or at different times?*

205. TS: *At different times. The first one to go was my brother, and the next one to go was my sister and I was the only one who knew they were gone.*

(Shezi's younger siblings were members of COSAS and went as teenagers into exile via Lusaka and via Botswana, Appendix B part 2b 207.TM)

Tentative memo:

Shezi's narration here reflects the generational split regarding political activism in her family, also the realities of the role of secrets - her double or secret life as a special operative/combatant, the secret of hiding guns and ammunition around the house (which she continued to do as narrates in section "D") the knowledge that her teenage younger siblings were going into exile. She does not mention her father's presence (he was a long distance truck driver with long absences from home), and faced with the prospect of disciplinary corporal punishment from her Uncles; she also narrates being affirmed for her political role by another patriarch in her family, by the Uncle who intervened, she is a bit emotional when she narrates this.

Shezi describes how MK activities changed over the course of time, she narrates:

154. TS: *'84, '85. In 1986, we had to look for soft targets.*

156. PL: *So, what does soft target mean, like it doesn't matter who gets killed or what does it mean? People, civilians?*

157. TS: *Yes. Well if you are caught in cross-fire then you are caught in cross fire. But we were looking for targets where we know there are no blacks. Like Ghandi Square*

now, Van der Bijl, the buses that were there, were for the whites. So we know those are white kids. They are killing our kids in the townships, so we have to hit hard.

Tentative memo:

The 1980's saw escalations in Apartheid machinery, States of Emergency, and the ANC in turn had called for the country to be ungovernable in 1985.

Shezi was living at home with her parents and her children during this time and yet was able to travel in out of the country, whilst living with her non- politically conscious parents, in response to the question of what her parents had to say about all this she narrates:

161. TS: *They were totally against it, because my father would say, 'You can never beat the Boers". Even Mandela couldn't beat the Boers, and I would always say to my father, watch this space. My father became politically aware in 1988 when I was arrested. The way the Boers harassed them in the house shoving them and pushing them, insulting them when I was in jail and all that that, is when he said, you know what ..she must be right.*

Tentative memo:

Shezi's wording of "*watch this space*" as her response to her father is not probable as a term used at that time and points to a retrospective rendering on her part, yet in this exchange of her remembered young self she seems to be implying she can beat the Boers when Mandela couldn't. The themes of rebel, autonomy, radical selfhood are present in Shezi's narrations (200.TS,

154.TS -157.TS.). Shezi narrates that her father only became politically aware in 1988 when she was arrested and when he as subjected to police harassment when she was in detention.

Shezi narrates the details leading up to her arrest and detention in 1987, where two of her male comrades were arrested, detained and tortured by the security forces over three months, they eventually cracked under torture and betrayed the various activists in their underground group including Shezi. (235. TS Appendix B part 2b). On the day of her arrest she had a premonition she narrates:

237. TS *On Thursday round about 8 at night, I told my mother to say "You know what Mum," you know as a woman you have a sixth sense, I said to my mother "Uh huh, I've got this strong feeling the police are coming" ...Round about 1 am they came and I told my mother that "I told you that they are coming". I tried all means to evade them so that I can run away again, but I couldn't because the person who was pointing us out was in their car. So they came…hippos, casspirs, vans.. you know it was like they are coming to pick Mandela up.*

The family was paraded outside where she was eventually pointed out by an unseen person in one of the cars after denying that she was Thandi Shezi and providing another name. She was then brutally beaten in front of her family, she narrates:

238. TS: *Wow! I was beaten,… beaten , I was bleeding, my dress was torn..my mother had to try to intervene. They told my mother "No" then my mother said "Even if you*

want to kill her, but don't kill her in front of me (narrating her mother's pleas her voice lowers to almost a whisper). (Long pause thereafter)

Tentative memo: Shezi narrates her first encounter with security police and the brutal violence on her body person, it's the first time she narrates herself as powerless.

Shezi continues her narration to describe with the unfolding of her arrest until she was at the detention cells, badly beaten up, half naked, with her dress in tatters and confronted with her two comrades (picked up months before) who betrayed her and who had cracked under torture, she narrates:

242. TS: *… Then we were taken to John Vorster. From John Vorster the boys were taken to another room..They went and collected the two who were arrested at Park Station. …. When they come, they ask me "Do you know them?" then I said "No, I don't know them". Then because they were so badly beaten (*whispers these last three words*) ..Then I realised that here I am not going to survive. (long pause) But I said (to myself) even if I am not going to survive, I'll die with the truth. …*

Then I said to myself, ngesiZulu sithi "Umfazi ufa azi" ngisosebenzisa isiZulu manje, Ngizofa ngazi. In isiZulu we say "A woman dies knowing the truth" I am going to use isiZulu now, I will die with the truth. I'd rather die, and that's how we are trained.

243. PL: *In Zulu, what does that mean though? How would they use that expression?*

243. TS: *They were using that expression to say a woman will die with the truth, like it was used a lot when they said "Umfazi ufa azi" /"A woman dies knowing the truth", it's like, I'm impregnated by somebody, then I am saying it's my husband's child. They'll never find the truth because I'll die with the truth. That is why the grandmothers in the rural areas they usually say "Eh uyakhala Makoti, eh hambom'thulisela phandle"("Daughter-in law, the baby is crying, go and quieten the child outside.")Because they know when you go outside you'll call the child by its real surname/clan name (that of the real father.)*

Tentative memo:

Shezi invokes a gendered figure of speech in isiZulu to frame her determination to die without telling the truth. The theme of deceit from being undercover, secret keeping is present. She references scars on her body for the second time in her narration, scars that arise from battle. And again whispers when recalling effects of trauma and physical violence inflicted by the police.

She continues with the narration detailing how eventually after denying that she knew her two comrades one of the policemen said she must be taken to the 'Waarheid Kamer'/ 'Room of Truth' where she was brutally tortured with electric shocks all over her body and on her breasts and had the wet sack torture method applied over her head, she narrates:

244. TS *…They said "Today, vandag jy sal die waarheid praat."/ ("you willl speak the truth") ……That's when the torture started (speaks in low half whisper) electric shock…… it went on and on, you know they'll ask you a question…… "Waar is*

die ammunition?" ....I , want to answer it , you want to answer it, by the time you try to answer, you are inside this sack, you want to answer, you need to breathe, you cannot breathe easily easy at all , they apply the electric shock....you know..it it was that combination of electric shock, breathing, when you breathe out , the wet sack forms a bubble (she demonstrates) when you breathe in, it suffocates you over your face (demonstrates with palm over face) , the time it closes down on your face ..they apply by apply electric shock, you have to answer, you couldn't. Then for me to survive, I thought quickly, I could see I am perishing ... say no I'm dying, because I could see under the sack, my breasts going prrrrrr! (gestures with hand at breasts in shaking motion) after they apply the electric shock.

245. PL: *Where were they applying the electric shocks?*

245. TS: *All over, in the breasts, you know all over, I have got scars, I sometimes forget where all of them are, from handcuffs, there are also on my thighs, on my breasts, (she shows her breasts) can you see them? These tiny white marks that you see all over, they applied the shocks everywhere, if they want to go to the breasts, they put them there, and they ask you a question you have to answer, you have to breath you have to.. Woman, can you imagine such a thing?, I couldn't tell you that was how long but I felt it was a long time.*

Tentative memo:

Shezi codes switches languages between English and isiZulu for the first and only time in her interview (see Appendix B part 2b 244 – 246 .TS) when relating her torture, perhaps in her traumatic address she needed to use indigenous language to intimately language the trauma

(Shezi is also aware that the researcher is also Nguni speaking). When she describes the shocks on her breasts she shows her naked breast, she asks the researcher "*Woman, can you imagine*?", Mfazi/Woman pointing to intersubjectivities between the participant and researcher. Graphic description of torture experience, body used to narrate as well, body as the silent witness, because it is written on the body.

Shezi narrates that she then came up with a ruse and told them that she is from KZN, that she is an IFP member and told them the whole history and indoctrinations of the IFP, remembered from her High School days in KZN, she narrates:

246. TS: *So with that information, that's how I survived, because I gave them the IFP information and somebody was nodding to say : Ja it was true, it's true. ...(Loud sigh, speaking softer now) Well, ...they took me to another room, by then I was bleeding through the mouth , because during the electric shock, trying to breath, trying to answer the questions, with the electric shock, ngazi luma ilwimi so lalidabukile, ndi bleeda ngomlomo.(I had bitten my tongue, it was torn , I was bleeding from the mouth) ...Bangithata bangisa kwelinye iroom (they took me to another room), these four white policemen came in, mabefika bathi, lomunye whathi (when they got there one of them said) "Hey , let us teach this bitch a lesson....kufenka (she needs) , arespecte (to, to respect) the write superiority, you know, "She is a terrorist , but she's lying" You know there were talking and talking and talking , one of them said "Let's have fun", you know,... fun its by raping me. So they did that. You know during the whole process... that is why I*

am saying God is there…..During the whole process there was this voice that came to me and said "You know what Thandi, (almost whispering) this very sweet voice said "Remove the soul from the body" It was like Thandi the carefree Thandi , this Thandi is standing there and is looking into this body to say : Whose body is this? In actual fact, I think that is how I survived the whole ordeal, you know, because that was like my soul is there and I am looking at this body feeling pity for this body (long pause) feeling pity and sorry for this body and… to me it was…to me it was 'Okay they've done it, I'm bleeding, dizzy, I couldn't feel the pain. So they removed the handcuffs because I was already bleeding from the hands.

Tentative memo:

Shezi relates speech silence dynamics in not revealing the information sought by the police, and then for survival innovates by telling them she was IFP. This section of narration also had code switching to describe effects of torture trauma, and long pauses when she relates the immediate sequence before the gang-rape after she had thought she had survived due to the IFP story, and another long pause when she relates viewing her body from her disembodied perspective.

She continues with the narration describing how she was then taken to another room, where the police informer was instructed to wipe the blood off her body, she was then told to assemble an AK 47 she narrates:

246. TS: One of them came with an AK and said to me "Assemble it" (long pause). So the way I was so …nice and fed up, I wanted to end it all, there. I quickly assembled it and I wanted to kill everybody in the room, including… myself. ….But quickly

they realised that they are putting themselves in danger, so they took away the the AK.

Tentative memo:

Shezi relates going into the imaginary, in imagination she is able to have agency as Ricoeur argues, she imagines killing the police and herself, she narrates that she is rageful.

Shezi relates another ruse that she and other prisoners would use to fool their captors, she narrates:

252. TS: *…so when you feel like you feel like you want to eat something sexy like Captain Dorego, KFC, you'll tell the Adjudant, every morning the Adjudant will come and ask for klagtes, complaints. Then I'll tell them to say, "You know what? I have remembered something, I remember now where can we find the guns and ammunitions." Oh they'll come flying! When they are going out with you, you'll be a Queen in their car, and you'll make them to round the whole town pointing to areas that you know they'll never find anything. And along the way, they'll ask you "Are you hungry? What do you want to eat? Kaptein Dorego?"(laughs) You think : I want to taste that one. You don't know what kind of an animal is that! you know you are from prison , there are these new shops! (laughs), then you'll eat your Kaptain Dorego then after that you'll say "I'll go and re-think". They'll take you back and now they are no longer going to harass you as long as they see that now you want to come with information. That is how you manage to survive. You survive by making sure that you have the books to read, that you know we use a toilet to phone each other, you know….*

Tentative memo:

Shezi relates strategies of survival, being able to exercise power over her captors through the ruse, she describes being the "*Queen in the car*", contrasts with dehumanizing experience of capture, torture, solitary confinement she is in?

After Shezi's release from prison one year later in 1988, she narrates that she was very thin and frail walking home, the neighbours couldn't recognise her, and that when she arrived home her family had thought that she was dead. For two days after her release Shezi narrates disposing of the guns and ammunition still hidden at her home in the early hours of the morning with her Commander and other sector members (Appendix B part 1b, 257 TS - 258.TS) she relates:

259. PL: *How did you carry that stuff in your fragile state, coming from prison?*

259. TS: *You don't become fragile during the war..(laughs) war is war. More especially I was..angry. I was so angry and saying to myself now they have given me more reasons to push forward. There were times when I said "Ag I am leaving all this..." but there were times when I said what about my kids? Are they going to live the same life that I am living under Apartheid?*

Tentative memo:

Shezi refers to "*war*" that is being fought, how she viewed the situation, she relates her sustained anger from detention, torture, rape and imprisonment.

Section : Experiences of the TRC

Category " E (Expectations of the TRC)

Category " F " (Experiences of the TRC)

Category " G " (Unfulfilled expectations of the TRC)

Category " E" (Expectations of the TRC)

3.5.1.5

Mlangeni expresses that she had expectations of the TRC's promises, she narrates:

47I .CM *I was scared (long pause). The biggest thing was I wanted to know what had happened with my child. Why was he killed so brutally? (long pause) they said "You will ask the police that are there to investigate the story and you will find out why" (long pause) as they did find out.*

472. CM: *I only expected them to say all these 3 children (of Bheki's) that I was left with what was I meant to do? I had expected some help/compensation.*

490. CM: *Yes, there were promises made but they didn't live up to them. They had promised us that they would take care of us, but those promises did not turn out they way they had promised them to us. Especially for us, it was R30 000 for two people, which means R15 000 each . And so we took it. And Makhosi took it too..it wasn't a problem, she took it.*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni relates disappointment of unfulfilled expectations of the TRC, she shared the R30,000 awarded with her daughter in law.

Category " F " (Experiences of the TRC)

3.5.1.6

Mlangeni was first told about the TRC through the Khulumani Support Group (KSG), (a counseling support resources group set up by the families of victims of the political conflict in South Africa, formed in 1995 in response to the pending TRC to prepare people for testifying at the TRC) she says her motivation of going to testify was to find out why her son was killed (Appendix B, part 2a 466. CM – 467. CM)

484. PL: On the day you testified at the TRC, and Seipati immediately after you testified, are there things that you wished they could have asked you that they never did?

484. CM: (long pause)

485. PL: Like maybe they would ask …take more time talking to you?

485. CM: No I…(overlap) I was not satisfied because I could see that they focused on Seipati more. My story was not as important to them, and the things that had happened to me during Bheki's activism, …."sizabalaza", we were active in the Struggle…(long sigh)

Tentative memo:

Her response seems to suggest not only dissatisfaction with the experience of more focus being

given to Seipati, "*My story was not as important to them"* but also perhaps of not being engaged or her own personal experiences throughout Bheki's activism, *" we (Bheki and her) " were both in active in the Struggle".*

Category "G " (Unfulfilled expectations of the TRC)

3.5.1.7

Regarding unfulfilled expectations of the TRC

490. CM: *Yes, there were promises made but they didn't live up to them. They had promised us that they would take care of us, but those promises did not turn out they way they had promised them to us. Especially for us, it was R30 000 for two people, which means R15 000 each. And so we took it. And Makhosi took it too..it wasn't a problem, she took it.*

530. CM: *After seeing what happened in my home, I felt that there wasn't much of a difference. All that happened was that my old wounds were opened all over again, and they did try to heal those wounds in whatever way they could, but it was nothing significant. What they did, is that we were able to talk to them, and discuss things, and they promised us what they promised and you hold on to that hope that at least, something will happen, I am still waiting until today.*

Tentative memo:

Mlangeni narrates that she still holds onto hope of compensation, she is raising Bheki's other children on her pensioner's grant. (Note: Khulumani Support Group has been pursuing promised compensation from the TRC for victims in the decade and a half after the TRC).

Category "E " (Expectations of the TRC)

3.5.1.8

In 1995 Shezi worked as field worker for the Khulumani Support Group identifying victims in the township and taking statements of people to submit to TRC. She describes why she didn't want to testify at the TRC, and that the knowledge of the gang rape and torture she went through was known only by the women she was in detention with, she narrates:

269.TS *Those women knew, what had happened to me, but I, I, I… couldn't even tell my family or anyone else. When I was released I was this person who will sit in a very dark room, alone crying myself to sleep. I had constant nightmares up until I came to Khulumani and Centre for the Study of Violence(CSVR) assigned a psychologist for me to assess me to deal with my ……..you know.*

Tentative memo:

Shezi relates her Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder experience and the wounded self that had emerged. This is the first time and only time in entire interview where she narrates herself as broken, weakened, she struggles with her first person articulation *"I, I, I…"* in relation to the secret she had carrying of being raped, and struggles to bring into language the naming trauma of rape "*…to deal with my ……..you know.).* Secrets and trauma, earlier in her narration secrets played a different role (being a secret operative, guns around the house, siblings going to exile, triumph of keeping the truth a secret during torture).

Shezi narrates why she did not want to testify at the TRC:

267.TS *"For me I did not think that the TRC can give me back what was taken away from me. And for me to go and stand in the public and tell people about my ordeal, it was a no- no, because my family didn't know what happened to me during detention.*

Shezi narrates (269. TS Appendix B part 2b) that whilst working as a statement taker for the TRC, she encountered the story of a woman who was also brutally raped in exile. After taking the statement she broke down and the TRC psychologists attended to her, and later TRC women officials asked her to testify her own story, she narrates that they said:

269.TS *"Thandi, your story is very important because the Apartheid government is refusing that they were using rape as one of their torture tools, so you are the only woman that has actually….that can come out in testimony and give it in details so that we can be able to have this record."*

Shezi narrates how this request was still not enough for her to decide to testify at the Truth commission and later when performing the play she describes how that was the turning point for her to decide to testify at the TRC, she narrates:

270.TS *Actually that one gave me… actually I can say it was a shift, because I was saying, here I am sitting listening to this woman talking about this, how many women went through this? What if they can say this woman is lying, but if there are so many women that can testify, but I still didn't want to go, I was not ready up until 'The Story I Am About To Tell'(the play).*

Tentative memo:

Shezi relates that it was the play that made her ready or able to testify at the TRC. Her part in the play is self-authored, she was able to determine her self-narration on her terms.

Category "F " (Experiences of the TRC)

3.5.1.9

Shezi came into contact with the TRC via the Khulumani Support Group, via Mrs Dlomo, activist and mother of slain youth leader Sicelo Dlomo, at the time she did not want to go to the testify at the TRC, she narrates:

280. PL: *And then when you went finally to the TRC to testify in public, because you had been doing it in the play, how was that different for you? Did it feel different on the day at the TRC?*

280. TS: *Actually it didn't feel.. different for me telling my story, but I was annoyed that it was called Women's Hearings, but you'll find men testifying their wives ordeals, to me it was annoying. How can they say its Women's Hearings whilst there are men that are coming to testify on behalf of their wives. But it was fine, it was okay.*

But when I testified, it was fine I didn't even break down, but at night the nightmares came back, but I went for counseling, then I was okay.

281. PL: *So you are saying that you got worse after testifying?*

281.TS: *No. I didn't get worse, actually it was relief that the story it's out there, and I don't need anyone, because I told them that I don't need anyone's pity.*

Tentative memo:

Shezi says she did not want anyone's pity, she doesn't frame herself as a victim as the TRC did. She also highlights her annoyance at men testifying on behalf of their wives, she relates her perception that the TRC favoured men in giving more attention to their testimonies, as she had also been attending hearings for the past year before she testified as part of the KSG and for the play research and workshops. Shezi also narrates symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after testifying as she had nightmares the night after testifying (Note: Shezi also continued with therapy via KSG with the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) after testifying)

Regarding her experience of authoring and narrating her story in the play Shezi says:

269. TS: *To me it was a therapy, you know talking is healing. So it gave me a platform to deal with my inner fears and everything, so for me to talk about it, it was taking it out, what happened to me, how I survived that I am still here.*

Tentative memo:

Because the Shezi's role in the play was self-authored it meant that she had narrative authority, she relates individual self-healing and self-survival in her remarks.

Regarding her experience of authoring and narrating her story in the play Mlangeni says:

451. PL: *You are telling your story in the play on stage, is it the same or different as when even at the TRC? Is there a difference?*

451. CM: *The difference is this: When I tell my story in the play I will say "if there is something similar that has happened and are afraid of talking, COME OUT and talk about it to me, to us here. We will help you heal your wound, how to cleanse it".*

Tentative memo:

For Mlangeni, her experience of narrating her story in a self-authored manner in the play for her points to healing through intersubjective exchanges.

3.6 INTEGRATION

The following thematic pattern or clusters seem to emerge from the categorized data.

3.6.1.1 **Normative femininity and male social position of power**

The imperatives and expectations that are implicated with the image prescribe that females be passive and demure continually in relation to males. Males, in contrast, are afforded greater freedom and space to be self-assertive and aggressive. Although the subjects contest this idealized femininity and male's social position in one way or another, the image appears to have important implications for the subjects and we cannot easily dismiss them. This can be seen in Mlangeni's descriptions of her contestation of power dynamics within her marriage, her role in

dispute resolutions of domestic violence in her community with other women of the community and her contestation of male authority figures power as an activist. (categories “B”, “C”, “D”)

Shezi narrates resisting the sense of normative femininity from her childhood where she narrates that her father raised her and sisters as tomboys (categories “A” “B”, “D”), to her elective social affiliation as a tomboy with her High School male peer group (category “B” 130.TS) to intimate relations (category “B” and her social positioning with male counterparts in political structures category “D”) . The theme of tomboy /rebel emerges.

3.6.1.2 **Tomboy/ Rebel**

At times for Shezi, it suggests that the categories of femininity and masculinity are redundant (category “B”, 130 TS) where she says she doesn’t know what pressures girls were subject to because it was never “*her thing*” she narrates herself as acting like a boy. She narrates herself as tough, and resisting conventional gender demarcations and was able to occupy to some extent, a different position of gender socially at least (130. TS.). As she encountered different positions to occupy as her life progressed, she seemingly displays the ability to disengage or be free from stereotypical gender prescriptions regarding rearing her children (category “E” 169.TS - 173 TS) as she says although she was living at home she did not rear her children and that her mother, sister and father did the child rearing.

Butler’s (1990, 1993, 1995) reading of the classical psychoanalytical concept of identification and Foucault’s (1972, 1977, 1982) analysis of power relations seems to accord with the afore-

mentioned findings of a dynamic of conformity and dissent. Butler argues that an individual participates in the cultural investiture of his or her body, as a sexed/gendered material and subjective reality, through the process of identification. We see this with Mlangeni's relationship with traditional notions of femininity where she identifies with the cultural narratives, yet later as a young adult going forth she rejects the implication of her being passive and demure in relation to males. Thus, an individual may affirm and emotionally invest in certain aspects of being female in her social milieu while contending with other aspects. This can be observed for example in Shezi's responses, she rejects any implication of her being continually passive and demure in relation to males from childhood in High School and later in intimate relations, and later as an adult in the political structures she is involved in, where her positionality was identified with '*women's emancipation'*.

Butler (1990, 1993) would account for the contrasting description as an individual's engagement with the dominant cultural binary of masculine and feminine. As noted above, Butler's argument is that an individual takes ownership and "digests" the cultural investment of the body. This would include the dominant binary, which is culturally articulated through the marginalization and disavowal of other culturally possible forms of subjectivity.

3.6.1.3 **Gender provides the foreground for intersubjective relationships**

The predominant change the participants talk about stems from the differing negotiated meanings of female selfhood within the milieu of intersubjective relationships applicable for the participants at differing times.

Although Mlangeni says she joined the ANC Women's League (ANCWL) in the 1960's, she

says that they "*…were not too clear We just followed Winnie without really understanding*." (category "D" 341.CM), she says that in 1986 the struggle became her work (category "D" 313.CM). Mlangeni says that after this she became an ANC recruiter, served on the street committee (345.CM) and describes the community work and political conscientising of other women they did as ANCWL members (356 – 357.CM).

Mlangeni relates that her son was a decisive factor in her getting deeply involved in the struggle and actively challenged her to become involved (378. CM) "*You can see what the other mothers/women (aboMama) are doing, what's going on?". That's when I realised that I had to."* The image harbours as imperative for Mlangeni, to be like the other Mothers/activists as if it is the standard with which one measures and accounts for oneself. We see here how gender was foregrounded in her intersubjective relationships as a political activist.

Similarly for Shezi gender is foregrounded in her intersubjective relationships. In 1983 -1985 when she started as an activist in Soyco "*…I was now doing woman political, woman emancipation.."* (category "D" 150. TS.) , and where she was conscientising women and girls that they need to be at the forefront of the struggle; as she was in a high position in Soyco, reflecting her positionality and awareness.

3.6.1.4 **The radical stance in the world: imagination, action**

The theme of the individual's ability to take up a radical stance toward the world where, to borrow from hooks(1990), subjectivity contributes to the individual's ability to take a radical

stance toward the world, one that seeks to change systems of domination through speech and action.

With Mlangeni this theme emerges firstly within her marriage as discussed and in her lived experience as an activist (and as a mother category "D".)

Mlangeni's exposure to political activism is through Motherism, defined here as movements that are shaped by the women's identities as mothers, which are women and mother centered in their political approach (Gasa, 2007). Mlangeni defied the security forces on their numerous invasions to her home through speech, as in contestationary exchanges with the police (category "D" 387. CM, 391. CM) and in acts when she physically threw herself into the police van where her son was about to be detained. There is a dense complexity in this section of narration (category "D", 384.CM) Mlangeni directly contests political authority and power and gendered power of the policemen not only in action but in speech also "*I am the mother here! Do you hear/understand me properly?!"*, she narrates that it was the first time she had stood up to the police, to male figures. She declares and enacts the authority she has as mother to directly contest males and police authority over her children. Here the theme of radical stance of female selfhood again emerges, through to her role in the circulation of illegal political pamphlets, her participation in the rent boycotts. She narrates the hostile response of some her community to her activism: *(*category "D" 360.C.M*),* to which Mlangeni offered resistance, refusing to be deterred by this social censorship

For Shezi her radical stance is evident from High School where she says she did not experience peer pressure as a girl as she had adopted a male position socially (category "B",130.TS), to

contesting male power within the political structures of Soyco (category "D" 225. TS) to later as an activist living at her parental home as a militarily trained special operative. We see this in the weaponry she hid at her home in the house and in the yard (category "D" 238. TS, 200.TS) to her strategies of survival at the time of her capture and detention (category "D" 246.TS.) And later after her gang rape ordeal by security policemen she narrates being asked to assemble an AK and her desire to kill the police officers and herself in her rage (category "D", 246.TS), reminding us that she was capable of that.

The analysis suggests that there are thematic similarities between the two subjects with regard to the politicisized image of female selfhood in the social milieu**.** For both participants, central to this struggle is the redefinition of authority and power to resonate with a radical stance that informs their gendered subjectification.

3.6.1.5 **The body narrates inside and outside**

The theme of bodily narrating emerges in a few narrational points with both participants. The complex transactions between body and language, the speaking body.

With Mlangeni we see this witness where the body 'speaks' as a memory anchor, a marker of time and periodization and hardship inscribed in the bodily memory of the breast, a recall of life events tied to a stage of breastfeeding and mothering where she relates one of her migrations and narrates the following: "*(short pause) we stayed for, how long?, because …(long pause), I was breastfeeding Thabang when we got here (she puts her hand on her breast and holds an imaginary baby, eyes downcast). When we left Springs to come here. (long, long pause), (sighs)*

*eyi…(*category "B" 216.CM*).* She also establishes herself in this narration as a nurturer, a good mother as well as possible nostalgia for when her children were fully under her protection.

Later in her testimony she describes how she stopped the police from taking her son Bheki into custody at night, she narrates throwing herself repeatedly into the van with physical simulation of that action, through simple yet complex transactions between body and language, the body becomes a barrier in possible life and death stakes.

In the immediate time after the bomb killed Bheki, the body again features in Mlangeni's narration (category "D", 411. CM*)* where she enacts the motions of the police scraping up Bheki's exploded head remains from the walls and floor. Mlangeni, who uses a cane to walk, stood unassisted to bodily witness the scraping actions of what was done with her son's remains by the security forces. After Bheki's death she again references the body to narrate the trauma of loss "*There was no more life in this body of mine..(flat palms her chest with both hands) … (*category "D" 415.CM**).**

With Shezi we have the silent witness of the body as recorded by the scars she shows from a fight with a boy in her social group at High School, (category "B" 130.TS) to showing the scars from torture inflicted by security forces *(*category "D" 242- 245. TS**)** on her wrists from handcuffs and on her breasts and thighs. Later, in the torture session when her gang rape was orchestrated, Shezi narrates disembodiment and spiritual transcendence (category "D" 246. TS*).*

3.6.1.6 **Subdual of the personal**

Shezi is living at home but seems to be able to operate independently from familial pressure and child rearing expectations. There the theme of choice and sacrifice is present in Shezi's narration,

the subdual of the personal: she sacrifices her romantic relationship with the father of her two children due to differences in politics (category "D" 181.TS), Shezi sacrifices herself to the cause of liberation (category "D"), she sacrifices her relationship to be a mother/parent to her children, like perhaps, many men in the liberation movements did. Her self-representation is consistent with her narration about being independent and making her own way in the world, and also resistance to the strictures of what is expected of a female and mother.

3.6.1.7 **Intergenerational fissures regarding political involvement and the collapse of parental authority**

The intergenerational fissures that existed in families regarding political awareness and activism is reflected in Shezi's narration (category "D" 200.TS) where she narrates her mother's reaction of shock and calling in maternal patriarchs to physically discipline her after discovering guns and ammunition hidden in the house by Shezi. Shezi narrates that her parents were not politically aware and "*didn't know how advanced I was in politics*". We see this intergenerational fissure regarding political involvement in the family in Shezi's narration of how her parents were totally against her political activism (category "D" 161.TS) and of her father's lack of belief that the Apartheid regime could be defeated, despite his three children's political radicalization.

Similarly, we see this intergenerational fissure regarding political involvement with Mlangeni where she narrates that her immersion in political activism was a result of her politically active son's challenge to her to become politically active like other mothers (category "D", 378.CM). In Mlangeni's family, after she became politically active, her husband did not.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The TRC was, to a large extent, an attempt to tell a story about South Africa's recent past, and was engaged in two sets of inquiries directed at identifying the victims and the perpetrators of gross human rights violations between March 1960 and May 1994. The Commission sought to construct a larger narrative out of the separate narratives that were presented at its hearings. The TRC Report will remain as a legacy of a defining process in South Africa's transition to democracy and its representation of history will arguably come to bear upon social practice of present and future generations. The TRC Report will never be revised and, unlike written histories, it is not provisional.

Various scholars have addressed the issue of gender in the TRC process which saw the failure to adopt a gendered analytical framework despite critical inputs recommending this (Olckers 1996, Goldblatt & Meintjes, 1998) and the subsequent marginalisation of women's experience and subjectivities in the process. This was compounded by the separate chapter of the TRC Report which led to 'women' emerging as a category which favoured sexual violence whilst silencing other kinds of experience (Goldblatt & Meintjes, 1999; Ross, 2003).

This has inevitably created critical gaps within the historical record, creating discontinuities that undermine the critical understandings of post-Apartheid social reconstitution in South African history. Precisely then, because women continue to "bear the brunt of suffering in this society" (TRC Report 4, p 316), the political stakes are so very high in the extent to which women's

histories and subjectivities are required to complete the narrative of South African history during the time of Apartheid. This production of alternative histories requires historians to develop new frameworks to re-assess the unintended consequences of the TRC. These unintended consequences created the simplifying of complex subjectivities plus social relationship and the inadequate exploration of agency and resistance of women. Historians must raise questions that the Commission itself failed to ask, questions of how black women made themselves subject and assumed agency within the context of Apartheid, questions which allow the complexity, ambiguity, and contradictions of lived experience to disrupt the traditional coherence of the text. Questions indeed, that challenge the construction of final texts of historical enquiry to resist the chauvinism of authoritative final interpretations.

4.2 The nexus of historical consciousness

Bozzoli (1991) suggests consciousness is 'formed historically, within a nexus of structures, experiences, relationships and events - all of which are seized upon by the self-aware woman seeking to pursue her own life strategy, and that it cannot be understood by using a purely structural or synchronic method of analysis'. I centrally locate my research within the framework of a gendered analytical framework, drawing upon gender theory, in doing so it is possible to conceive of the social subject and relations of subjectivity to sociality to then explore identity formations of women as historical subjects.

The play *The Story I am about to Tell*, directed by Bobby Rodwell, was developed through a workshopped process which started in 1996, and was first staged in Soweto in March 1997, a year after the TRC process had started. The play had three real life characters: Catherine Mlangeni, Thandi Shezi, Duma Kumalo (of the Sharpville Six), who self-authored and narrated

their own life experiences, and three fictional characters who were professional actors. The research process of the play also involved the cast attending hearings of the TRC. Mlangeni testified at the TRC hearings in May 1996 a few months after the play workshop process had started, and Shezi, who had decided not to testify at the TRC, later testified at the Women's Hearings in 1997 as a result of her experience in the play.

Both the TRC and the play *This Story I Am About to Tell* were memory projects for different purposes and with different impacts on both the women involved in this study. In a context where the relationship between history and memory is perhaps uniquely fractured in contemporary South African life, how is memory crucial to the voice of women who have never had their historical subjectivity acknowledged in the official process of the TRC?

Both the participants in the study expressed dissatisfaction with their experience of testifying at the TRC, Mlangeni relates: *"My story was not as important to them, and the things that had happened to me during Bheki's activism, …."sizabalaza", we were active in the Struggle"*, expressing her experience of marginalization. For Shezi, her dissatisfaction was different "…*actually it was a relief that the story it's out there, and I don't need anyone, because I told them that I don't need anyone's pity."*, she does not frame herself as a victim as the TRC did. These two differing experiences of the participants of the TRC process confirm the concerns of various scholars (Goldblat &Meintjes 1998; Ross 2003, Motsemme 2004), firstly the failure of the TRC to hear women's experiences through the casting of women as secondary victims of the Apartheid regime, and the inadequacy of the binaries and fixed identities generated by the TRC process in the category of 'victim' and the category 'women'.

To begin to address this question of how is memory crucial to the voice of women who have never had their historical subjectivity acknowledged in the official process of the TRC it is perhaps useful to revisit, in brevity, the concept of subjectivity provided earlier in this study in chapter Two. Passerini (1998) defines subjectivity as the 'symbolic activity which includes cognitive, cultural and psychological aspects. … The importance of this term, moreover, is that it embraces not only the epistemological dimension but also that concerned with the nature and significance of the political. …Nevertheless (I) believe it to be of great importance that the writing of history today should take into account this problem of subjectivity and subjective liberation' (Passerini, 1998: p55).

Subjectivity, subjective liberation and revised comprehensions of agency have, for decades, been the interest of feminist research focused on the unearthing of the marginalized experiences of women which attest to the capability for autonomous action in the face of often prodigious social sanctions and structural inequalities (De Lauretis, 1984; Hollway, 1989; hooks, 1990; Butler 1990, 1993; Braidottiti, 1994; Mama, 1995; Skeggs, 1997; Gasa, 2007 amongst others). Subjectivity, as Portelli reminds, us is as much the business of history as are the more visible "facts" (1990).

4.3 Gender as an historical matrix : narrativity and subjectivity

The act of self-narration is central to identity formation. Organised along a temporal dimension self-narration situates self-historicity and consciousness within the objective historical sequence of events whilst giving significance to the overall construction that is the person. In Ricoeur's view (1983, 1988, 1991, 1992), many thinkers have failed to recognize the constitutive role

played by narrative in the construction of personal identity. What then is narrative identity? It is the unity of a person's life as it is experienced and articulated in their stories of self that express this experience. Slaughter (1997) argues that "The right to narration is not merely the right to tell one's story, it is the right to control representation", as such it can be argued, as literary theorists remind us, that the narrative is a political act. With this in mind let us now turn to the testimonies.

Catherine Mlangeni was born in 1932, second born of five siblings, in Nquthu, rural KwaZulu Natal (KZN), her parents were peasant farmers on their own land. Both her parents were Sothos from KZN and the family spoke seSotho at home. Mlangeni's father died when she was eight years old and her mother reared her four girls and one son as a single parent thereafter. Her childhood life on the farm involved farm work and Mlangeni and her sisters would do chores normally reserved for boys out of necessity such as the oxen to the fields to plough and tending the cattle. She attended and completed Primary School, which she enjoyed, she had desires nurse of becoming a nurse, but her dreams of continuing with her schooling were crushed when her mother took her out of school at age sixteen, saying "*a girl has no use for school".* Mlangeni relates that this experience was incredibly painful for her and she vowed to herself that when she is married she will ensure that her children got the education that she was deprived of. Her older sister had also been taken out of school at the same age, Mlangeni relates the issue of lobola as a possible concern of her mother. It can be surmised possibly, that an educated girl could price herself out of the available market of suitors, affecting the economic gain that a girl could provide to her family. Mlangeni was then sent to traditional Initiation school for girls according to Sotho culture for three months, where she was inducted into the teachings of how one needs to

conduct oneself as a woman. Mlangeni relates that she valued the teachings of the Initiation school. Here, Mlangeni is positioned within the discourse of socio-cultural expectations of gender and we see her identification within the sanctioned modes of femininity. According to Ricoeur (1991) social integration is attained through the reiteration and reinforcement of the mediatory symbolic forms, that is narratives and chronicles, through which a given community constructs and maintains its origins of identity.

Two years after Initiation school, when Mlangeni was eighteen years old, she was identified as a candidate for marriage. Her mother was contacted by the family of a young man, Mphikeleli Koos Mlangeni, to request her daughter for marriage, Mlangeni relates " *..my mother spoke very earnestly with me. When I heard her reasons, I thought well my mother is struggling with money, maybe things might get better."*. Mlangeni battled to admit in the interview that there was some pressure for her to marry, seemingly for economic reasons as well, to make things better at home. The family, Butler (1990, 1993, 1995) argues, provides the narratives or resources for the subject defining their own personal sense of being female/male, subjects might have limited narratives or limited access to narratives for their self-perception, understanding and accounting for their lived experiences. Thus one could suggest that Mlangeni's mother provided narratives for her self-perception and understanding, especially when she experiences varied and/or contradictory socio-cultural demands.

Mlangeni relates that the early years in her marriage were happy, although the familial and social conditions were not ideal. After marriage she moved away from KZN with her husband to

Belfort, in the Eastern Cape, where her husband was living on a small holding that his uncle was living on, that belonged to an Afrikaner farmer. Her husband was a contract worker at the railway tracks and would be away from home when he had work, so they did not live together all the time. Mlangeni was age twenty–two and had had two children when they left the farm. They then moved to Springs, where she was able to have her own house with her husband and family. During this time she had never formally worked. Mlangeni relates that when she arrived in Gauteng she was happy in her marriage *"It was easy when I got here to Gauteng. It was still nice, we were in love. He didn't even drink."*. Mlangeni and her family would then later move to Soweto when her husband was transferred via his railway job in 1956. There was then a deterioration in the marital relationship as Mlangeni's husband started drinking heavily and stopped contributing finances to the family upkeep. Forced by this new reality of a husband who was no longer providing for the family Mlangeni relates pragmatically "*I decided I had to get work, and my life carried on.".*

Mlangeni started working in 1956, at the age of twenty-four, she started off working as a domestic worker working seven days a week although she was not a live in worker, she did not enjoy the job. She was fortunate to soon find employment as a seamstress in a factory. She had had three children at this point, two were attending school and the third one was less than a year old. Mlangeni used the money she earned to ensure that her children went to school and paid family expenses. Her determination to ensure her children went to school fulfilled her childhood desire to heal her own wound of being removed early from school. The whole responsibility of parenting had fallen onto Mlangeni it seems, as she narrates that her husband was not even participating in parenting decisions or discipline of the children, that was all left up to her. There is also marked a transition in terms of her role, she had to become the provider for the family, as

her husband was no longer providing. There is a shift in traditional roles in the home and power relations and Mlangeni became the de facto head of the family. Mlangeni relates an ambivalent relationship with her husband who seems to grow weaker as she grows stronger. It seems there is a transition to a more defined autonomous subjectification in the context of power relations within the domestic sphere, yet accompanied with ambivalence and also resistance.

She joined the Garment Workers Union of African Women and relates that her reason for joining was because the union was economical, they would can get better pay, she does not describe her joining the union in political terms. She relates that she attended the 1956 Women's March, and had joined the ANC Women's League (ANCWL) but describes herself as "*not being too clear on politics*" at that time. Mlangeni attended the Women's March in 1956, as a member of the union and relates *"But you must remember we were both women and workers."*. Mlangeni's response reflects the simultaneity and gendered interconnectedness of subject positions as a woman and a worker (which enabled a position of new empowerment for her in the home) and interconnectedness of her selfhood and the collective.

Mlangeni describes her first real exposure to political teaching was from her hearing a charismatic young woman speaking in her neighbourhood. This woman was Winnie Mandela canvassing women in the early 1960's to organize themselves into groups. She narrates "*It was up to us*", such was her perception of the groupings of women as enabling a sort of collective power to be able to attend to social problems in the community. She relates great admiration for Winnie Mandela, and refers to her as *"our Winnie"*. Possibly Winnie Mandela, who was only a few years younger than Mlangeni, also reflected a model for the alternative Mother.

We shall return to Mlangeni later in this account.

Thandi Shezi was born in 1961 in Soweto, the third born in a group of five children, comprised of three girls and two boys. Her father was a long distance truck driver and her mother was a domestic worker. Shezi narrates that her father brought her and her sisters up as tomboys who must be independent, and every Sunday all the children were forced to help him fix his scrap cars in the family yard, and she learnt a great deal about fixing engines. Shezi's mother was more traditionalist in the transmission of gender roles for girls than her father.

Shezi's Primary School education was disrupted after the June 1976 Uprisings occurred - setting off an unprecedented wave of youth led resistance, country wide protests and disruptions of education in urban schools. Shezi was sent off to rural KZN to the family homestead in 1977 with her two younger siblings to continue their education, Shezi, as the oldest, was responsible for her siblings, she was fifteen years old. It was during High School in 1978 where she had her first exposure to political ideology through an IFP awareness campaign (Inkhatha Freedom of the Nation/ 'Inkhatha yeNkululeko yeSizwe') that targeted students in High Schools. Shezi was an extrovert in High School and participated in debating, netball, athletics and choir. Regarding peer pressure that girls were subject to she relates that she didn't experience it because it was "*never her thing*", she narrates herself as acting like a tomboy in her elective group of male friends, that she even fought with and had the scars to prove that. She narrates herself as tough, a fighter, resisting conventional gender demarcations and was able to occupy, to some extent, a different position of gender socially at least. She also relates how she relished arguing with her History

teacher and reducing him to tears in arguments about Van Riebeeck, she represents herself as independent and physically and intellectually tough. Shezi had wanted to become a nurse.

Allthough the two participants are from vastly different generations and backgrounds both express a similar career aspiration in school, to be nurses, and for similar reasons. Mlangeni says nurses were "*respected*", Shezi says "*These women were elevated in the community*" she uses the gender designator of women specifically. Nurses were looked up to in the black community and were women who were in the professional classes. For both the participants, who came from working class backgrounds, we see a class aspiration expressed and also perhaps an indication of what was not the norm for black women in society: to be 'respected' or 'elevated' within patriarchal society.

Shezi's dreams of becoming a nurse were not be as she fell pregnant in Matric and had to return home to her parents in Soweto with her younger siblings 1982. Shezi had her first born child in 1982, she became politically active in 1983 at age twenty-one, when she joined the ANC aligned Soweto Youth Congress (Soyco) which had been set up in 1982 to accommodate youth who were not at school. By this time the political climate in the country was deteriorating, in the early 1980's the situation in South Africa was characterized by increasing repression and unrest after Botha's National Party government introduced ineffective reforms to Apartheid which were driven by a combination of internal violence, international condemnation, and changes within the National Party's constituency.

During her time in Soyco Shezi had her second born child in 1984 with her boyfriend from High School days in KZN. She would later however, terminate her significant relationship with the father of her children due to differences in political affiliation, because he was a member of the IFP. Her political identity as a core identity informed her choice, she narrates "*By then I was too deep into politics. I had to tell him to go to hell and I will raise my kids"* and he ceased providing financially for his children.

Shezi was fully immersed in activism, she narrates that the women were given equal tasks to that of men in Soyco and were equally respected for their intellectual contribution, but only after a workshop to enable this equality and mutual respect. Regarding differences of opinion with her male comrades within the structures of Soyco, she relates that in arguments "*…we'll come to the point where we'll compromise, but I'm not a compromising type you know, I end up being victorious where ever I go."* Shezi again represents herself as tough and uncompromisingly challenging the status quo of male power and authority, it seems her positionality has changed somewhat compared to the High School self, she is no longer one of the boys, she is now 'with the boys' and operating from a gendered space as a female activist. Shezi was the Secretary of Soyco from 1983-1985, she narrates" *I was doing political education for women emancipation. The young girls and the mothers I would educate them that the woman's place is not only in the kitchen, you have to be in the forefront of the struggle."* Although Shezi specifically uses the term "*woman emancipation*" the emancipation is not linked to fighting patriarchy, but rather the system of Apartheid. Suttner (2008) writes of the insufficient treatment of the ANC to proper gendered analysis in its discourse, and that the notion of women's rights may have been introduced into the ANC's liberation discourse without an adequate treatment of gender,

whereby the conflation of gender struggles with that of women's struggles resulted in the absence of men from such analysis.

In 1984 Shezi was recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and became a Special Operative and combatant as a member of the underground struggle. Shezi embarked on her training as a Special Operative in Zambia as a crash course of six months, and later shorter courses in Botswana, she relates that she was trained in combat and weaponry. Shezi was living at home with her parents and her children during this time and yet was able to travel in out of the country, she relates that she did not do any child rearing because of her underground activities and her parents raised her children.

From 1985 to 1989 serious political violence had permeated the fabric of society in South Africa as black townships became the site of struggle between anti-apartheid organisations and the Apartheid government. In the mid 1980's significant changes to the context of resistance came forth which saw the emergence of a new discourse framed by revolutionary terminology and militarism. Various scholars have described South Africa as being in a state of war during the 1980's (Cock, 1991; Ellis, 1998, Suttner, 2008), Cock defines war as "intense, widespread conflict that involves organised, collective, socially-sanctioned violence" (Cock, 1991, p. 7). A State of Emergency was declared in 1985 encompassing the then PWV area (Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging which now is Gauteng), Eastern Cape and the Western Cape, this Act gave police and the military sweeping powers and ushered in increasing repression from the Apartheid government. The State had embarked upon its "Total Strategy", a counter-insurgency strategy that ultimately resulted in unprecedented military influence in all spheres of national, regional and local government decision making. Domestic pressure was compounded by the

propaganda offensive of the Apartheid government that was launched to prop the Apartheid regime's military and its objectives both internally, with large scale military deployments stationed in townships to quell unrest, and externally with military offensives in the neighbouring countries of Angola, Namibia, and Mozambique. In 1985 the ANC called for a "People's War", a strategy to bring about "ungovernability" and "people's power" to make black townships "ungovernable" by means of rent boycotts which lasted until the 1990's, consumer boycotts and other militant action, numerous township councils were overthrown or collapsed. People's courts were set up, and residents accused of being government agents, or defying the boycotts were dealt extreme violence and sometimes the fatal punishment of necklacing. In Soweto school boycotts spread, township residents participated in street committees that were set up to defend communities at a local level. Both State and liberation-movement strategies brought about the increasing militarisation of South African society throughout the 1980's (Cock, 1989).

Shezi's duties as a Special Operative included carrying guns and ammunition into the country and to secure safe bases for trained cadres. Shezi narrates her military training in a very military like fashion, there is also a language shift from her description of her Soyco activities which were more first person singular, whereas when she describes her experiences in Umkhonto we Sizwe she almost exclusively uses the plural "we". Shezi describes her activities as an undercover operative and the missions she was undertaking as being constant. We see the emergence of a militarized identity of Shezi as a combatant and she refers to her undercover activities as her work. Shezi relates that she didn't have free time '*Do I even remember having any free time? Because I was always on a mission here, a DLB there (a dead letter box),*

information there, fetching ammunition there, deploying, so I was like, all over". An integral component of Operation Vula, initiated in 1986 by the ANC's National Executive Council, was "to bring large quantities of weapons into South Africa, and to conceal them in 'dead letter boxes so that they would be available if it became necessary" (TRC, Vol.2, Ch.7, p 381).

Combat roles and experiences varied considerably amongst the differently placed people who fought for the ANC. Cock categorises MK into four broad groupings, "Those who left the country and were trained externally for long periods of time and remained in the camps; those who trained internally for shorter periods, which may have included one or two weeks training in Swaziland or Botswana; those who assisted and provided support for MK in the form of safe houses, courier work and reconnaissance; and those who did non-military tasks such as building underground structures" (Cock, cited in Motumi & MacKenzie, 1998).

Shezi does not relate any adverse personal experiences regarding being a woman in MK. However, she does describe a negative perception of women in the sectors (MK cell member operation units) *"Gender in the sector was a… you wouldn't have too much because we as females were sometimes perceived as the weak…So in your sector you look for the people who think…. they can be able to stomach (police brutality)"* Shezi describes the kind of woman who was recruited into MK, as those who could withstand police brutality if apprehended, implying that she was that kind of tough woman.

Suttner (2008) asserts that the general tendencies of liberationist discourses is to be masculinist

and writes how women's involvement as combatants in the ANC underground took place when the gender consciousness of the ANC as an organisation was taking shape and, that the ideas of the feminism of the 1960's and 1970's were still seen as very controversial. As such, Suttner details how women's experiences over the years of being in the ANC underground and specifically as combatants were varied, where some women felt excluded by the male chauvinism and African machismo which essentially defined the militarised identities of male counterparts within MK structures.

Shezi's parents were not politically aware in the time of her operations as an MK combatant in the mid 1980's. Even after her mother's initial discovery of the guns and ammunition Shezi had hidden in the house on one occasion they remained totally against her involvement, she narrates that her father would say *"You can never beat the Boers". Even Mandela couldn't beat the Boers, and I would always say to my father, watch this space."*. Her father's lack of faith in the possibility of the defeating the Apartheid regime should be viewed in context to what was happening in the mid 1980's and the escalation of the government's severe repression in the country. Shezi narrates that her father only became politically aware in 1988 when she was arrested and when he was subjected to police harassment when she was in detention. Shezi's narration of her parents' reactions reflects the fissures inter-generationally regarding political understanding and activism in her family and also the cleavage in her family - a radicalized daughter, who hid guns and ammunition in the house, and two teenage children in exile reflects the breakdown of parental authority in African homes due to the actions of their children's political radicalization.

In 1986 a second State of Emergency was declared which was now nationwide, repression by the State increased, local communities and hostels were attacked mainly by IFP members. Shezi's

Umkhonto we Sizwe activities had changed over the course of time and reflect the hardening of her Umkhonto we Sizwe's stance, and therefore the ANC's attitudes in relation to the utilization of soft targets, where civilians may get killed, "*Well if you are caught in cross-fire than you are caught in cross fire. But we were looking for targets where we know there are no blacks. Like Ghandi Square now, Van der Bijl, the buses that were there, were for the whites. So we know those are white kids. They are killing our kids in the townships, so we have to hit hard."*

Let us return to Mlangeni in this same turbulent year of 1986. Mlangeni had retired from formal employment in 1986, where she describes herself as deeply immersed in the struggle, and that was now her work, she was fifty-six years old. Mlangeni relates that her son was a decisive factor in her getting deeply involved in the struggle and actively challenged her to become involved "*You can see what the other mothers/women (aboMama) are doing, what's going on?". That's when I realised that I had to.".* This was impactful for Mlangeni, to be like the other Mothers/activists, as if it were perhaps the standard by which one measures and accounts for oneself. We see here how gender was foregrounded in her intersubjective relationships as a political activist. Mlangeni's son directly influenced the radicalization within her female selfhood, the entry point into this radicalization is as a politically active mother, through Motherism, Gasa (2007) defines Motherism as movements that are shaped by the women's identities as mothers, which are women and mother centered in their political approach.

Mlangeni describes the range of activities of her activism in the mid 1980's as recruiting new members, conscientising women about the political situation, being on the Street Committee, helping the poor and orphans. Mlangeni was steadfast in her deepening political activism, as a

woman in her late fifties and into her mid-sixties she even did the toyi-toyi alongside her son, Bheki, in community protests and paid no regard to her neighbours whom, she says, mocked her with derogatory epithets for this display of political radicalism (in their eyes at least). Mlangeni also assisted her son in his underground activities with the distribution and disposal of illegal pamphlets (used for creating political awareness in the townships), whilst she was involved in activism with the ANCWL (African National Congress Women's League)

Mlangeni had a clearly defined conception of what she thought the contribution of women was in the fight against Apartheid, *"…women were supposed to do what the men were doing … We had to be united. And fight the fight our men were fighting."*. Mlangeni relates that her husband was not involved in any political activity and was disparaging of her involvement and their sons' involvement, "*There was a slight difference even though it was not meant to be like that, because we are all at war. We all needed to contribute. The same way it should happen in the home. I was alone. My husband used to say I would get killed by the Boers "And these thugs of sons of yours who tell you to fight and argue with the Boers",* here Mlangeni presents a textured understanding of the operations of power within gender relations, she makes a direct linkage between the personal and the public political sphere, between men and women, and concurrently between herself and her husband. Mlangeni relates her husband equating her agency and militancy against State agents as something that would get her killed, and refers to his politicized sons, as being influenced by Mlangeni's militancy, and refers to the fighting and strong males in the house, as "*thugs*". Mlangeni relates her husband as a weak patriarch who neither provides, fights nor protects. Mlangeni uses the term "*war*", to represent the political battle waged at the time and reflects her internalization of the ANC's "People's War" referred to earlier.

Mlangeni was a victim of repeated police harassment as the mother of her activist sons (two of her sons were politically active) she narrates of an incident when she threw herself three times into the police van and simulates this in a launching movement of her body, here her body narrates the fraught moment of contestation to stop the police from taking away her son Bheki, who had just been picked up by the police. Mlangeni directly contested political authority and power and gendered power of the policemen not only in action but in speech "*No! I'm going too. I am the mother here! Do you hear/understand me properly?!"*. This statement suggests that she was strongly contesting power relations by stating "*I am the mother here*", she declares the authority she has as mother over her children to contest the power and authority of the police. She relates that she had never stood up to policemen before. On another occasion she told the police that if they take her son she is also coming, as children were being picked up to be killed, and she relates that she told the police that they will then die together. She relates herself even willing to risk death with her children as a mother fighting the system.

Mlangeni narrates many raids of the police to her home, where she would be manhandled and physically thrown down onto the floor and kicked. Mlangeni's description of physical violence from the police is characterized by understatement although the content of the description is clearly violent. This seems to suggest an inability to recognize or acknowledge the violence that was directed to her body, confirming what Etter-Lewis in *'Black Women's Life Stories: Reclaiming Narrative Self in Narrative Texts'* argues is the tendency that women's narratives are more liable to be characterized by 'understatements, avoidance of the first person point of view, rare mention of personal accomplishments and disguised statements of personal power.'

Over the course of years Mlangeni's son, Bheki was arrested and jailed for a year during the extended States of Emergency of 1987-1989. Mlangeni's harassment and intimidation in her home by the police continued even when Bheki was imprisoned, demonstrates State tactics of terror and repression targeting of the African family. Feldman (1991, cited in Motsemme, 2007) notes how State power and violence in Northern Ireland takes control over the interiority of the body and imprints its power over material objects, bodies and built environments, this was certainly the case in South Africa. Motsemme (2007) describes these forced entries into homes by the State as a continuous embodied presence of State violence, and that the built environment of targeted homes of African families, like Mlangeni's home, become repositories of a history of violence. Mostemme (2007) further argues that these violations in the home created the transformation of spatial meanings of the home, where previously a home was a place of nurture and safety that women could provide for their families, changed to violated homes that were sites of forced entries and brutality. This signified that the home was no longer bricks and cement but also what Feldman (1991) argues becomes the register of a crumbling of boundaries between the the outside and the inside, public and private, interiority and exteriority' (cited in Motsemme, 2007).

I argue though, that to view the homes of African women to have only this spatial meaning of loss, intrusion, brutality and powerlessness is limiting, the testimonies of the two participants situates the home as a site of power , resistance and agency. It was precisely in her home where Mlangeni enacted direct contestations with security forces through speech and action, it was in her home that she defended her children, it was in her home where Mlangeni dealt with the distribution and disposal of illegal pamphlets, burning them nocturnally. Similarly, but to a much

lesser extent, for Shezi, the home was where she hid weaponry and provided an enabling environment for her MK combatant operations. I argue that the memory and witness of the home is also a repository of spatial meaning that is encoded with their innovation, strategies of survival, heroic memory of the survivor and the participants' immense resistance, agency and autonomy of subjectivation. In allowing for complexity and ambiguities in the spatial meanings of the home, in these two testimonies the home is *both* the repository of violence and the repository of political resistance and agency for the participants.

Bheki Mlangeni was subsequently assassinated in 1991, via the means of a cassette bomb that had been mailed to him that exploded when he put on the headphones to listen to the cassette. He had completed his Law studies at Wits University and was her only child to attain University education, he had been practising for six months as a Human Rights lawyer at the time of his assassination. He was living at the family home with his newly-wed wife Seipati. On the day of the day of Bheki's death, Mlangeni was at home and witnessed the devastating physical scene of this. The bodily speaking again features in Mlangeni's narration where she enacts the motions of the police scraping up Bheki's exploded head remains from the walls and floor, Mlangeni, who uses a cane to walk, and was age seventy- nine at the time of this research interview, stood unassisted to bodily witness what was done with her son's remains by the security forces. Langer (1991) asserts that deep memory defies incorporation into a broader historical perspective, it does not respond to the familiarizing co-ordinates of here and there, now and then. Deep memory is the memory of loss. It manifests as fragments of memory and may be difficult to make sense of or find adequate expression within the limitations of language. Here Mlangeni's body

narrates in traumatic address that defies language but narrates deep memory, the body's narration is another mode of narration.

Let us return to Shezi's testimony.

Shezi was arrested in 1987, after being betrayed by two of her male MK comrades in her underground cell who were detained and severely tortured by the security forces. On the day of her arrest she had a premonition and told her mother that she had a strong feeling that the police were coming. Her mother urged her to flee, but Shezi thought of the certain violence that would be inflicted on her family by the security agents, and more worryingly large caches of weaponry that were hidden in the yard in her father's scrap cars. These would most certainly lead her family to being brutalized and even arrested. Her sixth sense proved to be true *"So they came…hippos, casspirs, vans.. you know it was like they are coming to pick Mandela up.*" she narrates. She was then brutally beaten in front of her family, Shezi narrates her first encounter of security police and the brutal violence on her body person, it's the first time she narrates herself as powerless.

Within torture situations that women and men have faced during imprisonment, keeping silent and not betraying secrets was tremendously challenging. The police wanted Shezi to reveal the name of her MK commander, Shezi was severely tortured in prison with electric shocks applied to her breasts and thighs and the wet sack torture techniques, she resolved to die with the truth and relates, "*Then I said to myself, ngesiZulu sithi "Umfazi ufa azi" … Ngizofa ngazi."/Then I said to myself, in isiZulu we say "A woman dies knowing the truth"… I will die with the truth…"* Shezi invokes a gendered figure of speech in isiZulu to frame her determination as a woman to die without telling the truth, by invoking the phrase she is implying possibly that her belief was

women are hardened to keep the secret of the truth. Secrets feature quite prominently in Shezi's entire narration, she is the keeper of secrets : the secret of being a secret operative, secrets of guns hidden around the house, the secret of her teenage siblings going to exile, and now the triumph of keeping the secret of the truth during torture.

Feminist scholarship has also been also concerned with the issues of speech, silence and articulation. Gasa (2007) writes that whilst a powerful form of self-liberation has been attained when women have spoken truth to power, silence can also be a form of self-liberation '..an exercise of self-authority and agency. Silence when chosen, can be a powerful force' (Motsemme 2004a, b, c). Gasa (2007) further asserts that "Silence was sometimes exercised not by literal silence but choice of what to tell, was an exercise of personal power and control, fighting back with a weapon that lay beyond the reach of the one who presumably held power." This certainly holds true for Shezi, who later in her torture session, utilizes this form of silence as a choice of what to tell when she decides to tell the police that she was an IFP member and using her knowledge from High School in KZN to comprehensively tell the police about the IFP and its ideology and history.

Shezi code switches languages between English and isiZulu for the first and only time in her interview when relating her torture, perhaps in her traumatic address she needed to use indigenous language to intimately language the trauma, (Shezi is also aware that the researcher is also Nguni speaking). Additionally this section of the narration references intersubjectivities between the participant and researcher, when Shezi describes the scars on her breasts from the

electric shocks and demonstrates the vibration of the electric shocks on her breast she shows her naked breast briefly, and asks the researcher "*Woman, can you imagine*?", here the word Mfazi/Woman is used to address the researcher as a term of identification, affiliation or solidarity. This section of narration is characterized by a lot of fragments in her narration at this point, Langer (1991) writes that humiliated memory recalls an utter distress that shatters all moulds designed to contain a unified and irreproachable image of self. Shezi was then taken to another room and gang-raped by four white Afrikaner policemen. Shezi speaks of disembodiment and spiritual transcendence during the rape ordeal. For Shezi, disembodiment to narrate oneself in *and* outside of the body perhaps works to encompass a prior formation of self or identity within *and* without the body. Disembodiment also is a common experience of rape survivors, of how they survived the experience.

In the context of the subaltern woman or 'sati' that does not' speak,' Spivak (1983, 1985) understands such bodily writing, that is not "writing" per se, as the corporeal resignification of an ethical dilemma, the narrational element as a form of covert witnessing. For Shezi the act of placed yet displaced silent witnessing (scars) as a form of bodily speaking signals another type of modality of self-narration, perhaps the ability of response to oneself, that signifies female agency through a distinctive traumatic address that works to reconstitute a prior conception of self.

Shezi was in solitary confinement for a year, in detention without trial, which became a common feature of the Apartheid government's reaction to growing civil unrest; and by 1988, 30,000 people had been detained, it was also illegal to disclose the name of anyone arrested under the

State of Emergency until the government saw fit to release that name. Shezi's family did not know where she was for the entire period of her detention and had presumed that she had been killed. Shezi credits the support of female prisoners in the cells adjacent to her. Shezi would drain the toilet bowl of water to be able to use this as a communication channel by talking into the toilet bowl and letting the sound be carried by the pipes to cell neighbours. Shezi relates how political prisoners would trade the food for books with common law prisoners via knotted sheets flung out their cell windows as conveyers (political prisoners were not allowed books, political prisoners also had better food than criminal offenders due to the State's fear of continuing of hunger strikes they had embarked on to protest the food supplied), and how the district surgeons who examined them were supportive and smuggled out notes from prisoners out of the prisons.

Shezi relates another ruse that she would use to fool their captors was to feign wanting to point out where guns and ammunition were hidden "*Oh they'll come flying! When they are going out with you, you'll be a Queen in their car, and you'll make them to round the whole town pointing to areas that you know they'll never find anything….They'll take you back and now they are no longer going to harass you as long as they see that now you want to come with information. That is how you manage to survive.".* Shezi's testimony of her experience in detention in solitary confinement reflects strategies of survival and agency in a space of supreme restriction, that of the prison.

Shezi was released after one year in prison, in solitary confinement. She suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and did not tell anyone for years about her experience, she relates that

she was angry and ashamed, her behavior oscillating between being angry or withdrawn, and she became violent towards her young daughter over a period of eight years. She later was, after some years, able to receive counseling via the Khulumani Support Group (KSG) at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) in 1996. She continued to be politically active after the unbanning of the and other political parties, and during the negotiations she was involved in re-building ANC branches, being part of the formation of MKVA (Umkhonto we Sizwe Veterans Association), and later in the 1994 elections participated in voter education awareness campaigns for the ANC.

4.4 Self-narration: The play *This Story I Am About to Tell* and the TRC and testimony

The participants had dissimilar motivations for deciding to appear at the TRC, although both were members of the Khulumani Support Group. Mlangeni appeared at the TRC before she performed in the play, her reasons for testifying at the TRC were simple, she says: *"No, I wanted to talk because I wanted to know why my child died".* However, Mlangeni's actual personal experience was perhaps not up to her expectation she relates that she felt that she was not engaged by the TRC on her life and experiences she says: *"…My story was not as important to them, and the things that had happened to me during Bheki's activism, …."sizabalaza", we were both in the Struggle…(long sigh).* Mlangeni's own experiences of brutality from Apartheid government agents, and activism was completely ignored and not solicited at the TRC.

In the play, both participants authored their self-narrations, and had control over self - representation. Mlangeni talks about her resistance and resilience and the traumatic events of her

son's death. Speaking of the difference between public self- narration and in the play and the TRC she relates: *"Maybe there's someone like me, who suffered like me. They must also come, and talk as I am talking. If they start to talk, they'll be able to talk as I am now able to."* A strong element of talking wounds as healing is present in Mlangeni's responses about the experience of self-narration, and that to speak about one's story is perhaps done in the service of healing others.

For Shezi, who had initially decided not to participate in the TRC, she narrates how it was only due to her experiences in the play "*To me it was a therapy…so for me to talk about it, it was taking it out, what happened to me, how that I am still here."* that she decided finally to testify at the TRC Women's Hearings. Her part in the play is self-authored, she was able to determine her self-narration on her terms, she highlights the necessity for her to have been able to speak of her survival, as opposed to her testimony at the TRC where she said she did not want anybody's pity, refusing the TRC's victim status assigned to her.

The Commission unequivocally used 'story telling' as part of its methodological approach to both healing and ascertaining the 'truth': "By telling their stories, both victims and perpetrators gave meaning to the multi-layered experiences and the South African story….Indeed this aspect is a distinctive …feature of the legislation governing the Commission… The Act explicitly recognized the healing potential of stories"(TRC Report 1998, Volume 1 p,112). Both participants described experiencing Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after testifying at the TRC, Mlangeni relates that the TRC had "*opened up wounds*" and that she had "*very little with which*

to comfort" herself, Shezi relates suffering from nightmares on the night after she testified. Both participants received counseling via KSG at the CSVR (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation) and not provided by the TRC. This demonstrates another critical inadequacy of TRC in failing to provide or co-ordinate post testimony counseling for people who testified.

4.5 Forgiveness and reconciliation

Many scholars have commented on the theological language of forgiveness and reconciliation espoused by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his TRC deputy-chairperson, Alec Boraine. Both Mlangeni and Shezi describe themselves as committed Christians however, neither of them references Christianity's conceptualistion of forgiveness. Gobodo-Madikizela (2003: p125) writes in *"A Human Being Died that Night: A South African Story of Forgiveness* " that "..lessons from the TRC proceedings, approached with an open mind – and heart - can help us chart a path along which forgiveness may occur, as well as conditions that make it difficult, or even morally inappropriate to forgive."

The route to forgiveness and reconciliation is a difficult and arduous personal journey, for Mlangeni the process still requires an apology from Eugene de Kock. For Mlangeni there is no closure yet, and the victim/perpetrator dynamic is as yet unhealed and even though she saw De Kock in the TRC and at his court hearing, she is unable to move on. Mlangeni relates that forgiveness does not mean she can be further subjugated, a strong self-assertion of continued resistance to subjugation. She relates looking at de Kock at the TRC amnesty hearings and wanting him to feel uncomfortable, a desire perhaps, to exercise power, she relates that she simply wanted an apology. She relates the pain of that, "this thing (De Kock's refusal to

apologise) *entered our blood , and entered our souls and made us messed up inside…*" in a bodied and disembodied metaphor, an ontological rupture.

For Shezi her process of forgiveness and reconciliation seems to suggest that she has taken a lot of time to process and get to a self-liberartory resolution and understanding of her torture and rape experience. She had been blaming herself for the rape, which is a common stage in rape survivors healing journeys. Shezi narrates "…*I had to forgive myself and say ..I forgive myself because I did not look for it, all along I had been trapped in , in, in, in, the pain of saying I looked for it . But immediately when I forgave myself, then that forgiveness spilled to others to say I have forgiven those white policemen."* . Shezi relates an alternate understanding "*Reconciliation it means you have to begin to reconcile within. Reconcile with your past, reconcile with what happened to you".* For Shezi possibly then, forgiveness and reconciliation represents an opportunity for her to redeem part of her own humanity that has been held captive by what she had experienced.

4.6 Narrating Black women into history

It has been argued that the TRC was the manufacturer of the founding myth of the new nation thus serving its mandate of political function from the new government, which was to function as a nation building exercise. Debates around national identities are increasingly focused on the issue of plural identities, the desire for a post-authoritarian era identity is strongly allied to nationalism. The nationalist agenda of the TRC's production of a version of South African history was an attempt to redefine the centre in terms of the marginal, with its binary framework of victims and oppressors, an attempt that was not entirely successful as discussed in Chapter One and Chapter Two.

hooks (1989) describes the process of testimony as the act of speech, of "talking back", that is the expression of moving from object to subject." The narratives in this study illustrate that these African women do not identify with labels and framings that portray them as victims**.** They both were very much engaged in their lives as conscious actors in an ongoing process of reinvention in their endeavors to make themselves subject in the historical times under Apartheid. The findings of this study indicate that by looking at subjectivities of black women we are able to see black women as agents of history, as complex political actors and thus how the narrative is a political act and an instrument of the will to freedom.

Surveying Mlangeni's testimony it has been possible to map the trajectory of historical consciousness of an ordinary working class black woman in a manner that recasts the myth of the poor, illiterate African mother who is not an active subject of history. Mlangeni's journey into political activism is a long and gradual arc of her political consciousness and development, from the 1960's where her political understanding was limited through to her growing consciousness and political activities in the mid 1980's.

Various scholars have addressed the powerlessness that women felt in being unable to protect their families in testimonies of the TRC. Ross (1997) argues that the fact that this violation was located in the domestic space, which usually marks a relatively ordered continuous and predictable world, provided a particular impact to women. Motsemme (2007) argues that these narrations of women's powerlessness to protect and maintain their families 'surface the process in which loss of control, a loss of lived meanings' occurred. On the contrary though, Mlangeni's

testimony in this study provides a very different account to the economically poor, and powerless African mother that Mlangeni was reduced to in her TRC testimony.

According to hooks (1990), subjectivity contributes to the individual's ability to take a radical stance toward the world, one that seeks to change systems of domination through speech and action. Surveying Mlangeni's testimony in this study we see the development of her radical stance towards the world was as a mother and her political agency and activism was enabled through the Motherism movement. Suttner (2007) writes that existing historiography has traditionally 'tended to dismiss or downplay the involvement of women in political struggle, for entering as 'mothers' or supportive of the role of men, or performing conventional female roles'. The Motherism movement in South Africa is an area of historical enquiry, that it is relatively under-researched and under-theorised, additionally interpretations of motherhood and particularly for poor African women, tend to be framed in particular discourses that only relate black women as subjugated.

Surveying Shezi's testimony it is possible to map the historical consciousness of a young black woman's journey into political consciousness and activism as a community leader, to female combatant in a South African war situation. Shezi's testimony provides us with a very different reading of the possibilities of black female selfhood. For Shezi who is living at her parents' home but seems to be able to operate independently from familial pressure and child rearing expectations of her two children, and we see her agency through her choices and sacrifice present in her narration, as markers of self-liberation. She chooses and sacrifices her romantic relationship with the father of her two children due to differences in politics, she chooses and sacrifices her relationship of being a mother/parent to her children, like perhaps many men in the

liberation movements did. She chooses and sacrifices herself to the cause of liberation. Her self-representation is consistent in reflecting being independent and making her own way in the world, and having autonomy and agency. She is much more than the poor rape victim she was engaged as at the TRC.

However, I am aware of the dangerous pitfalls of overly inscribing agency assigned to black women, who as a group have been socially and politically marginalized. It can lead to other distortions of structural and social inequalities that can allow other actors, such as the State to absolve themselves of the duty of care and accountability to providing solutions for the empowerment of this constituency. Over-inscribing the agency of black women can also provide impetus for other agents of patriarchal domination such as Traditional leaders to drive agendas and legislation that disenfranchise women, for example the Traditional Courts Bill, (which effectively will deprive rural people and rural women in particular access to the legal judicial process other South Africans have access to, as Traditional courts will have a certain jurisdiction).

Various feminist scholars have been engaged in the questioning of conventional notions of femininity which does not arise just from exposure to and identification with a greater array of alternative images of femininity, but from tensions inherent in the concrete negotiation of increasingly conflictual female roles. For Mlangeni we see this reflected in her testimony at different points from when she is prevented from continuing her education and sent to Initiation school, to the change in dynamics within her marital configuration where she becomes the head of the household whilst contending with the presence of the embodied yet absent husband and father. Later, when she joins the ranks of the Mothers of the Nation (as they were also called)

though the Motherism movement of the ANCWL, she engages in fighting the system and being the protector of family and home. With Shezi we see these tensions reflected in her contestation of traditional strictures as a girl child, we see this also reflected the in her tomboy status at High School within her elective peer group of boys whilst being the caretaker to her younger siblings. And later when she became a community activist and subsequently an MK combatant.

Such a process is suggested in De Lauretis's work on gendered identity as both the effect of representation and that which remains beyond representation - that is, the cross-cutting and conflictual practices of self-representation (De Lauretis 1987); and in Butler's (1993) formulation "… to say that there is a matrix of gender relations that institutes and sustains the subject is not to claim that there is a singular matrix that acts in a singular and deterministic way to produce a subject as its effect" (Butler, 1993: p.8). That is, the relations of power and discourse produce the field of *sanctioned* modes of subjectivity in relation to what is *culturally* constructed as that which has to be disavowed.

According to Ricoeur (1994, p. 126) thought imagination inhabits an indispensable role in action; creativity denotes the extent to which the imagination, as it operates in anticipatory consciousness, makes up action in that there is 'no action without imagination'. From the testimonies of Mlangeni and Shezi we are able to see the role of imagination in locating agency, in that we learn from their testimonies what they actually did, and what they wished to do or could have done if certain possibilities were an option in the material world.

For both participants the role of intersubjective relationships has been critical in the development of their political consciousness and activism, for Mlangeni it was through her son and the Motherism movement of the ANC Women's League, for Shezi it was it was through her community activism in Soyco and later in Umkhontho we Sizwe structures, and we can see how

these intersubjective relations illustrates the individual and the social as being produced simultaneously. Ricoeur (1994) proposes that the historical field of action is only understood through the placement of categories of common action upon the temporal fluidity of experience, thus then it 'establishes the relations between contemporaries, predecessors and successors partially through the transmission of tradition…in some sense, establishes the other as another self like myself'. This means that imagination makes up not individual action but also intersubjective relations and collective forms of action.

The experience of the TRC inspires us to believe that the narrative need not remain in the hands of the colonial master or the oppressive regime and indeed the TRC itself. Though the recognition and exploration of black women as authors of their self-representations it has been possible to produce a counter narrative to the TRC Report's inscription of black women as victims and passive within the history of Apartheid, thus enriching our understanding of black women's political history. The study also demonstrates the need to be able to listen effectively to women's words and different modes of narration : linguistic, corporeal, affective, traumatic. In doing so is possible to contribute to contemporary South African historiography and recast the 'woman question' as part of the body politics fundamental reconstitution. The attempt to theorise nonunitary subjectivity in black women's narratives indicates the possibilities for interpretive research, within the realm of historical enquiry, to contribute to endeavour within scholarship to change the terms of reference for consciousness.

4.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT RESEARCH

In retrospect perhaps a larger sample size with a more focused interview schedule size may be needed to tease out more substantially the patterns of qualitative shifts in an individual's subjective sense of gendered and historical consciousness. The aim of qualitative analysis is, however, to draw out individual nuances that may escape statistical procedures (Haralambos and Holbon, 1990). Thus sample size is not the sole determinate of the robustness of a qualitative analysis.

In addition, the research does not explore the ways in which class and race relations constitute gendered subjectivity. Black women's lives are structured not only by class divisions of late capitalist society, but also by the combined effect of race, class and gender oppression. Race and gender are both concepts which bridge the different levels of social life, concepts which are produced and reproduced in the course of subjective processes and socio-cultural, economic and historical relations. With regard to these cultural narratives, the research does not reflect on how these are situated within the relations of power and discourse, for example, the research does not reflexively explore how these cultural narratives mediate or construct the participating subjects' reality. Although the research attempts to provide a constructivist and hermeneutic critique, the task is undertaken from within the traditions it seeks to critically examine, thus it follows that research could unwittingly reinforce certain unexamined assumptions or constructions. The life stage approach employed in this study is ideologically embedded where selectivity and fragmentation are also key components of an ideology.

4.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The research gives weight to a qualitative approach to exploring gendered subjectivity, such as the social constructionist approach specifically Butler (1990, 1993, 1993a 1995, 1997;) and hermeneutical approach of Ricouer (1983, 1986, 1991, 1992, 1994).

However, if gendered subjectivity is indeed textured in nature, mutable and temporalised one cannot assume that is therefore characterised by a single form of gendered subjectivity. Furthur studies need to explore in addition, how the psychodynamic processes are culturally mediated or constructed as well. This would include an examination of the influence of race and class variables, that is, how class and race variables influence and contribute to the cultural investment of the body and historical consciousness.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Utilising the social constructivist and hermeneutical theoretical frameworks of Butler and Ricoeur respectively, this study has attempted to situate the politics of subjectivity, memory and historical consciousness within the framework of a gendered analytical framework in order to explore the complexities of subjectivity of two black South African women who were denied voice at the TRC.

The exploration of subjectivity is possible through engaging the participants self-identity processes through narrativisation within the individual and evolving meanings of lived experiences. The study has attempted to examine how the constant interplay between narrative self-formation and social experience in the construction and reproduction of the individual's subjectivity produces the subject. The study has attempted to examine narrativity, and modes of narration: linguistic ,corporeal, affective, traumatic; and finally the study has attempted to examine how these women assumed agency and self-liberation.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM

Department of History,
University of Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050
Tel: 011 717 1000

Dear Ms. Catherine Mlangeni

My name is Palesa Letlaka-Nkosi. I am currently completing my Masters Degree at the University of Witwatersrand, Department of History. A requirement of the degree is the completion of a research project.

I aim to undertake a research project that examines the experiences of two black women who both narrated their personal testimonies in self-authored narrations for public theatrical consumption and, who both testified at the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The study will look at the broad history and events that have impacted on their lives as women. This will involve an interview that will last approximately three hours which shall be audio taped for research purposes.

The completed research report and interview transcripts will be kept by the University of the Witwatersrand, for preservation and future research purposes for use by suitably qualified researchers. Copies of the final research report, audio interviews and transcripts will be given to the research participant for their personal archives.

Participation in the research is voluntary. Participation in the research may be discontinued at any time. If you consent to participation in the research please fill in the section below.

Thanking you

---------- ----------

P. Letlaka
Student

Prof C. Kros
Supervisor

I, _____ [state name in full] hereby consent to the participation in the stated research.

I understand that participation is voluntary and the research report will be kept by the University of Witwatersrand. In addition I understand that participation in the research may be discontinued by me at any time.

_____

Signed

CONSENT FORM

Department of History,
University of Witwatersrand
Private Bag 3, Wits, 2050
Tel: 011 717 1000

Dear Ms. Thandi Shezi

My name is Palesa Letlaka. I am currently completing my Masters Degree at the University of Witwatersrand, Department of History. A requirement of the degree is the completion of a research project.

I aim to undertake a research project that examines the experiences of two black women who both narrated their personal testimonies in self-authored narrations for public theatrical consumption and, who both testified at the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The study will look at the broad history and events that have impacted on their lives as women. This will involve an interview that will last approximately three hours which shall be audio taped for research purposes.

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_____

Signed

PART 2

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

NAME, DATE OF BIRTH, PARENTS

What is your full name?

When were you born and where?

What were your parents' and full names , dates of birth, places of birth?

What were your grandparents' full names, dates of birth?

FAMILY LIFE:

What were the occupations of your parents?

How many children were in your family, what is your birth order?

Where did you grow up?

What kind of did you house you grew up in? Can you describe the neighbourhood you grew up in?

Generally what was your childhood like?

What were your parents like? What memories do you have of them? What work were your parents doing then?

How did your family compare to others in the neighbourhood – richer, poorer, the same?

What happy memories or stories from your childhood do you remember most clearly?

What sad or difficult memories from your childhood do you remember most clearly?

What memories do you have of each of your siblings?

Family chores:

What main chores did your mother and father do around the home?

Did the children in your family have to do chores?

When did you start doing chores at home? And what were your chores and responsibilities

Who taught you how to do these chores? What was that like? Did you like or dislike doing chores?

Did your siblings do chores? What chores did your sisters and brothers do?

Did you think this was fair or not? Why?

Senses of Self

How do you remember being described by your parents? Did you agree with this then? Do you agree with this now?

How do you remember being described by your siblings? Did you agree with this then? Do you agree with this now?

How did you see yourself, or would describe yourself back then?

EDUCATION:

What were the school's names you attended from Primary school onwards, and what years were you there?

How did you get to school?

Did you like going to Primary school?

Do you have any memories of what you wanted to work as when you were grown up?

Do you remember how your teachers described you in Primary school?

How do you remember yourself?

High School:

What are your earliest memories of going to High school?

How did you get to school?

Did you remember the kinds of jobs that you wanted to have this stage? Or Role models

What kind of social or peer pressure do your remember as a girl?

What were the kinds of things that you remember you couldn't /were not allowed to as do specifically as a girl?

Was this different to boys? in what way?

Do you remember how your teachers described you in High School ?

Do you remember how your friends described you in high school?

How did you see yourself then or would you have described yourself then?

How would you describe yourself then looking from who you are now?

How old were you when you left school? Why did you leave? What did you do next**?**

WORK

What was your first paid job?

Where did you work?

Describe what you did in your job, what hours did you work?

What were your wages? What did you do with your wages?

How did you feel about your job?

Responsibilities? Did you have to give money to any one else? Parents? Family? Why?

Did you make all the decisions on how to spend your money? Who else was involved?

Did you join any work organisations or Unions? Which? How did you get to join?

What other jobs did you do in your working life, how did these jobs come about?

What did you do in your leisure time

(Repeat questions for different jobs held)

MARRIAGE/PARTNERS:

How did you meet your partner first serious partner? When was this?

How did you feel about him? Why ?

Was there any family pressure about him? Or against him?

Why did you choose to be serious with your partner? Where did this lead the relationship to?

Marriage: where did you get married? How old were you?

How did you manage housekeeping after marriage? Living together?

Who paid the bills? Who decided how the money should be spent ?

How did you feel about this ? What did you do when you disagreed?

How would you describe your relationship (s)

Children:

How many children did you have? When was each child born?

Did you and your partner have the same ideas about bringing children up?

Parenting/Mothering:

Specifically as a mother what did you see your different roles as? Describe each one, Why

Who did the disciplining? counseling?

Did you find yourself being similar to any of your parents in your parenting ? how? Why?

EXPERIENCES OF APARTHEID :

What were your experiences during childhood? What vivid recollections come to mind?

How did your parents explain these situations to you?

As a child, teenager adult, what do you remember being told to you about Apartheid? By whom?

EXPOSURE TO POLITICS/ACTIVISM:

When and how did you get exposed to politics?

When and how did you get involved with activism?

What were your experiences, what organization did you join, what kinds of things did you do in the organization as an activist?

Did you experience any backlash/pressure from family/ friends, community members for your being involved with activism?

Why do you think this was the case? How did it make you feel?

How did you push on regardless with your decision? When? Other occasions

How did it make you feel?

Did you experience encouragement getting from family/friends, community for being involved with activism?

Why do you think this was the case? How did this make you feel?

Catherine Mlangeni specific: What was your understanding of the role that you and women had to play in the struggle against apartheid?

Did you view this as in any way as different to what men were doing in the struggle?

What were your personal experiences of harassment by the authorities? When ? what instances?

Why did these not deter you? Why and How did you decide to continue?

What were your concerns for your safety? Did you have to do anything to safeguard yourself? And your family?

What happened afterwards in your life? How did you pick up the pieces?

Thandi Shezi specific:

Were there many other females in the organization or exposure groups in your politisization?

How were you treated as a female in these formations? And other females?

Describe any perceived differences in the forms of activisim and tasks between males and females?

Did you have a sense of voice ? of being listened to and respected equally for your inputs? Why?

What particular recollections do you have of these?

Pre TRC

Pre TRC community groups: Khulumani Support Group:

When and how did you become involved with the Khulumani Support Group? (KSG)

What was it that the KSG was able to provide you with? Group support? Counseling? Information?

What did you learn about opening up and sharing with others who had similar experiences?

Was it difficult to do this? How did it help you?

How do you think you would have coped if KSG had not been in your life?

SELF -AUTHORED NARRATIVITY: THIS STORY I AM ABOUT TO TELL PLAY

When and how did you get involved with this workshop play?

Why did you decide to participate?

What were workshops like? How did you decide how and what of your story you would like to tell?

Describe the early sessions and how you arranged your story and why? What made you choose to narrate these memories?

Who were the other participants? How was it like meeting them and what were your relations with them?

Were there participants you were close to? Why? And were they those you were not close to , Why?

How did you feel about the new experience of public expression of your story? What was the first time performing like?

Did you keep to the same narration every performance or did it sometimes change?

What kind of responses did you receive from people after the play? Family? Community? Public?

You toured overseas with the play what was this experience like?

What was the difference in local performances and overseas performances for you ? why?

TRC

Exposure to TRC info:

When and how did you first hear about the TRC?

Did you want to participate in it? Why? Why Not

TRC testimony day Experience:

When you went to testify at the TRC what are your recollections of before you went?

What were your apprehensions? Expectations?

Who did you choose to accompany you? , Name , Age ?Why?

Who else was there of you family? Friends?

What do you first remember of the day's proceedings?

What was it like speaking about this at the TRC?

Did it feel different to doing so in the play? How so?

In the testimony you said your relatives where harassed? What type of harassment? To whom? And to which women?

How did you feel after your testimony?

What happened for the rest of the day afterwards?

After the TRC - PSTD

Please relate your experiences after the TRC ?

Did your symptoms get worse after TRC testimony?

What did you do about this? Counseling?

How have your feeling s and thoughts about the TRC changed over time?

From your expectations then, what have you thought about it over the years. For you personally?

POST TRC EXPERIENCES – SENSES OF SELF, DEEPENING SUBJECTIVITIES

Looking back on your childhood self, how do you view her now? What was she like, how would you describe her?

Looking back on your younger activist self how do you view her now, how would you describe her?

Looking back on your post detention (Thandi,) how do you view her now, the you that kept that secret for so long, how would you describe her?

How would you describe yourself as a person now, who has lived through what you have lived through?

What did personal mythologies? stories die you tell yourself about yourself that you think are no longer true , or that you have discarded?

What would you say made you able to survive? Your strategies?

Forgiveness/ Reconciliation

What is your understanding of forgiveness?

Are you able to forgive the past?

Are you able to forgive those who harmed you?

Are there things that you cannot forgive?

Do you think reconciliation is possible?

SOUTH AFRICA NOW

As an activist before 1994 what kind of SA were you fighting for? And hoped would emerge?

Looking at the SA after 1994 what where your hopes?

And after the TRC what were your hopes?

Over the years what have your hopes and disappointments been regarding SA as you have experienced in post 94 freedom?

APPENDIX B

PART 1

THE FRAMEWORK OF CATEGORIES

The framework comprises categories for the coding of the themes that emerge through the interview

PROCESS CODES (APPLICABLE TO ALL QUESTIONS)

1 Non relevant

Themes that are not related or relevant to the research question are coded as such.

2 Long pause

Indicates a pause or break of more than ten seconds in the subject's narration. Pauses that are below this threshold are indicated by "…."

THEMATIC CODES (SPECIFIC TO INDIVIDUAL SECTIONS)

Category "A" (Education)

Descriptions of experiences within the educational environment.

Category "B" (Intimate relations)

These are descriptions where the subjects describe the quality of their intimate relations and their subjective sense of being female within those relationships.

Category " C" (Work)

Descriptions around work, financial decisions

Category "D" (Intersubjective relations)

Intersubjective relationships provide an ensemble of meanings on gender and prescribe, inform or challenge the manner of being a certain gender.

Category " E" (Experiences of the TRC)

Descriptions of subjects experiences of the TRC

Category "F" (Expectations of the TRC)

Descriptions of the subjects' expectations of the TRC

Category "G" (Unfulfilled expectations of the TRC)

Descriptions of the subjects' unfulfilled expectations of the TRC

PART 2

Part 2A - Transcribed interview with Subject A – CATHERINE MLANGENI

Interviewer: Palesa Letlaka (PL)

Interviewee: Catherine Mlangeni (CM)

Place of Interview: Soweto

FAMILY

1. PL: What is your full name?

1. CM: My name is Catherine…my birth name at home

2. PL: What was your surname?

2. CM: Malakwane

3. PL: Oh, Malakwane?

3. CM: Yes. Malakwane (corrects interviewer pronunciation)

4. PL: Where were you born?

4. CM: I was born in Nquthu

5. PL: Where is Nquthu?

5. CM: In Natal.

6. PL: Which year?

6. CM: I was born in 1932

7. PL: What were your parent's names?

7. CM: My mother's name was Malefu Aida she was born a Moloi. My father was Charles Malakwane do you understand?…

8. PL: Where was your father from?

8. CM: My father is from Natal.

9. PL: Oh Sothos from Natal!…So did you consider yourselves Zulu or Sotho?

9. CM: No were are Sotho. Our surname points to that we are Sotho.

10. PL: Did you speak Sotho at home?

10. CM: We spoke Sotho at home. What ..us we met at school…we learnt Zulu at school. It's only then that we spoke Zulu.

11. PL: Do you remember when your mother was born?

11. CM: She was born during the Boer War.

12. PL: Do you remember perhaps when your father was born?

12. CM: I don't know. They were orphans.

13. PL: How many were you at home?

13. CM: There were five of us. Four girls and one boy.

14. PL: Which number are you?

14. CM: I am the third born.

FAMILY LIFE

15. PL: What did your parents do for work?

15. CM: They were farmers at home. We had crops and livestock.

16. PL: So you grew up at Nquthu?

16. CM: Yes I grew up there and went to school there.

17. PL: What kind of house did you have? What kind of house did you live in?

17. CM: There were rondavels and rooms. You know what it its like in the rural areas. Before he died my father built a big house, but we grew up in the rondavels and rooms.

18. PL: So where you lived, were there other farmers or did you live on your own land?

18. CM: We lived on our own land…

19. PL: How far where the neighbors from you?

19. CM: One was here; another one was here, (pointing to direction to left and right)

20. PL: You could see each other?

20. CM: We saw each other; we but we would have to call out loudly to each other.

21. PL: What was it like growing up as you say you grew up on a farm?

21. CM: We grew up very well as children…my father passed away.

22. PL: When did your father pass away?

22. CM: 1940

23. PL: How old were you?

23. CM: I was born in 1932 March 2

24. PL: You were 8?

24.CM: (nods)

25. PL: How were your parents?

25. CM: My parents lived very well. My father was a man who liked to…work. We had everything at home. We were short of nothing. Our corn used to come by cart and cows. People used to get milk from us.

26. PL: How do you remember your mother?

26. CM: My mother grew up in the church…mother was poor…My grandmother…grew up poor.

27. PL: When you look at your family, where you any different from the people you lived around? Did you have more money or were you poor?

27. CM: No we were better off. We worked, we had cows. Others had nothing; they would get milk and food from us.

28. PL: What are the happy memories you have of growing up?

28. CM: The time when my father was still alive was a happy time because we lived well.

29. PL: Where were your grandparents, aunts and uncles when you were growing up?

29. CM: I didn't have any. My father was an orphan and my mother (short pause) also had her sisters who were still alive, my uncles died. My father had but they were not close. They were in Standerton and he was in Natal. Standerton is where they used to farm. People who didn't have productive fields would go there to grow crops and they would be paid with corn and thereafter they would go back to their homes.

30. PL: Can you tell me more about your siblings? How were they, how do you remember them?

31. CM: (Long pause), my siblings just lived…because they didn't have anything, and they were not happy, a person who was better off was me. After some time I also found myself like them, but it got better because I was here in Johannesburg working for myself.

32. PL: Oh...I am talking about when you were growing up

32. CM: Oh the time we were growing up? You are saying?

33. PL: Can you tell me about your siblings growing up from the oldest, to the next and so on.What do you remember about them?

33. CM: (long pause)…The others were ok. The older sister was problematic. She liked to stay with her friends and we wouldn't know what to do. We stayed at home with our mother. We helped her with everything she did.

34. PL: When you were still children? I'm referring about when you?

34. CM: (Interrupts) yes when we were children. At home growing up. One would make the fire, one would cook another would got to the fields. We cooperated. The one who wouldn't cooperate was my older sister. She was problematic.

35. PL: How many were you boys and girls.

35. CM: I am the second born, we were four girls and one boy.

FAMILY CHORES

36. PL: What kind of chores did you do?

36. CM: I looked after my siblings. When my father died my mother would go and sell inkamba (round clay vessels for liquids). We supported ourselves by moulding clay and selling it. We would help her with that, we already knew how.

37. PL: What did your father do around the house if you remember? And what kind of things did your mother do? Isn't it that they shared the work?

37. CM: (interrupting) My mother did the cooking. Someone would go to tend the cows, another would go to the fields and plow. My father would plant and do the rest of the field work. …

38. PL: In the house, is there something your father did in the house?

38. CM: No my father didn't do that work. He would be with the cows outside and my mother would be in the house. My father would see to the cows and the field to see how the corn was growing, what was happening and what was needed in the fields.

39. PL: So you children did you work in the house?

39. CM: Yes we worked in the house.

40. PL: What did you do?

40. CM: Back then we still used to grind grain, one would grind, another would cook, and another would fetch water. Another would tend to the firewood, chopping. When one does this another does that. …

41. PL: Who taught you how to do these chores?

41. CM: My mother.

42. PL: Did you like to do all this work?

42. CM: I liked it. I liked everything that my mother did and I would do it with her (long pause)

43. PL: Does it mean that all of the children worked in the house?

43. CM: Yes, when father went to the cows.

44. PL: What did your brother do in the house?

44. CM: He also use to work in the house, he would sweep, clean like us if it was not your turn to go to the cows. Because if you didn't go to the cows you work at home, sweep and do all the work that would have been done by the one who is with the cows.

45. PL: So you used to do the same chores in the house whether you were a boy or girl?

45. CM: Boy or girl it made no difference because he was the only boy, and it meant that you as a girl must go and do a boys work because he can't do it on his own. The younger ones would get a headache and cry and all these things, but they all still did the work in the house and in the fields.

46. PL: What kind of work did you do that was supposed to be done by boys?

46. CM: You see there was only one boy…

47. PL: As you were saying, what were the things that you did that were normally done by boys?

47. CM: We used to plough. We used to drive the ox to the fields to plough. We would hoe in the field. We would look after the cows. That's what was normally done by boys. One would have the whip, driving the cattle, like that. (*demonstrates whipping action*)

48. PL: I see.

48. CM: You see even with the corn would sow corn and sprinkle manure/ash and so on.

49. PL: So you are saying that you used to do the same work as boys? How did you feel about that? Did you see it as a good thing?

49. CM: We saw it as a good thing because those were our chores. It was our work which helped us at home. It was alright with us.

Childhood disciplining

50. PL: How were you disciplined at home? What would happen if one misbehaved?

50. CM: We were spanked. Sometimes it would feel that our father was not our father. It was like some person who had picked us up from wherever. If you made any mistake you would pay for it. (idiomatic Zulu: direct translation: you would point the house with liquor)

51. PL: What were you spanked with?

51. CM: With a whip.

52. PL: So was it just your father who spanked you

52. CM: Yes

53. PL: Your mother?

53. CM: No my mother didn't spank us. She would just say you know where you would see CM (Charles Malakwane, the father) for your crimes.

54. PL: Who was the strict one?

54. CM: My father.

55. PL: Do you remember anything that you did and were spanked for?

55. CM: I didn't really misbehave. My father loved me. He would ask me "what were the others doing my girl?" and I would tell. And sometimes I would feel bad when they got spanked after I had told on them.

56. PL: Did he never spank you?

56. CM: No. He did, but not like the others. He did spank me, but NOT like the others. He spanked me but NOT like the others (repeats)

57. PL: If you remember, just once, what had you done?

57. CM: My mother was not around, I don't remember where she had gone. So I called my friends thinking that my father had eaten. So I called my friends, when my mother left, she would leave sour milk in the gourd and his porridge so he could eat. So I told my friends that my father had already eaten, "come let's eat". We had a feast and my dad heard us. When we had finished and I was going to wash the gourd he said "hey girl bring my food!" (laughs). And I didn't know where to hide myself/I didn't know what to do with myself.

"I'm talking to you! Can you hear me?" Hey! I was in a fix.

"Dad I thought you had already eaten"

"Eaten? How could I have eaten when the gourd was still full? How would I have eaten? Do I not eat and the call you to collect? So did I say that?"

"No dad I thought you said that" (Makes sounds demonstrating the spanking).

58. PL: He spanked you?

58. CM: He spanked me!

59. PL: How was the relationship between your parents?

59. CM: They got on well. There was no argument at home. I had never seen my mother (entantatheka) harassed/ intimidated), or a blue eye. (long pause)

60. PL: What about you/ What was it like between you and your parents, when you recall?

60. CM: It was ok with me because I liked to work. ..I was next to her helping her. The others would go and play. I used to like helping my mother, even when grinding grain I would help her with (inkamba)…

61. PL: And the between you and your siblings what was it like?

61. CM: It was painful sometimes when I had told on them for misbehaving. Then they would not talk to me for the day. "you're mean!, you're mean!"

62. PL: So you said you growing up you never saw your aunts and uncles…

62. CM: The one who used to visit was our cousin who called my mother Aunty.

63. PL: What kind of things do you think did your parents used to say about you at the time you were growing?

63. CM: They spoke well of me, "Here's the grandmother of the house, who has birthed all these others. You stay at home you work, but these others!"

64. PL: So did you agree with all of that at that time?

64. CM: Yes I did agree with all of that because I used to sit and not go anywhere. I would piggyback the younger ones and wash them without being asked. I knew that at a certain time I must do a certain thing. I saw myself/wanted to be like my mother.

65. PL: Do you remember what your siblings used to say about you. What kind of person you were?

65. CM: They use to say Maqinase (forward) / They said I was forward…

66. PL: When they talked about you? Did you agree with that?

66. CM: I didn't agree with that because I did not like it when they got upset with me and not talk.

67. PL: But do you agree with that now? When they called you forward?

67. CM: I called it upon myself because I used to tell on them. They had wanted me to keep quiet and not tell my father, but I would just tell.

68. PL: But do you agree with that now? When they called you forward?

68.CM: (she laughs)

SENSES OF SELF IN CHILDHOOD

69. PL: What about you. How do you think you were? How do you remember yourself? What kind of child would you say you were?

69. CM: I wasn't a difficult child. I did as I was told. Nobody needed to look for me. I would play close by. I would not visit far. They used to visit far and go to my mother's family. I never used to go anywhere. Even when they asked me why I wouldn't go I would tell them that I did not want to.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

70. PL: Ok, what kind of things did you do together as a family? Is there anything that you would all do together?

70. CM: (long pause), something like what for example?

71. PL: Things like playing or praying or, what did you all do together?

71. CM: On Sundays we would all go together to church.

72. PL: At home is there anything that you remember?

72. CM: After our evening meal we would all say evening prayers together. Everybody was in the house by that time.

73. PL: Did you all eat together in the evening?

73. CM: We ate together, at the same time. The boy and my father would sit in the house and we girls would eat off the same plate.

74. PL: Were there other things besides work that were done only by your father? Things that only he did, like polishing shoes maybe?

74. CM: When it came to the cows, like checking if they were all still there, it was my father.

75. PL: Are there things that were done only by your mother?

75. CM: Inkamba (clay pot sculpting) were made only by her. After she had finished…and preparing food

76. PL: What did you do over weekends?

76. CM: Weekends we would do the washing and go to church on Sunday. Saturday we would wash our washing.

77. PL: And holidays like Easter or Christmas what did you do?

77. CM: Christmas we would slaughter a goat, and eats lots of meat.

EDUCATION

PL: We will talk about education now.

78. PL: What was the name of the Primary school you attended and…if you remember

78. CM: I started at Ndatshane Primary School.

79. PL: Where?

79. CM: Ndatshane

80. PL: Where is Ndatshane?

80. CM: It is at Nquthu

81. PL: How old were you?

81. CM: I was eight.

82. PL: Was your father still alive?

82. CM: No.

83. PL: He was no longer alive

83. CM: No he was late.

84. PL: How long did you stay there? (How many years were you there?)

84. CM: There was another school…when you left there you went to another one. You continue there Standard One and then you go…the college that was close to us. (Describes all the different schools that you would have to go to for the different classes/standards.)

85. PL: Let's go back to Primary school. When you recall, what are the things you remember like when you first went to school

85. CM: (long pause) When I first started to go to school, I was happy because we had friends that we went to school with. We were happy that we were also going to school and would carry slates. It was nice to go to school…we were happy.

86. PL: What do you remember at school when you first started? What do you remember?

86. CM: (short pause) When I started?

87. PL: Yes

87. CM: (short pause) when I started school it took some time to understand what was done at school. I only knew about herding. I didn't quite understand what was being done. But after a short time it was nice when I knew how to write a, e, i, o, u. I could write and would show my mother and father and they would be happy.

88. PL: So how did you get to school?

88. CM: We walked. It was near.

89. PL: Did you enjoy going to Primary?

89. CM: Yes I liked it.

90. PL: Which subjects did you like?

90. CM: (short pause) I liked Arithmetic (long pause) And vowels a, e, I, o, u, ma, me, mi, mo mu. I had heard them and I knew that when you say "ma" this is how it is written.

91. PL: Why did you like them?

91. CM: I liked them because I knew them…I knew them…how to write them

92. PL: Where there subjects that you didn't like?

92. CM: Yes there were. They were those I couldn't do. They were difficult

(Laughter)

93. PL: Oh ok. Which were those?

93. CM: Scripture. It was hard. (long pause)

94. PL: In Primary

94. CM: Yes. The first thing was Scripture. We had days which were for Scripture, those days when we had scripture were difficult days for me, because I couldn't really understand what they were saying.

What's going on, what is this now…what they were saying.

95. PL: Ok. Did you play any sports?

95. CM Yes

96. PL: What did you play

96. CM: Golf.

97. PL: Pardon?

97. CM: What is this? Tennis! What? Basketball!

98. PL: Netball?

98. CM: Basketball the one that (demonstrates)

99. PL: Its netball, Yes its netball. Were you a good player?

99. CM: Yes I liked it because I knew it. When they called the name I jumped.

100. PL: Did you have many friends?

100. CM: No I didn't. There were only three.

101. PL: Ok, who were they, your friends?

101. CM: It was Emma, Anna and who was it again? (short pause) and Clara.

102. PL: Do you remember where you wanted to work when you grew up?

102. CM: I wanted to be a nurse. I thought I would be a nurse, they helped they were respected by everybody.

103. PL: What kind of social or pressure do you remember as a girl in school perhaps?

103. CM: We were not allowed to be as loud as the boys, they would say girls must not be loud and must behave like girls not boys.

104. PL: Who would say this?

104. CM: The older girls and the teachers

105. PL: What did you think about this?, all children make noise when playing or in a group don't they

105. CM: Well… it was what they said and we obeyed, you didn't want to get scolded all the time

106. PL: Did you think this was fair though, if you can remember, that boys were allowed to be noisy or allowed more natural

106. CM: It was alright I think.

107. PL: Did you have any dances that that you did as children.

107. CM: No. We didn't attend dances.

108. PL: Who were the people you looked up to? Who were your role models?

108. CM: There was a family/house…they were rich, where we used to get temporary work when schools closed. Ooh they were well off. I wished to be like them. To live the life they lived.

109. PL: Do you have any memories of the clothes you liked when you were a child?

109. CM: I have. I liked my gym dress. And another pleated skirt. When I wore them I felt stylish.

110. PL: When did you wear your pleated skirt?

110. CM: Sometimes I would wear it to church. The gym dress I wore to school after ironing it. My gym dress didn't look like the others. My father bought …material that they used to make gym dresses and skirts. It was all beautiful.

111. PL Do you still remember what your teachers used to say when talking about you?

111. CM: There was a teacher called Charles who called…(long pause) He liked me very much. He would say "I like it when this child sings church songs.(She sings song until the end) There is a song that I used to like was "Izivunguvungu,…uze ungikhumbule Nkosi yami" (please remember me Lord). I loved it.

112. PL: Please repeat what the song was?

112. CM: (Starts singing the song)

113. PL: Repeat the words please,

113. CM: Oh, Isivunguvungu …(repeats the name)

114. PL: It's a church song?

114. CM: Yes. I liked it. I still like it.

115. PL: Which church is it from?

115. CM: Anglican

116. PL: Did you say "Izivunguvungu?"

116. CM: Izivunguvungu are a lot of things that cause disturbance. That cause pain.

Senses of Self

117. PL: How do you remember yourself in Primary? Where you outgoing, or introverted?

117. CM: I was bright/intelligent. I used to sing too. There used to be shows, and I would walk slowly to the show and the boys would run to us saying "Run Catherine. We are going in now. Run Catherine. We can't wait". (long pause)

And that would excite me because what I did made them happy.

118. PL: In High School, so you say you started at this Primary until you, what did you do after Primary?

118.CM: I went to(long pause) you know this is confusing. When you get to Standard 2 you go to another school, to study (Standard) Three and four, the schools were small. When I got to Standard 4, that was in higher Primary. It was a bit bigger.

119. PL: After Std 4?

119. CM: I did Std 4 and Std 5 and I could not go any further and my mother said she couldn't take me to school anymore.

120. PL: Your older sister, was she at school?

120. CM: She had also been taken out. You see there was this thing that disturbed the older people that if you were a girl you shouldn't go to school because you would get pregnant and all sorts of things and so on. There was a priest who taught us at school asked if I could go back to school to see him. "I will teach her" he said. And I think when she talked with her friends they would say "Whooo!, where will you get the cows (lobola) from?" And that's when I couldn't go any further because my mother said "No, a girl has no use for school".

121. PL: So how old where you then when you left school?

121. CM: I was (short pause) 16. I was 16.

122. PL: You were 16 and what standard were you in? Standard 5?

122. CM: Yes……..(long pause) I was very sad. I felt so much pain I didn't know what to do with myself. But what could I do? There was nothing I could do. The only thing was to ask God to help me, get married, have my own children who could go to school. So they could heal this wound that I had.

123. PL: So what did you do?

123. CM: I didn't do anything. I stayed for two years and got married.

CHILDHOOD ACTIVITIES

124. PL: What kind of things did you do as children perhaps at home as children

124. CM: You see as Sothos and Zulus we did not use to go out after sunset/dark. Unless there is a wedding, otherwise we didn't go out.

125. PL: So there were no times like after school or Sunday school where you would be with other children? What kind of things did you do?

125.CM: We just played

126. PL: What kind of games?

126.CM: Children's games or we would play basketball, aag netball at school.

127. PL: So when you were at Sunday school as a teenager, were there any youth groups that you attended for teenagers?

127.CM: No. There weren't any. When we came out of church we if there was a wedding we would go and practice which songs would be sung at that wedding.

128. PL: So you sang?

128.CM: Yes I sang

129. PL: Who did you sing with? The choir?

129.CM: Yes with the choir…all the girls would be together there.

130. PL: Was it your age mates that sang or. Were there adults?

130.CM: No. No adults

131. PL: So when did you practice?

131.CM: We would practice around this time so that you return when the sunsets.

132. PL: So that's what you did with other children?

132.CM: Yes.

RELIGION/CULTURAL PRACTICES

133. PL: When you were a child growing up, what did you do on Saturday and Sunday?

133.CM: When I was still young/growing?

134. PL: When you were at Nquthu

134.CM: On Saturday we would do our washing on Sunday we would go to church.

135. PL: Which church/What kind of church did you go to?

135.CM: Anglican

136. PL: Every Sunday?

136.CM: Every Sunday

137. PL: Could you choose if you wanted to go?

137.CM: We grew up knowing whether you liked it or not you go to church. You leave everything you are doing and go to church.

138. PL: Where there any groups in Church like maybe Bible Study that you attended as a child?

138.CM: Sunday school. After church we would go to Sunday school.

139. PL: When did you stop going to Sunday school?

139.CM: I was already older. We attended other classes I don't know what they are called. We took classes for communion and to earn what the Bible is

140. PL: Do they do confirmation at the Anglican Church?

140.CM: There is something that is done ukuqiniswa (confirmation)

141. PL: In church?

141. CM: Yes in church and thereafter you can receive the sacrament..Yes, and you are taught that when you are at this stage you do this and this stage you do that. When you are in church preparing to receive the sacrament you do put like this and so on.

142. PL: So, did you pray at home?

142. CM: Yes

143. PL: Everyday?

143.CM: Everyday

144. PL: Who led the prayer?

144.CM: It was my mother.

145. PL: How did you feel about religion as a child?

145.CM: I liked it very much. It was the one thing that we liked very much because…at the Anglican Church. We were together with all the girls

146. PL: So you can say that it was your parents that made you to love church?

146.CM: Yes, because it meant something at home.

147. PL: Did getting married change your going to church?

147.CM: Yes it changed. Because I left the Anglican Church and joined the ZCC, thinking that it might make life better, because they pray for you there (is meaning that there's faith healing), and guide you what you must do to improve your situation.

148. PL: Who was attending the ZCC?

148.CM: It was me. There was a ZCC priest that we worked with where I worked. He was a mechanic…"why is it like this/ why are things happening this way. Come to church"

149. PL: Before then you had been going to the Anglican church all along?

149.CM: Yes

150. PL: Every Sunday?

150.CM: Yes, then I stopped and went to Zion until now.

151. PL: What customs did you observe growing up?

151.CM: (long pause)

152. PL: Did you practice any traditional customs/rituals?

152.CM: We did. A lot.

153. PL: What kinds of things did you do?

153.CM: We observed what kind of things were not done in the family (taboos). There were things that were compulsory that you had to do

154. PL: Is this the time you were growing up at Nquthu?

154.CM: Yes

155. PL: Whose the person who insisted on cultural practices?

155.CM: The parents.

156. PL: So what did you do, what kind of things did you practice?

156.CM: Like with the Sotho people. They have initiation school for boys and girls

157. PL: Boys AND girls?

157.CM: Yes

158. PL: Did you go to initiation school?

158.CM: Yes

159. PL: How old were you? How old were you as a girl?

159.CM: When I left school.

160. PL: How do the BaSotho practice this?

160.CM: They tell you that you are grown up now, this and that you don't do. You don't sleep around and go with boys and not come back home (decorum). You must sleep at home. When you leave this place there will be young men who will proposition you. When you like one he will take you.

161. PL: So who teaches you?

161.CM: There are those designated people who do these teachings.

162. PL: Oh so you have left home? You were at another place?

162.CM: We are at another place..you must do this and that and when you live here you will do this and that.

163. PL: How long did you stay there?

163.CM: We stayed for three months.

164. PL: Three months?

164.CM: Yes

165. PL: But they don't do anything to the body?

165.CM: No. They don't do anything to the body.

166. PL: So it's the same that if you leave you are eligible to have a boyfriend?

166.CM: You can be propositioned thereafter. And we know that so and so is with so and so

167. PL: Were you happy to go there?

167.CM: I was. I had been taken out of school and my whole interest had been school I was told "you are grown now you must stop going to school and enter another stage" so it was not good to argue with my mother who had raised us. We did not like to contradict her. Her word was the last one.

168. PL: What was it liked in those three months?

168.CM: It was nice. We were a group, we did the same thing together. Our families brought us food until the day graduated, the place was in Nquthu where we lived.

169. PL: Are you working? Is there any work that you do during that time?

169.CM: No there isn't. We just learnt what we needed to know for when we left home. What we would be doing thereafter. That is what we learnt.

170. PL: How do you view this practice?

170.CM: I saw it as a good thing because it teaches you. It teaches you about when you leave to go to your family home how you must conduct yourself. You mustn't do all sorts of things.

171. PL: You see it as a good thing, an important/necessary thing?

171.CM: Yes. It's important. I wish that time could happen with these kids nowadays.

172. PL: When you look back at your younger self who had completed this stage how would you describe yourself?

172. CM I was a person who behaved well, doing things the way there were supposed to be done, I was respectful, I was just a girl who followed the rules, and what it was that older people said to me or what they were teaching me.

MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

173. PL: So how old were you when you got married?

173.CM: I got married when I was 18.

174. PL: How did you meet your husband?

174.CM: He had relatives in Natal. I think that they also liked me and said “here is a girl who is respectful and so on” is the way they spoke. And as time went on my mother also said “take this man. You can see that he is self-sufficient”.

175. PL: Was he not your boyfriend?

175.CM: He was. Well not yet, he was still asking me out. You know in the rural areas they talk with your parents and say “We want this child” and my mother also encouraged me “ It perhaps will also help us to improve our condition”.

176. PL: Oh. Was he your first boyfriend?

176.CM: Yes. He was my first boyfriend.

177. PL: So you were 18 when you met? Or when you married?

177.CM: When I married. He came as soon as his family had negotiated and he paid lobola and in one day he had finished! He owed nothing. He was also an orphan and he worked and saved money and when he felt ready to marry, he married.

178. PL: How did you feel about him?

178.CM: I felt good about him….he was doing nice things…at home. Even when he visited it would be nice at home, My mum she would also go out covered in her blanket. He would also give my siblings money…(long pause)

179. PL: So, nobody forced you into marriage?

179.CM: No, my mother spoke very earnestly with me. When I heard her reasons I thought well my mother is struggling with money, maybe things might get better.

180. PL: So there was some pressure to say it would be nice if you could do this ?

180.CM: Yes, there was.

181. PL: So you were 18 when you got married, so how did you get married? Was it in church, or traditional?

181.CM: We married in church

182. PL: How was it that you married in church and not differently?

182.CM: We were church-goers, so then we got married in church

183. PL: Where there any traditional aspects such as the welcoming of the groom into the family?

183.CM: Yes there was on both sides

184. PL: How were you dressed on your wedding day?

184.CM: I wore a white dress (short pause) a veil

185. PL: And after?

185.CM: I changed, (short pause) and I wore a mustard two piece. (short pause) It was very beautiful. In the evening, I changed twice, I wore traditional Zulu/Sotho(?), isiShweshwe (german print material that is can be worn traditionally by a new bride),

186. PL: How was the Shweshwe like?

186.CM: It was blue. It looked like this, but it was a two piece, we wear these Shweshwe outfits (and others) thereafter exclusively for some months to show we are new brides.

187. PL: What did your husband change into to show he was a new husband, and how long did he have to wear those clothes?

187.CM: He didn't change into any special clothes to show this, men don't have to show they are newly married.

188. PL: Did you like that you had to wear these traditional outfits to show you were a new wife?

188.CM: Yes, it made me proud, I was happy to be married then, I was happy… then in… marriage. (sigh Long pause)

189. PL: After you got married did you then go and stay with your husband?

189.CM: Yes I did

190. PL: What was his name?

190.CM: (mumbles)

191. PL: Pardon, who?

191.CM: Koos.

192. PL: Mlangeni

192.CM: Yes

193. PL: Koos Mlangeni

193.CM: Yes. His birth name was Mphikeleli (first name in Zulu)

194. PL: So where did you go to live?

194.CM: We went to stay in Balfort…Balfort

195. PL: Where is Balfort? Natal?

195.CM: No, it's in the Transvaal toward Standerton. You know Standerton.

Going toward there.

196. PL: So where did you live? Did he have a house?

196.CM: He had a house.

197. PL: Did he have a house or live at home?

197.CM: He had a house. You know how it is in the rural areas. When you are grown you build your own house, so that when you marry you have a house. I got married and we lived in this house but we cooked and ate in the main house.

198. PL: The house you stayed in..

198.CM: It was just to sleep in. A rondavel to sleep in.

199. PL: So how old was he?

199.CM: (short pause) oh, I don't know how old he was but he was older, he was older than me

200. PL: Now that you were married how did you manage, how was it to adjust? Was it hard or difficult?

200.CM: It was easy when I got here to Gauteng. It was still nice we were in love. He didn't even drink.

201. PL: We will still get there Ma. I'm talking about when you had just married.

201.CM: I was very happy.

202. PL: Where you at his home or home?

202.CM: I built a bigger house (rondavel), you know the houses in the rural areas, they are lined up. I also had a house like that. I had my own bed, my own kitchen and so on, but still cooking in the big house.

203. PL: This place you lived in, where did you say it was?

203.CM: Belfort

204. PL: What kind of a place is it? Is it in town, or rural

204.CM: It was a smallholding

205. PL: So who paid debts/ Who was responsible for finances

205.CM: It was my husband. When he was working he would come back to pay…

206. PL: So he wasn't always living with you? You didn't always live together?

206.CM: No…he was working at Springs at that time.

207. PL: What did he do?

207.CM: He was working at the railway, contract worker

208. PL: What was he doing at the railway?

208.CM: (long pause), He wasn't doing anything important/big…he was (short pause), what did he do? (long pause), You see those that work on the tracks? He worked there on the tracks.

209. PL: Who determined what needed to be paid, or did you tell him what you needed? How did you determine what you did with the money?

209.CM: (short pause), There was this, they grew up with their uncle. So when he came back he would give the uncle money and we would give us a small amount from that and keep the bulk for himself. When we needed something it wasn't pleasant. That's when it started becoming unpleasant.

210. PL: Did your husband give his uncle money?

210.CM: Yes. The uncle would want the money.

211. PL: All of it?

211.CM: Yes he would want the money. He would buy whatever he would/wanted buy. We couldn't buy what we wanted.

212. PL: How long did you live like that for?

212.CM: We didn't stay long…when the uncle saw that he was refusing to give him money…when am I going to build a house? That's when he kicked us out. He told us to go. (long pause), we went to Springs

213. PL: How many children did you have then?

213. CM: When he told us to leave we had two children

214. PL: You did not work at that time?

214. CM: I never worked then. We would help there and there…

215. PL: So you went to Springs and then?

215. CM: At Springs we got a house. They built houses and when he got to…he built a house/dwelling. He built a proper house, a nice house.

216. PL: How long did you stay at Springs?

216.CM: (short pause) we stayed for, how long?, because …(long pause), I was breastfeeding Thabang when we got here *(she puts her hand on her breast and holds an imaginary baby eyes downcast*)When we left Springs to come here. (long, long pause), (sighs) eyi…

217. PL: Are you alright Mam Catherine?

217. CM: Yes… It was very hard….it was hard…

218. PL: How many children did you have?

218.CM: Five

219. PL: Do you still remember the years they were born? Your first born was born?

219.CM: 1950

220.PL: The second?

220.CM: The second 1954, the girl.

221. PL: The third?

221.CM: The third 56. The fourth one 58

222. PL: ok and then the fifth one?

222.CM: The fifth one 62

223. PL: So what are their names from the eldest to the youngest?

223. CM: Their names? The eldest is Mandlakayise Sidwell, …Grace, (long pause), Bheki, .The third one ? Is it the third one now?

224. PL: Yes you have counted Grace

224. CM: (long pause) oh Thabang, Charles. Charles Thabang, this one Godfrey Bhekisizwe. Bheki this one.

225. PL: The fourth or fifth one?

225. CM: Lindani Bornaparte. The fifth one. The one you see here at the house.

226. PL: Allright. Let's start gain. The first one

226. CM: Mandla (1950)

227. PL: Mandla, the second one?

227. CM: Grace (1954)

228. PL: The third one?

228. CM: Thabang (1956)

229. PL: Bheki the fourth one? (1958)

229.CM: Bheki

230. PL: And the fifth one?

230. CM: Lindani (1962)

231. PL: Were you in agreement with your husband about how the children were to be brought up? Did you think the same way?

231. CM: In the beginning we did, but when he started drinking it was not the same as the beginning.

232. PL: ok, when did he start drinking?

232. CM: (long pause) he started with the one born in 56.

234. PL: That's the third one right?

234. CM: Thabang

235. PL: That's the third child

235. CM: Yes. They were still young.

236. PL: At home your husband had started drinking?

236. CM: My husband?

237. PL: Yes

238. PL: He started drinking?

238.CM: Yes he started drinking. And things changed. We stopped getting along, but I persevered. ..We never separated we stayed together. It was no longer allright.

239. PL: He stayed drinking throughout?

239.CM: He drank the money…he would say he was mugged and all sorts of things.

240. PL: He didn't bring money home?

240.CM: No he didn't. he didn't.

241. PL: Why did you stay/ What kept you here?

241.CM: I was with my children. I didn't want to part with my children. I didn't want to be all over and get other children with twentyleven (different) surnames I wanted one surname at home. And it was like that. Nothing happened. I decided I had to get work, and my life carried on.

242. PL: So Bheki and Lindani were born while he was drinking.

242.CM: He was drinking one way!

243. PL: What was it like then? Was there any aggression?

243.CM: There was aggression because there was no money. But he wasn't a person who liked beating much. He would just keep his own money, but he didn't like beating much.

244. PL: He never beat you?

244.CM: No, , he never did. He didn't even ask me about my money.

245. PL: So you stayed with your children?

245.CM: Yes I stayed with them

246. PL: From birth till?

246.CM: From birth…until tot tot (until now)

CHILD REARING

247. PL: We will talk about being a mother/woman and get back to your husband. As a mother to these children what did you think you should do?

247.CM: When I looked that my children were clean, that they were going to school, are they healthy, and if they were not healthy I would take them to the clinic. Are they going to school?..That's what I looked at.

248. PL: It was you that checked that they were going to school?

248.CM: Yes, yes. The father was not bothered.

249. PL: Who disciplined the children?

249.CM: Their father was soft. He didn't know how to discipline the children. And not spank them , and if they wouldn't go to school…the children aren't educated, he would say "They will work just like me. I have my own things they will also have things. Even if they don't go to school it's alright. Leave them alone"

250. PL: And what would you say?

250.CM: I would say that's ridiculous! The one thing that they are going to do is go to , they are definitely going to school.

251. PL: Who was the one who spanked the children? If there was someone?

251. CM: Their father didn't spank them

252. PL: Did you spank them?

252. CM: Oh, I did!

253. PL: How did you spank them?

253. CM: …the time I was working, I would come home and find them just sitting, I wanted to come back and find it easier for me to cook and do everything that I needed to do. They should have washed the pots and prepared…

254. PL: But they were mainly boys?

254. CM: They would do it as boys

254. CM: One of the boys may cry…cry not wanting to do anything, or cry because someone had stepped where they have already cleaned, and say " I'm not going to do it," they would go back and clean. Whoever it was would cry but it was done.

255. PL: Which of your parents are you more like in the treatment of your children?

255. CM: most like?…really my children went to school..God must help them and go to school. Others did not do so well, others continued. Even those who did not do well it was because their father was no longer the same.

256. PL: Do you see yourself as doing the same things that perhaps your father did or your mother did in raising your own children?

256. CM: My father. My mother did that, she didn't spank us. I spanked and pushed them to school.

257. PL: So you were like your father?

257. CM: Yes

258. PL: Who did you talk to if you needed help with your children?

258. CM: (pause) My children when it was bad, it was my mother.

259. PL: Your mother?

259. CM: Yes (pause), to say I don't have anything (money), the children are not going to school. And she would do the way she did, make a plan.

260. PL: So she was the person who

260. CM: (interrupts) who helped me.

WORK

261. PL: When did you start working? What was your first job?

261. CM: (short pause) I started as a domestic worker. My children's aunt was a domestic worker and so I started there.

262. PL: Were you already back Springs when you started your first job, or?

262. CM: No we were already here., we had moved from Springs. He was transferred here and we left Springs….we moved with his job.

263. PL: Here in Soweto

263. CM: Yes

264. PL: How old were you when you started your first job?

264. CM: My age?

265. PL: Had all your children been born when you started working?

265. CM: No. I hadn't had Bheki yet. There was Thabani

266. PL: Thabani was born in 1956? So you started working after 1956. Perhaps how old was Thabani when you started working?

266. CM: He was less than a year a year old , because I asked another woman to look after him.

267. PL: What were the others doing?

267. CM: The others were already in school.

268. PL: The other two?

268. CM: Yes

269. PL: So there in the kitchens (suburb) How did you work?

269. CM: Sleep out. I came back home.

270. PL: Everyday?

270. CM: Yes

271. PL: What were your working hours?

271. CM: I started at around 7 and knocked off at around 5.

272. PL: Do you remember how much you were paid?

272. CM: (long pause). Eish

273. PL: At the time

273. CM: (long pause), I think it was may be 4.

274. PL: 4 what?

274. CM: Four hundred

275. PL: A month?

275. CM: Yes a month

276. PL: What did you do with your salary?

276. CM: I bought my children food, clothed them, all these things. Even at school…the fees

277. PL: Where there other people you gave money to from your money? Like parents, was there anywhere else where you helped out?

277. CM: No, there wasn't

278. PL: So who decided what should be done with your money?

278. CM: I did. I decided what must happen with my money. It was me because that one (her husband) didn't ask me about money because he didn't give me money. Only when he felt like it. He didn't even ask me what I did with the money.

279. PL: How did you feel or think about your first job?

279. CM: I worked because I wanted my children to go to school. I wanted to clothe them so they could be like other children.

280. PL: Did you like your job or didn't you?

280. CM: I liked it because I was getting paid. I could do as I wished to do.

281. PL: The actual work that you did cleaning etc. how did that make you feel?

281. CM: I didn't like it , it didn't make me happy, but I stayed while looking for a better job.

282. PL: Why did it not make you happy?

282. CM: (long pause), there was a lot of work. The whole day until I knock off at 5.On my feet one way. You eat standing, a bit of bread 2 slices. No it didn't make me happy/feel good.(short pause) until I got another job.

283. PL: What kind of job was it?

283. CM: We sewed.

284. PL: I see.

284. CM: That was better. But there was no money either. I got paid 3 (hundred) there.

285. PL: You earned less money as a factory worker than being a domestic worker?

285. CM: Yes, but it was better work, not everyday, on my feet.

286. PL: How did you find working with other people all day?

286. CM: I liked it, talking to others, you also learn about the different things from other workers

287. PL: So how long did you work at this factory sewing

287. CM: (long pause), thirty. Thirty years

288. PL: Thirty years, that's a long time

288. CM: Yes

289. PL: Where? Where is this factory?

289. CM: It was in Delvers and Marshall street

290. PL: There in town?

290. CM: Yes…86 and that meant we stopped working.

291. PL: What kind of things did you sew?

291. CM: Men's jackets, dresses and suits.

292. PL: Where there many people?

292. CM: There were many!

293. PL: Was it only women sewing or were there men also?

293. CM: No, the men were cutters

294. PL: Were there any organizations? unions that you joined?

294. CM: Yes, union

295. PL: Was it a union?

295. CM: Yes

296. PL: Which union

296. CM: Garment workers..

297. PL: Why did you join a union?

297. CM: When people came to ask how we are working, are we happy, we must unite so we can fight at work and also get better pay…We understood that and we joined.

298. PL: Did you get on well with your /co-workers?

298. CM: (pause) I got on well with some the others not.

299. PL: Who was your boss?

299. CM: It was Emma

300. PL: Emma?

300. CM: Yes.

301. PL: Emma who

301. CM : Zwane

302. PL: A black person?

302. CM: Yes

303. PL: Did you get along with her?

303. CM: No I didn't really get along with her. But I just worked and kept quiet: they used to count and I would know how much work I had done and she would count less than what I had done. That is what used to upset me.

304. PL: What did you do during the times you were not working? What would you when perhaps you had knocked off from the factory?

304. CM: I would do the washing and ironing for the children. All of that preparing for Monday going back to work and school.

305. PL: What did you do for yourself?

305. CM: I used to sew for myself. I used to sew aprons and sell them. But that didn't go as well as I had wanted it to.

306. PL: But were you still working at the factory during this time

306. CM: Yes. I was still working at the factory.

307. PL: What did you do in your free time? Did you visit people? What did you do?

307. CM: There was a lot of work here in the house, because there were children. I washed and ironed. The children were here and grandchildren

308. PL: Then at that time?

308. CM: Yes, my daughter never married, she had her 3 children here at home, all of them…*(long sigh)*

309. PL: So time for you to do your own thing?

309. CM: No I didn't have time to sit and relax. There was a lot of work for me. There is only one girl, the boys would go to soccer and I would remain here at home. Sometimes she would cry but I would carry on with my work.

310. PL: When the factory closed there was no more work?

310. CM: There was no more work. (pause) and I found another job. The Madam sewed from home and I got a temporary job with her. I don't remember how long I worked there. Until it happened that time ran out and I retired.

311. PL: You retired?

311. CM: Yes

312. PL: When was that?

312. CM: 1986

313. PL: You never worked after that?

313. CM: I never worked. I got deep into the struggle, that was my work

314. PL: What do you mean by this?

314. CM: I became political and became active, I was deep in, (*she makes a gesture with her hand of immersion*) fighting in the struggle.

315. PL: At that time?

315. CM: Yes

COMMUNITY LIFE

316. PL: When you were older, which community organizations did you join?

316. CM: The community…when we were protesting with the organization

317. PL: Was that the first time you joined a community organization?

317. CM: Yes

318. PL: With the protests?

318. CM: Yes with protests.

319. PL: What about church, were there no women's groups?

319. CM: In church all those things were included that the women should do this and that. Women should join when going to conferences. We would go.

320. PL: You would go?

320. CM: Yes I would

321. PL: From the church?

321. CM: Yes from the church. I also had the isambhatho (uniform) for the church.

322. PL: Which one was this? Anglican or Zion.

322. CM: Anglican. I stayed at Zion for a time and then I got one from there too.

323. PL: What is the isambatho from the Anglican church like?

323. CM: Its black. With a black skirt, a white blouse and black hat.

324. PL: What do you have to do to get this?

324. CM: You are taught. There is ..one a certain day you must come and learn the Catechism and do all these things. And what you must do when you graduate. This is how you must conduct yourself when certain things happen.

325. PL: So you did this too at the Zionist church?

325. CM: Yes

326. PL: What is the uniform like?

326. CM: A white skirt, (short pause) blue blouse and a white hat.

327. PL: So now you still attending the Zionist Church?

327. CM: Yes

328. PL: You wear that uniform?

328. CM: Yes

EARLY EXPEREINCES OF APARTHEID

329. PL: When you were growing up what do you remember about the situation of the country? Or apartheid? Did you see that there was a difference?

329. CM: I didn't see the difference when I was about 14 or 15. I started seeing it when we started protesting that indeed there was a problem.

330. PL: You didn't see it?

330. CM: Not that much. I just saw that if it was a certain way at your home just accept it as it is. Even if we were poor and there wasn't enough food, that's just your family situation there, If you don't have you don't have.

331. PL: So your parents didn't say that they were suffering as black people. They didn't talk about that?

331. CM: I realize now that even if they were talking I didn't understand when they were talking what they were referring to. I heard when they spoke about my uncles. I only understood later when I was grown that the uncles were killed for nothing, by the Boers.

332. PL: Did you hear that as a child?

332. CM: I was still a child, but I was a bit mature

333. PL: Except for that, was there nobody who spoke about it when you were growing up or when you were married who spoke about politics?

333. CM: There were, but my husband didn't. You would see people wandering and wonder " Where are they going to? What they are doing, where were they going in these coats?" My husband was drinking.

POLITICAL EXPOSURE/ ACTIVISM

334. PL: So who taught you about politics?

334. CM: When I arrived here the first person who told me was this women Winnie. "Here at Jabulani there were no women who were active. Somebody would shout: "women come out and hear how people are living here at in this country", here (in her area) nobody did anything but drink…and they would say "Hey women! Rise up!"

335. PL: Did Winnie Mandela say that?

335. CM: Yes

336. PL: When was this now?

336. CM: It was around the '60's. It was then that Mama (Winnie Mandela) started going around here. We were in the shacks/squatter camp, she would go here , and go there , all over . We discovered that we needed to form an organization so that when one is upset/feels pain to talk to mothers and support each other.

337. PL: Did she call you to gather often?

337. CM: No not often. She would encourage us to form groups. So we grouped ourselves. The biggest thing was the difficulty with our husbands. They would beat their wives and we would go and diffuse the problem. Nobody was going to look after us. It was up to us to do that (long sigh). This is life. The children cannot grow up this way. We would persevere those that succeeded and got jobs would work. We helped each other.

338. PL: What happened after that? You formed a women's group?

338. CM: Yes at a church here in Jabulani

339. PL: Here in Jabulani?

339. CM: Yes and Zondi

340. PL: So what times did you meet?? When did you meet?

340. CM: We met at around this time.(late afternoon into early evening) There where were so many groups, that we were meant to choose one group. So our Winnie was ANC which meant that our group fell under ANC. We admired her work, she was active. No matter what was happening, or a funeral she would be there.

341. PL: When did you start protesting? /When did you become politically active?

341. CM: (long pause) In the 60's we were not too clear. We just followed Winnie without really understanding. I started understanding properly when my children had already grown up into their teens…they would ask "Mama why are you not doing anything? Mama what are you doing?"

342. PL: So had you joined the ANC's Women's League?

342. CM: Yes.

343. PL: Do you remember when this was?

343. CM (long pause)

344. PL: Or how old were your children then?

344. CM: '86

345. PL: '86?

345. CM: Yes (pause) I had some work that I was doing. I was a recruiter, I was on the street committee, and what else, and the time of the rent boycott. Then that's the time I started working/being active.

356. PL: What kind of things did you do as women activists.

356. CM: We helped the poor. The very poor. The orphans. We would go around asking from people to donate and we would give the poor children, and those who did not have food. You would also contribute what you could. That's how we carried on.

357. PL: In the ANC Women's League what are the things you talked to people about? Did you help them or did you tell what the situation of the country was?

357. CM: We did talk about the situation of the country. "Can you see what these people are doing?"

358. PL: Did you find people maybe your family or your friends and neighbors who did not approve of your activities.

358. CM: Even these, they didn't like it. These (pointing to the neighboring house on her left).

359. PL: And those close to you? what did they say/do to show you that they didn't approve?

359. CM: They would say "You are making noise, Bheki is going soon (to jail) you are making noise. "You are ignorant (amaqaba)" All sorts of things. "Can't she see how her children are? They are ignorant (makes barking/chanting noises imitating freedom chant from toyi toying), what is that? , What does their mother say? Even their mother is doing that. Oh no"

360. PL: And then what would you say?

360. CM: I said nothing.. I was doing what I was doing and it had nothing to do with anyone. It's this thing that we did that made us happy. "We like it because it is where we advise each other, where we can help each other. What can you do for me?"

361. PL: So you say you after you retired, your work became the struggle and what about your husband?

361. CM: My husband, what I liked about him was he didn't prevent us from meeting at home. He didn't object to anything, he didn't object to anyone sleeping at our home. He allowed it. He had no problem with it.

362. PL: There were people who slept here?

362. CM: They slept here.

363. PL: What kind of people?

363. CM: Some of them were beaten, and can't go home and come here at night. I open for them.

364. PL: Why were they beaten?

364. CM: They would be fighting with their husbands. They would be nowhere else for them to go except for here.

365. PL: So there was no one who tried to block what you were doing? Was there no one who said stop these things/ stop what you are doing?

365. CM: Here in my house?

366. PL: Yes

366. CM: No. not here at the Mlangeni's.

367. PL: Were there people who encouraged you? From the family or friends or the community?

367. CM: The community is where I was happy because we got on well, helping each other all these things. We joined the Women's League, dressed the same. Being together all the time.

368. PL: From this group in Jabulani-Zondi?

368. CM: Yes

369. PL: Why do you think it was like that? That you encouraged each other, the community that…What do you think unified you?

369. CM: I think it is because we understood each other and we respected each other. We would listen to anyone who had an issue or a solution and act according to their wishes.

370. PL: Were there other women leaders?

370. CM: Yes there were.

371. PL: Like who?

371. CM: (short pause) like (long pause), Mom Jane, and another one from Mdeni who we used to meet with. (long pause) You know Khulumani?

372. PL: Yes

372. CM: Khulumani ,…(long pause) who is she? (long pause sigh)

373. PL: What did she do at Khulumani? I will look up her name.

373. CM: She is the founder of Khulumani. We were all together…..The woman who..Mrs Dlomo! The mother to (short pause) who was the boy's name?

374. PL: Is it not Sicelo?

374. CM: Sicelo. Sicelo Dlomo

375. PL: When did Bheki become active politically?

375. CM: I'm not sure when he started because…

376. PL: Was he still in school?

376. CM: Yes in High School. He was schooling in Natal. That time the schools were not functioning (1976) so I took them to Nquthu.

377. PL: At this time you had not yet joined ANC Women's League?

377. CM: I had already joined. I was committed

378. PL: Meanwhile he also?

378. CM: Yes he too was involved in the struggle, from when he was in High School. He also used to ask "Mamma why are you not doing anything? You can see what the other mother/women (aboMama) are doing, what's going on? That's when I realised that I had to.

379. PL: So he was the one who was politically active in the home?

379. CM: In the home yes. And Thabani. They went together, they were at the same school. They went together.

380. PL: At the time what contribution did you think women had in the struggle?

380. CM: Contribution?

381. PL: Yes, what could women do to fight against Apartheid?

381. CM: (long pause. Sighs) What women did was to (short pause)how can I say? (long pause)

382. PL: Or what were they supposed to do according to your understanding?

382. CM: To my understanding women were supposed to do what the men were doing because if we faced different directions nothing would come right. We had to be united. And fight the fight our men were fighting.

383. PL: According to you, were things men and women doing different or were they supposed to be different to fight this thing?

383. CM: There was a slight difference even though it was not meant to be like that, because we are all at war. We all needed to contribute. The same way it should happen in the home. I was alone. My husband used to say I would get killed by the Boers. And these thugs of sons who tell you to fight and argue with the Boers…he gave me bad luck (wangihlolela)

384. PL: At the time how did the police harass you?

384. CM: They harassed me, they harassed me. They would come here in a convoy looking for one person. One name: Bheki. One day they came here after we had just finished eating…they harassed him and I said I'm also getting in the car. There was a time when they took children and they never made it to the police station, they'd die on the way. And I said "No! I'm going too. I am the mother here! Do you hear/understand me properly?!" I left with them. I refused to stay behind and threw myself with my body inside in the police van, two three times, in out, in out. (*she makes physical movements of launching her body forward into the imaginary van*). In the police van I said "You take them somewhere else. The others don't come back. People like you take them away. So why must we remain behind? Let's follow our children!" So we can hear what you want from them… I had never stood up to a man… a man … to policemen before.

385. PL: How old was Bheki then? Was he still in high school?

385. CM: He was in High School.

386. PL: Did the police come often to the house?

386. CM: Yes, here in the house?

387. PL: And harass you?

387. CM: Yes and harass me! They would come in and find these trunks and open them and find books and pamphlets. "You know Mama you can't read things like this. The person who reading this what are they studying?" I'd say "I don't know what they are studying. I didn't go to school."

388. PL: They came regularly?

388. CM: They would come and throw me down (*points and indicates floor*) and do whatever.

389. PL: Throw you down on to the floor?

389. CM: YES! They would ask" Where is Bheki?", I would say "Bheki is not here he is at school"

390. PL: So did it happen many time this thing of throwing you around?

390. CM: Yes, many many times….

391. PL: When they come and not find him?

391. CM: When they didn't find him, they would get angry. I'd say "You know Bheki is studying at Wits. Go look for him there! I don't know"

392. PL: What kind of policemen were these?

392. CM: They were Boers.

393. PL: Why did you not give up?

393. CM: I couldn't give up because they were killing children. Maybe if I was there they would be afraid that I could see what they were doing.

394. PL: Did you not fear for your life?

394. CM: No I didn't. Because of my children

395. PL: Is there anything you did to protect yourself?

395. CM: I had nothing to protect myself. When they would always come I just said "No", And they would tell me I was stubborn and that this child of mine took after me, (they would ask) " Is there a child here called Bheki?"

396. PL: In the months before Bheki's death, he was no longer at Wits? He had finished?

396. CM: He had already finished. He had trained as a lawyer.

397. PL: So where did he live?

397. CM: He lived at Glyn Thomas. At Bara. (student residence for Wits)

398. PL: How was the situation?

398. CM: It was bad at that time. He had been arrested by then

399. PL: How long was he arrested for?

399. CM: A year (short pause) at Sun City. That pleased our enemies/those that didn't like us.

400. PL: Were you able to visit him?

400. CM: Yes I went

401. PL: How did you feel?

401. CM: It was painful. Sometimes we would find them beaten up. Painful, It was painful

402. PL: So he was released after a year?

402. CM: He was released.

403. PL: Did the police still come to you?

403. CM: They came! They still came even when he was not around. They would say "We want to destroy this house so he can stop being a know-it-all where he is."

404. PL: What happened the day they caught Bheki?

404. CM: When they arrested him?

405. PL: Did they find him at Glyn Thomas?

405. CM: Yes. They found him at Glyn Thomas. They fetched him there.

406. PL: The day he lost his life where was he?

406. CM: (short pause) he was (short pause), he was here at home. On study leave. He was supposed to go and write. There came a letter, did there come a letter or a phone call? I don't know which and it said "If you don't come and get this parcel, it will be you and us. You must come and fetch your parcel" He then said to his sister "Hey I'm tired of these people now. Let me go and fetch this thing and see what it is." He then left to fetch it. He found it at work and took it, and it went past the security check/machines, it didn't do anything. They had also gone to movies it also got in there with no problem. When he got home…

407. PL: Where was he staying?

407. CM: Here

408. PL: Did he have a backroom?

408. CM: In the garage. It was put here (long pause), it wasn't long…it was over for Bheki

409. PL: Where were you?

409. CM: I was here. I heard this loud noise that I didn't recognise. I was not well at all day, I was here at home… that day, that day and went back to work (activism) distressed. I heard this noise and my daughter in law Seipati rushed in "Mama…" I can't even hear what she is saying: " there's Bheki in the garage". I go running out to the garage and they hold me back: "No…at home at your house". When I arrived they said "Don't come in. It's bad" I threw myself with my whole body in there and saw him. (sigh and long pause)…seeing is believing.

410. PL: There was Seipati? Where did she live?

410. CM: In the garage, she is the one who called me.

411. PL: What did you do after that?

411. CM: We stayed outside. They were saying that there was another bomb that was going to go off. We got help when Winnie came and she said these people…and it was raining and we were sitting outside. And we came into the house. Winnie came and we saw people picking up pieces of his remains (*she stands up makes physical gestures demonstrating scraping at a wall towards and bends down towards the floor.)*

412. PL: Who were these people?

412. CM: The police.

413. PL: They arrived after?

413. CM: They shut us in and picked up pieces ..

414. PL: Winnie went there?

414. CM: She went in and they all left there and then. There and then they left.

415. PL: What happened after you buried Bheki? How was life here at home after that?

415. CM: There was no more life in this body of mine..*(flat palms her chest with both hands)* My husband was sick until he died. From that day.

416. PL: How did you manage to get your life back?

416. CM: I don't know really. Because even when we went to court I told my husband I said "Let us pray. God give us eyes to look at this Boer." and he said "I don't have the strength" We came back from court. When we saw him…when we came back he couldn't even walk.

Healing : Khulumani Support Group

417. PL: How did you meet the Khulumani Support group?

417. CM: Mrs Dlomo came here and said: "I had gone to town and in town I met so and so ,Maggie Friedman. Where we had gone. And Maggie said we must (long pause), have an organization where all the victims could meet so we can cry with one voice. Let's be a group instead of isolated. That is how Khulumani started.

418, PL: Where you there when it started?

418. CM: I was there. It was me and Mrs Dlomo and we went to Maggie in town and we started spreading the word…

419. PL: Which year was this? I will look it up. So it was you and Mrs Dlomo?

419. CM: And Maggie (Friedman)

420. PL: Did people welcome with this idea because Black people are not used to talking about their pain

420. CM: What can you do? You can't grow them …but many understood when we said that talking about it heals rather than just staying in that pain and not talking.

421. PL: What do you think Khulumani gave you? What kind of things did you do?

421. CM: We were taught that when something pains/hurts you, you must talk about it. Even the Bible says "each to the other so you can live". "Tell me your pain/problem. You will feel relief". And truly when I went there and others were telling the same problem that I had, I felt better.

422. PL: So you would sit as a group?

422. CM: We would sit as a group

423. PL : And a person would speak?

423. CM: Yes, they would say "I am so and so, I came from etc and this and that"

424. PL: Men and women?

424. CM: Yes men and women

425. PL: Was there someone who trained for therapy that people talk… to help you

425. CM: (interrupts)There was someone who taught us “Speak out EVERYTHING that pained you” So when we write the books people can hear and come back, there were also boys who were like, who liked to sit …

426. PL: Was there no one who guided you with these?

426. CM: There was! Who guided us? I don’t remember who it was. They studied with Bheki at Wits. They…

427. PL: A woman or man ?

427. CM: Men, They were white There were two of them. Two white boys.

428. PL: You said that you learnt to speak about your pain, that it healed. Did you go regularly?

428. CM: I went regularly. So much that we who understood, were able to help those that were new. We helped them.

429. PL: Was it not difficult?

429. CM: It was difficult.

430. PL: To listen, or talk?

430. CM: Yes, Yes. You cry and stop…If you are not ready to talk, you keep quiet. You go to the toilet, or outside .When you come back you are able to speak

431. PL: What happened inside for you? What changed inside that you found relief, as time went on what did you feel changing inside?

431. CM: I felt the change that, I thought to myself, ok Bheki is gone and there is nothing I could do about it. I have heard so and so and it’s like this (I have heard someone’s story which is similar). So let me accept and pray that God helps me to accept and know and talk to people about the tragedy that had happened to me.

432. PL: So you were able to talk?

432. CM: I was able to talk then. I would talk and know where to put it.

433. PL: Did you do individual counseling?

433. CM: Yes

434. PL: With these same young men you were talking about?

434. CM: Yes

435. PL: Was it your first time to do something like this?

435. CM: It was the first time I had ever done something like that.

436. PL: What was your experience?

436. CM: I found it healing. The first time I went there I was sick (distressed) I couldn't even go outside. When people looked at me I would feel that they were looking because my child had died. And I would get angry. Maybe these people were not even looking at me. They are looking at their own things.

437. PL: What do you think your life would have been like if Khulumani had not existed after Bheki passed away? How do you think it would have been like?

437. CM: ((sigh) No it was not going to be alright. Do you know that I couldn't even pray. I couldn't pray. I couldn't even say "Our Father who art in heaven"/ "The Lord's Prayer". When I tried I would just feel my heart harden and heavy. I don't believe that if I had not received this I would have lived.

438. PL: How long did it take you to be able to pray after you started going to Khulumani?

438. CM: After some time I was able to feel that something had lightened. The heart that had hardened softened.

439. PL: How many years did you go to Khulumani and keep talking?

439. CM: Many years…until Khulumani started to go into decline

440. PL: Why did you want to carry on with them and help people?

440. CM: That was because I was feeling what was inside me was also inside them. If we could carry on talking and comforting each other, and opening ourselves up, there is something that shifts.

441. PL: Then this play of yours, how did you meet the people of the play? With Bobby Rodwell?

441. CM: I don't know how what happened because Bobby wasn't part of Khulumani it was Maggie. How Bobby came about, I just got a call that said "Mam Catherine we would like to see you at The Market Theatre", (short pause) "Hawu (surprise) who is it?" its (long pause) its Bobby. (she said) "There is something that I would like to discuss with you". I got scared but then I thought what could she do? So I went there on a Monday. She said "You'll see me I will be walking around there. Which direction will you be coming from?" I said "I will be coming from next to (long pause), I will be coming from Soweto. I will get off at the robots and come down" And really I saw someone who kept going up and down. When I got closer I stood and she came toward me. (short pause) she said "Mama? what are you looking for?" and I said "There's someone who said they want to see me", she said "Are you Bheki's mother?" "Yes I am, (she said) "I'm the one who wants to see you". So we sat down and she told me that (she said)"I want to make a play (short pause) about all the people who were hurt and to teach people that talking heals a person and silence kills a person and I don't want more people to die. I also want to lend a hand". And then I said, "now that I have no schooling?" she said "No You'll learn. There are many who have no schooling. You will find a way to carry on"

442. PL: What made you to agree to be in the play?

442. CM: I heard and believed at Khulumani that talking about your pain heals you.

443. PL: So when you started preparing for the play what did you do?

443. CM: We started by gyming. We gymmed and wore tights. Pants! my dear, we would wear them. We wore them until we got used to it. We get there and do this and do that (demonstrates) all that until

you feel your body is light. When you sit down then (they would say) “there’s your script and there’s yours”. It’s written then that Mam Catherine will answer and say and so on and so on. I would think “Hawu! (exclaims), Will I remember this? at my age?

444. PL: The lines you said in the play, did they first talk to you and then you told them and then they wrote it?

444. CM: Yes, yes

445. PL: So it was you who decided what you were going to talk about?

445. CM: No. they wanted me to talk about my story

446. PL: Your story?

446. CM: What happened to me

447. PL: How did it work? You are the person who spoke and they wrote your story and then you performed? Or the way you told your story did it come from you or did they craft it and direct what you must say?

447. CM: No

448. PL: You are the person who..

448. CM: (interrupts) yes it was me who thingied, as you see (Long pause) I started by telling them my story and then they wrote it. They wrote until they got to my part yes.(long pause), It’s what I told them. It’s what I said.

449. PL: But how because you told them your story?

449. CM : Yes

450. PL: Was it different from telling your story to others at Khulumani? What was the difference because now you are not with people who came to get help, where you are all sharing your stories. You are in another place with this play and these other people.

450. CM: It’s just that I like to tell out my story to whomever. Maybe there’s someone like me, who suffered like me. They must also come, and talk as I am talking. If they start to talk, they’ll be able to talk as I am now able to.

451. PL: You are telling your story in the play on stage, is it the same or different as when even at the TRC ? Is there a difference?

451. CM: The difference is this: When I tell my story in the play I will say “if there is something similar that has happened and are afraid of talking, COME OUT and talk about it to me. To us here. We will help you heal your wound, how to cleanse it”.

452. PL: You read it and then understood what you were doing in the play, was it hard, was it nice? Are there things that were difficult for you and think “hey I’m forgetting a certain thing”

452. CM: With time I stopped forgetting, when it came to them saying "Mam Cath, " then I knew that, so I would know I must answer that question here or say there. It became nature.

453. PL: When you first started, when you first started performing where did you do it? The first time you showed this play?

453. CM: (long pause) We started at The Market Theatre and we called other actors so they could see how the play was and construct it well…

454. PL: How was it for you that day? How did you feel?

454. CM: I was already used to the stage by then. The first day was painful because you looking at these people and don't know what will happen…

455. PL: So you were not nervous when they came?

455. CM: No

456. PL: What was it like for a real audience? How did you feel?

456. CM: Do you mean painful?

457. PL: How did you feel when performing here at home?

457. CM: Here at home in my house?

458. PL: Here in South Africa

458. CM: South Africa?

459. PL: Yes

459. CM: No I had gotten used to it. I felt, it was painful at times. I would just look up and the tears would retreat. And carry on talking.

460. PL: What would you do after the play? After you had performed, did you chat?

460. CM: There would be questions that would be asked, (for example) " this had happened to you? Was it your child? How did you feel?" And carry on with that conversation.

461. PL: Did you go overseas with the play?

461. CM: Yes,

462. PL: Where did you go? the places that you remember.

462. CM: We started in Germany overseas then we went to London, all the villages in London. Then we went to Nottingham there many. We went to many places.Then we came to Durban, we also went to Cape Town.

463. PL: Is there a difference when you perform here at home and overseas? Which did you like? Or was it all the same?

463. CM: (long pause) no, the people who were more…were overseas. They would be silent and listen

464. PL: The ones overseas?

464. CM: Yes

465. PL: Here at home, how were they then?

465. CM: They listened but they did a lot of things, they would be in and out. There it wouldn't be silence

466. PL: How did you get to the TRC? How did you hear about it?

466. CM: With the TRC, when we were at Khulumani they told us about the TRC. That we should got there and open up and talk about what happened. And they would explain and emphasize how this thing would help you to heal to talk about all the things that had happened to you.

467. PL: So did you want to go and talk was there nothing that said don't go?

467. CM: No I wanted to talk because I wanted to know why my child died.

468. PL: How did you go there to register and so on? Where did you do it?

468. CM: We went to the TRC and they told us which building to go to and then we got there and entered one by one. One by one one by one.

469. PL: Not the day you were going to talk, the day you registered?

469. CM: (long pause)

470. PL: Did you not register?

470. CM: We did register and we finished. As you register you are asked what had happened, you tell and they record it.

471. PL: How did you feel on the morning you appeared at the TRC?

471. CM: I was scared (long pause) The biggest thing was I wanted to know what had happened with my child. Why was he killed so brutally. (long pause) They said "You will ask the police that are there to investigate the story and you will find out why" (long pause) as they did find out.

472. PL: What else did you expect from the TRC that day or the TRC that, what else would they do for you?

472. CM: I only expected them to say all these 3 children (of Bheki's) that I was left with what was I meant to do? I had expected some help/compensation.

473. PL: Who had you gone with there?

473. CM: (long pause) I had gone with the children's aunt

474. PL: Had you asked her to accompany you?

474. CM: Yes

475. PL: Your other children didn't go?

475. CM: No they didn't go. My daughter in law went

476. PL: Why didn't they go?

476. CM: (*long pause: drinks water*)

477. PL: If you remember

477. CM: mmh?

478. PL: Why did they not go?

478. CM: (long pause) They said (*long pause*), they don't think that there was anything they could be helped with, they didn't trust if they would be told the truth.

479. PL: Was there any one from the community or friends that had come?

479. CM: No, they were not there. (*long pauses, halting*), we went with the aunt to the TRC and we found Seipati there. The day we went to court in Pretoria (long pause), all these were supposed to go but they didn't. It was me and Thabani and Lindani and…the four of us. And my husband. We were five.

480. PL: Was your husband there on that day? Did he also go to the TRC that day?

481. CM: He didn't go.

482. PL: Why didn't he go?

482. CM: He said he didn't want to. He didn't know how that was going to help him.

483. PL: How did you feel after the TRC, did you feel like you it had set you back?

483. CM: It did set me back but then I had understood that talking helps and I went to Mrs Dlomo and we sat and talked and distracted ourselves talking and discussing many things. Until it passed.

484. PL: On the day you testified at the TRC, and Seipati immediately after you testified, are there things that you wished they could have asked you that they never did?

484. CM: (*long pause*)

485. PL: Like maybe they would ask …take more time talking to you or

485. CM: No I…(overlap) I was not satisfied because I could see that they focused on Seipati more. My story was not as important to them, and the things that had happened to me during Bheki's activism, …." sizabalaza",we were both active in the Struggle…(long sigh)

486. PL: On that day, after you finished testifying at the TRC, what happened, did you go home, or…what happened?

486. CM: I came back home with my heart broken. Having started that story from the beginning, my heart was sore. But I was also hopeful because they –(*said faintly*) had promised me that they would investigate the matter until they came to the bottom of it. (unclear what she says here…) but… at least that gave me hope. They had promised us a few things, and they told us this and that, this and that, so I put my hope in that even though my heart was broken, I put my hope in that promise.

487. PL: At the time when you were testifying at the TRC, what happened? Were you doing the play already?

487. CM: No, I we hadn't done it. We were, we were, we were…we were… stilll attending Khulumani – it was still hot in those times. We were going there.

488. PL: What did they say about… you were saying that telling your story was hard for you and took you back..what happened?

488. CM: Yes, it took me back, I felt myself going back into memories. With very little I could comfort myself with.

489. PL: What did Khulumani do after you came back from the TRC?

489. CM: They organised counselors for us, whoever came back from the TRC went to Khulumani and we went there depending on the amount of trauma that you experienced. So they counseled me.

490. PL: I see.What happened because there were promises made by the TRC?

490. CM: Yes, there were promises made but they didn't live up to them. They had promised us that they would take care of us, but those promises did not turn out they way they had promised them to us. Especially for us, it was R30 000 for two people, which means R15 000 each . And so we took it. And Makhosi took it too.. it wasn't a problem, she took it.

491. PL: As time went on, did you follow up as to whether they did investigate what they had promised to investigate?

491. CM: They did follow it up because we even went to court and at that stage we had not gone to court before. We went to Court in Pretoria. We went to trial and we even saw ,we saw Eugene de Kock.

492. PL: Who was preparing your case as you were preparing to go to court?

492. CM: Bheki went to the Lawyers, the Lawyers took his case there and our case was with them.

493. PL: Oh, it means other women didn't find a lawyer? You got this lawyer for yourself, for just our part in the case?

493. CM: Yes, Yes, It was like that.

494. PL: How was it going to court and seeing de Kock

494. CM: Oh, it was very bad, but for me I became better. I would tell baba, Baba today we are going to court, be advised that we are going to see this Eugene de Kock again. We would pray, and ask God to help us, to give us the strength to look at him, and to also give us the ability to hear and understand because if we were not able to look at him then we would not be able to hear as well. He would say that because I am around I should pray. And I would tell him, no, we must both pray. And that's what we put our faith in.

495. PL: Do you remember which year you went to court?

495. CM: No, I don't remember.

496. PL: On the day you went to court, you say your husband went with?

496. CM: Yes, he went with.

497. PL: Who else went with?

497. CM: We went with Lindani. The others were at work. We went there together and when we got to court we found others there, friends of Bheki were also there.

498. PL: How come your husband and Lindani were able to go to the trial where Eugene De Kok was, but they didn't go to the TRC?

498. CM: Yes, they didn't go. They wanted to see this one (Eugene De Kok), with their very own eyes. And hear what is coming out of his mouth. This one they saw as being small (TRC) That one they saw being a big thing (The trial). So we went to trial, and even the other one went the next day.

499. PL: Which one?

499. CM: The one that I say is there, my third child.

500. PL: Oh, your third child,

500. CM: Yes, my third child.

501. PL: Oh he went..

501. CM: Yes, along with his wife.

502. PL: So now you heard… were you resolved or comforted inside that you got the truth now that that you got the truth now that you went and saw Eugene De Kok? Or how did you feel?

502. CM: Eugene De Kok was not speaking in such a way that we must be comforted, he was speaking any way he wanted to, and he was just talking about what he did and how he did it. That took us right back to the beginning, because a person is supposed to show even in their eyes that they were aware that he family is there, but not him, he didn't care. He was talking about (hero…hero…hero…) said his fellow Afrikaner people. But this one, he is finished inside.

503. PL: Which one?

503. CM: At this time, my husband, he can't event stand up to walk, he can't do anything. We even suggested that he goes outside to get some fresh air, but he didn't. We went back inside, and when we were leaving, because we have to go to the taxi's, we didn't have transport. By the time we got to the taxi's, we were holding him (her husband) up. I was holding him on the one side and my other son was holding him on the other. We were dragging him along. But from the very time he saw him, he changed, he was no longer the person that we knew. He was a very strong man before, nothing got to him and he was not one to cave in easily to anything, but when it came to his own child, he crumbled. He was not comforted at all.

504. PL: Didn't he go to the Khulumani support group?

504. CM: No.

505. PL: Why Not?

505. CM: He didn't want to.

506. PL: He didn't want to?

506. CM: Yes, he didn't want to.

507. PL: He didn't want to go, even though he could see that you are getting help there?

507. CM: He would just say, we will hear from Mama, - Mama will finish all the stories there, I would say to him, if you can, why don't you go there yourself and hear what other people have to say as well and hear of the things that have happened to people. It will lift you up, because you will get to see that you are not alone. But he would say not.

508. PL: So he never went?

509. CM: No, not at all. And now he goes to court and he put himself in that position and I could see he was not okay. By the time I spoke those words to him, I could see that he was not okay. From the time he left the house, until we got to Pretoria. From that point on, he was not okay, even when we went to the funeral, he was no longer the person we used to know.

510. PL: Did your children not go to Khulumani to go and get help? Did you tell them that they could get help?

510. CM: Yes I used to tell them that they could get help there but they also didn't want to go. They said no mother, let it be you alone who goes there. So I kept on going. Even though I used to beg them that we should all go together. Even for me, something used to leave me inside and there was something I could get, that would be helpful to me.

511. PL: Where you able to (….unclear) as you were attending Khulumani?

511. CM: Everytime I used to come here, I would start right from the beginning. I would speak the things I was speaking there, and I would speak words of comfort that would comfort others. So that they should also know that nothing like that would ever happen again, and also just to say that only God knows.

512. PL: So than, you were like the mother who was counselling them …

512. CM: Yes, all of them here in the house, I used to counsel them. Even his wife, she used to go here, go there, and I used to say to her, no, leave her alone, leave her alone.

513. PL: After some time, after you had seen Eugene De Kok and seen what he had to say, what did you want to get out of it? When you went there and you saw him, what did you thing you would get from him?

514. CM: Even though he didn't apologise, but when you are looking at a person, you can see when they are remorseful, I could see that it was all coming back to him, even when he was talking, I could see it was coming back to him because as a person, those memories do come back. And it worries you and you realise that you were never supposed to do that.

515. PL: Did you go there with the intention of going to see if you could get some sense of comfort? Or did you just go there to listen without even thinking about it first – whether it would comfort you or not to go there?

515. CM: I had not yet thought about being comforted by going to the trial. I had thought to myself that I would be comforted by what would be coming out of his mouth. But nothing of that nature came out of his mouth.

516. PL: After a while, were there a lot of journalists from newspapers talking to you?

516. CM: Yes, there were many.

517. PL: Who was the family spokesperson who was talking to the media about this case?

517. CM: We used to speak for ourselves.

518. PL: Who used to talk?

518. CM: I used to talk, as well as other women. It was us, as a group of women, the women's league, but there were three of us, even before we leave home we would discuss – this and that, no. This and that, no.

519. PL: So these women of the women's league they would accompany you when you went to court?

519. CM: Yes, when we went to court.

520. PL: So you continued to go to trial with these three women, here at home, there wasn't anyone going to the trial anymore?

520. CM: No, no one was going to the trial anymore. After a lengthy time, the boy, the one that's in Brakpan, he would come this side and sleep over.

521. PL: Oh, your son was in Brakpan, he was the only one still coming to the trial?

521. CM: Yes, it was him alone.

522. PL: Until when did this go on?

522. CM: Until the end of the trial.

523. PL: And what did you think of the outcome?

523. CM: The sentence handed down was very high, but I was that interested in his sentence, I was more interested in him changing. I was hoping that his heart would change, that he would see what he did to us traumatised us. To fight with people who have nothing, but who were human like him. I thought he would be interested in bandaging our wounds, but he didn't.

524. PL: There were a lot of media people who might have wanted to talk about the family of Bheki Mlangeni, were there people from the media who would come there, who would want to talk to you?

524. CM: Yes, but this boy from Brakpan, he would say, "mother these people are going to mess with your head, I don't like it."

525. PL: So what would you say when they asked to interview you?

525. CM: I would just say one or two things.

526. PL: So it was you, the person who was talking to the papers?

526. CM: Yes. And what also used to pain me is that his wife was there, so we could have gone together, but she was too busy doing her own thing.

527. PL: She wasn't going to court?

528. CM: No, she wasn't going to court. Everything was on my shoulders.

529. PL: At the time that you agreed to talk to the media, what made you to agree to talk to them?

529. CM: I wanted them to know how ugly he is, and the words that come out of his mouth, how ugly they were. That's what I wanted the nation to know.

530. PL: As the years have gone by, how have your feelings towards the TRC changed, if at all? Is it still the same, or has anything changed at all?

530. CM: After seeing what happened in my home, I felt that there wasn't much of a difference. All that happened was that my old wounds were opened all over again, and they did try to heal those wounds in whatever way they could, but it was nothing significant. What they did, is that we were able to talk to them, and discuss things, and they promised us what they promised and you hold on to that hope that at least, something will happen. I am still waiting until today.

531. PL: But you were hopeful that when you left there, something would happen, that they would give you money or something.

531. CM: Yes, yes, that's what I was also telling me myself, not..(…Unclear..)that's what I was telling myself, but nothing up until today.

532. PL: Up until today , it ended there?

532. CM: It ended there.

533. PL: You got the money at that time, you didn't get it again?

533. CM: No, we didn't. They would be saying we going to come, we going to come, nothing. And it's sad because time is going, and in your heart, you wish that before you go, there would be something that you see. I wish things would be done, no matter when, but it wouldn't take that long to come to us, those who are advanced in years.

534. PL: So now that we are here in 2011, do you still feel hopeful or have you lost hope? Do you feel discouraged, angered?

534. CM: Some days, I'm hanging on to hope, others just loose hope. I take long to loose hope though, I hang on for a long time. I ask myself, what is better about the others? What is better about them? Bheki was high in stature, and there was a lot of work he was doing. Why is it that they have forgotten him, and I say, maybe its just bad blood. And I tell myself, maybe one day they will help us, we don't know, but all I ask is that before I go, I can see things getting done.

535. PL: As the years have gone by and you are seeing the type of society we live in today, the things that you were fighting for, as a woman who is a member of the women's league, have they come to pass?

535. CM: For others they have come to pass, but for others like me, as I'm talking to you, nothing has really happened because there really isn't anything that has made us happy since we found our freedom. Because if there is indeed freedom, if you are able to see me being down , you should be able to come and help to lift me up and just to come and tell me that its like this, like this, and like this. Now, with all the people, what had Bheki done to them? Bheki was a part of them, why are they not saying that we had some one amongst us named Bheki. Our branch is supposed to speak up and ask, why is our person not having anything done for him?

536. PL: Oh, you talking about the branch…

536. CM: Yes, the branch, you see, we have freedom now. If you have been traumatised, you are supposed to also look and ask yourself, what is there? What are you saying about it?

537. PL: Oh, You are talking about the ranch of the ANC?

537. CM: Yes.

538. PL: So they didn't do anything for him, not even a tribute or any type of remembrance?

538. CM: They had promised, even my son in Brakpan, he would say he would also contribute if they do something. (….unclear…) something like that. We would then keep quiet and wait.

539. PL: As we now have freedom, how would you say people's lives are like now? How has your community changed? Especially what you were fighting for? The freedom and getting rights?

539. CM: The freedom is there, there are a lot of things that we can see which have changed. We can count them. Even though you can't see it for everyone, but you can see that things have happened. Even at the clinics when we go to the clinic we can see that things have changed. Even at schools, things are better.

540. PL: Now, if you had to describe yourself, having been someone who has experienced all that you experienced up until now, how would you describe yourself? Thinking about your life, and the things that you have gone through?

541. CM: I see myself as someone who has been helped a lot. Because along my path I have felt many things and it shouldn't be the way that somebody looks at it, at times it does come to me, but it goes away quickly again, because I comfort myself.

542. PL: So there aren't memories anymore that you can say are still very painful to you?

542. CM: It has its time. As we are talking about these children, the ones that are here at home, they would say go, go and stay with your children, why are you still trying (meaning of sentence unclear) and Bheki would say, those words are too tough for him. He said, I will keep him. He came with twins, that is the amazing part and he will raise the children. And now, the very one who promised to raise the children, is the one who has left us.

543. PL: Yes, Bheki, the very one,

543. CM: Yes, Bheki had said he would raise the kids and he would do everything for them.

544. PL: That he would raise his sister's children?

544. CM: Yes, his sister's children. (….unclear….)

545. PL: Where are Bheki's children, where do they stay?

545. CM: Bheki's children? They stay with their mother, but they do come here sometimes. When they miss being here, and they sleep over. They spend that time that they spend here and they leave.

546. PL: When you think about all the painful things that have happened to you in your life, because you spoke about event he painful things that happened to you before you got married, in school and what has happened now with your son, have you managed to change the way that you think about all the things that have traumatised you? Or are you finding it difficult to?

546. CM: It's not easy, (…unclear..) Bheki has just died, there would be many people who would stand up with you (…unclear…) then I went to the person who they said is the person who would tell you what went wrong, (unclear..) I found a lot of people there who were in trouble who had gone to her..

547. PL: A traditional healer woman or a woman of prayer or what kind of a woman was she?

547. CM: I think she is a woman of prayer, I went to her and I faced her. She would be constantly going to the toilet. When I would raise my eyes to meet hers, she would stand up and go outside to the toilet. And I looked down. My sister was with me, and she asked me if she should go inside with me, and I said to her, she can see for yourself that there is nothing I'm going to remember here, come inside so you can listen and remind me.

When we arrived inside, the woman asked my sister, who is this that is with you, and my sister told her that I was her sister. The woman asked, am I the one whose child they have been talking about, and my sister said yes. The woman said that she had been looking at me for a long time, since I arrived but I am not getting the answer. I'm getting an answer from the ones that have passed away, but not me, I am not saying anything. I can see all of the ancestors, they are looking down, so there is nothing that I can do for her.

That became something because I was expecting her to say tell me names, and say this and that, and that and that… and I can do this and that for you. She said that she won't be able to do anything for me, because things were not happening the way that she usually works. She said to me I must go home and because she could see that I was still troubled and had bitterness inside of me. She asked me if I am someone who prays and I said to her, a lot.

But I haven't been able to pray, even when I try to say the Lord's prayer, I am unable to finish it. When I try, there would just be something that makes me unable to. She said, I must please go back home. She said that time will pass and when I'm feeling better, I should go back to her so that she can tell me the news I need to hear. So I told my sister that I am going home right at that moment. It doesn't matter that time I get home, I will get there and they will open for me. I'm going home. But they reasoned with me and I slept over and in the morning, I went to Nquthu and I caught a taxi and I came home. I arrived home around 4pm and everyone came to see me, to hear how my journey had been.

I told them that it was nothing much, and I'm just giving up. They asked me how come and I just asked them to give me space and I wanted to go to sleep and maybe it would be better inside. Their father told them to leave me to go to sleep.

Around 3am, I saw Bheki in his likeness, coming into the kitchen. It was him, he was even wearing the beautiful clothes I had taken for him and he asked me, why am I so worried so much? I'm here to show you that I'm not dead; you should not be so worried. He said that everything that's bothering me, it will be okay… All you have to do is to kneel down and pray and don't stop praying. When I realised that he was gone, I asked myself, could he have left, and I was looking for him in all the bedrooms. After that, all the things that I wanted, the answers, everything, all those desires just ended. And I realised that I shouldn't be trying to do things for myself, I must kneel down and pray because everything is under God's control. After he had disappeared, I was able to pray that night. I knelt down and prayed.

548. PL: You were able to pray that night?

548. CM:Y Yes, I was able to pray.

549. PL: As your child had come to you in your dream, after that you woke up and were

549. CM: (..unclear – too much background noise..) Through prayer I am able to get to the maker of all things.

550. PL: That was the day you were able to start praying again?

550. CM: Yes, to pray.

551. PL: How did you feel?

551.CM: I felt so much better, even the heart that was bleeding, that ended. I was able to

552. PL: As you've said that you are a church going person, what are your views on forgiveness?

552. CM: (Pause to think…) For me, as I've said, things in my life, never happen in the planned way. I would think that things will go in a certain direction, and they go in another direction. In my view, Eugene wasn't that bad of a person, if he had spoken the way that I wanted him to, my heart would have been comforted.

553. PL: Who then, does forgiveness help? Who benefits the most from it?

553. CM: I am the one who get comforted because it's my heart…when Eugene arrived

554. PL: Ma , sorry that was unclear, who does forgiveness benefit?

554. CM: I said it helps me.

555. PL: Do you feel like you have forgiven?

556. CM: I feel better, but for me to say you can do whatever you want to do because I've forgiven, that can't be the case. There were some words that I was expecting him to speak that would have made me to wash my soul and make me to be that which I was supposed to be, but he never gave me that chance. I have no regard for him, even if he can appear now, I have no regard for him.

557. PL: By 'him' you mean Eugene De Kok?

557. CM: Yes.

558. PL: So, you saying that its better, that you have not yet reached that place…(CM interjects)

558. CM: I haven't reached that place, I can't say I've reached that place where I've fully accepted what happened and I've forgiven. There was a time when we were meant to meet him (Eugene De Kok) and I don't know what happened, but we were going to meet, but the meeting never happened because I couldn't bring myself to speak to him.

559. PL: As you've mentioned that you didn't hear those words you wanted to hear, what else in your point of view is going to make you to finally reach that place of closure?

559. CM: (…..Long thinking Pause…) Whatever arrives can arrive, my heart is not as sore as before.. Now I can even walk by the roadside/or he can walk on the road (meaning unclear) its fine.. Even if he is quiet, I can be quiet too. Because I would have liked for us to talk to each other. That didn't happen, because he didn't give me that chance. There was a place where people were going to ask for forgiveness.

560. PL: What place is this?

560. CM: There was a place… there was supposed to be 15 of them, asking for forgiveness..

561. PL: Oh okay, was this part of the TRC or was it..

561. CM: Yes, In the TRC.

562. PLS: Oh, they were supposed to come and say sorry to you all?…

562. CM: Yes. So they came in, there were about eleven of them. There were four of them who did not come. I did not care about them. I saw this one, that they say is De Kok. This De Kok was sitting there, and I wanted him to feel uncomfortable by him seeing the way my eye was looking at him. I was looking at him with angry eyes, until his eyes also briefly looked in my direction, I was looking at him all the time. I wanted him to see that I'm looking at him, and he is not saying the things that he needs to say. He is unable to talk and say simply " Sorry" and this thing, also entered our blood and entered our souls and made us messed up inside, because now, we are still messed up even now. That is what I wanted him to say, and he did not say it at all.

563. PL: I would like to ask you… thank you very much for finishing this section. There are some questions that I did not ask you that day. About your upbringing, I had asked you, the oppression that you felt; you said you lived in the farms so you didn't know about it. When did you get to know about it?

563. CM: I felt it when I came here, when I had now married. When we heard about this thing of one person suppressing another, what was that? Was it… even if a person or even one of those Boers, remember, when I arrived, they were the Afrikaners here by our home. We used to go there and work. You would work, and work (with emphasis), even that one room, you would work and the Boer would come and say, "Is nie mooi nie."(It's not nice). Every day, day in and day out, you are not alone, there are many of us there, but you are working alone, and she will never say, today, you did a great job. Even the food that you are given, its not the kind of food you would like to get. Even the milk, it was the same thing every day.

564. PL: As you are saying that you used to stay with the Afrikaners, was it at the farms?

564. CM: Yes, it was the farms, we were working for a contract company (…unclear)

565. PL: Oh, so it was your husband who was working on the farms on contract?

565. CM: No, he was no longer on the contract, he was in Johannesburg at that time, it was just us who were left behind.

566. PL: Who was left behind?

566. CM: They would know that you are married and they would call you to come and work.

567. PL: Were they paying you for the work that you were doing?

567. CM: No, they didn't pay us, we used to work for free, working for our accommodation because we were staying there…(unclear…)

568. PL: How many years did you stay there?

568. CM: I stayed there for three years. I realised that in the farms, there is no life.

569. PL: When you left there, what kind of papers did you have?

569. CM: I didn't have any papers.

570. PL: You didn't have papers?

570. CM: No, I didn't have papers..

571. PL: When did you get you get your papers?

571. CM: It was all about you knowing your job..

572. PL: No, I mean your papers to move around. How were you able to get from one place to another?

572. CM: When I got to my husband, Mlangeni's employer set everything up for me, he helped me with my papers as I qualified to be there because it was the place of railway so I was never bothered by any white person. I only started being bothered by white people when I arrived here.

573. PL: Where, here in Johannesburg?

573. CM: Yes. But even then, I already had my own place, I had my own shack.

574. PL: At the time when you were staying with the Farmers, did you have papers?

574. CM: No, I did not have them.It was common knowledge that I was there and there were no police who came in to bother us there.

575. PL: When your husband was working at the railway, you said that you had papers. What of papers was it? Was it just a piece of paper; was it an ID or a Pass book?

576. CM: It was an ID, which was written that no matter where they found me, they wouldn't bother me because my husband works here. (..unclear..)

577. PL: Where you ever part of public protests? Did you ever attend these marches?

577. CM: Yes, I used to attend them.

578. PL: Do you remember any of the marches that you attended? What would be the cause of you marching?

578. CM: When I came to Johannesburg, I started working, and as we were working we joined unions and they taught us that there are things that are allowed, and other things which are not allowed. It was very familiar to what we were doing in the ANC women's league. If there were marches happening in the women's league, we used to go there. Even when we were marching to Pretoria, I was there.

579. PL: Oh, you were there, at the women's march?

579. CM: Yes, I was there. But we were not the famous women who were known at the time. But we were with them, the women's league, and we had our uniforms and we knew on which days are we wearing what kind of uniform. We had dedicated ourselves because we had agreed that we would accompany them to Pretoria.

580. PL: So, you had joined the women's league at that time?

580. CM: Yes, I was a member.

581. PL: So, as you were a union member and a member of the ANC Women's league, and where two groups would go together would you go together as workers or as women?

581. CM: As workers. You must remember were both women and workers.

582. PL: At the time of the state of emergency, I think it was about 86'(Catherine interjects)

582. CM: It was '86.

583. PL: There were curfews, in terms of what time people had to be at what place, there were restrictions…

583. CM: It was also the time when Winnie (Madikizela-Mandela) and them, were arrested, yes, I was there. The State of Emergency even had my son arrested. And he went to Sun City (Johannesburg Central Prison) the whole year.

584. PL: It was during the state of emergency?

584. CM: Yes, they used to get beaten up.

585. PL: People's movements were restricted and they couldn't move around after a certain time, what about you? Did anything happen to you during the state of emergency?

585. CM: I used to get pamphlets dropped off at my house and I would be busy with them, sometimes, when they got too many, I used to burn them because the boys used to come over to my house.

586. PL: And it was Bheki who used to be involved with the pamphlets?

586. CM: Yes, they would meet at my house and Bheki would tell them to take the pamphlets and distribute them. And that's how it used to happen.

587. PL: So, you say if the boys don't come to fetch the pamphlets, you burn them?

587. CM: Yes, if it's the old ones, when the new ones arrive, I burn the old ones if no one has come to pick them up.

588. PL: Were you not afraid?

588. CM: No, I used to burn them at night, and even if they had arrived while I was burning the pamphlets, what would they have done to me? They would have probably taken me with them.

589. PL: Did the police often come to your house?

589. CM: They used to come and I used to tell them that I am uneducated and I don't know what these pamphlets were about, and I'm not even sure what he (Bheki) is studying, so I don't know. I just know that he is studying at school, but I don't even know what he is studying for.

590. PL: So you used to make yourself out to be a mother who doesn't understand anything?

590. CM: Yes, a person who doesn't understand anything. But inside, I knew exactly what was going on. At times they would arrive and raid the house – at times they even used to throw me on the floor , kicking me and my husband would say that I'm stubborn. Why don't I just keep quiet? And I would ask him, "Why should I keep quiet?"

591. PL: So you used to talk to them? (the police)

591. CM: Yes, I would talk to them, I would tell the other ones, maybe the black police, "Tell these ones (white police) that I don't know what they are talking about, when they are saying that Bheki is the one that is telling people not to pay their rates. And what I'm telling them, I'm telling them whatever, so when they tell me their own thing, I'd say I don't know. When they say Bheki is the one not allowing people to pay their rents, I didn't know what that meant and I told them that.

592. PL: Your husband, when they arrived here, what did he used to say?

592. CM: He wouldn't say anything, he would just keep quiet.

593. PL: Would they beat him up too?

593. CM: No, they would see that he is quiet. They would see which is the one that jumps around a lot.

594. PL: And that was you?

594. CM: Yes. They used to say to me, that I'm the one who taught these children these things, we are going to sort you out.

595. PL: And you were not scared?

595. CM: No, I didn't have that fear anymore because I could see now that the situation is tough, and things are really difficult for us. Even when they came one day and took Bheki and them, I insisted that I want to go with. I told the police that I am going with them. I know you want to go and kill them.

You take them and you don't return them. I would ask them, are you going to kill the children? And they would say no, they wouldn't. I would say to them, we will all die together.

596. PL: If there can be a person, who can talk about you, telling your story, what do you think they would say about you? If they had to say that there was someone called Catherine Mlangeni. If they had to talk about you, what would they say?

596. CM: I don't know what they would say because I think it's better when a person sees for themselves what kind of a person you are. On my side, I see myself as a trust worthy person because there isn't even a single bad thing that I've ever done to a person. Also, (…unclear…) I like to do things in a straight manner. Women used to come my house, having fought with their husbands, and I would advise them, that ladies, we are in marriages, its not nice here. If you want to just to live your life with your kids, do that, and be separated by death with your kids. You need to endure, because if you don't, you will find yourself even losing your children.

597. PL: So, it would seem that you have been the local counsellor for a long time. It would seem like this thing has been with you for a long time.

597. CM: You know, this thing of counselling has been with me for a long time. Even from back when I was at school, I used to like the work being done by Zephora.

598. PL: What kind of work did Zephora do?

598. CM: Zephora used to heal the sick. She used to sit under a tree, all those who had troubles used to go to her and she used to advise them accordingly.

599. PL: Oh, so the person you wanted to be was Zephora?

599. CM: Yes, even (..unclear).. can tell you what kind of a person is Catherine. I used to like those things, I like people. We used to go with her, along with another one who was doing acting and he was always giving her troubles. And she used to ask me if she should leave him and I would tell her that she needs to tell him that what he is doing is not right. If he continues, when you get home, remove him from that (job – meaning unclear) that he is on.

600. PL: Would a person than describe you as someone who is a mediator, is that how people know you?

600. CM: Yes, there are women who see me like that, they know what kind of a woman I am. Even here in the township, they can tell you what kind of a woman I am..

601. PL: What kind of a woman would they say you are?

601. CM: I'm a person who doesn't like violence… you would see that even if you get into an argument with someone, the neighbours would say, that 'mum Catherine, hit this person they are out of order' but I don't like that. I'm the type who would intervene in confrontations and tell the people to sort it out because they are adults now. It's not nice for children to watch adults beating each other up. Even Bheki was that type of a person, even this one (other son), he is like that.

602. PL: Where do you think they got those character traits from?

602. CM: I think they got it from me, I remember one day, we were standing here, it was the day of…(unclear…) now Bheki comes to see if I also got on as well. He came all the way from Wits University to see if I had gotten on as well? When he arrives here, he finds that there are people

fighting and I was there watching. I will not forget, he comes and he asks me, why are you standing there watching? And I told him I was watching the people fighting. And he asked me why we were not intervening and were just watching on the side.. he wanted to know, what would the people gain from just watching this? And I told him that we would not be gaining anything. If you are not watching the people fighting, they will also eventually get back into the house and carry on with their business. When you give them an audience, they will then show off, because they want you to look at them and thing is not right. I thought about it, and I told him that he was right. What we were doing was not right. He said that if we had gone back into our houses a long time ago, the fight would have never escalated.

603. PL: Tell me one last night about (…unclear..) that you remember, there was even the

603. CM: People were buying from shops, but not allowed to bring in things from town. People were buying from the shops and they were using cars too and the boys would want to confiscate the goods of the elderly that they've brought from town, but because Bheki respected the elderly so much, he would ask them to leave to leave the elderly alone. They would take the groceries and they would fill up the car and they would bring them here at home. The people would then come and fetch them here at home… each plastic and paper bag had a name written on them, and the owners would then come and fetch their groceries here at home.

604. PL: You were working at the time, weren't you? So how come were you not buying the groceries from town?

604. CM: It's because Bheki told me that I shouldn't go to town because the IFP was out in full force. The Boers were working in conjunction with the IFP because the train would sometimes just stop in the middle of nowhere, and they would come into the train, the IFP people, they would come into the coaches, to attack us. They would use machetes on people, but they didn't get to me. I was supposed to have been hacked at the time when the train stopped between Braamfontein and Johannesburg, the train just stopped in the middle of nowhere, and the IFP people came in, carrying their machetes. I just remember someone shouting to me, that I should hide under the train seat.

605. PL: Who was saying that?

605. CM: I don't remember who said it, all I remember was hiding under the seat, he said I must not take anything with me, not my other bags, I must just take my handbag with me. Indeed, I did that and I was spared. But by the time I left the train, I left there with my head spinning, like I was a crazy person. I saw dead bodies that were hacked to death. I was saved from such things.

606. PL: God was with you, helping you?

606. CM: He was helping me, I would listen to his voice, and I would do as he was instructing me.

607. PL: Mum Catherine, we are finished now, oh, I wanted to ask, because of the woman that you were, and you even joined the women's league, even before 1994, what you are seeing now, is this what you fought for?

607. CM: Yes, this is it, even though it's not complete, but this is it. Because we were fighting for freedom to come, and for the ID's we used to use, not to be used in the way that they were used before. All the time you have to carry your ID, if you forget it, you go to jail. These are the kind of things that we were fighting against… Some of what we fought for, is definitely here.

608. PL: After 1994, what was your wish for the nation? Do you think your wishes came to pass or they didn't? Your personal wishes.

608. CM: My wishes, for the nation?

609. PL: Yes, for the nation.

609. CM: They weren't all quite realised, but, others are definitely there. It was one of my wishes that my children would built a big, substantial homes for themselves and I would just come and sit on the sofa and watch TV. This has happened, they have built their houses, which are amazing. Even this one can be a beautiful house if they can come and fix it inside. But it makes me happy to see that my children are doing that for me.

610. PL: Is there anything that still makes you sad about our nation?

610. CM: What makes me sad is that most people are still not working. That makes me really sad because I also see all these diseases and I think that it is caused by the high level of unemployment. So not working is encouraging prostitution, with girls just inviting men to come and "take it". When the kids are working for themselves, they are able to do what they can do for themselves, and not have to rely on being with a man to give them those things, like a pair of earrings.

611. PL: So, that's what makes you sad?

611. CM: Yes, that's what makes me sad because during the Boers time, money was little, but at least, there was a little bit of work. Things were not as expensive as they are now. Things were relative to how much we were earning. It wasn't like now, where a person has to get drunk and dance seductively because you want to get something from someone, you used to be able to do it for yourself. So if you were dating someone, you would be with them because you loved them, not because you want their money.

612. PL: We are now finished Mam'Catherine. Thank you very much for your time

ENDS

Part 2b - Transcribed interview with Subject B – THANDI SHEZI

Interviewer: Palesa Letlaka (PL)

Interviewee: Thandi Shezi (TS)

Place of Interview: Soweto

FAMILY

1. PL: What is your full name?

1. TS: It's Thandiwe Gladys Shezi.

2. PL: Where and when were you born?

2. TS: I was born at this old hospital which was called Bridgeman, on the 10th of October 1961.

3. PL: What were your parent's full names and dates of birth, where were they born?

3. TS: Yes, my father was born 23 June 1932, his full name is Joseph Fanyana Shezi, and my mother was born on the 27th of September 1934 and her full name is Thabisile Jane Motaung, by then, before she was married into the Shezi family.

4. PL: Do you remember your grandparent's date of birth?

4. TS: Well, their dates of birth I cannot remember, but their names I can remember – The other one was Vumbulula Mtshisi, and my grandmother was Joslina Shabangu, she died at the age of 87 in 1986.

5. PL: And whose mother was she?

5. TS: My Father's mother. My mother's mother was Elina Mndaweni-Motaung, but the birth name was Mdlalose and my grandfather was George Motaung, actually they migrated from Lesotho and they went to KZN. But because in KZN they could not pronounce Motaung, they ended up saying, Mndaweni.

FAMILY LIFE

6. PL: Oh, okay, now, let's go on to family life, where did you grow up as a child?

6.TS: I grew up in Lamontville in Durban, my grandmother, the sister to my mother's father, Catherine Shabangu,she was married to Zondi, and she took me when I was five years old. And stayed with me, because she couldn't bear kids so I was raised by her in Lamontville. My first Primary School was Gijima Primary.

7. PL: What kind of house did you grow up in?

7. TS: I grew up in a four room house in Thembu avenue. You know a typical four room house with a toilet outside.

8. PL: Did you have your own bedroom?

8. TS: I was using a bedroom with my other aunts. My father's sister, two of them. They had their beds and I had my single bed in the corner.

9. PL: Can you describe the neighbourhood you grew up in, in Lamontville.

9. TS: It was a very friendly neighbourhood; they practised so many cultures like testing of the virginity of the girls. I was still young by then so I wasn't supposed to be there, but I would go with the sisters testing the girls, because one of them she was the Nceba sister, she was the neighbour, sister Ncube, so I would watch whatever she was doing. We used to play naked in our panties, running around, going to the shops, my grandmother then was the politician, because she was friends with Msizi Dube, remember the one who was killed in KZN?

10. PL: What political party was she?

10.TS: She was ANC, so I sometimes used to go with my grandmother to those meetings, I couldn't understand what they were talking about, I was very young, and my grandmother sells liquor by then, so everyone policemen would come and she would sell liquor, the famous liquor that was being sold then was "Paarl Paarlie" the wine.

11. PL: So generally, what was your childhood like?

11. TS: My childhood was a normal one, a normal upbringing, because when I was in KZN, I went to Sub A, SubB, Standard one, then my father, he had a house in White City.

12. PL: White City, where?

12. TS: In Soweto, my father had a house in White City and my mother said that she wanted all her kids to be brought up by her. She was a domestic worker. So we stayed in White City with my father going out to different countries because he was a truck driver.

13. PL: Okay, let's take a step back because I think I missed that question. What were the occupations of your parents?

13. TS: My mother worked as a domestic worker and my father was a truck driver.

14. PL: How many children are in your family and what is your birth order?

14. TS: We are… in my mother we are five, were supposed to be six actually. The first born, Happy, it's a boy, was born on 26 June 1956, my sister Thoko, was born on 28 November 1958, it's me, Thandi, born 10 October 1961, then there's my younger brother S'phiwe, who was on the 18th Nov 1962, the last born, well, we can say she is the last born, Busisiwe was born 19th Nov 1964. Then, the one who was supposed to be the last born was a boy, but because of the accident that my mother had, the baby lived for only a week, in 1979.

15. PL: So when you were living in Lamontville, you went there when you were five, so you knew who your parents were?

15. TS: Yes.

16. PL: What were your parents like, what memories do you have of them? And what were your other parents like, or your caretakers, what were your memories of them?

16. TS: My grandmother and my grandfather from the Zondi's that I was staying with in Lamontville, actually they were spoiling me rotten. You could not beat me and I was very naughty, I would beat other kids and when the parents would come to report, my grandmother would actually beat the parents. I was also staying with my two aunts. Aunt Sibongile, who is the eldest sister from my father's family. My father was the first born, then there was my uncle, father Giya, then my other uncle Binwell, then its my aunt Sibongile, so I was staying with Sibongile, and Dolly. Dolly was the last born in my father's family.

17. PL: So you were the only child in that house?

17. TS: I was the only child in that house. My upbringing was very interesting. Everyone was very protecting me. I remember when I didn't want to wear a certain type of shoe, when my aunt wanted to take me to the stadium to watch the Lamontville Golden Arrows because by then she was involved with the manager of the Lamontville Golden Arrows and she wanted to take me to the stadium. And she had these sandals that I didn't like the colour. So I had to say, it's either you take me barefoot, or you go and buy me a new pair of shoes. So what she did, because I didn't want to wear those shoes, she took the bandages and bandaged my two feet so that when I walk into the store, it would be like I'm injured (laughter) so that I can choose the shoes that I want.

So it was very much interesting, I would be sent to the market to buy with my basket, my grandmother liked to do farming, like sweet potato, amadumbe (African Potato) you, we actually had a very vast garden. She was doing that. So every Saturday, I would go to the market to get grocery. By then I was nine or ten years old.

You remember in those days, you couldn't go to school until your hand could touch your other ear, so short as I am, my hand couldn't reach my ear, so I was told, I was still young. I went to school when I was eight years, starting my sub-A. When I was doing standard one, I was close to ten or eleven, so I was the one who was sent to go to the market to go and buy the veggies for Sunday, come back with the veggies, take my two cents, go with the bus to the beach, with my basket of food. Then I will come back from the beach. If I didn't want to go to the beach, I would go and visit the Zondi relatives in Umlazi or Kwa-Mashu, I was like, all over.

18. PL: What beach was this?

18. TS: It was the beach front, you see beach front next to…what is this famous hotel?

19. PL: In Durban, in Ttwn?

19. TS: In Durban, Yes. In town.

20. PL: So you would go there alone as a child, with your two cents?

20. TS: Yes, with my two cents, my transport money. It was two cents there, and two cents coming back. By then, there was not this thing of rape, kids being kidnapped or whatever. We would go all over… play naked, boys and girls. To us, we didn't see any difference. It's how we were brought up.

21. PL: But the beach, was it not segregated?

21. TS: There was a part that was for the whites only, there was a part that was for the blacks only. We would go into that part.

22. PL: How did your family in Lamontville fair compare with other families, were they richer?

22. TS: They were the same. There were richer families like our next door neighbour. They had taxi's, the mother there, Mrs Ncube, was a sister, the father was a principal, my grandmother was working in a factory. In a clothing factory with my aunts.

23. PL: And what was your grandfather doing?

23. TS: My grandfather was working at the firm also.

24. PL: Okay, so when you went to live back with your parents in White City, how old were you?

24. TS: I was twelve. Yes, I was twelve because when I came back, I did my standard two by then, at Vukani Primary, in White City. That was in 1972 or '73, I can't remember properly. I did my standard two there.

25. PL: That's when you came back to live here?

25. TS: Yes, I was doing my standard two. Finally my father got a four room house in Emndeni (Soweto) in 1974, that's when we came to live in Emndeni, then I went to Zibambele Primary.

26. PL: So hold on, when you first came back, what was the size of the house that you were living in?

26. TS: In white City, the houses are three roomed, others are two-roomed so we would all be packed in that house because it was the five of us, and my mother and my father. So sometimes my mother would be staying in – sleeping where she was working as a domestic worker, so it would be us and my father. We would sleep in the kitchen, you know, with all your blankets.

27. PL: What happy memories, from this part of your childhood do you remember most clearly?

27. TS: Hmmm, there are lot of them (laughter)'.

28. PL: Just share, maybe just one..

28. TS: Oh there are lots, I remember when my mother was working as a domestic worker and her mother was visiting, than her employers asked my mother to bring us all to go to the zoo. It was the first time for me, seeing the zoo and seeing the animals live you know and, what puzzled me was that my grandmother, my mother's mother, will always when a white woman gives her a packet of chips or something, like sweets, she'll say, "dankie Nonatjie (sp)" and I wanted to understand, what is this Nonatjie. I got so irritated; I wanted to know, why are you saying Nonatjie? And she would say, when we were brought up to say the whites are the Baases, and the Nonas, in Afrikaans, it's a Nonakie, it means Madame. She'll be saying that and I got annoyed. That is when I remember, probably this is when I picked up my political…you know, because I said, I am not going to go with you anymore, "You see you grandmother, you are irritating with Nonatjie, Nonatjie. A white person, is a white person, it's a person just like us." And she used to say that I was troublesome because we had to respect whites and I would ask her, are they God's? so we had this argument, it was so nice because she wanted to hit me with her walking stick, and we ran all around the zoo, she was chasing after me (laughter). Because I was so annoyed with her calling these white women Nonatjie's.. and I couldn't understand what annoys me.

29. PL: And then, do you have any sad or difficult memories from childhood that you remember clearly?

29. TS: Yes I do have one, when we were still staying in white City, I had this one friend Mpho, usually when she goes to the shops I would go with her, and when I was sent to the shops I would go and collect her and we would go together. On that one fateful day, it was winter around June, she came and called me to go with her to the shop, to 'mum lettuce's' shop. From our home to the shop, its not far. You just pass an open field and then you are at the shops. Now, on this day, when she arrived, I was already taking a bath, preparing to go to sleep. I told her that she should go along, and come back to my house afterwards and I will accompany her home. She never came back.

Her family came to our house after two hours. They wanted to know if Thandi had not passed by the house. I told them that she had come past the house but because she I was still bathing, I told her to go along alone and I would follow her and if I didn't follow her, she should come back to the house, but she didn't come by the house for me to accompany her. You remember that One Rand note, she was killed for that One Rand note. When we got out of the house, we started screaming out her name, looking for her, then me and her uncle, we felt something was drawing us somewhere, when we continued looking, we found Mpho and she was stabbed here…(presumably showing the body part) for One Rand note.

30. PL: She was stabbed in the neck?

30. TS: That is when I said, how is this life?

31. PL: How old were you?

31. TS: I was still young, I was twelve. She was also twelve. So, for me, that's a memory that can never leave me. When I always remember her, the way we were growing, up so friendly, you know, sharing everything, playing with tins, pouring sand in them, all those memories and when she died, I couldn't be myself anymore. That is why, when my father said he wants to change, and move to Emndeni, in 1974.

32. PL: What was your extended family structure like this side?

32. TS: My grandparents were all in KZN. It was my uncle who stays in Dlamini, married. My aunt, who was married to the Ramifi's who stayed in Emndeni. She was a teacher by then, teaching at Zibambele. My (long thinking pause), my uncle's from my mother's side, the whole family is in Vosloorus. If you go to Vosloorus and you say you are looking for the Motaungs, they are known. Even if you say I am related to the Motaung's, they are well known. Around Joburg we had a lot of families and relatives.

33. PL: Did you see a lot of your aunts, uncles and cousins?

33. TS: A lot! In fact, when we moved to that house in Emndeni, it was the five of us, my mother, my father, my uncle, my aunt. My father, he was somebody who was, I don't know how was he made, if he finds you on the street, and you don't have a place to stay, he will bring you into the house and you become family – we've got so many aunts and uncles, and we don't know their background and when we were growing up we asked my father, 'baba, these people that are now frustrating you, where are they from? Where are their families? Please let them go." My father would fight. We had uncle Bomba, we don't know them, we don't know their family, we had Nceba, we had aunties we didn't know. In that four roomed house.. fortunately for us, our parents said to them, the bedroom is for our kids, the rest of you and your wives, you will find a place

there in the kitchen or somewhere. We had to move though for my uncle when he had a wife and we went to sleep in the dining room. And the boys had to move to the kitchen. So when you got home after people were asleep, you had to jump people, but it was a happy time, we were one big happy family. When people used to ask me, how are we related to this Bomba, I would tell them that I also don't know.

34. PL: What memories, just quickly, do you have of each of your siblings?

34. TS: My brother, the first born happy, he was very kind and loving, but when he's drunk, he'll fight. We'll always gang up against him when he was drunk.

35. PL: He was already drinking, when you were children?

35. TS: My brother, he started drinking and smoking dagga at a very early age. He actually dropped out of school at a very early age. But he took it from my father. My father, where he grew up in Dundee, where he was born, at the age of 15, he was arrested for stealing a train. You remember the goods train? His father was a policeman, my grandfather. So, they will always be taking the children of the policemen to be putting coal on the goods train. So my grandfather was picking up what was happening and my grandmother told us, he had to spend three months because of stealing the train, because his father was a policeman. At the age of 16, he ran away from home and came to stay at Mai Mai (a Zulu community in Johannesburg), and nobody knew where he was at the time. That's when he started looking for a job, smoking dagga and all of that. So my brother was an identical twin of my father.

36. PL: And your other siblings?

36. TS: The others we were so close. Thoko, my sister that I come after, she was the one who liked to be a beauty queen with the high heels and all that. The last born of the family, she was naughty. Sphiwe was not talkative because of the stammering. When he was talking he was going (…makes stammering sound…) So, that's why he was avoiding to talk..

37. PL: So Sphiwe was number four?

37. TS: Yes, he was number four and I'm number three. The last born Busi, when she's supposed to go to school (laughs) that's a memory I can't forget, she will go out… I will dress her, I'm also going to school, mind you my school, is opposite. She's at Primary, I'm at Higher Primary.

38.PL: The school was opposite what?

38. TS: They were opposite each other. It was my school, and then, her school. I would drop her off and then go to my school. But I would be called to say Busi did not come into class. She would not go into school after I drop her off at the gate. She would go to, at the place where they used to dump things, "kwamathikithwane". You remember in the olden days, people used to dump their old shoes, clothes outside and the trucks used to collect them and dump them – kwamathikithwane. What she used to do, she used to come home, go to the dog kernel, take the sackcloth there, change out of her uniform and into the sackcloth, go and put her uniform where the sackcloth was and she would go to the dumping site.

When she comes back, she's wearing high heels that are not of the same colour, with Make up, wearing make believe breasts (laughter), and I was the one who was going to get spanked, because I knew I was going to get asked, why didn't I look after my sister, but how could I look after my

sister when I was in class? So she used to give me a lot of trouble and I would always be getting spanked because of her, because I would be told that I am the older one, and she is the child, up until I realised that it was better that I spank her. One day I closed her inside the room, and I beat her up. From that day, she never absconded from school.

Family Chores

39. PL: Okay, family Chores, what chores did your mother and father do around the home?

39.TS: My father wanted to fix his cars, he had a lot of cars. My mother would do the washing, my sister would be doing the cleaning, also we'll be assisting with the cleaning. My mother because she was a domestic servant, she would come with a recipe where she works and she would put out all the ingredients on the table and she would tell us to bake a cake. At the age of 12 you didn't know what to do, but that's how we learned how to cook, clean and bake.

40. PL: The children in your family they did chores?

40. TS: Yes. There were only two who didn't do the chores.

41. PL: Who were they?

41. TS: It was my mother's favourites. My brother, the first born, and the last born, my sister. Those were very much protected by my mother. So much so that on Sunday, after we come back from church, we would like to go and watch soccer matches, and at Emndeni, the open veld there was the playing field, so there were different teams. My brother was also a soccer player. He was playing for the Emndeni High landers. So we used to like to go and watch them play. But we would be prevented from going to watch him, because we had to take down the engine and put on…. what do you call this… I know them all. With a car you cannot tell me anything. I grew up fixing my father's cars. We'll change the top gaskets, the points, the brake Pads, my brothers were two brothers, they will escape to go and play soccer and they would be giving us their overalls to go and work on my father's car.

42. PL: On the car, you and your sister?

42. TS: On a Sunday! On a Sunday you will find us full of oils (laughter). My father brought us up as if we were Tomboys. But there is one thing I liked about him, we will never go hungry. In actual fact, every Friday, when he comes back from work, he will come back with a hamper of veggies, with a hamper of different kinds of meat. And once he opens the fridge and finds that the meat from last week that he bought was still there, he will take the new one that he's coming with, and distribute it around the neighbours.

So the neighbours would know. So what we'll do, after my mother has tipped us, and say, when its Friday Morning, or when you come back from school, make sure that you take all the meat out, so that he will find the fridge with maybe one packet. Because he said before we go to school in the morning, we have to have a full meal, pap and meat, when we come back from school, pap and meat and supper before we go to sleep, we had to have pap and meat. So we couldn't.

43.PL: So, the chores that you did with your siblings except…were they specific ones that specific children did, or how did the children do the chores? Let's say when it came to the house?

43. TS: Actually in the house it was me and my sister, the other would be washing dishes, like S'phiwe and the young one, they know they will be fighting dishes, but the fight will end there. Sometimes

me and my sister would assist each other with the cooking. Sometimes I would cook porridge that is not cooked, but my sister would be training me and my mother would also be training me, you know.

44. PL: And your older brother?

44.TS: Or that one, he will always be out playing dice, smoking dagga, he grew up very… I don't know..

45. PL: Did you think this was fair? How the chores were divided amongst you at the house?

45. TS: Actually we didn't mind. Sometimes when they were both fighting, one would say, 'I washed the dishes' and the other would say, 'no, they were washed by me.' I'll stand up and my sister, and the one would wash and the other would dry (the dishes) and put them in the cupboard.

46. PL: And with the car fixing? Did you like that or did you dislike it?

46. TS: We disliked it but we had no choice. It's either you do you or you sleep outside.

47. PL: So your brother Sphiwe was also one of the child mechanics…so how were you disciplined at home?

47. TS: Hmmmm…(pause), that is a good one. (Laughter) My mother could beat you with anything, my mother was a…she had a short temper. If you made her angry, whatever she had in her hand, she would throw at you. My father rarely beat us. In fact, he would even fight when they beat us. He would use a sjambok. We have sjambok marks..

48. PL: So, who was more strict, your mother or your father?

48. TS: My mother.

49. PL: Can you remember some of the things, maybe one, that you were disciplined for?

49. TS: I remember once, when I was starting my puberty, I had this boy who was asking me out and I also loved the boy. I had been asked to make tea for the priests, this was round about 6pm in winter and it was dark. We were using tea pots. So I took the tea pot outside and I put it next to the drain and off I went. I forgot the time, and when I came back, I was in trouble.

50. PL: And how old were you at that time?

50. TS: It was the last time. I think I was fourteen going on fifteen.

51. PL: It was the last time?

51. TS: It was the last time my mother beat me up. If it was the now times, maybe she would have been rotting in jail. She was beating me up with a sjambok, it was causing raw, open wounds.

52. PL: How were the relations between your parents?

52. TS: Oh, it was okay.

53. PL: And you and your parents?

53. TS: It was fine actually. I was more closer to my father than my mother. But because my father is now late, I'm now closer to my mother.

54. PL: And between you and your siblings?

54. TS: We are still together.

55. PL: And at that time?

55. TS: Actually we were doing everything together. When we go to the shops, we would go all three of us or four of us. Sometimes you'll find us sitting on the bed talking. If we are not inside the house, we will be out, sitting on top of the rubbish bin outside, chatting. So close and united. Even now.

56. PL: So, with your extended family who was around, were there any special roles assigned to your aunts or uncles for guidance?

56. TS: No, I did not know about that.

SENSES OF SELF: FAMILY LIFE

57. PL: How do you remember being described by your parents then?

57. TS: I was always described as a person who was very stubborn, who also liked to fight.

58. PL: Did you agree with this then?

58. TS: Yes I did.

59. PL: Do you agree with this now?

59. TS: Yes.

60. PL: How do you remember being described by your siblings then?

60. TS: Then? To them, I was this sister who would always advise, advise them no matter how I young I was. Always helpful, but you dare not annoy me. You'll see the true colours. I will fight like a wounded lion. I don't care if you are a first born, second born, or uncle or whatever, I'll fight anyone who did a wrong to me. Even know, because even now, their brothers and sisters even their children, if they want anything or need anything, they will bring them to me.

61. PL: How did you see yourself? Or how would you describe yourself then?

61. TS: I would describe myself as someone who was extroverted, who loved to talk, and liking to fight.

Family Activities

62. PL: Now what about family activities, what activities did you do together as a family?

62. TS: It was Christmas, we'll all go together to KZN,(..unclear..) family, where my father would slaughter two sheeps and make a family feast. It was a family together. All my uncles my aunts, their children, their husbands, would all converge to my father's place, (..unclear), we'll be there, blowing crickets (fireworks) doing everything together as a family.

63. PL: And then here in Joburg, what did you do together as a family? Where there any activities that you did together as a family?

63. TS: Except going to church, there was nothing.

64. PL: Were there activities only done by your dad or by your mom?

64.TS: No.

65. PL: What did you do on week nights at home?

65. TS: We would watch TV. Actually we were the first house Emndeni to have TV. By then it was still the black and whites. All the kids from the streets, our friends, would come to watch TV and on the weekends, it was soccer you know, I liked Kaizer Chiefs so much. That's when I was still growing up. We'd be watching soccer. So I remember one day when chiefs was going to play Pirates, when my mother came back home from work, she found us sitting with my father, with my brother there with his alcohol and his dagga. She then found this washing that we had hidden away and we had to go and do the washing. We went to my father and asked him for R50. He asked us for what, and we told him that we wanted to buy wine. What is this wine…what is the name of this wine that is well known? Castello…we went to buy Castello to drink it so we could have the courage to tell my mother where to get off.

66. PL: How old were you then?

66.TS: 16. (Laughter), we drank the alcohol and it was me, my sister and the last born, the three of us. Mind you, my mother found us sleeping next to the bath, the washing was still there, we didn't tell her where to get off, instead, we had splitting headaches.

67.PL: So you had never drank before?

67.TS: That was the first time...and the last. (Laughter), and we understood that if you drink you can tell a person where to get off, so we wanted to tell my mother that we were tired of her.

68. PL: So how did your family, compare to other families and houses, in the neighbourhood, 6. where you richer, where you poorer?

68. TS: No, we were the same standard.

69. PL: On big days, like you've spoken about Christmas, what did you do on holidays during the year?

69. TS: We stayed at home or went to KZN.

RELIGION/CULTURAL PRACTICES

70. PL: Just briefly, your religious practices and your cultural practices?

70. TS: We were mixing religion and tradition when we were growing up. My mother liked Izinyanga (traditional healers) too much. We were taken to be marked (as you can see) but on Sunday we would go to the Zion, where my father was a priest. Up until, we were so tired of Izinyanga. One time, my mother arranged with a certain Inyanga to come to our house because she was saying that we are talking in our sleep.

But we told her that you must realise that Emndeni is built over the graves of white people so it's to be expected that their ghosts would bother us. She said that it was a tokoloshe. She went to an Inyanga (traditional healer) and we were going to get traditional markings again, and it's painful the black stuff they use with the razor. So we called my father at work and we asked him when he

coming back home. He was on his way to Namibia that day, and we told him to please go the next day and come back home because things were not going alright as there was an Inyanga coming to the house.

For sure my father asked for permission from his bosses to come home and he came back. My father came back when the Inyanga was busy with the process already, having burnt his stuff there and we were standing there in our panties and the boys were wearing their underpants. And when he came we just said, thanks God. He came in and asked the man who he was. The Inyanga told me that he was called to mark the children traditionally because they are not sleeping because of a tokoloshe that's bothering them. My father told him to take his things and go. My father loved Afrikaans, and he would say, "die tokie as ek mos." He would say my children are tired of being marked because there is a Tokoloshe in the house. It must mean that the Tokoloshe is me. Please leave my house… that is when we were saved.

71. PL: So what about church – Zion?

71. TS: It was compulsory.

72. PL: So how did you feel about going to church being compulsory every Sunday?

72. TS: Actually, I used to enjoy the music because at the Zion Church they could sing. So for me it was not that it bored me, because I loved singing.

73. PL: Did your religious practices change, from then?

73 TS: Yes, they definitely changed. Now I'm a born-again. From Zion to a born-again. But a fake born-again (laughing), still very human still doing wrong thing sometimes.

74. PL: Did you have any traditional practices that you practised at home?

74. TS: Yes, we did. At home we didn't really have a cultural practice, but during thanksgiving, when we would remember our grandfather, or something like that.

75. PL: Okay, but, did you do something specific like imbeleko?

75. TS: No, at home we didn't have them. But at my children's father's home they did so I had to take them for Imbeleko. But I'm not practicing it.

76. PL: So you didn't have to. So what about…

76. TS: Isiphandla? (goat skin bracelet) No.

77. PL: So it was quiet light then? The traditional part. And, community, were you part of the community, before your political activities, were you part of the community programmes for teenagers?

77. TS: Yes, I was singing there in the Zion choir, clap and tap music.

78. PL: So, your choir singing, you were doing it in High School, at the Zion church when growing up?

78. TS: Actually, I was using it as a place of safety. So that when anyone can suspect anything, they will say, but this one, is singing for the choir, this one is working, this one goes to church. So I didn't open any loop holes were the system could suspect.

EDUCATION

79. PL: What were the names of the Primary schools that you attended, and what years were you there?

79. TS: I started kwa-Gijima in 1969, then I moved to Bantu Vukani in 1972, in 1973 I was in Zibambele in 1974 I was at Sikhulani Primary.

80. PL: What were your earliest school day memories?

80. TS: They are varied, but it was when we were writing with a slate, so every day I brought the slate and actually I would be whipped by my grandmother for breaking the slate. You remember when you break the slate, you only left with this piece, when the one teacher comes you write (a.e.i.o.u) and when the next teacher comes you write ma.me.mi.mo.mu. (laughter), but it was good because you writing it on the slate but it stays in your head. Unlike now when you write with a book and you have to remind yourself what you have written. With a slate, a.e.i.o.u, wipe, ma.me,mi.mo.mu, wipe, one plus one, wipe. So you had to memorise that.

81. PL: How did you get to school?

81. TS: By walking.

82. PL: Did you like going to Primary School?

82. TS: Yes, we are all kids by then, making noise and annoying our teachers

83. PL: Did you have a favourite subject and why?

83. TS: Actually my favourite subjects were biology and Afrikaans.

84. PL: In Primary? Why were these your favourites?

84. TS: In lower Primary or higher Primary? By then it was a lower Primary and higher Primary.

85. PL: Were the subjects different?

85. TS: Yes.

86. PL: Okay, what were your favourite subjects in lower Primary?

86. TS: In lower Primary it was Maths.

87. PL: Why?

88. TS: Because I would like to count. Add, divide, one plus one, you know when we were put in a group and we say, ‘one plus one’ makes two, ‘two plus two’ makes four.

88. PL: Okay, and your least favourite subjects in lower Primary?

89. TS: I did not have any.

90. PL: And then in Higher Primary, what was your favourite subjects?

90. TS: It was Social Science.

91. PL: Why?

91. TS: Because it was talking about nature, and humans, the different parts of a human body, and things like that.

92. PL: And your least favourite subject?

92. TS: My least was Afrikaans.

93. PL: Why?

93. TS: There was this teacher, we even called her 'probeer'. Whenever she comes, she would shout, 'Thandi, probeer, Ek will jou help'. Now I called her Probeer.

94. PL: Now, did you have favourite teacher in lower and higher Primary?

94. TS: Oh, a lot. I had Ma-Nkabinde, I had the principal, because whatever they were eating, they were giving to me (laughter) it was also because I was perceived as this brilliant one. Sometimes ma-Nkabinde would say, 'write on the board for them' at Primary. That to me, they were making me to feel superior than the others. So those were my favourites.

95. PL: Did you play any sports?

95. TS: Yes, I was in athletics as well as a basketball player then in Primary before it was changed into netball.

96. PL: Okay, were you good?

96. TS: Yes, I was very good. In high school I was a captain for four following years.

97. PL: But you started in Primary?

97. TS: Yes, I started in Primary.

98. PL: Did you have a lot of friends?

98. TS: I had lots and lots of friends, but the problem was that I didn't have lots of friends that were girls. It was boys.

99. PL: This is in Primary, both Lower and Higher?

99. TS: In Primary all the way to High School.

100. PL: Okay,who were your good friends in Primary?

100. TS: It was Zanele, Patience because we started in Lower Primary right up until Higher Primary, then we dispersed. I did 1976 with the uprising, others were taken to KZN. But it was Zanele, Patience, Christina and the five boys. Nelson, Bheki, Jabu, the one that we were very close with, George, actually people were saying we were dating, George and Thulani.

101. PL: You were one big crew?

101. TS: One big crew, the crew that was very naughty.

102. PL: Do you remember the types you wanted to have when you were grown up, in Primary?

102. TS: I was thinking of becoming a nurse.

103. PL: What kind of things do you remember doing with your friends after school?

103. TS: We would come back to polish our shoes together, we used to accompany each other to go and buy sugar, you remember there was the tiki (2 and a half cent) sugar, we used to also have this style of maize meal sack, there was also this style that those from Emndeni could not enter Zola, and the shop was in Zola, there was no shop in Emndeni so we would all group ourselves, to accompany one person who was going to buy sugar of 2 and a half cents.

104. PL: Do you remember any music from that time? Any Favourite songs or dances?

104. TS: Hmmmm…at that time it was…(singing) 'No Woman No cry'..who used to sing that song,?

105. PL: Bob Marley.

105. TS: Yes, and there was Percy Sledge.

106. PL: Do you remember any dances, that you guys were doing as young kids?

106. TS: We used to do Bump Jive, we used to do 'Sikiza"!

107. PL: Did you have any role models or hero's when you were a child? This time when

107. TS: No.

108. PL: Do you have any memories about having favourite clothes, this time when you were in Primary, was there anything that you can remember as being your favourite?

108. TS: No.

109. PL: Do you remember how teachers described you in Primary school?

109. TS: No. Because I was all over. I remember in high school when I was called, "Sunlight" you know Sunlight is pure. They used to call me 'all over', because you'll find me in music, athletics, Netball, debate, in the classroom I was perfect with my work so, every year when I was in high school in KZN, in Mbali high school there were awards.

110. PL: We coming to High School now. Where did you go High School?

110. TS: Ngali High School in KZN.

111. PL: Why did you go there?

111. TS: It was after the 1976 Uprisings, there was no school in Soweto so we had to be taken there.

112. PL: So this was you and all of your siblings?

112. TS: Yes.

113. PL: So you went to Ngaleni?

113. TS: Ngali High school.

114. PL: Which part of KZN was this?

114. TS: It was in Nqhuthu.

115. PL: Memories of High School that come to you now?

115. TS: Memories of High School?. Its when we won a music competition, we were singing we won zone, regional and even national and we ended up in Pietermaritzburg and we took the final trophy with that song. Yes that's the memory and the principal used to say, 'when I die, sing this song for me' and that's what actually happened.

116. PL: And how did you get to school at this time?

116. TS: We were walking 10 Km, 20 Km, a day.

117. PL: Did you have favourite subjects at High School?

117. TS: Yes, it was Agriculture and Biology.

118. PL: Why?

118. TS: Agriculture because it was about the soil and biology because it was about understanding the humans, the animals and all that. But history, I'm having a lot of arguments when I'm told about history and Jan Van Riebeeck.

119. PL: Which one was your least favourite?

119. TS: My least favourite was Maths.

120. PL: Why?

120. TS: Because I hated the teacher.

121. PL: How did you perform in Maths?

121.TS: Bad, very bad!

122. PL: Did you have any favourite teachers, and why?

122. TS: My favourite teacher was Sir Vilakazi. He was teaching me History. He was my favourite because he used to cry when I used to argue with him about Jan van Riebeeck. So I liked that one (laughter), to be in power.

123. PL: Did you have a lot of friends?

123. TS: I had a lot of friends, I can't even remember their names. There was Dennis (…unclear..), Eunice, I had a lot of friends.

124. PL: And sports?

124. TS: Yes I was a captain for netball for four years. I was doing athletics – 100 meters, r relay, the long jump. Also I was in the debating team, also in music, in the choir.

125. PL: Do you remember the kind of jobs you wanted to do at this stage?

125. TS: I was still wanting to do nursing. To me, nursing was actually a passion. I was actually obsessed with the white dresses and the white caps.

126. PL: Do you remember the music that you were listening to, favourite music and bands?

126. TS: We were listening to Ladysmith Black Mambazo, abo Soul Brothers, Mahlathini and the Mahotella queens.

127. PL: Do you remember any dances you did back then?

127. TS: No.

128. PL: Clothes, trends, were you into clothes or fashion?

128. TS: No.

129. PL: And what kind of things did you guys do, the teenagers after school?

129. TS: Go to the river and fetch water, prepare supper, do your homework.

130. PL: What kind of social or peer pressure do you remember as a girl? As a teenager, in High School?

130. TS: I can't remember that one because I grew up as a tomboy. I always associated myself with boys and I would talk the boys language, so I wouldn't know what pressure girls were under because it was never my thing.

131. PL: So, was there anything you remember you were not allowed to do as a girl?

131. TS: Yes, as a girl, you were not allowed to sit on the chair, you have to sit on the floor.

132. PL: Where is this? At home or anywhere?

132. TS: At home. As a girl you were not allowed to cook when you were menstruating. As a girl you were not allowed to eat eggs.

123. PL: As in never?

133. TS: Yes

134. PL: Why?

134. TS: They said eggs would make you infertile. And there were also different types of meat that you were not allowed to eat. For instance, if a girl is pregnant and there was a ceremony to come and pay damages to the girl's family, you are not supposed to eat that meat. There were lots of things that girls were not supposed to do.

135. PL: Did you think this was fair or not?

135. TS: It was not fair.

136. PL: Why?

136. TS: It was not fair because we were denied eggs, also there is also nothing wrong with me cooking while I'm menstruating. Also, that meat that they said we shouldn't eat, but they say don't say who is washing it? It's the girls, so we were the ones who should have been eating that meat. But in hindsight I think it was teaching you to be responsible. Teaching you how a lady must conduct herself. So there would be times when we would go to the elderly ladies, who would teach you about being a lady, what you should do. If you sleep with a man what should you do, what you should and shouldn't wear and maybe if we still held on to those teachings, there wouldn't be such a spread of HIV like there is today.

137. PL: Do you remember any South African events that were taking place outside of your familiar surroundings? Just any big events?

137. TS: No.

138. PL: What about 1976, the reason you were taken to KZN?

138.TS: Oh, you talking about that? I remember 1976, I was at Phulani higher Primary and on that day, we were writing the paper mathematics and history, (Wiskunde and Geskidenis). When we were sitting at our desks, the high school boys from Naledi high were…

139. PL: So you were already studying in Afrikaans?

139. TS: Yes. Everything was done in Afrikaans. Maths was Wiskunde, and History was Geskiedenis, so everything was in Afrikaans.

140. PL: Do you remember when this change happened?

140. TS: I think it was from '73 or '74, that is when we find in Higher Primary, things are done in Afrikaans.

141. PL: How was it like?

141. TS: We were still young, and we didn't understand it.

142. PL: What was the medium of instruction before?

142. TS: It was Zulu.

143. PL: So you were saying, in '76…in the class?

143. TS: We were writing Geskiedenis and we heard outside, 'black power, black power' and we saw this group of boys coming into the class, and they took the question papers and tear them apart and they said, 'go home'. As we got out, we were running, there was this mark (presumably showing) from a rubber bullet, I didn't even know that I had been hit by a rubber bullet. I went home, there was smoke, there was gunfire, my concern was my mother because she was using the train. I was worried about how she was going to come back home. She did eventually get home around 1am, even then, being escorted by police because they could not enter Soweto.

143. PL: So you were in higher Primary in '76?

144. TS: Yes.

145. PL: What exposure had you had by then, was that that was your first exposure to politics.?

145. TS: Í didn't know what was happening, we just heard, "black Power", Hector is shot, I didn't know what is happening. I was enjoying not to go to school.

SENSES OF SELF

146. PL: So, when you went to KZN, do you remember how you were described by your teachers? Who called you Sunlight 'all over'

146. TS: It was my High School teachers. Because you will find me all over. If there has been a naughty group and the pupils are being beaten up, Thandi is there. School choir, Thandi is there, actually, I was doing everything. And cutting the tunics. That side in KZN, they wore long tunics so on Fridays I had to ask them, to do the mending. (laughter)

147. PL: How do you remember your friends describing you in High School?

147. TS: They used to call me someone who is forward.

148. PL: And how did you describe yourself?

148. TS: Well, I could see myself that I was forward.

149. PL: And how would you describe yourself now?

149. TS: Actually I miss High School, because the Thandi that I am now, I am very soft.

150. PL: So, how old were you when you left school, why did you leave and what did you do next?

WORK

150. TS: I left actually in matric, 1982, I left because I was pregnant with my first born. I came back to Johannesburg. In 1983 I joined Soyco, the Soweto Youth Congress, In Emndeni I was the secretary, from '83 – '85. I was now doing woman political, woman emancipation, and forming the spirits committee, and by now…

151. PL: Wait, lets jump back, because suddenly now, you're an activist. Let' go back to 1982, you were pregnant. What was that like?

151. TS: Yes, I was. Actually, I became politically involved when I was still at high school in KZN, when I was…in High School, they introduced in 1978, they introduced a subject which was called, 'Inkhatha yenkululeko yesizwe' (the Inkhatha freedom of the nation) were we going to be taught about what is IFP and what does it stand for. So they had to introduce it by force at school. You'll find that from our school, the one I was attending, there were lot of us from Thokoza, Katlehong, Soweto, Tembisa, Meadowlands, who were moved there, so we re-grouped there.

So we were like, what is this? what are we going to get, are we going to write it in the exams? So, the fatal mistake that I made in 1979, because I was forward and I outspoken, there was a high-school meeting, where Musa Zondi had come to talk to us. He appointed me a speaker, I would have to go to Ulundi, collect information and bring it and I told him where to get off. That is when I become…because the older boys who were doing matric, they would come to me and say hey, you are a Sowetan, they used to call us 'Black Power' and they would say, you are a Black Power, so how can you go to IFP?

This thing was conflicting because this side, when they report back to Gauteng, they would say, let her go, so that she can collect the information and feed it back to us, the ANC will understand the movements of Inkhatha. That's when I learnt that Gatsha actually was an ANC member. He was deployed to form a political party, that will be a substitute of the ANC in exile. That is when I became politically aware. That is when I would also call my grandmother and I would ask her about the meetings. I would ask her, grandma, the time you were having meetings, what was going on? She would say they you were still young, but I could still remember. So when I came back pregnant, I was already involved. So in 1984 I had to be removed from being a secretary because I had to go to Zambia to go and train as a special operative. The special operatives, where the people who were carrying ammunition into the country, and also looking for safe bases for trained cadres. If they say we are putting ten in KZN, I have to be in KZN and befriend… you see…we knew how we did it.

152. PL: So, how long were you in Zambia?

152. TS: In Zambia it was crash-courses. You would go in for six months and come back. They didn't want to keep us there for long because they didn't want people to suspect that something was going on. We'll go for Six months in Zambia, then Botswana. You'll find that they'll tell you that Cadre, next camp is in Botswana, you will stay there for three months and come back. When you come back, you come back with ammunition for the people that you have to deploy.

153. PL: So, what kind of training did you get?

153. TS: We were trained, how to open a sector, if you find that you are cornered because you don't have to disclose the information, so, it's either you submit or you fight. If you submit you are arrested and you have to die with the information. We were trained in Makarov, how to dissemble and assemble it, hand-grenade, how does it work, RPT 7, you name them.

154. PL: So, you'd come in and out – around '84…

154. TS: '84, '85. In 1986, we had to look for soft targets.

155. PL: What's a soft target?

155. TS: A soft target would be a place that if we hit it, people like De Klerk or Botha would hear about it – public places like Vander Bijl Square – now Ghandi Square, or Sasol.

156. PL: So, what does soft target mean, like it doesn't matter who gets killed or what does it mean?

156. TS: Yes.

157. PL: People, civilians?

157. TS: Yes. Well if you are caught in cross-fire than you are caught in cross fire. But we were looking for targets where we know there are no blacks. Like Ghandi Square now, Van der Bijl, the buses that were there, were for the whites. So we know those are white kids. They are killing our kids in the townships, so we have to hit hard.

158. PL: So, at this time, who was looking after your child?

158. TS: It was my sister (Thoko) because my younger sister and my younger brother they were both out in exile. In fact they left in 1984.

159. PL: So how many of you became politicized amongst your siblings?

159. TS: The three of us.

160. PL: Same Party?

160. TS: Yes, same party.

161. PL: And what did your parents say about this?

161. TS: They were totally against it, because my father would say, 'you can never beat the Boers". Even Mandela couldn't beat the Boers,'and I would always say to my father, watch this space. My father became politically aware in 1988 when I was arrested. The way the Boers harassed them in the house shoving them and pushing them, insulting them, and all that that is when he said, you know what…

162. PL: So, during this time, '82 you came back, during 83-86, were you working or were you working and doing this stuff in the movement?

162. TS: In the ANC they had a strategy. They would look for a job for you, and place you in a certain company. I was working at Embassy Leather Luggage where my sister was working, that was my first job, where we were doing handbags.

163. PL: So were you really going to work? Were you a worker?

163. TS: I was not a worker per say.. I was undercover. People would think that I'm at work, but I'd be on a mission. It was a sort of a cover. Mr Swartz also understand what was happening because Mr. Swartz was also supporting us.

164. PL: Oh, I see. Did you get paid?

164. TS: Yes I was getting paid for loafing around (laughter)

165. PL: So what happened to your wages? Did you keep it?

165. TS: It was for me. Actually it was not a lot of money, because it was…how much was it a week? It was R65 by then. So what do you do with R65? (laughter)

166. PL: So you just used your money for you? Did you join any unions?

166. TS: No. I couldn't, because of my work.

167. PL: What was your free time like?

167. TS: Do I remember having any free time? I don't remember. Because I was always on a mission here, a DLB there (a death letter bomb), information there, fetching ammunition there, deploying, so I was like, all over.

MARRIAGE/PARTNERS/CHILDREN

168. PL: And partners? Did you have any partners, boyfriends around '86?

168. TS: No, I had two kids by then, you see in 1982 when I was in high school I was pregnant with my first child, and then in 1984, by the time I took my first born for the ceremony of Imbeleko, my

second born came in. So I left my kids when they were very young.

169. PL: So who did you leave your children with?

169. TS: My sister and my mother, they were taking them to crèche, bringing them back because I couldn't stay.

170. PL: So, how many children did you have?

170. TS: I have two.

171. PL Or, just the two?

171. TS: Yes, I have two.

172. PL: So, your mother and your sister, were raising them for you?

172. TS: And my father.

173. PL: When did you come to being with your children for the first time?

173. TS: Oooh, first time being with my children? It was after 1994.

174. PL: I know you have a daughter, what are your children's names and what are their sexes?

174. TS: A daughter is a first born, Mbali. And the second is Ayanda, a son.

175. PL: And how old are they now?

175. TS: Mbali is 29 and Ayanda is 27.

176. PL: And were you with the partners, the fathers of these…

176. TS: No, he's an IFP member…

177. PL: Mbali's father…

177. TS: No, he is the father of both children.

178. PL: So, what do you mean he is an IFP member?

178. TS: I got him in Natal, so he was IFP. He remained an IFP member. You remember in Thokoza, in the '90's when it was hot. He phoned me in the middle of the night and told me that there is a Fridge that he had and he wanted to bring it for me and knowing that someone had to get killed for him to get killed, I told him that I'm coming over to Thokoza.

179. PL: So he was your boyfriend then?

179. TS: Yes.

180. PL: But you met him but he was already in a different political party?

180. TS: I met him in school, we grew up together, you see when you are at school, every child is an IFP

181. PL: So, did you continue after you had Ayanda?

181. TS: By then I was too deep into politics. I had to tell him to go to hell and I will raise my kids.

182. PL: And was he involved in any way with the children's support?

182. TS: No, he thought he was punishing me.

EARLY MEMORIES OF APARTHEID

183. PL: Your experiences of apartheid, what were your first experiences of coming up against apartheid? If you can remember..

183. TS: My first experience is when I was….(long thinking pause)…my first experience is when (…long thinking group..) I think it was when we were arrested as a group, I think it was in 1985. We were from watching Mbogeni Ngema's show Sarafina, and we were in a car. Little did we know that some of us had pamphlets, so we were taken.

184. PL: So what year was this? Sarafina? Where did you watch it?

184. TS: At the Market Theatre. So that is when I realised the brutality of Apartheid, the way we were treated, so we were still you know teenager, to us it was still excitement but that is when I felt that when the white man is holding power, they can do as they please. The other when it's when.. Do you remember the Black Jacks?

185. PL: Black Jacks?

185. TS: There were these police, specially trained police, who during the rent boycott, were specially trained, also, they were removing people who the 72 hour stamp of saying out of Johannesburg because you are from KZN, you are from… so there was this uncle of mine who was coming from Swaziland, my father's brother, and he did not have a permit to be in Johannesburg, did not ask for a permit. And when the black jacks came and raided the house, he was manhandled and taken away and deported back to Swaziland. So, I was questioning my father, why is he not allowed? What is the difference between KZN and… that is when I realised, that we are actually, oppressed.

186. PL: So, do you remember anyone who told you about apartheid, or did your parents explain the situation? How did they explain?

186.TS: Actually my father would sometimes talk about it. The person who would tell us all about it is my father, He would sometimes say how they were made to carry Dom passes they had to have a work permit and a residential permit, wherever they were staying. If you don't have these things you were deported back to KZN or Eastern Cape or where ever you came from. So there were like places a black person could not enter, like a restaurant, there were streets where they were not allowed to walk in, they were for whites only, even the telephone booths. So my father would always relate those stories to us, that during those years, it was very difficult for them. You are found at 8:30 at night, you are not supposed to be on the streets.

187. PL: Now, when you were in Durban, growing up with your grandmother, when you went to the beach alone, you said there was a black beach and a white beach. Do you remember the first time you were told about the sides and what to avoid?

187. TS: I didn't know what was happening I was very young. All I know is that you would get to the gate and you would be told, go that side, and others would go this side. I didn't understand what was happening.

EXPOSURE TO POLITICAL ACTIVISM

188. PL: When and how did you first get exposed to politics?

188. TS: When I was exposed to politics it was in 76, during the Soweto uprising, it was curiosity to know what was happening. Until in 1977when my father explained to us, that we are all going to KZN because there is no learning here. So I'm taking you to KZN to go and finish your studies. And when we went to KZN, the treatment that we received in KZN, they were calling us, "the children of Black Power", they are here to just mess things up. I remember going with my father to four different schools and at each school, they would say they don't take children from Soweto because they were just going to mess things up…until my uncle came and spoke on our behalf, and that's how we got accepted into the school, otherwise the schools would say we are the Black Power children and we were just going to mess things up.

189. PL: Now, at the time, when you were there, in KZN, you were only exposed to this IFP drive that you described earlier.

189. TS: It was in 1979, I was in high school and that's when they wanted to introduce actually, a lesson about IFP. And we had these older boys, who were from Katlehong, and the older boys would say, how are we going to benefit from knowing what is IFP?

190. PL: So for you, was this a new way of thinking because, you say it was the older boys…what?

190. TS: For me it was…I was aware of, for the mere fact that I'm from Soweto and the only language I know was DM… UDF, ANC, Umkhontho weSizwe, those were the familiar names, and we would listen to radio Freedom sometimes we'll be grouping in one place and listening to radio freedom you know and you'll be hearing these voices and the AK, but by then, my mind couldn't grasp actually what was happening you know. Up until the day you know, when I was questioned by other students from Soweto, in Natal who said to me, don't go to Ulundi, don't be brainwashed, then I wanted to know more, then that's when I started to get a political education. So when I came back, that is when I became so clear.

191. PL: When you came back from?

192. TS: From KZN in 1982.

193. PL: When you came back to Johannesburg?

193. TS: Yes.

194. PL: Okay, so when you came back, who was the person, or who were the people who exposed to you to deeper political understanding?

194. TS: It was Soyco, because I was a member of the Soweto Youth Congress.

195. PL: Why were you a member of that?

195. TS: Actually, I was recruited by a friend of mine, who said, we have to fight Apartheid by all means. And I wanted to understand and he said the only way was to form street committes, have the Soweto Youth Congress, the students had COSAS, also, travelling with a train, you know in a train they will disguise as if it's a church, then they will come these unionists, and they would form a line, and then you will listen, and get more information and get more interested to say, I want to play a part.

196. PL: So, the Soweto Youth Congress was for anybody who was out of school, up to what age?

196. TS: Up to, actually we have older people who were coming to assist us, but it was up to the age of 40.

197. PL: So then you joined Soyco?

197.TS: Yes, I become active in Soyco in 1983.

198. PL: So is this when your political education began? So this after you came back, when you were part of Soyco?

198.TS: Yes.

199.PL: You were doing these different member of community roles so that?

199.TS: So that the information could not leak easily.

200. PL: So at home, did anybody know or nobody knew?

200. TS: About my activities? My mother knew but she didn't understand. You know the level of education of my parents..they knew that I was active in politics but they didn't understand what I was doing. The first time that my mother discovered that how advanced I am in politics, that is when she accidentally, you know these old women, under the old mattress, you remember the first mattresses were the ones that had the springs at the bottom, so under the mattress, she would have this donkey blanket that would cover the mattress and then have a door, so that the mattress would not touch the spring so that the bed would not age quickly, so I was coming back from Thokoza, after destroying the hostel in Thokoza the famous one with ammunition, and I had no chance to take the bag where it had to be hidden. So, fortunately the only place I could hide it was my mother's bed. So I took off the mattress and the blanket and I laid down the AK's, the Makarov, put the blanket and put the door and put everything back in place. But, I was slow to remove them. My mother during the weekends, she usually cleans the house. When she does the spring cleaning in her bedroom, I was not there. I left early that morning. There was another mission I had to carry out in Duduza, to distribute ammunition.

So I had to take another (…unclear..) because I couldn't take the one under my mother's bed. Because she's going to suspect. Only to find that my mother will pick up the bed, trying to do spring cleaning, moving the things around, she found the ammunition. They say she didn't say anything, she didn't shower, she just locked the bedroom and went straight to her brothers in Vosloorus and told them that, here is this child, she is trying to kill us. When I come back in the afternoon, I'm wondering why so many of my uncles cars were there, parked outside our house.

When I got inside the house my mother cried. I apologised to my uncles, my Uncles used to be able to hit, but my uncles… especially uncle Jan, the one after my mother, he said no, they must leave my niece alone. He asked me, where are they going? We took them with his car to where they had to go to, and he said, nobody is going to beat you up my niece, "Mayibuye".

201. PL: So, he was also politically active?

201. TS: Politically aware… he was aware.. Because he was in a union, he was working at Lever Brothers. So in the unions they used to educate them so he had a political awareness.

202. PL: So, after this, was there stress at home?

202. TS: No, actually there was not stress. My uncle actually explained to them the situation and everything, and that is when they become aware and they understood what role I'm playing. He even mentioned my brother and sister who were in exile.

203. PL: So they had already gone to exile, these are your younger siblings?

203. TS: Yes, in 1983.

204. PL: Where did they go?

204. TS: My sister was doing standard eight, my brother had finished matric.

205. PL: Did they go together or at different times?

205. TS: At different times. The first one to go was my brother, and the next one to go was my sister and I was the only one who knew they were gone.

206. PL: So you were here?

206. TS: Yes, I was here as well.

207. PL: So how did they become politicized?

207. TS: They were members of COSAS. Because when in 1982 I fell pregnant, they also had to come back because I was the older one and they could not stay there alone in the house that my father had built us. So my sister was at Aurora Girls and my brother was at Skanomntwana. so they were still at school. So when my brother finished matric, he went to exile. My sister did not finish matric., they went to Lusaka via Botswana

208. PL: How did you join MK?

208. TS: In 1984 I was recruited to MK, as a special Operative, that is when I became more political…

209. PL: Who recruited you?

209. TS: It's a woman, Thuli.

210. PL: That you grew up with in the neighbourhood?

210. TS: Yes.

211. PL: And, what kind of things did you do in Soyco?

211. TS: I was first the secretary, than I was (doing) a publicity, and then I was doing political education for women emancipation. The young girls and the mothers I would educate them that the woman's place is not only in the kitchen, you have to be in the forefront of the struggle.

212. PL: Where would you engage with these…

212. TS: We were using the churches, and there is a place at Emndeni which was called the Emndeni youth centre, and it had a home, an orphanage home. So Mam'Matladi would provide us with space, so those were the places were we would carry our bibles as if we are going to church, we had no pen and paper to write anything. Everything that you were told you had to remember.

213. PL: And it would be typically you and who else?

213. TS: Oh, the rest, some of them are now even in parliament, some are mayors, some are ministers, the people that we were together with.

214. PL: So you say that you were recruited in 1984 to MK, and how did your activities change?

214. TS: My activities complete changed because I had to be very secretive, very scarce to the SOYCO committee, for me not to be found in the group of people because by then, when they see a group of young people standing together, the police car would stop and you would be picked up to be questioned. So I was working on the basis of when they have a serious problem, when there is an informer, than they can only call me to come and resolve that.

215. PL: How did you explain your absence?

215. TS: It was easy, because the ANC had already deployed me in their employment, so most of my time it's consumed by work.

216. PL: I see…did you experience any backlash or pressure from family, friends or community against you being involved in activism?

216. TS: Not that I remember, no, actually, the way I did my work so smart, nobody even suspected, they were all so shocked when I was arrested, they said, not that one. (…long pause..)

217. PL: Were there many other females in the organisation, or exposure groups in your politicization, so that would be SOYCO?

217. TS: Actually the ratio was balanced. There were females and males, it was balanced, though mostly it was males, but there were a lot of women.

218. PL: And in terms of your MK, because if you were an operative, you didn't know who else was an operative?

218. TS: No, you will never know, because they were avoiding this thing of selling each other out. If I got arrested than I say, 'even Palesa was there..'

219. PL: So who was your…

219. TS: My commander?

220. PL: Yes, tell me the structure.

220. TS: My commander was Silver Ncanyiwe Itumeleng, he is now in Pretoria, working with the Mayor, he was my commander.

221. PL: So what does that mean if someone is your commander?

221. TS: Someone who is your commander is someone that trains you, gives you instructions, and you report to that person, mission accomplished, or mission failed because of one, two, three.

222. PL: So these were only one-on-one?

222. TS: Yes.

223. PL: What was that relationship like, with your commander?

223. TS: It was a work relationship, you have to report to the commander and get instructions. In ANC they usually say, 'comply and complain later'

224. PL: Did you perceive any differences in the forms of activisms and tasks between males and females?

224. TS: No, we were all equal. We were all given equal tasks.

225. PL: And how were you treated in these formations, in Soyco?

225. TS: Well I was treated normally as their equal. Because even my point of view was taken. If I'm wrong I'm wrong, if the males are wrong, we will always argue, and we'll come to the point where we'll compromise, but I'm not a compromising type you know, I end up being victorious where ever I go.

226. PL: Why is that?

226. TS: Because I stood my ground. If I believe that something is right its right. And you are not going to change me.

227. PL: So, did you have a sense of voice, of being listened to and respected equally for your contributions?

227. TS: Yes.

228. PL: Why?

228. TS: Because some of the suggestions or some of the things that I would suggest that we can do one, two, three to resolve this problem, they were done, and they will never be questioned, to say why because you are woman. No, we actually had a workshop in the night, of saying you are all equal and we are all going to respect each other. So we were doing all our things under the respectful manner.

(*From 1984 when she was recruited into MK already as member of Soyco*)

229. PL: You say that you were recruited already in1984 to MK, how did your activities change?

229. TS: Well, automatically the activities change because in Soyco we had to be in the meetings all the time, we were running the street committees and everything. But once you are recruited into the MK now it changes that you'd need not to be seen too involved in the things in the township so that you can easily be exposed, because you cannot trust anyone. So you have to be secretive, number one. Number two, you have to play it safe, be there but choose which meetings you attend so that you are not easily caught up because once you are caught up you might be saying whose my commander, whose training me, whose doing whatever. So they change automatically, you

don't become too involved in the township street committees and the meetings of the youth and all that.

230.PL: So Soyco was aligned to what, politically?

230. TS: To ANC, it's Soweto Youth Congress that was aligned to the ANC. So they were looking at the issues like, it was Soyco and COSAS, (Congress of South African Students) those who are from school from being COSAS,

231. PL: But then how did you explain to the Soyco members that you were now going to be scarce?

231. TS: No, it doesn't create a question mark because by then we know how many people are becoming targets the most..the active people, so I was one of the active people, who sometimes will be told even if you are a Soyco member to say :now comrade you have to lie low, because you are being targeted . You lie low you come up, so it wasn't a problem because they know that it might happen that the police are on the alert.

232. PL: So this 84? You were going in and out of the country? For the crash courses you said and then you had to choose soft targets and set up sectors. What is a sector?

232. TS: A sector it's a… people who are also recruited by the MK, you'd be given names of the people. A sector will be where you sit and plan to say which one, which one we are going to target. We usually not say it's a target but we will also say which playing field that we are going to be playing our soccer match in so that others could not understand.

233. PL: Oh, I see, in that time with the sectors what was the gender balance? Because that is the only time that you'd come together and see one another as sector members.

233. TS: Gender in the sector was a… you wouldn't have too much because we as females were sometimes perceived as the weak, you know they said the police can slap you with a one clap and you'd divulge all the information. So in your sector you look for the people who think…. they can be able to stomach. So mostly in the meetings you'd find that female and males are in majority, mostly females because they were the people who were feeling the pain of being evicted in the houses. The pressure of looking after kids whilst the husband basemoyeni (are disappeared) or in hiding and all that . So that is where we get a chance to group maybe under as if maybe we are doing a prayer, then we'll talk politics. You know there so many methods that we were using so that the system could not pick up that (makes hand gesture)

224. PL: So a sector is something that was organised by MK members amongst non-MK people? Just like public just to politisize?

224. TS: Yes, and to give feedback what is happening, what is the way forward? Conscientise them actually to spearhead forward.

DETENTION

225. PL: When did thing start changing perhaps because you could see that you were being targeted because your detention came a few years after your recruitment

225. TS: Well there I can say it was a……. silly mistake, let me say, but not on my part, On the part of two of my comrades . we were working together. Then you know after the mission you are told by your commander to say: "lie low, visit KZN". Or if we see that the tension is too much then we'll

be sent out the country. So usually the ANC will give you a large sum of money, to go and buy yourself whatever clothes or whatever so that you can go out. These two people were supposed to go out, after a mission, but excited after seeing a lot of money and all that they went roaming around in in town, and they were spotted by one of the askaris. So they couldn't take the torture….eh… one take out another and another until we were all pointed out, you know , all the people in the sector.

226. PL: What year was this?

226. TS: In 1988

227. PL: So you didn't have any idea that this had happened to them?

227. TS: No, er I did, we did get the information that er, Sipho and Professor are arrested, they were caught at Park Station by, Professor was identified by one of the askaris that he was training with in Angola. So they were taken both, and then….they were tortured. Then I was told to go out "Thandi, they might point you out so go out." So I went and stay in KZN for …3 months. I got bored and it though maybe the, the the police are no longer looking for that, you know. I came back, it was on a Wednesday……..(Long Pause) On Thursday round about 8 at night, I told my mother to say "You know what Mum," you know a trained person can have a sixth sense. I said to my mother "Uh huh, I've got this strong feeling the police are coming" Then my mother said " Ha eh. Ngcono ubaleke uye eWhite City kabo Bab'Mcane wakho (It's better that you run away to your uncle in White City) I said "Bazoni trapa" Nizokhulma iqiniso (They are going to beat you, you will speak the truth", you see? So its better if bathola mina(they find me), Mina, I know what to do and what to say. And surely my mother was begging me to go but I didn't want, because I was afraid of my two kids, my sisters kids, and er…..my mother . My father was a person who travels a lot, he was a truck driver, so during the week we were with my mother. (long pause) Round about 1 am they came and I told my mother that "I told you that they are coming". I tried all means to evade them so that I can run away again, but I couldn't because the person who was pointing us out was in their car. So they came…hippos, casspirs, vans.. you know it was like they are coming to pick Mandela up.

When we out as family, because the first thing the white policeman who Brood van Heerden, he could speak seTswana and Zulu. So the other one, I have forgotten his surname, it was an old man, when he came in he said "Wie is Tyanchi?" Tyanchi he couldn't spell Thandi, Tyanchi. Then I had to change my name and say I am Zodwa. …..And mind you by the time they came I said….let them take me, if I can manage to evade them with the name, then I'll survive. In the house, in the house (yard), there was an old truck of my father's..we had had limpet mines, all kind of ammunition in boxes, those were supposed to be distributed…….And in my mother's bedroom under the bed there were AK's, all ammunition, because I was special operative. …Then they couldn't get who actually is Thandi because there is Zodwa, there is Thoko, no they cant find, mind you my younger brother and sister they were already in exile.

Then we were taken out and paraded on the veranda, and they used these bright lights…

228. PL: So you and your family members were taken outside?

228. TS: Everybody in the house, we were all taken out so that the person that is in the car can identify : That's Thandi. So they started with my mother, they person was, we couldn't see the person…… you know, then when they came to me, that's when the person said :That one. ….Wow! I was beaten,… beaten , I was bleeding, my dress was torn..my mother had to try to intervene. They told

my mother "No" , then my mother said "even if you want to kill her, but don't kill her in front of me (voice lowers to almost a whisper). Long pause

229. PL: Where are the kids?

299. TS: My mother had already taken them into the house. ….Outside it was my mother, my sister, my uncle and me. So they were beating me in front of these people and the neighbours, you know the neighbours mos, they were watching. …. I was taken, we went and collected Siphwe along the bend, then we went and collected Jabu, from here Tladi.

230. PL: So this Askari was pointing each person's house?

230. TS: Yes, so went and take Jabu, we take Sibongiseni

231. PL: They put you in the back of the van?

231. TS: We are all in the back in one van. We were five, it was me, Jabu, Sipho, Sibongiseni and er whose this boy? I was the only female amongst them, and then were taken to ..We started in Protea but they did not take us out in Protea, and then we taken to

232. PL: Did they beat each other person when they collected them?

232. TS: Yes! Before you are put in the van you've got to get some beating. Then we were taken to John Vorster. From John Vorster the boys were taken to another room. I was in this other room and when I was sitting there, I was handcuffed at the back, you see these scars? They are scars of the handcuffs (points) I was handcuffed at the back, sitting there on the floor, half naked, you know…. They went and collected the two who were arrested at Park Station. …. When they come, they ask me "Do you know them?" then I said "No, I don't know them". Then because they were so badly beaten (whispers these last three words) they couldn't take the pain anymore, Sipho said "Hayi Mshana" we used to call each other Mshana, then I said "I don't know them" (get asked) "Don't you know these terrorists?" I said "No, to me a terrorist is someone who is huge, ugly with outside teeth and eyes", you know I described something..then they said " Okay you'll know them". That is when I was sitting there they were beginning to phone "Ons het 'n terrorist, ons het 'n terrorist " (We have a terrorist, we have a terrorist.) Then I realised that here I am not going to survive. (long pause) But I said to myself even if I am going to survive, I'll die with the truth. Because if I can utter one word….my whole family is going to be wiped out. Because they'll be taking me back to home and finding those boxes with ammunition. The whole family..it means my kids, everybody was going to be arrested.

Then I said , ngesizulu sithi "Umfazi ufa azi" ngisosebenzisa isiZulu manje ,Ngizofa ngazi. I'd rather die, and that's how we are trained.

233. PL: In Zulu, what does that mean though? How would they use that expression?

233. TS: They were using that expression to say A woman will die with the truth, like it was used a lot when they said "Umfazi ufa azi", it like, I'm impregnated by somebody, then I am saying its my husband's child. They'll never find the truth because I'll die with the truth. That is why the garndmothers in the rural areas they usually say "Eh uyakhala Makoti, eh hambom'thulisela phandle" Because they know when you go outside you'll call the child nge real surname/clan name yakhe, do you see? (laughs)

So then ..then these …about huge boers came into the room (sucks in breath) They were hairy , their hands, you know, (sucks in breath) everything about them was scary. Then they ask some few questions, by then I am already ..umlomo udumbile, beyikahlelwa, iyababa(my mouth is swollen it was being kicked, its burning) bathi (they said) " Uh huh lo makaye e waarheid kamer" Waarheid kamer yi la kune torture machines, then mandifika lapho, oh kwabizwa omnye u Sam wase Alexander , iAskari, wayshile nje (gestures to face,) ingathi ama comrade ayemshisile mabem tola ukuthi yi police informer, bekashile… (Translation: This one must go to the room of truth. The truth room is where there are torture machines, then when I got there, oh they brought another one called Sam, from Alexander, an askari, he was burnt (gestures to face) I thin the comrades had burnt him when they found out he was a police informer, he was burnt..)

234. PL: Did you know him from before?

234. TS: Bengamazi, bengizwa nje igama lakhe, then masendim describa sengiphumile, then abantu bandi xoxela ukuthi ungubani. Then wangifaka isaka , a wet sack,… ewhite, wayi fasa ngemova, I am handcuffed at the back . Then they went… you could see mos kulembobozi esaka ukuthi ukukuphuka ngama steps, you can see maningena kulelelo room, there was this big machine and this chair, the room.. its bare , its open, its only that machine….. and that chair where you have to sit. Ngahlala esithulweni. Bathi "Today, vandag jy sal die waarheid praat." ……That's when the torture started (speaks is low half whisper) electric shock…… it went on and on, you know they'll ask you a question…… "Waar is die ammunition?" ….I , ngifuna ukuphendula, you want to answer it, by the time uthi uzam ukuphendula, you are inside this sack, ufuna ukuphendula, funeka ubreathe, akubreatheki easy , they apply the electric shock….you know..it it was that combination of electric shock, breathing, when you breathe out , isaka lithi (demonstrates) lenza i bubble, when you breathe in , iyakuvala(demonstrates with palm over face) , the time ikuvala by applya ielectric shock, you have to answer, you couldn't. Then for me to survive, I though quickly, mandibona ukuthi no I'm dying, because I could see under the sack, my breasts going prrrrrr(gestures with hand at breasts in shaking motion) after they apply the electric shock.

(I didn't know him, I'd only hear of him, then he'd be described when I went out (of SA/on missions), then people told me who he was. Then they put a wet sack over my head, a wet sack,… white, and tied it at the back, I am handcuffed at the back . Then they went… you could see mos through the sack that you're going up steps, you can see when I entered the room, there was this big machine and this chair, the room.. it's bare , its open, its only that machine….. and that chair where you have to sit. I sat on the chair. They said "Today, vandag jy sal die waarheid praat/ you shall speak the truth." ……That's when the torture started (speaks is low half whisper) electric shock…… it went on and on, you know they'll ask you a question…… "Waar is die ammunition/where is the ammunition?" ….I , I want to answer it, you want to answer it, by the time to try to answer, you are inside this sack, you want to answer, you need to breath, breathing is not easy , they apply the electric shock….you know..it it was that combination of electric shock, breathing, when you breathe out , the sack does like this (demonstrates) it makes a bubble, when you breathe in , it collapses/closes over your face and nose (demonstrates with palm over face) , the time it opens they apply an electric shock, you have to answer, you couldn't. Then for me to survive, I though quickly , when I saw I was dying ,no I'm dying , because I could see under the sack, my breasts going prrrrrr(gestures with hand at breasts in shaking motion) after they apply the electric shock.)

235. PL: Where were they applying the electric shock?

235. TS: All over, in the breasts, you know all over, I have got scars, kuthi nam ezinye ngiyazi kohlwa , eze handcuff, zikhona na la emathangeni, emabeleni, (she shows them) uyazibona? These tiny marks ezimhlophe ezigcwele, bebeapply everywhere, mabe funa ukuyibeka ebeleni bayabeka, and they ask you a question you have to answer, you have to breath you have to ..uyabona into enjengaleyo, I couldn't tell you that was how long but I felt it was a long time.

(All over, in the breasts, you know all over, I have got scars, I even forget where they all are, the ones from the handcuffs, scars on my thighs, breasts, (she shows them) can you see them? These tiny marks, white allover me, they applied the shock everywhere, when they want to put it on the breast, they put it, and they ask you a question you have to answer, you have to breath you have to ..can you imagine such a thing?, I couldn't tell you that was how long but I felt it was a long time.)

236. PL: What are you saying when you are trying to answer ? How were you evading them?

236. TS: I was telling them that I know nothing, they'd ask "Don't you know the terrorist Silver, babefuna/they wanted uSilver, uSilver Ncanyiwe, he was our commander. So ngathi/ I said mina angimazi /I don't know him. Bathi "awulazi iterrorist?"/ "they said you don't know this terrorist? ngathi andiyazi iterrorist ukuthi yinto enjani/ I said I don't know what a terrorist is. I end up saying "Mina ngi phuma e KZN, mina ngiyi IFP member/ I'm from KZN, I'm an IFP member. Lucky for me because after '76 my father in'77 wasithumela eNatal kabo Mama'am / he sent us to Natal to my Mother's home. So I was fortunate to learn the history of the IFP, more especially because I was talkative. In …70… in 1980 I was chosen to be a publicist ngesiZulu bendibiza umsakathi we IFP/ in Zulu it was called a publicist for the IFP, so we were taken to Ulundi to be trained as IFP, what it stands for and all that. So with that information, that how I survive, because I gave them the IFP information and somebody was nodding to say Ja, it was true, it's true. So they took the story that I am an IFP member, then they let me go , but one of them came in and said, "Hey, if you can let this person go , you are letting the biggest terrorist go….. (Loud sigh, speaking softer now) Well, ….they took me to another room, by then I was bleeding through the mouth , because during the electric shock, trying to breath, trying to answer the questions, with the electric shock, ngazi luma ilwimi so lalidabukile, ndi bleeda ngomlomo /I bit my tongue so it was torn, I was bleeding from it from the mouth. …Banagithata bangisa kwelinye iroom/they took me to another room, these four white policemen came in, mabefika bathi/when they came they said, lomunye whathi /one of them said "Hayi , let us teach this bitch a lesson….kufenka/ she must , a respecte /respect the white superiority, you know, "She is a terrorist , but she's lying" You know there were talking and talking and talking , one of them said "Let's have fun", you know,… fun its by raping me. So they did that. You know during the whole process, that is why I am saying God is there. During the whole process there was this voice that came to me and said "You know what Thandi, (almost whispering) this very sweet voice said "Remove the soul from the body " It was like Thandi the carefree Thandi , this Thandi is standing there and is looking into this body to say : Whose body is this? In actual fact, I think that is how I survived the whole ordeal, you know, because that was like my soul is there and I am looking at this body feeling pity for this body (long pause) feeling pity and sorry for this body and… to me it was…to me it was 'Okay they've done it, I'm bleeding, dizzy, I couldn't feel the pain. And I was taken to another room Sam (the askari) was asked, was told to take the sack out of my face, to clean me, because the blood was all over. He came with a roll of toilet paper, cleaned me. After that the said to take out the handcuffs, because during the struggle with the electric shocks, the handcuffs were cutting in, so you could see the bones here (she points to wrists) So they removed the handcuffs because I was already bleeding from the hands. One of them came with an AK and said to me "Assemble it"

. (Long pause) So the way I was so …nice and fed up, I wanted to end it all, there. I quickly assembled it and I wanted to kill everybody in the room, including… myself. ….But quickly they realised that they are putting themselves in danger, so they took away the , the AK. They took me to .. oh after some few hours sitting there bleeding, shivering , you know because it was winter, the dress is torn, this water that they were pouring for them to apply the electric shock, so walking with one shoe, I don't know where did the other shoe went….They took me to Mondeor Prison, at Mondeor prison they said…. "not an injured person like this one , we are not going to take her in , until she's checked by a District Surgeon." Then they took me to a District Surgeon, the District Surgeon asks " What is happening here?"

237. PL: Was the prison in Mondeor?

237. TS: Sun City, Johannesburg prison, we call it Sun City (laughs). They took me to that District Surgeon, the District Surgeon asks them if he could examine her alone. But because the tongue was now swollen, I couldn't say anything,. They were giving the answers, when he asked what happened they said "uh huh, We found her at Hillbrow, she's a prostitute, she got injured while trying to resist arrest. So that's what the district surgeon wrote.

They took me straight to Sun City. First day when I arrived in Sun City I was put in a communal cell. Communal Cell is this big cell with plus forty beds. You know I was alone in that communal cell…injured and all that. Then the next day then I was taken to solitary confinement, in a single cell where I stayed. Then once a week I was checked by a doctor….the injuries because I spent almost two weeks without eating any solid food because of the tongue.

238. PL: So how were you getting nutrition?

238. TS: I was getting juice, I was getting juice, and rice water just to keep me going for two weeks. Thereafter then I become fine.

239. PL: At this point did anybody know where you were?

239. TS: Nobody actually knew where I was, because they looked everywhere….. you `know nobody could say. Only the police knew where I was and their informant. Because after three months in solitary confinement a woman..a girl she said her name was Phumzile from Jabulani. She was put on an opposite cell from mine. …She came in the afternoon you know, and she called my name, I didn't know the girl , I've never met her, yet she called my name "Thandi! Thandi!" and a person who call me with Thandi…you must know that person doesn't know me because I was called Modise, I was called Modise. She said Thandi, then I looked through the window, she said "Hi, I'm Phumzile from Jabulani, eh wena batholeni kuwe?" She's asking me what did they find from me. You cannot in a cell shouting to somebody and asking such a question immediately a person who is trained will pick up to say : this is an informer. She will be always be brought for three nights and she couldn't get any information from me. I stayed, the people who were giving me support,were actually, Winnie, Zondo eh those were comrades, Winnie, Zondo, Sonto Masondo, you know , Jessie.

240. PL: Where were they?

240. TS: We are in different cells, they've already been charged , you know so they were in the.. we are still in Sun City. And then the next door cell was a woman from..she was in parliament at some time, Petronella Mentor. Petronella..she was also supporting me, you know we'll trade books, you know I like to read , books for food, because..

241. PL: How did you do that?

241. TS: Political prisoners were getting the best food because our food was checked by a doctor, because once they cook something that is rotten we go on hunger strike. So they were avoiding that. We'll trade it you know, we had a system of, the opposite cells were the cells of the common law prisoners, this block (gesturing) was the block of the political prisoners so we'll use a sheet, put a plastic bag, put our food in a plastic bag, tie it with a sheet and out of the window we throw it. The other one catches it, takes out the plastic bag, tie the book in the sheet, it comes back. During the day because we are always, everyday they strip search us. We'll hand the books in the pipes that are outside the cells. At night the books comes back, you know, you read. Because the only thing that you are given in solitary confinement is the Bible, to read.

242. PL: But the common law prisoners were able to have books?

242. TS: They were having access in books, so when you feel like you feel like you want to eat something sexy like Captain Dorego, KFC, you'll tell the Adjudant, every morning the Adjudant will come and ask for klagtes, complaints. Then I'll tell them to say, " You know what? I have remembered something, I remember now where can we find the ammunitions." Oh they'll come flying! When they are going out with you, you'll be a Queen in their car, and you'll make them to round the whole town pointing to areas that you know they'll never find anything. And along the way, they'll ask you "Are you hungry? What doo you want to eat? Kaptein Dorego?"(laughs) You think : I want to taste that one. You don't know what kind of an animal is that! you know you are from prison , there are these new shops! (laughs), then you'll eat you Kaptain Dorego then after that you'll say "I'll go and re-think". They'll take you back and now they are no longer going to harass you as long as they see that now you want to come with information. That is how you manage to survive. You survive by making sure that you have the book to read. You know we use a toilet to phone each other, you know.

243. PL: How?

243. TS: Through the toilet bowl!

244. PL: Doesn't it have water the toilet bowl?

244. TS: You drain the water, and the information will go.

245. PL: You talk into the bowl?

245. TS: It's so easy, you sit at the toilet bowl like this (demonstrates kneeling on floor facing chair)

246. PL: So everybody has drained the water?

246.TS: Yes, so that we get the information. The other way how to get information, one of us is going to be having a toothache, wanting to see a doctor, or have stomach cramps wanting to see a doctor, and that's where information will be exchanged with a district surgeons. From the male section they'll give us information this is what is happening outside because they'll meet with the people outside who are recently arrested will be coming with the information from the outside that is telling what is happening.

Also what was confusing to the system was that how come one prison will start a hunger strike but the hunger strike will escalate to all the prisons in all provinces. There were district surgeons who were so supportive, and so so you know feeling for us. So those were people who were giving out

information. You'll come with your tissue wrapped like this (demonstrates folded up paper) as if you are sneezing on it, then you'll leave it with the district surgeon. Or sometimes the district surgeon will tell them to say "I want to examine my patient in private." That is when we exchange the information. Sometime the district surgeon will say " Lie there for an hour, I'll tell them that I am still examining you." Or say they are giving you a drip just for you to relax outside of prison. So some of them were very sympathetic to us and very supportive.

247. PL: How long did you stay in prison?

247. TS: For a year in solitary confinement. For me to be released, you know.. for them to find out..because my parents and the comrades SACC mostly they had assigned Krish Naidoo and …who was this female? Lawyer of ours…Pricilla Jana, to exchange the information with the police looking for my whereabouts. So for them to get the information a friend of mine from Emdeni, Thuli, was arrested for a pamphlet, under state of emergency. So when I was going down to the doctor, the prison doctor, she was coming out from the prison doctor, but we couldn't talk, we just looked at each other and I went in. Thuli was released the next day and that's when Thuli gave them the information then Pricilla Jana was able to write them a letter to say that this person is in Johannesburg prison at cell so and so, they explained everything in a letter, then they said they are still investigating. But they said the State of Emergency and solitary confinement is supposed be 29 days but I was there longer than that . ..Also it was supposed to six months if its State of Emergency, and not in solitary confinement but move to be with other comrades, because I was not..I was suspected as this most dangerous terrorist. Then Thuli ..we met with Thuli, I can't remember the date or the month, ..then is December..I think it was 1989, when the call was made to say release all political prisoners. That is when….I was released. ……(long sigh, and lowers voice to almost whisper) when I was released

RELEASE FROM PRISON

I couldn't walk…..First before they could take me home I had to undergo another torture of being taken to John Vortser, ..first to Aleaxander Police station , there I was sitting with this.. eeh.. policeman, a boere he was asking me questions – can't I remember anything , can I be able to assist them to identify the terrorists, you know, it was a lengthy story, then I was taken back home. You know, the distance that I was walking was five minutes it took me thirty minutes…..and some of the people saw me but they couldn't recognise me because I was so thin, thin you know. They went home to say they saw somebody who looks like Thandi. At home they said no she must have died, you know because they couldn't believe that after such a long time, they can find me alive, even if they've told me I have been found, I may be released….

When I was back home I was told to lie low, because they were still tracing me. You know you'll find a gentleman with a briefcase, a handsome man with a briefcase. My home at Emdeni it's a shop next to it, then it's my home. So the person would come and stand at the corner from 7am in the morning until 7pm at night. You come in to greet me, when you go out, police are coming to your house, to ask what do you know about Thandi. So I couldn't even come to your house and be with you , so I was in the house full time, up until after a month , then the person at the corner disappeared, then came the police to pick me up. We went to Protea Police Station, we went to a room, I was given a briefcase full of money and told that if I can…go and look for Silver, …they were looking for Silver…there were other two people that they showed me their pictures…They said if I hear they are in even in Cape Town, I can use the money to go to Cape Town, they I said you can keep your briefcase. I'll go and look for them.. because I just wanted to be out of that place. And.. during the whole ordeal, remember I said there was ammunition at home and nobody

knew about it. So the first two days after my release we had to distribute, walking slowly like…at night round about 1am, during the night, the boxes will go.

248. PL: Who were you doing this with?

248. TS: With members of my sector, other comrades who knew what was happening. We managed, and with Silver also , we managed to distribute all of them. They were taken away from my home.

249. PL: How did you carry that stuff in your fragile state, coming from prison?

249. TS: You don't become fragile during the war..(laughs) war is war. More especially I was..angry. I was so angry and saying to myself now they have given me more reasons to push forward. There were times when I said Ag I am leaving all this...but there were times when I said what about my kids? Are they going to live the same life that I am living? Under Apartheid.

250. PL: Did you stay the whole time ? Was there nothing that made you think of skipping the country or how did it work? It was 1990 now.

250. TS: No, …no, there was nothing that was making me to think of skipping the country, actually after my release I stayed at Emdeni for two months, then I went to KZN, at home and stayed for a month. I couldn't take seeing what is IFP doing to people, it was during that time of the IFP working with the police, brutalising people and all that. Then I realised that here I am going to blow my cover…I have to come back.

251. PL: And then 1990, 1991 what were you doing in that time?

251.TS: '91, '92 I was still ….operating. You remember during the '90's it started this train violence, the Thokoza, the Duduza were burning and all, you know those types of things. So I was manouevering, distributing, trying to get .. doing my job as a special operative looking for safe base for the MK's and all that. I was till operating and all that but now I was in a.. I was telling myself that now we are on the verge of winning the war. So still participated, I went back to the structures in the township, continued.

252. PL: Could you please explain what does special operative mean?

252. TS: Special operative are the people that are getting crash course from outside. More especially Special operatives are the people that are looking for safe base, when the MK soldiers come in for deployment, to come and do missions, they have to find a place to stay. Because they'll take a person from Cape Town to Johannesburg and they are relying on the special operatives to find that person a safe place. And that person should not be recognised. And also people who are going , making sure that they move ammunition from one place to another , to go and collect more, and distribute.

253. PL: You say that in 1991 you felt the war was being won, what made you feel that?

253. TS: You know there was a time where you felt that the system was actually falling apart …when you realise that now they want to sit down and negotiate, and now they are saying that they are releasing Mandela, and then you realise that there is now somewhere where we are going, whilst somewhere somehow Boipatong happened, and they were intensifying this Third Force thing. But to me I had this hope to say we are winning this one. Because if you can remember, OR Tambo, I don't know which year was that, there was a message that OR Tambo posted which said that the fatal mistake that the South African government can make is to liberate Namibia, because if they

can liberate Namibia they'll be left with only South Africa and they wouldn't have any states, African states where they can hold power, and they did that fatal mistake of liberating Namibia, so they had no ground anymore.

254. PL: Did you disband after the negotiations?

254. TS: No, we did not disband, we actually, the formation of the MKVA, also we now because the ANC, because the ANC was now unbanned now we were participating freely , rebuilding the ANC structures in our townships in our wards. You know from when Mandel a was released there was this marathon of making sure that we conscientise every black or white or Indian South African who we think alike, who believe in the ANC to make sure that you go and vote. So there was no rest, actually, it was workshops, meeting.

1994 I worked like a lunatic because I was taken and deployed at Roodepoort where it's a stronghold of the Boers, and realising that the Boers who were voting at that town hall of Rooderoort were so much limited, and in the township there were long queues. So busses had to be sent to come and collect people from the township to go and vote, because by then you were voting anywhere where you want to go and vote. So it was me trying to, as a party agent to make sure that we are not robbed with the votes, and you'll find this white farmer with a truck full of black people, where he'll be telling them to say vote for National Party and because if you don't vote the National Party, I'll know and I'll chase you out. So I had to go around use African languages Zulu, Sotho or Tswana to tell them he's lying , when you get to a certain number you put a cross, they'd ask if Tata Mandela's face was there, I'd tell them it was there , so if you can't count , just look for the picture put your cross.

And the good part is when the votes were being counted, when they opened the boxes, …..I felt proudly South African for the first time. There were so many people, the officials, so they opened the box and they put the ballot papers face down, and I saw this pile that was going, I said to myself I am in a stronghold of the National Party but I saw the busses that come from the township are giving me hope. When they were calling, the results of each balot, that's a day that I'll never forget, you just heard ANC, ANC, ANC, to me it was like music. You'll find the Boers they were so red in their faces and they'll argue maybe with a form to say this person has put a cross on the face of Mandela and not on the box, then I said "But the fact remains the person has voted for Mandela" You know some of the people will put the cross at the back then we said let us look into the ballot paper in the light, where the cross is in, its tin the ANC box, its not at spoilt paper . We'd argue, me arguing with the Boers saying No, it made me say you know what I have played my role.

After the elections of 1994 I said you know what guys I need to take a break, I need to take a break. They said there is no break in the ANC, even if you now longer operating, they'd be meetings with people like Popo Molefe, then I'd say let me focus on the township, rebuilding the structures of the ANC giving political education and all that, that's what I am still doing even today participating as a BEC member, deployed as an SGB member.

255. PL: What is BEC, and SGB?

255. TS: Branch Executive committee, that the leadership of the committee, making sure that the development , community development is taking place, people who have got problems, we don't have to go just to the people when it's time for them to vote, but we have to be there for the people. Helping them assisting them, if say they have lost a family member, they don't have anything to bury that person we have to be in the forefront making sure that that person is buried with dignity.

256. PL: How was it that you came into contact with the Khulumani support group or TRC before the TRC?

256. TS: Mam Sylvia Dlomo, Sicelo Dlomo's mother, remember Sicelo Dlomo who was killed, *(* He was 18,and leader of COSAS at the time*) was a friend of my mother, and also I was an active member of the ANC at Emdeni. So she told me about Khulumani. I didn't want to go to the TRC anyway, I didn't. So she told me that there is this organisation that is being formed that is going to assist the victims of Apartheid, taking their statements, assisting them to access the TRC and all that. I said that I can do , I went in 1995, when Khulumani was formed and worked for Khulumani as a field worker, where we go into the township and people will identify people were affected by Apartheid, people who were in wheelchairs or shot and all that; so that we'd be able to take their statement and submit to the TRC.

257. PL: Why did you not want to participate in the TRC? But you were happy to help other people.

257. TS: For me I did not think that the TRC can give me back what was taken away from me. And for me to go and stand in the public and tell people about my ordeal, it was a no- no, because my family didn't know what happened to me during detention.

258. PL: Who did know? Who knew what had happened to you?

258. TS: It was only me, nobody knew

259. PL: Even the other women next to in solitary with in prison? Jessie Duarte etc.

259. TS: Those women knew, what had happened to me, but I, I, I… couldn't even tell my family or anyone else. When I was released I was this person who will sit in a very dark room, alone crying myself to sleep. I had constant nightmares up until I came to Khulumani and Centre for the Study of Violence CSVR, assigned a psychologist for me to assess me to deal with my ……you know.

SELF- NARRATION: PLAY AND TRC

Then Bobby Rodwell came with a play, This Story I am About To Tell, me and Mam'Catherine (Mlangeni) and Duma (Khumalo), me and Duma we were working for Khulumani, were identified to come, so they asked us if we were going to go the route of telling other people's stories or our stories, then we felt we want to tell our own stories, our personal experiences.

That is when gradually, it was from '97 when I made The Story I am about To Tell came, it was travelling in England, Holland, Germany. We were travelling around, more especially during the TRC hearings we will be going just to listen to how people are presenting their stories, also when we are going to take ama statements, people's statements, because I was once a statement taker for the TRC.

Then I….came across, I was taking a statement of a woman who was in exile and she was relating how she was… brutally raped, you know, and..for me the story hit home and I broke down. After breaking down the TRC counselors and psychologists had to ask, Ntombi Mosikare, because Ntombi knew my story, I told them as the people that I worked with , then Ntombi explained to them to say the story is similar to what happened to her (Thandi). Then….. Sis Dudu Cili, she was our counselor and all that, Sis Dudu and Hlengiwe Mkhize they said to me "Thandi, your story is very important because the Apartheid is refusing that they were using sex, rape as one of their

torture tools, so you are the only woman that has actually….that can come out in testimony and give it in details so that we can be able to have this record."

And after I had given my statement I was encouraging other women to say talk about everything, and after I had testified so many were testifying to say kwa Mshayezafe Hostel IFP members did one, two ,three to me etc. So now women were beginning to come out and that also helped me, although it nearly destroyed my daughter. Because my daughter hearing it for the first time, actually the woman who made a mistake was this woman who was Drum magazine writer, she had died. She interviewed me, I agreed to the interview , after interviewing me and before goes and publishes the story, and I asked her to say before you publish this story please tell me so that I can prepare my family if they come across a Drum magazine, they shouldn't be shocked. I learnt after two weeks that the Drum magazine was out on the streets, it was before I had testified. And my daughter came across the Drum magazine at school and people were asking if its her mother and all that. So she also had to undergo counseling, at CSVR, who were doing counseling assisted by Bishop Paul Verryn.

260. PL: So the turning point was when you took that woman's statement? Because you were against going to testify at the TRC?

260.TS: Actually that one gave me… actually I can it was the turning point, because I was saying here I am sitting listening t o this woman talking about this, how many women went through this? What if they can say this woman is lying, but if there are so many women that can testify, but I still didn't want to go, I was not ready. Up until The story I Am About To Tell

261. PL: So what was then the real turning point? Was it when Hlengiwe and them spoke to you?

261. TS: *The Story I am About To Tell* actually assisted me, to be able to , you know standing on a stage in a theatre, talking about ….. at first I'll break down , but after I'll be alright

262. PL: So you were telling your story in the play before you testified?

262. TS: Yes, I testified in … I can't remember the date, but already I was in the play

263. PL: Did your family attend the play?

263. TS: They did, my mother was still wearing a blue robe for my father, we were at Pace College, my mother did attend, my kids did attend.

264. PL: So when was their first exposure to what had happened to you?

264. TS: Through Drum magazine

265. PL: So your daughter went for counseling and your mother?

265. TS: No she didn't

266. PL: How did you address it with your mother? Did you talk about it?

266. TS: No, we didn't talk about it, I was very angry and very… you know, I didn't want anyone to go there because for me it was a torture. We never talked about it. Its only my daughter who went for counseling, even my son did not go for counseling, my sisters, not.

267. PL: So they went to the play, they heard about what happened to you but it was never spoken about?

267. TS: Yes.

268. PL: In the play, how did the make the stories, because some people were actors some people were real?

268. TS: Three people, it was me, Duma and Mam Catherine we were telling our actual stories, and Ramolao Makhene, Kenneth Nkosi and Dan Robbertse were professional actors.

269. PL: You say when you started you'd break down doing the play and as time went on how did you find it, performing?

269. TS: To me it was a therapy, you know talking is healing. So it gave me a platform to deal with my inner fears and everything, about how I survived, so for me to talk about it was taking it out.

Difference in Self-narrations : Play and TRC

270. PL: And then when you went finally to the TRC to testify in public, because you had been doing it in the play, how was that different for you? Did it feel different on the day at the TRC?

270. TS: Actually it didn't feel.. different for me telling my story, but I was annoyed that it was called Women's Hearings, but you'll find men testifying their wives ordeals, to me it was annoying. How can they say its women's hearings whilst there are men that are coming to testify on behalf of their wives. But it was fine, it was okay.

But when I testified, it was fine I didn't even break down, but at night the nightmares came back, but I went for counseling, then I was okay.

271. PL: So you are saying that you got worse after testifying?

271.TS: No. I didn't get worse, actually it was relief that the story it's out there, and I don't need anyone, because I told them that I don't need anyone's pity.

272. PL: Yes, I see that from your testimony, what did you mean by that?

272. TS: I don't want people to say "Ag shame", and be treated differently "Yhu, she was raped, don't talk about rape in front of her."

273. PL: You were asked during your testimony what do you think can be done, what do you want done? - At the time I'll remind you, you talk about "the government making women's centres where women can go and voice their innermost feelings and concern ", and you spoke about sense that you had that government was more concerned with men.

273. TS: Actually they were more concerned about men because men had much of the time giving their testimonies but the Women's hearings it's was only for a day, and that was it , how many women were left out before they could tell their stories. So you see that the gender thing was not balanced. For women it was only (gestures with her hands to denote small quantity) and then they moved forward.

POST TRC

274. PL: Did you go again for counseling after your TRC testimony? Because you said you broke down

274. TS: I attended counseling until 2007.

275. PL: How regularly?

275. TS: It was twice a month, then began to slow down, once a month.

276. PL: Group or one on one?

276. TS: One on one at first Mary from CSVR

277. PL: Mary Robbertse?

278. TS: Yes, Mary took me for almost four years, then I went to Paul Verryn, then Paul Verryn took me up to 2007. I decided to stop the training., it was not them who told me.

278. PL: What made you decide to stop?

278. TS: Sometimes you go and look fro Paul Verryn, Paul Verryn is unfound. And I said Thandi , deal with it yourself, without the people who helped you throughout these years, so now you can stand on your own because now you are able to counsel another person, I was now okay.

279. PL: You had described that you were a very angry person after your detention. When would you say that you were able to release you anger?

279. TS: After being involved with Khulumani, when I was involved with Khulumani I realised that I'm not the only person, I need to be there for other people. And also starting to counsel others , then everything was going away.

SENSES OF SELF: childhood, adolescence adulthood

280. PL: Looking back on that childhood Thandi, before High School how do you view her now?

280. TS: That Thandi was a carefree Thandi, a Thandi that was a go- getter, A Thandi that could do anything at any time when she feels like it, and if she doesn't want to do something, she doesn't do it. My mother will beat me, put me in my room, not giving me money for carry to school. I didn't care, as along as I said I am not going to do that, I was very stubborn., very naughty, like to fight, when I grew up I was like this tomboy.

281. PL: And your high school Thandi? If you look back at that Thandi from this Thandi now?

281. TS: My High school Thandi was she was same like my childhood Thandi, (gets animated) still talkative, wanting to fight doing things as she pleases, doing things when she wants to You know at high school I was netball captain for years, I was an athlete, music, debating, I was even given a name – Sunlight you'll find me found all over. So I was that Thandi at High School. But most of all I used to fight a lot.

282. PL: And then if you look back on your post detention Thandi, how do you view her now? The Thandi who kept that secret? For so long? How would you describe her now?

282. TS: I'm still the same, I'm still so semi-introvert, I give myself time before I can disclose or say something to the person, I'd rather take the pain and live with it, than telling you, because I don't know how you are going to handle it. I don't want to hurt other people, I'd rather be hurt.That Thandi who used to call it as it is, call a spade a spade, and not a spoon to dig with. But after that I learnt to keep everything within.

283. PL: Are there any memories in particular that you battle with, or you haven't worked through?

283. TS: In actual fact , no.

284. PL: Do you think it's possible to get over the past?

284. TS: Hmnnn……It's not possible, you can never get over the past because a slightest thing that can happen in your life can trigger what happened in the past. And there are things from the past that you can use for the present. And when you look into those things, you'll ask yourself where did I learn or experience this and you'll find it it was from your past. Like for instance keeping things to myself you know, are the things of the past I was not used to doing before, but I am still now using it in the present so it's not actually possible.

FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

285. PL: And forgiveness and reconciliation? What is you understanding of forgiveness?

286. TS: My understanding of forgiveness, before you can say you forgive another person, you have to forgive yourself first.

287. PL: What are you forgiving yourself for?

287. TS: Forgiving yourself…it's like to me it helped me to forgive myself because by me forgiving myself I begin to let go of the pain, because during detention and after detention, I was like saying I looked for it, I deserved it, you know. Then there begins the time where I had to forgive myself and say : You know Thandi , you did not look for it, I forgive myself because I did not look for it, all along I had been trapped in , in, in, in, the pain of saying I looked for it .But immediately when I forgave myself, then that forgiveness spilled to others to say I have forgiven those white policemen.

288. PL: You have?

288. TS: I have, because holding a pain or holding a grudge in you it's actually eating in you. They are happy wherever they are. So I had to reconcile with what happened and forgive myself before I can say I can forgive them because I can say I forgive you but I haven't forgiven myself for allowing you to hurt me.

289. PL: Is there anything that you cannot forgive from you rpast?

289. TS: That I cannot forgive? Actually there is a……I cannot forgive the torture that I went through of rape. And when you read the newspaper you always…and this developed. You remember when we grew up Palesa, we used to go wearing our short skirts, as children cutting sack cloths, playing games with our panties showing. But the Apartheid intensified the rape thing in such an extent that now our people are raping like .. so that one to me is still a pain but , I'm dealing with it. You can forgive but you cannot forget, that's a fact.

290. PL: And reconciliation? Do you think it's possible?

290. TS: Ya, its possible.

291. PL: What does it mean for you?

291. TS: Reconciliation it means you have to begin to reconcile within. Reconcile with your past, reconcile with what happened to you. Face your skeletons first, before you can say you are reconciling. The South African Reconciliation method was to say we blacks we have to stretch our heads at them to show that : (shouts in a stage voice) We are reconciling with you!. Whilst the other people were drifting far away from us, because we have never first started to reconcile within as a black nation to say: Okay it happened and how far do we go. Like for instance the centres for healing that I am talking about where people can go, like you find so many MKVA members who are from exile and back to South Africa they are traumatised with the guns, killings and everything, they are not given an opportunity. The life that they know for them is killing and fighting and all that, they were never given an opportunity where they can sit and be counseled and be given something to do you know. So reconciliation it needs to start there, so that out of reconciliation, we can start the reconstruction of the nation.

292. PL: As an activist before 1994, what kind of South Africa were you fighting for and what South Africa did you hope would emerge and is it here?

TS: Actually we are hoping for a democratic non-racial and non- sexist South Africa where everybody can live free and work wherever he or she wants to work, stay wherever. Yes we do have that, but we are not yet there because the rich are still becoming more rich, the poor are still becoming more poor until we address those issues and mostly our people were so excited with the democracy to such an extent that its everybody for himself or herself. We are forgetting about the people who made it possible for us to get that democracy. So we are having these huge numbers of corruptions in our government, because for example people in government are putting people in positions because they were in the struggle together, so and so is a Director, that person will mess up there and mess things up and they say the ANC government cannot deliver.

PL: Thank you Thandi, we are at the end of the interview.

ENDS