

Chapter Six: Mapping Political Violence in Mpumalanga Township

6.1 Introduction

Previous chapters have focussed on answering the first question posed by the thesis ‘why and how did the conflict become violent?’ (see chapter one). As discussed in chapter four, the answers lie partly in the dynamics of local politics; but also in the fundamentally violent nature of everyday township life. While violence was always there, lurking below the surface of daily life, there were ways to contain and deal with those dynamics. As against the background of increased national political mobilisation and confrontation political tensions increased, these tacit understandings began to unravel. Furthermore, as chapter five demonstrates those ways of doing politics were deliberately undermined, and, the ensuing distrust exploited by the State.

This chapter continues to assemble the layers that need to be explored to fully answer that question. Chronologically this chapter continues the narration developed in chapter four. It demonstrates that despite its conflict-ridden history the violence that was seen from the mid-1980s was singular; and, 1987 did represent a severe rupture in the politics of Natal and KwaZulu. As such, it demonstrates the increased intensity of incidents and the changing technologies of violence.

The chapter provides a detailed discussion of the trajectory and modality of political violence in Mpumalanga township. Its focus is firmly on the local. It illuminates further the relationship between political violence and the tensions between political organisations in Mpumalanga (see chapter four). Nevertheless, this detailed examination clearly demonstrates the argument that political violence is deeply embedded in the articulation between local, provincial and national dynamics. I illustrate how, in the post-1987 period, these trajectories intersect at

the point of place. As will be seen none of these spheres was determining, each fed into the violence, with each having their part to play.

The chapter also begins to answer the second question asked by the thesis 'What forms did the political violence take?' (see chapter one). It investigates the form and character of political violence in Mpumalanga township, focusing on the five-year period from 1987 to 1991. It will demonstrate the argument that the year 1987 marks the beginning of a major shift in both the form and character of violence that previously existed in the area. It concludes the narration in 1991, which is marked by the eventual success of attempts to negotiate peace, a cease-fire having been originally signed in November 1989.

It shows the extent to which the violence transformed and disrupted the spatiality of the township, clearly illustrating what was new and singular about this mode of conflict. The chapter also provides the first layer of evidence for the argument about the distinctly spatialised form of the violence. It identifies the three spatialities of the violence - the body, the household and the neighbourhood. It describes the first 'expansion' in the spatialised form of the violence from an attack on individuals to attacks on households, followed by the second 'expansion' when the focus became the pursuit of territory. Moreover, it indicates how the meaning of place was recast by the violence - an argument amplified in the subsequent chapter.

Furthermore, the chapter examines the gendered and generational form of the violence. Its spatial character drew the population into the violence according to their age and gender. Through a detailed narration of the progression of the violence it firmly establishes that initially the political violence was primarily a conflict between male youth. They determined the sites of conflict and the meaning of those spaces. In the process, generationally-based patriarchal authority was challenged and older men were marginalised from public life by younger men. The chapter illustrates that as, over time, the violence shifted its

spatial form so did its gendered and generational form. It incorporated the entire community of Mpumalanga. Once households and territories became the targets, women were more directly affected by the violence, and gender and age were no longer protectors. Women, reclaiming their right to occupy the streets worked differently from men in their efforts to ensure the safety of their areas. In the process they challenged the reconstruction of the street as a site of masculine power relations. Nevertheless, while no-one could exist outside the violence, the power to determine its form and direction still lay with the youth.

The chapter begins by examining the first attacks on Hammarsdale Youth Congress (Hayco) members and the debates within Inkatha that these attacks provoked. These attacks, confined to known UDF and Inkatha activists, constituted the first spatiality of the violence – that of the body. In the second section I look at the second spatiality of the violence – attacks on the household. For the first time residents not directly affiliated to any political organisation become targets. The household, I argue begins to acquire the political identity of the youth who reside there. In the third section, the focus shifts to the third spatiality of political violence – the capturing of territory. It examines how the violence re-territorialised the space of the township, establishing firm borders between Inkatha and UDF areas. The meaning of space was similarly re-made and purified. The chapter then shifts to examine the way in which women used their gender-specific networks to challenge the redefinition of these spaces as spaces of masculine power, violence and sexual assault. In the final section I look at the ‘invasions’ of territory, primarily but not only by Inkatha supporters. Constant themes throughout these discussions are attempts to negotiate peace and the role played by the security forces. The devious role played by the security forces illustrates the way in which the different trajectories articulated with each other, to produce through their specific interactions new conflicts and sedimentations.

6.2 Violence and the Spatiality of the Body

The first spatiality entered by the political violence was that of the body. Attacks

on the body did not in and of themselves represent a new modality of violence or demonstrate the singularity of the violence. They were not necessarily new - witness the earlier attacks on Azapo members, and the alacrity with which *oqondo* beat any male youth suspected of criminal activity (see chapter four). What did, over time, indicate 'something new', was the increased intensity of the attacks (see fig 7), in both number and severity; the introduction of new technologies (in particular guns); and, the intensified violation of women's bodies through rape and coercive sex. In the post-'87 period the repertoires of violence against the body changed fundamentally.

6.2.1 Attacks on Hayco members

As outlined in chapter four, a new organisation Hayco¹ had been formed in mid-1986. Its membership was intent on challenging Inkatha's presumption of controlling the politics of the township. Implicit was a challenge of gender and generation. Hayco's membership was primarily male youth. On Inkatha's side, the youth were also the major protagonists, with Nkehli and 'his boys' the main perpetrators of the violence (Hlongwane, TRC Affidavit, Section 8-37, 6 July 1995). Political violence signified a new politics. Unlike the pre-'87 period where there were institutional ways of dealing with conflict, a diversity of political organisations and an involvement (if not dominance) of older men in public politics, this was a violent politics, dominated by male youth with no room for political diversity. It was also to become a politics devoid of politics where territory rather than ideology signalled political identity (see below).

In early 1987, a few months after the formation of Hayco, its membership came under physical attack from Inkatha-aligned youth controlled by Zakhele Nkeli. In February 1987 Hayco member Sthembiso Mngadi was killed, ostensibly in a case

¹ It appears as if at first Hayco consisted of township youth opposed to Inkatha. It was not the political philosophy of the UDF that brought them together but their opposition to Inkatha's increasingly violent control of all aspects of township life (see the account of the school boycott in chapter four). The broader conflict between UDF and Inkatha resulted in them seeing themselves aligned to the UDF.

Fig 7: Graph Showing Incidents of Political Violence, Deaths, Injuries and Arson, September 1987 – December 1989

of mistaken identity.

... one day they [Hayco youth] held a meeting in one church down there. And as they came out of that meeting, the Inkatha people and Zakhele Nkehli, whom we heard was there, approached. They shot Mngadi's boy. That was when it began, actually we could realise what was going on. (Focus group interview, Connie's Group, Con1#1-2:3)

The target was apparently Hayco president Vusi Maduna (The Natal Mercury, 17 February 1987). The five killers including a 'political figure' from Woody Glen, being driven by a local councillor² in a yellow Cortina, said they were looking 'for a man in a brown hat'. They then shot and killed Mngadi who was wearing Maduna's brown hat at the time. Within a week another three members of Hayco, Vusumuzi Mdletshe, Bongani Mbatha³ and Sandile Xaba,⁴ had been killed in two separate incidents (The Natal Mercury, 24 February 1987). A day later Arnold Ngubane was found dead (The Natal Mercury, 25 February 1987). According to Hayco he was not one of their members. In the wake of these killings Hayco leadership fled Mpumalanga and many students stayed away from school (The Weekly Mail, 27 February-5 March 1987). In early March the South African Police arrested a 16-year old youth in connection with Mngadi's killing (City Press, 1 March 1987). Two weeks later four more arrests followed (The Natal Mercury, 17 March 1987). The UDF-aligned youth responded by attacking two Inkatha officials as they emerged from church in Clermont,⁵ (City Press, 15 March

² One of the focus group interviews claims the local councillor involved in this killing was Zakhele Nkehli (see focus group interview, Connie's Group, Con1#1-2:3).

³ This report illustrates some of the difficulties with using newspaper sources. The Natal Mercury refers to him as Bongani Mbatha, The Weekly Mail and two oral interviews (see Interview TN, TN1#1-2:2; focus group Connie's group, Con1#1-2:3) give his name as Mashu Mbatha, and Israel Hlongwane in his TRC affidavit refers to the killing of Mashu Shandu (TRC affidavit, S20). According to The Weekly Mail, his body was found in a culvert, and Hlongwane says they left it in a water pit opposite his house. However, there is a discrepancy in the method of killing, Mbatha was shot but Hlongwane says they stabbed Shandu. Nevertheless, Mashu was a well-known student leader at PheZulu High School. His murder impacted dramatically on the community's perception of Inkatha and relations between Hayco and Inkatha.

⁴ Israel Hlongwane applied for amnesty for this killing (Hlongwane, TRC Affidavit, S11). He claimed this was the first killing in which he was involved (see S11.7).

⁵ Clermont is an African freehold township on the northern side of Pinetown. Politically associated with the congress movement and resisting incorporation into KwaZulu, it became a refuge for the youth fleeing Mpumalanga from Inkatha. Mpumalanga Inkatha-based officials were also convinced that comrades from Clermont were infiltrating Mpumalanga to assist with UDF activities there.

1987), the previous week the chairman of the Woody Glen⁶ Inkatha branch, Mcoleni Nicholas Shange, had been shot and killed while visiting a fellow Inkatha member in unit four (The Natal Mercury, 17 March 1987). Other IYB members were killed, and by the end of March eight more members of Hayco were dead, including the president Vusi Maduna (The Weekly Mail, 20-26 March 1987). Maduna had been negotiating a cease-fire with Nkehli, who was acting on behalf of the Inkatha youth, at meetings convened by Mpumalanga mayor Rodger Sishi. His comrades accused him of being a spy. He was shot and burnt by those of them who had taken refuge in Clermont, when he went to discuss the negotiations with them (City Press, 22 March 1987).⁷ In these first few months, many of Hayco's original leadership were killed.

The annual inter-school athletics meeting between Hammarsdale, Wartburg, Camperdown and Inchanga in April 1987 exposed many of the Mpumalanga schools and their scholars to the violence for the first time.

I think I was doing standard six, and we were going to meet with other schools, it was the athletic day. We gathered at the stadium at the township near to my home. ... at half-past two see a yellow car, running around the ground, the sports-field And to see what has happened. 'Oh', they said, 'those are the Inkatha members'. 'Oh, what are they doing?' 'They are looking for the pupils who their families joined UDF or their brothers, or their sisters, or their parents.' Ok. It seems as though we are in danger, we did evacuate at the ground, at the sports-field and go to home. While I was on the way to my home, I see this car. I saw this car. Haw! Two guys in front, and two guys in the back-seat. [Mmm]. The other guy I can mention was Mashuga, who was (was who?) Mashu Mbatha.⁸ Who was the first one who was killed at the violence at Mpumalanga. And the other guy I can't remember well his name. And he was killed because they said he was the UDF member So they are not allowed to practice UDF things at our township. Ok. They killed that guy. The members of UDF want to avenge for him. That start the violence. (Interview TN, TN1#1-2:2)

I was there running, ja. I didn't see anything, but I saw the bus burnt, and the young boys running there. And they fight everyone. And they run. And in that day, I lost my shoes, my school shoes! I lost my school shoes. And when we came home and told my mother, ... 'I haven't got the shoes now'. They say, 'I have no money to buy for you another shoe. You must go with your feets'. And I must every day. It's too far from [unit] one north to unit four [where I schooled]. (Interview MN, MN1#1-2:3)

⁶ Woody Glen, sometimes referred to as *Inkandla*, is one of the sections of Mpumalanga township, it was to become an Inkatha stronghold.

⁷ These allegations are confirmed in Israel Hlongwane's affidavit to the TRC, (see S11.8 and 11.9). Furthermore my oral sources indicate that suspicions about Maduna were widespread.

⁸ See Hlongwane's affidavit and footnote 2 in this chapter.

By all accounts it was the events of these three months that demonstrated to the ordinary resident that their community had changed. To cite a woman from unit two who had just finished recounted the killings of UDF-aligned youth, including attacks on her sons, during this period ‘so the war just started like that’ (Focus group, Fri1#1-2:12).

Many amongst the older generation were confused by the situation. They didn’t understand the new politics of violence and attempted to resolve the situation utilising the methods that had always worked in the past. The parents of UDF-supporting youth called community meetings. Showing their respect for, and faith in, legitimate channels of governance they wrote letters of complaint to the KwaZulu Government requesting an end to forced recruitment⁹ and asking that particular Inkatha officials, like Nkehli, be restrained from violating their rights (Focus group interview, Mrs Mthembu’s Group, Mth2#1-3:23). The situation was discussed at council meetings,

... We also talked about it at the Council Chamber and a memorandum was signed. What Inkatha had to say about that was that they had nothing to do with that, meaning they denied that. They claimed self-defence up until the fight took place. What happened then was that the youth could no longer tolerate watching Inkatha raping their mothers, attacking their homes and doing everything silly just because it said that it wanted to destroy the UDF. They then started defending themselves and their parents as well as their property. It was then that violence took place. (Focus group interview, Mrs Mthembu’s Group, Mth2#1-3:24)

But this more gentle way of doing politics was terminated by the violence. Neither the youth of Mpumalanga nor the higher authorities responded to their pleas. The escalation in political violence to a war-situation saw the end of public governance in Mpumalanga Township, and a generational about-turn in determining the politics of the community. The men and women who had been in the MPURA leadership, and were then elected to the Mpumalanga Township Council, were excised from shaping the public life of the community. The youth shaped the politics of the community and politics dominated every aspect of

⁹ This is discussed more fully in chapter seven.

community life - public and private. As the violence increased in intensity township management disappeared along with the rule of law. The township council no longer met and administrative responsibility was assumed by township superintendents who, as the spatiality of the violence shifted, invariably followed the politics of the unit in which they lived (Interview Sishi, Sis1#2-2:1-3).

Nevertheless, some of these 'public' individuals did find ways, outside of the violence, of participating in communal life. Rodger Sishi continued to use his role as 'mayor' of Mpumalanga to try and steer the community back to peace. Rejoice Mcoyi, a prominent business woman and MPURA member became well-known as a member of the Natal Organisation of Women and prominent in the women's protests.

6.2.2 Inkatha and the *oTheleweni* - Conflicts within Inkatha

Many of the older Inkatha members were also not happy with the violent direction Inkatha seemed to be taking. After all, they were also part of a certain tradition of 'doing politics'. Residents of Unit One North, an Inkatha stronghold, had all been relocated from Georgedale, and as discussed in chapter three, had brought with them a certain orderliness of how things should happen. Violent politics controlled by the youth did not have a place in that world-view.

One section of Inkatha under Zakhele Nkehli was propagating the violence, while another group under Mrs Xolo did not support these actions (Luthuli, Amnesty Hearing, Durban, 7 April 1998). Many ordinary Inkatha members agreed with that viewpoint. Mrs Ziqubu from unit one south (see Map 7), giving evidence to the TRC explained that her husband was a staunch Inkatha member and a respected figure in his neighbourhood. At a local community meeting he spoke out, arguing that

... if it is Inkatha who is doing all this [killing people] it means we have to resign from the organisation. (Mrs Ziqubu, TRC Victim Hearing, Pietermaritzburg, 21 November 1996).

Yet, ordinary Inkatha members resident in Mpumalanga were not able to debate

the issue amongst themselves. As part of a wider provincial strategy (see chapter five) in late 1986 / early 1987 covert militarily-trained operatives, later known as the Caprivi trainees, were infiltrated into Mpumalanga. These men, many of them from Mpumalanga, were under the command of Dulaxolo Luthuli¹⁰ who had been instructed by Inkatha General Secretary MZ Khumalo to lead the fight against the UDF. Luthuli's contact in Mpumalanga was Zakhele Nkehli. The Caprivians were further instructed to make contact with the local KwaZulu Police officers and await instructions.

Luthuli was sent to stay in the area under Mrs Xolo with the task of uniting the two factions (Luthuli, Caprivi Hearings, Durban, 4 August 1997, p.27). He felt that the indiscriminate violence was losing Inkatha support (Luthuli, Amnesty Hearing, Durban, 7 April 1998). Nkehli didn't trust Luthuli because of his ANC background and was not prepared to accept his guidance (Luthuli, Caprivi Hearings, Durban 4 August 1997, p.27). After Nkehli complained, they were all summoned by Buthelezi to Ulundi. According to Luthuli the disagreement was not that Inkatha was killing people, but rather the way in which Nkehli was organising it.

... there is a boy in one house, who is a member of the UDF, then people thought that they should go and destroy the entire house. In the evenings people would be forced to go to camps, going to places like Ngoze, if the elders of that house refused to let their children go out at night, that house would have to be attacked, or if maybe that house is

¹⁰ Daluxolo Luthuli, often known by his clan name Madlanduna, was born in the mission area of Georgedale, Mpumalanga. His family, related to the late Chief Albert Luthuli was well-known for its ANC sympathies. His father, Reverend Jafta a travelling preacher, owned land in Georgedale and was a respected figure in the community. Luthuli was a member of the ANC and later its military wing *uMkhonto Wesizwe*. He was trained in the Soviet Union, fought as part of the MK contingent in the Wanki Campaign, was later captured and sent to Robben Island. On his release from prison in the late 1970s he returned home, found his father had become a member of Inkatha and joined as well. In the early 1980s he considered himself to be both a member of the ANC and Inkatha. He claimed that discussions on Robben Island had not identified Inkatha as an enemy organisation to the ANC. (This view is in contradiction to that of Harry Gwala, who in the early 1970s, was warning workers to be suspicious of Inkatha and Zulu nationalist politics.) He travelled, with his father, to Lesotho to make contact with the late Chris Hani and discuss the recruitment of members for MK. In 1985 he became an active member of Inkatha when he was approached to become political commissar of the para-military wing of Inkatha. He accompanied the two hundred recruits to Caprivi where they underwent six months military training (including training in unconventional warfare). On their return he was asked to take on the position of commander as well as that of political commissar. (Luthuli, Amnesty Hearing, Durban, 7 April 1998.)

suspected that maybe the members are likely to be UDF members, then they would be attacked. Sometimes they would be attacked because they are economically well off, maybe people just want to steal from the house. I was just trying to fix such things. ... when I arrived there, Inkatha youth members used to act like they were entitled to killing people. There were cars that were known to the community that if you happen to see that car, you would be killed. Or if there was an attack, they would act that they had the legitimate right to do so. To such an extent that people would be able to identify the people who say killed or burnt down their houses. I then decided that it would be better to do this operation or to carry out this operations in a covert manner. ... They thought that they could do anything and everything in public and in broad daylight. I ... advised them to do things in more appropriate ways. ... I went to the Cabinet meeting because Nkehli had complained that I do not allow for people to be killed. But I did not agree with the manner in which it was being done. (Luthuli, Amnesty Hearing, Durban, 7 April 1998, p.12-13)

These accounts of this early period give a clear indication of the generational struggle that threaded through the political violence. The youth were the new political actors demanding that other youth participate in this new politics. This demand for participation was paramount, surpassing generational authority.¹¹ Even if the elders refused, their authority was not, as is demanded by cultural norms respected. In fact, such refusal was constructed as a reason to discipline a household that did not *hlonipha* the Inkatha leadership (see chapter four) and thus could be legitimately attacked. Waetjen (2006:111-113) citing Campbell suggests that this generational struggle relates to the breakdown of masculine authority within the family and the different way in which men of different generations responded to the ‘crisis of masculinity’.

Other aspects illuminated by this quotation are the modalities of the violence. Luthuli speaks to the intensity of the violence. He doesn’t dispute the aim was to kill opponents; the question was that this should happen in a way that did not easily identify the perpetrators. He also indicates the technologies used in the early period of the violence (killing individuals and burning houses) and makes it

¹¹ Israel Hlongwane’s affidavit to the TRC clearly spells this out these dynamics. He describes how he was accosted by UDF-supporting youth wanting to know why Inkatha supporters were frequenting his home, if as he claimed he was not a member of any political party. His response refers to the house being the domain of his parents and therefore under their control; but this explanation is not accepted (S6, 6 July 1995). Similarly a woman in the focus group (Connie’s Friend’s, describes how she was informed by Inkatha youth that her children should attend a meeting, when she referred them to her husband she was told that they were not interested in talking to her husband (Fri1#1-2:13). Both these incidents are fundamentally against the norms of *hlonipha*.

clear that the youth, on both sides, were the actors in this new form of politics.

While the Ulundi meeting might have cleared the air between Nkehli and Luthuli, it did not persuade all within Inkatha. People were confused and uncertain as to what was happening. Mrs Ziqubu explained how her husband was expected to assist Inkatha. However, his unease at Inkatha's direction led him to eventually distance himself from the organisation.

Things started to happen. I had children, male children. We were now all afraid because of the violence in the place. You could see the children walking around were not safe. They started pointing out families which were supposed to be burned. We were all afraid because of all this. Meetings continued to be held in the place where we were. There was Mr Mlaba¹² at that time. He was the leader during the meetings. As I said before people were all afraid, they didn't know what was happening, but it happened that they elected my husband to be the leader at the area in which we were staying. Men used to go out patrolling the place, especially at night. My husband used to join them in the patrolling process. He decided to stop patrolling because he was afraid that he could be killed at night. ... People used to talk about exactly what was happening, asking, 'Why do we have to leave other people?' And it happened that they stopped patrolling the place. ... [TRC: After that are you trying to tell us that your husband disassociated himself with the watch operations? Did he also disassociate himself from the IFP activities?] --- I don't remember well, but what I know is that he was no longer following the IFP views and policies, but you couldn't say that he was no longer working for them. But he could see that everything was bad, and he could see exactly what was the cause of that. (Mrs Ziqubu, TRC Victim Hearing, Pietermaritzburg, 21 November 1996).

In order to sway this faction, of which 65-year-old Mr Ziqubu was representative, Luthuli embarked on a covert strategy to demonstrate the danger posed by the UDF group. He hoped to convince the 'Inkatha group' of the need to fight UDF.

... I divided the Caprivians that they should infiltrate them in order to recruit the youth, especially in those Inkatha group who didn't see the need to fight or didn't want to fight and also to ensure that if the *Theleweni* people, there is some burning of houses and fighting, they should run to the area of the people who didn't want to be involved in violence action, to create an impression to the UDF people that even the other group, the Inkatha group is also fighting, so when they are attacked they could attack all of them. Therefore because of that arrangement, the peaceful arrangement which was Inkatha, find itself getting involved in the fight. That was used as a strategy to get them involved in the fight and we used the Caprivians to achieve that. (Luthuli, Caprivi Hearings, Durban, 5 August 1997, p.28)

¹² Sipho Mlaba was the Inkatha chairperson from unit one north, Mpumalanga Township. He was to gain a reputation as a fearsome warlord and his car became associated with drive-by shootings. A few months after Nkehli's death he became involved in negotiating a cease-fire and today is credited, together with ANC-leader Meshack Radebe, as responsible for the peace in Mpumalanga. He passed away in mid-2006.

Three organised groups of Inkatha youth operated in Mpumalanga. The first group was organised by Zakhele Nkehli (resident in unit four). Israel Hlongwane (living in unit two south) assisted by Mashonisa Jabulani Hadebe, Mxolisi Bhoxabhoxa Ndlovu, Bhani Khambule and Zakhele ‘Sqothu’ Langa carried out most of the attacks. They had eleven youth under their control,¹³ most of whom came from unit two and unit one north (Hlongwane, TRC Affidavit, S10). The second group fell under Mrs Xulu from Woody Glen. There were five boys in this group, also from Woody Glen¹⁴ (Hlongwane, TRC Affidavit, S16.2). The third group were linked to the Caprivi trainees. They fell under the ultimate control of Luthuli¹⁵ (Hlongwane, TRC Affidavit, S15.1). Not all the Caprivi trainees were used to attack UDF areas, some of the group eg Bongo Msomi, were infiltrated into UDF areas to act as spies (Khumalo, Amnesty Hearing, 11 August 1998, p.44). In these early days the group associated with Zakhele Nkehli was responsible for most of the killings (Hlongwane, TRC Affidavit, S19.1).

Through a combination of subterfuge and intimidation the ‘violent’ *otheleweni* were able to win the day and convince other Inkatha members of the need to eliminate the UDF from Mpumalanga. However, in the process a number of the older Inkatha members withdrew their active support from the organisation. The *otheleweni* led by warlords like Nkehli were youthful both in leadership and membership.

6.3 The Second Spatiality of Political Violence - Targeting the Household

By August 1987 new modalities indicated that the political violence had moved into a new spatiality. The second spatiality incorporated all aspects of the first

¹³ Their names were Bheki Tsanibe, Pang ‘Qabani’ Wanda, Siphiwe @ ‘Guitar’, Zitoto Dlamini, Themba Magubane, Mfanozi Zwane, ‘Silwane’, ‘Ngqovela’, Sifiso Shampanza @ ‘Tsotsi’, Mandla Moshe and Mali Kunene.

¹⁴ They were Nathi Zondi, Bheki Makhatini, Musa Nxumalo, Khehlo Ngubane and Du Ndwalane.

¹⁵ They included Vela Mchunu, Bhabha Khunene, Walter Mthlane, Nathi Sibisi, Thulani Vilakazi, Bongo Msomi, Sosha Khumalo, Zweli Dlamini, Sicelo Ndlovu and Musa Xulu.

spatiality but added new dimensions. The targets of the violence were no longer only the UDF youth. Hlongwane's gang¹⁶ also attacked the family members of these youth and burnt their houses. Furthermore, the political affiliation of other family members was not a protector - it had become irrelevant. Politics had become the firm preserve of male youth and their affiliation determined the affiliation of their families, thus if the son was a Hayco member the whole family became targets.

In this context, women were subject to rape and sexual violence. As chapter four indicated sexual violence was a long-standing strategy in disciplining women. In this spatiality, it now emerged as one amongst the repertoires of violence. These acts were strongly patriarchal in every sense of the concept. Not in the traditional Zulu sense of authority vested with older men – here, it was younger men who were wresting the power to rape women and irrespective of their age – ie again in breach of the generational principle. The rape of women was meant to establish the patriarchal and gender authority of the male youth. Not only did they challenge older men's authority to protect their household, they also violated women as independent beings. Strong taboos in Zulu custom about the killing of women and children in legitimate warfare were disregarded as well as modes of respect that older women could previously have expected from younger men. The traditional ceremony that was held after the KwaMakhuta massacre, where women and children were killed, in order to cleanse those who had participated, illustrates these taboos.

When we arrived there was a goat. Mashubane then said ' Men, I slaughtered this goat so that I can wash you because there the children died and the females, so I actually wash you by slaughtering this goat'. He actually slaughtered this goat and took some medicine and it was like *intelezi* and we're actually supposed to vomit and then we ate this goat. Thereafter we actually went to Matekulu and that was the end of it. (Khumalo, TRC Amnesty hearing, 11 August 1998:10).

The first wave of attacks in early 1987 had resulted in many of the active Hayco

¹⁶ I mention Hlongwane, because he later accepted responsibility for most of the attacks reported in the press during this period (see TRC affidavit, S19.1), furthermore the press reports do indicate that they were the work of the same group.

leadership fleeing Mpumalanga and subsequently the number of incidents decreased. In mid-July Hayco youth began to return home and once again the attacks started (The Natal Witness, 1 August 1987). In late July five youth were attacked, four killed and two homes were destroyed by arson.¹⁷ The Inkatha-linked youth arrived at the homes of these youth, knocked on the door and asked for them, stabbing them to death when they came to the door. If the youth was not there, the family bore the consequences. When Inkatha youth arrived at the home of Mrs Paulina Shabanga they were looking for her son Leonard, as he was not there they abducted her ten-year-old son Jeremiah and set her house alight (The Natal Mercury, 21 July 1987).

On occasion the motive in killing family members was more cynical. As Israel Hlongwane explained in his TRC affidavit the killing of the Hlongwane brothers, Nkosinathi and Thulani (no relation), was to set a trap so that their older brother Sqangi Hlongwane¹⁸ could be eliminated.

In fact, we¹⁹ had been looking for Sqangi for a long time and each time we got to his home he was not there. We often found Thulani Hlongwane who was Sqangi's brother at Sqangi's home. We reported this to Zakhele Nkehli. Zakhele Nkehli told me that the only way to get Sqangi is to do something that would force Sqangi to come home. Zakhele Nkehli then suggested that Thulani should be killed in order to get Sqangi home. We went to Sqangi's house one night on two occasions at about 20.00 and 22.00 and again he was not home. [...] We found Thulani and other family members including his mother, a young boy of about 12 years of age and an infant carried on the mother's back present there. We surrounded the house and I knocked on the front door. When there was no response my friends started demolishing the windows using stones and bush knives. Thulani came out waving a bush knife in a drunken manner. Bhani grabbed him and pinned his arms from behind. Sphiwe asked him where Sqangi was and he only replied by swearing at us. Sphiwe then stabbed him once in the throat area and he fell down. [...] We failed to kill Sqangi because he did not come home to mourn the death of his brother Thulani. [...] We met Thulani's brother when he was coming from Sishi's shop in unit one. It was about lunch time on a clear day, [...] it was about three weeks after we had killed Thulani. We discussed among ourselves that we should kill this brother also in the hope that this may bring Sqangi to the wake [vigil]. We called to him to come to us but he refused. He started running and we chased him. We chased him for approximately 100

¹⁷ Mandla Xaba (18) , Welcome Zulu, Nkosinathi Hlongwane and Thulani Hlongwane were killed and Daniel Selepe (20) was seriously injured. The Shabanga and Hlongwane homes were torched.

¹⁸ Sqangi Hlongwane was a well-known Hayco leader. He was one of the youth who had originally approached Israel Hlongwane asking why Inkatha supporters were visiting his home.

¹⁹ Mdu Zuma, Bheki Dzanibe, Qabane Peng, Wanda Zakhele Langa (his cousin), Bhani Khambule, Silwane, Nkosiymandaba Mkhwanisi, Ngqovela, Mfanozi Zwane, Sphiwe @ "Ghita", Mali 'Nyuka' Nene and Zitoto 'Hwanqa' Dlamini.

metres finally catching him in the road. He had been screaming for help as he ran. People in the neighbourhood just closed their doors. [...] stabbed him a number of times. (Hlongwane, TRC affidavit, S13 & S14).

These and other similar incidents begin to establish more explicitly the repertoires of violence associated with the second spatiality. Groups of armed youth went looking for activists at their house, killing family members in their place if they were not there. Attacks on the homes, families and persons of youth suspected of being Hayco members or even sympathetic to the UDF became more frequent (see Table 6). In many cases these attacks included the rape of the girls and women found in the house.²⁰ For the first time press reports suggested that the ‘gang was heavily armed’, undoubtedly the result of the Operation Marion (see also Hlongwane TRC affidavit, S18). Against this background the cycles of revenge that were to characterise the violence began to emerge.

One of the incidents that shocked the Mpumalanga community (see Focus group Edi1#2-2:2, Mth1#1-2:17), the attack on the Dladla family home in unit one, illustrated these new dynamics. The front door of the house was broken down by Hlongwane’s group, searching for the 15-year-old son. That he had left the family home the previous year because of political differences with his mother, an Inkatha member, did not deter them. They proceeded to gang-rape the mother and her three teenage daughters. Before leaving they demanded money from the 102-year-old grandmother then set her alight, preventing the other family members from rescuing her and thus burning her alive (The Natal Mercury, 21 August 1988).²¹

This incident was recounted by most of the focus groups. Despite everything they

²⁰ The rape that accompanied these attacks is one of the most unreported aspects of the violence. Even the TRC hearings were not able to uncover the full picture. Yet the oral interviews I have done indicate that rape was endemic during the early days of the violence (see chapter seven). It should be noted that this invisibility is not unique, and it is in fact the widespread reporting of the rape of women as in the former Yugoslavia that is unique (see Copelone, 1998).

²¹ There was another attack in unit one the same night. Also looking for a Hayco member, Hlongwane’s group petrol-bombed the house (the Dlamini family), taking up positions outside, they shot at the family members as they fled the burning building.

had seen and heard during the four years of political violence, this incident had stood out and remained in their minds. The act of young men raping older women is enormously significant in understanding the political violence as also including a gender and generational conflict. It can be seen as one of the most subversive attacks on the system of values that underpinned 'Zuluness' – respect for age, otherwise known as *ukuhlonipha*. As discussed in chapter four, while gender violence had long been a technique of disciplining women, these acts of raping older women extended beyond gender discipline. It was a patriarchal technique of violence used to its ultimate effect in a generational battle located in a strongly patriarchal society (see Cockburn, 1998:42-45).

A few days later Hlongwane's gang took revenge on the home of Mr Dlamini in unit three. His neighbour's son, Toto Dlamini (no relative) himself an Inkatha member and compatriot of Hlongwane, had been killed by a member of Hlongwane's gang in a quarrel over a girl (Hlongwane TRC affidavit, S24). Toto Dlamini's mother, after consulting a *sangoma*, had informed Nkehli that her son's death was the result of her neighbour, a 'fortune-teller' and a member of the UDF (Hlongwane TRC affidavit, S25). Nkehli instructed Hlongwane to kill the man. The attack was carried out on the night of Dlamini's vigil. Not only did they execute Mr Dlamini but when the youth entered the house they deliberately threw a petrol bomb in a room where two young children were sleeping (The Natal Mercury, 21 August 1988).

These attacks illustrate two other elements that coasted on the tailcoats of the violence. Accompanying the 'political' violence was theft. Many attacks, as in that on the Dladla household were accompanied by demands for money. Furthermore, there were opportunities for personal grudges to be settled. It was easy to deal with a 'problem' neighbour by labelling them UDF or Inkatha.

Youth who had fled Mpumalanga returned once they realised that their absence did not deter Inkatha from attacking their families (for example see focus group

interview, Mrs Mthembu, Mth1#1-2; interview, MN1#1-2). Upon their return they attempted to protect their neighbourhoods from attack and exacted revenge for the Inkatha attacks.

... at the time when Inkatha raped, our children had ran away to Pinetown.²² That is why they came back from Pinetown to defend. Because they heard that their mothers were being raped, houses burnt, and their fathers killed. ... All that led to their coming back from Pinetown to die now, 'let us fight and die once', they said. (Focus group interview, Mrs Mthembu, Mth2#1-3:27)

These patterns of violence continued for the rest of 1987. Schooling was intermittent as many schools closed or male youth fled. Come end-of-year and many scholars were unprepared or unable to write exams, including matric.

Table 6: Violent Incidents in Mpumalanga Township - Late 1987 ²³

Month	No of Incidents	Deaths	Injury	Arson
September	4	4	1	1
October	3	5	2	1
November	20	17	7	4
December	21	7	12	5

As the months passed the number of incidents increased, as did the deaths (see Table 6). A closer look at the reported attacks enlightens us about the nature of the violence at this stage. During November and December, of the fifteen incidents where the age of the victim was mentioned, all were under thirty, the average age being twenty-one; the sex of the victim was mentioned in twenty-nine of thirty-two incidents, twenty-six of these were male. In nineteen of twenty-seven incidents the incident involved an attack on the victims' house. To recap: the violence involved the male youth and in the majority of cases included an

²² Pinetown was the white municipality next to the black township of Clermont.

²³ These figures are gleaned from newspaper reports. They are limited in that it is likely that not every incident was reported in the press, secondly, while I have tried to eliminate the same incident reported in more than one newspaper, there may be some duplication. Nevertheless, their purpose which they serve well, is to illustrate the increase in the number of incidents.

attack on the victim's house.²⁴

There was very little active policing in response to these incidents. From the beginning of the violence the South African Police and KwaZulu Police were complicit in aiding and abetting Inkatha.

At that time [1987] we had started working in co-operation with a gang of KwaZulu policeman known as *Amakesi*. They drove a light blue Nissan E-20 combi with a Melmoth NO registration ...consisted of Jabulani Makhathini, Khuluse who was also stationed at Mpumalanga ..., I do not know the details of the other policemen but there were enough of them to take up all the seat space in the combi. (Hlongwane, TRC Affidavit, S13.6)

A few arrests were reported in the press, yet when they involved Inkatha members the intention behind them was only to placate the residents.

Van Vuuren [from the SAP] assured them [Hlongwane's compatriots] that they had only arrested me to calm the people down who had seen me at the scene. He said that he would only detain me for a few days and there after I would be released. (Hlongwane, TRC affidavit, S17.6-17.7)

As indicated the technologies of violence changed. Initially those killed were stabbed with knives or spears but very soon guns became the weapons of choice. Responsibility rested with the Caprivi trainees who introduced firearms into the township. Hlongwane's group was supplied with a number of 7.65mm pistols that they shared amongst themselves. They obtained ammunition, as needed, from either Luthuli or the *Amakesi* (Hlongwane, TRC affidavit, S18).

6.3.1 The First Peace Talks

When the Hayco-affiliated youth fled Mpumalanga they found refuge with Archie Gumede (Natal UDF President) in Clermont. Gumede now entered the fray and attempted to mediate peace in Mpumalanga township (The Natal Witness, 11 September 1987). Towards the end of September 1987 discussions were held between Hayco members and Inkatha. Despite their earlier enthusiasm for taking on Inkatha Hayco was eager to end the violence. In contrast to the UDF delegation, which was from Mpumalanga Township, the Inkatha delegates were

²⁴ The increase in incidents from November is likely to coincide with the 'return' of UDF-aligned youth to the township. It should be noted that the discussion in Jeffery (1997:62-67) suggests that there were in fact more incidents than recorded here in the previous months.

based in Ulundi - the national organiser of the youth brigade and representatives from the Department of Communications. None of them were associated with Operation Marion, and thus the talks had little impact.

The peace meetings broadened to include representatives from KwaMakhutha and Pietermaritzburg townships, also engulfed in violence. Finally on 6 October Gumede (on behalf of the UDF) and Musa Zondi (from the Inkatha Youth Brigade) signed a statement agreeing to end the killings (The Weekly Mail, 9-15 October 1987). Yet the ink was hardly dry on the agreement when newly returned Hayco members were chased out of the township by Inkatha members and the attacks and killings continued, with increased intensity in the following months (see Table 6).

Gumede followed up the truce with public statements calling for restraint. Buthelezi's response was to accuse the UDF and its affiliate the Natal Indian Congress of 'keeping black strife alive'. His statements included a personal attack on Archie Gumede (The Natal Mercury, 12 October 1987). Gumede continued his efforts, and delegates from Mpumalanga, KwaNdengesi and KwaMakhutha met with senior Inkatha leaders and KwaZulu MPs (City Press, 18 October 1987).

In early November, the 'peace delegates' met again to discuss progress on the 'cease-fire'. They proposed the formation of a body to monitor the cease-fire (The Natal Mercury, 5 November 1987). The delegates were to meet once more at the end of November. However, in the wake of the mounting body count all attempts at monitoring a cease-fire or talking peace faded away.

6.4 The Third Spatiality of Political Violence - Capturing Territory

During 1988 the spatiality of the political violence shifted once again. By this time the technologies and intensity of the political violence were firmly established. But in this third spatiality the political violence acquired its distinctive

spatial form whereby the spaces of everyday life became re-territorialised. The targeting of households had begun the process of ordering and remaking space. The cleansing and purifying of space by both Inkatha and the UDF resulted in those households that were perceived to have the 'wrong' politics being ordered to vacate the area. Through intimidation and killings, rigid boundaries between UDF and Inkatha areas - of a sort that would have been unthinkable previously - were constructed. Place acquired new meanings and a new identity - they became singular with the only meaning of any importance being who controlled the area. Groups of male youths located themselves in abandoned houses or moved into households near the borders. Their job was to secure these boundaries, to watch out for and repulse attacks.

Instead of focusing on particular households, the objective turned to the capturing of territory. In the process the violence intensified and a wider range of political actors were drawn in. Despite, or perhaps because of, the use of the Caprivi trainees and *kitskonstabels* the UDF were winning the sympathies of the residents. Large areas of the township became known as UDF areas; as Inkatha saw it, they were 'losing the war'. The township became divided into separate geographic zones that were no-go areas for residents who lived in areas known to support the other party (see Map 7). The meaning of these spaces was remade according to political affiliation (see chapter seven where this point is discussed in detail). In the process political affiliation became fixed according to residential area. This had numerous implications for residents' lives (see chapter seven).

In order to boost Inkatha's chances of winning territory special constables attached to the South African police were deployed (see chapter five). This had the immediate effect of strengthening Inkatha's firepower and intensifying the political violence. Women became involved through protesting at the actions of these special constables (see below). Much of the public activity during 1988 concentrated on removing the special constables from Mpumalanga and replacing them with an impartial security force.

**Map 7: Mpumalanga Township Showing Different Sections as Controlled by
Different Political Groups**

Table 7: Incidents Associated with Political Violence in Mpumalanga Township, 1988²⁵

Month	No of Incidents	Deaths	Injury	Arson
January	21	13	11	12
February	5	3	2	1
March	10	4	2	0
April	8	4	7	0
May	6	7	2	0
June	19	8	8	9
July	12	6	10	3
August	22	16	12	3
September ²⁶	23	9	22	3
October ²⁷	48	22	38	27
November	45	47	55	10
December	22	26	15	10

The killings and attacks continued into 1988. An analysis of the reported incidents suggests that the distinctive repertoires and forms of the violence remain unchanged. The victims and perpetrators were still primarily young and male. Most of the attacks took place under cover of darkness, a cover frequently deepened by the deliberate switching off of the electricity supply between 5.00pm and 8.00pm (Sunday Tribune, 28 August 1988). However, the shifting spatialities did mean that the number of women attacked slowly increased over the year - by September slightly more women were reported injured than before. While the victims were still overwhelming male, the number of female victims increased four hundred percent from the previous year. After a drop in the second quarter the figures rose steadily from June, with an enormous increase from October through to November (see Table7). By September the press reported that Mpumalanga was the worst-hit township in the Province (Sunday Tribune, 18

²⁵ These figures are gleaned from newspaper reports. The same reservations apply.

²⁶ Official figures released by police unrest reports (The Natal Witness, 5 October 1988).

²⁷ With the exception of injuries these are official figures released by police unrest reports (City Press, 13 November 1988).

September 1988), which seemed to coincide with the redeployment of the *kitskonstabels*, and an attempt on the part of Inkatha to flush out the comrades and 'regain' the territory lost to them. An incident on 12 November illustrates: a large group of about twenty-five men scoured unit two (a UDF-area) knocking on doors and shouting to the comrades to come out, when they did leave the houses they were blasted with shotguns. In this incident about twenty-five people were shot including five who were killed (The Natal Witness, 15 November 1988).

The Caprivi trainees were still playing an active role in the violence. Bhekisisa Khumalo described the role of the Caprivi trainees in late 1987 and 1988:

... I received an instruction from Madlanduna that now we will actually be deployed at Mpumalanga Police ... we did get those police certificates ... When we were here the work that we were doing was night duties and [indistinct] duties. However at times Madlanduna would actually come and take us to do some other jobs because he told us that we mustn't forget that we are still with him even if we are working with the police. ... At times we used to patrol at night but then we did not patrol the IFP areas, the areas which were filled with the comrades, strongholds of the comrades. At times we would jump off and sjambok them and get them with whatever weapon we had. At times we used to shoot. ... when you arrive and people are in a group where you actually scatter and run away and then you just shoot everywhere and you don't even see who you're shooting, ... there were plenty [of these incidents] ... My aim was to [?], that in these areas, because the areas that were filled with the comrades, is that the comrades mustn't just sit freely and think that because they are on their stronghold they must just sit freely and just do as they please because their freedom means that it was easy for them to plan attacking us but when we actually tamper with them they wouldn't have enough time, they would actually think and be pre-occupied, think about defending instead of attacking. ... (Khumalo, TRC Amnesty Hearing, 11 August 1998:12).

Despite their interventions Inkatha was still under pressure from the UDF, both in Mpumalanga and elsewhere. To combat this, Buthelezi urged that more men were trained (see chapter five). The recruitment of Inkatha-supporting men as special constables, *kitskonstabels* or *oblom* (as they were known in the townships) in early 1988 was in response to these pressures. Amongst those recruited from Mpumalanga were Hlongwane, a group brought by Mrs Xulu from Woody Glen and a number of the Caprivi trainees (Hlongwane, TRC Affidavit, S26). The intensification of violence from June 1988 (see Table 7) was a direct result of the redeployment of the special constables in Mpumalanga.

In February, when the schools reopened the impact of the violence could be seen

in the decreased school enrolment of male pupils. Instead of a fifty-fifty ratio, in most Mpumalanga schools boys were reduced to twenty-five percent of the pupils (Sunday Tribune, 14 February 1988). Furthermore, schools were no longer free of violence. Children were arming themselves, and there was the first reported killing of a pupil at school. At Ukuza High School in unit three men dragged nineteen year-old Vusi Gqaza, of unit two, out of the classroom and shot him dead in the playground.²⁸ The unstable situation in the schools affected all pupils, not only Hayco members (see chapter seven). As a result of the fighting many pupils had not been able, during the past year, to attend school continuously. In the new year they faced difficulties registering at schools in Mpumalanga. Some principals refused to register pupils without an Inkatha membership card. Many of these pupils fled Mpumalanga, hoping to escape the violence and enrol in a school outside the township. There they too faced a number of problems - schools in other areas were already full and were reluctant to admit pupils fleeing from violence-torn areas concerned that they would bring the violence with them.

The distinctive spatialised form of the violence ensured that routes around or across spaces were particularly vulnerable. As both parties demarcated areas as belonging to particular groups so transport routes became contested. In February there were a number of incidents where passengers were dragged from taxis and killed, and taxis ferrying passengers were shot at. The Mpumalanga Taxi Association arranged to meet with Inkatha to discuss an alleged hit-list of 'bad elements who should be eliminated' (City Press, 21 February 1988). By August there were more frequent attacks on bus passengers and vehicles (The Natal Mercury, 8 August 1988; The Daily News, 12 August 1988). In many cases roads served as boundaries between UDF and Inkatha areas. It had also become impossible to travel across an area perceived to be affiliated to the party that wasn't the same as in your own area. Unit one north, unit four and Woody Glen (see Map 7) were perceived as Inkatha areas; unit one south and unit three were

²⁸ This incident is referred to in an interview with Nonto (Nond1#1-2;4). It is cited in chapter seven.

UDF areas; and unit two was keenly contested with small pockets of Inkatha and UDF supporters scattered throughout. Taxi-drivers were forced to find ways to negotiate these boundaries

Taxis from Pinetown were not yet divided at that time. ... If you are from unit three and the taxi goes to unit one first, you must tell the driver that, ... 'let me get out, you will pick me up when you come back'. The drivers already knew that. If you were near Mcoyi they would ask 'Is there no one from unit three who is a comrade?' 'I am here.' 'Get out we will pick you up when we come back'. (Focus group, Mth1#1-2:30-31)

This trend had intensified by October. Mpumalanga's urban design (see chapter three) worked in favour of the UDF and against Inkatha. The UDF controlled those areas of the township through which the main access routes passed and thus were able to control access to the Inkatha areas of unit one north and unit four which lay beyond the UDF areas (see Map 7). Nkehli complained that they were not able to get to work as the through-roads were blocked by UDF areas. The violence, he said, had increased absenteeism 'people were losing their jobs as they were scared to move around freely in and outside of their areas' (Echo, 4 October 1988). In response Inkatha was having to ferry workers to work everyday.

As Table 7 indicates the violence in Mpumalanga intensified dramatically from August/September 1988. In the main UDF youth 'fighting back' were responsible. However, there was also the infamous 'cemetery massacre' where five people were killed and numerous others injured after an Inkatha group of one hundred armed men ambushed a UDF funeral (The Weekly Mail, 12 August 1988, focus group interview, Mrs Mthembu, Mth2#2-3:18). The 'success' of the UDF can be seen both in Nkehli's need to organise a peace rally at Mpumalanga Training College on 9 October and in the UDF's ability to stop and delay the buses bringing Inkatha members from outlying areas to the rally (The Natal Witness, 10 October 1988). By the end of October Nkehli was complaining that the UDF was trying to drive Inkatha out of Mpumalanga. To support his assertion he provided a list of ten Inkatha members who had been killed recently (The Natal Witness, 20 October 1988). In October more *kitskonstabels* were deployed in Mpumalanga to bolster the firepower of Inkatha and ensure that UDF supporters

were driven out.

6.5 Women, *kitskonstabels* and protests

In this situation of escalating violence, where political affiliations and identities were being determined according to residential areas and public life was controlled and defined by young men (see chapters four and seven), women used their gender-specific networks to intervene in an attempt to redefine the terrain.

Women were just as interested as men in the safety of their area, and they undertook whatever action was necessary to ensure this. But they worked differently from men and, in the process, challenged the reconstruction of the street as a site of masculine power relations. Men were interested in protecting the boundaries of 'their area' and if possible expanding them. Women supported men in these activities by providing food, resources for weapons and the like, but their primary activities were aimed at ensuring that the space within these boundaries was safe.

That time we were always alert, you find that whatever is happening women were always outside watching what was happening ... when they're coming to attack us they always shout, 'you must watch out, there they comes', and we run out and we lock our houses and we're in the street. Everything happens, we were outside, and see what's going on ... (Focus group interview, Edith's group, Edi2#2-2:2)

As argued in chapter one, the production of space is imbued with power relations. The territories controlled by either Inkatha or UDF (or the police who moved across these spaces) were also reconstructed as sites of masculine power. Boys – whether Inkatha or UDF – patrolled and guarded the street, challenged strangers to declare their politics, and asserted their gender power by proposing or abducting young women and raping them (see above, also chapter seven). As the masculine protectors of this space they protected the houses from attack, and guarded the integrity of women – albeit selectively. Through their protests, women challenged this construction of space.

There are numerous examples of women using a strategy of surveillance and, through both their presence and their role as observers, trying to limit the violence

around them. They would gather, singly or in small groups, outside their houses to watch what was happening in the street, or at a high point to observe what was happening across the valley in other areas. In these places women often confronted the police over their actions.

In these short moments women challenged the use of the street as a physical place of killing. As Westwood and Radcliffe (1993:22) have pointed out, drawing on the Latin American context, the presence of women's bodies in sites from which they are excluded can in itself become a political act. Women's presence in the street subverted the dominant construction of the space. They provided an oppositional discourse to the power relations within that site, partly by using a discourse grounded in their identity as mother. This was powerful at a number of levels. First, all parties recognised it as an authentic identity. Mothers have a legitimate concern over the safety of their children and so their presence, while subversive, was legitimate and hence unthreatening. Second, it did not overtly challenge gender power relations and present a feminist challenge to the UDF comrades.

Other elements like religion²⁹ and cultural practices were also drawn into the construction of this alternative discourse. To illustrate I present two stories:

Mrs M: I remember one day when we were exposing ourselves³⁰ to the police in the street.

Mrs N: After having arrested a child just because he had come to the comrades' area. ... Then we took off our clothes and we protruded our buttocks at them and we insulted them on the streets. We had turned to be like those people in Saylom. We were like mad people. (Focus group interview, Mrs Mthembu's group, Mth1#2-2:15-16)

Mrs S: I remember one day three white policemen came. ... [T]here was a boy who

²⁹ With its mission background Hammarsdale has always been a strong Christian area, women have always constituted the majority of church members (see Laredo, 1968).

³⁰ She uses the word *sidunusela* which means dropping their panties and protruding their buttocks. Historically this action is associated with Zulu women, they use it to indicate disrespect towards someone or to show that an action is wrong. The historical and cultural context in which this is used is when men are stick-fighting and they continue to beat a man who is down. Women will *sidunusela* to stop this action that is wrong (pers comm., Professor Sihawu Ngubane).

was running away. ... He got inside, closed the door and sat inside. They [the police] ran there running and shouting saying that he got in there, inside that house. ... I asked [in *isiZulu*] the girl who was outside 'did he get here?' and she said 'yes'.³¹ And then one of the policemen who was asking took a gun. ... He took out bullets and loaded it. Then the other one ... when he came he said, 'open here', he told them to open here, he kicked the door saying 'open the door'. I then said that he is asleep because he works at night. He said, 'is he asleep, why doesn't he wake up? Knock hard so that he can get up'. I said [in *isiZulu*] 'you are asleep inside there, keep on sleeping'. He said, 'alright, he does not want to open'. I said, 'he is asleep'. Then he said, 'alright I'll shoot'. 'Wait! Wait! I'm telling Jesus first.' He said, 'alright', he went up near the wall there, he said, 'alright, tell Jesus'. Then I quickly said, 'Oh Jesus come because this man is shooting us! Jesus come now! Jesus come now! Now! Now! I look upon you.' Then I said, 'come and shoot'. And he said 'no'. He came down ... and called the other one who was guarding the window that side. He said, 'come back'. They came back. He said, 'don't shoot'. I said, 'come on work. I'm hot to Jesus. I'm hot to Jesus now, now, now, now. I see Jesus's face face. Come on work. Shoot.' They kicked the door. The boy got up [from the bed] and rubbed his eyes] and they said 'alright, mother move out of the way'. They got out and left. I said, 'thank you lord, oh I'm seeing you now'. (Focus group interview, Mrs Mkhize's group, Mkh1#2-2:14-17)

More directly challenging to these constructions of space and their accompanying gender power relations were women's protests. These were not always part of an organised political movement, but what distinguishes them from the examples described above is, firstly, that they involved a sizable and concerted group of women rather than a single woman or a small cluster acting on its own, and secondly, that the women were taking a grievance beyond their immediate neighbourhood. Through these protests women attempted to both regain control over, and to extend the activity spaces of, their everyday life (see Massey, 1995b:45-85). In the process they created new social relationships and redefined existing ones.

The first intervention in March 1988 was a regional one, involving women from different townships and coordinated by the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW). The regional UDF/Cosatu leadership, who were about to embark on peace talks with Inkatha, had been detained. The peace talks being held in Pietermaritzburg were initiated by Cosatu, the UDF, and the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce. A delegation of approximately fifty women from the townships of

³¹ Here the story-teller shifts between *IsiZulu* and English. When she talks to the girl she uses *IsiZulu*, but when she talks to the police or wants to be understood by them, as when she prays, she uses English

Mpumalanga, KwaNdengezi, KwaMakhuta and Pietermaritzburg presented a memorandum expressing their concerns to the Natal Judge President John Didcott at the Pietermaritzburg supreme court (The Daily News, 2 March 1988). This and other similar interventions organised by NOW impacted upon and fragmented dominant white discourses on the violence, and illustrated that the violence was not only a male issue. While the protest projected women's voices into public discourses about the violence it had little impact on the local spaces of everyday life.

It was the activities of the *kitskonstabels* that pushed the women of Mpumalanga into the public domain, in the first of their ongoing attempts to redefine the terrain of public life in Mpumalanga township. Their actions were governed by local realities and aimed at resolving the situation in Mpumalanga township rather than, as in the earlier protest, 'violence in the Province'. Despite the shifting political terrain and locations of power in the township the women still operated within the 'old frameworks' and directed their petitioning to the township mayor. Their actions continued to provide legitimacy for the township council and the pre-violence structures and networks in a situation where governance no longer had any meaning. To cite the Mayor:

There is nothing my council can do to resolve the conflict. It's impossible. The fighting is taking place under cover of darkness. On the surface everything is quiet and fine, but the next day you hear that so many people have been killed and so many houses have been burnt. In that kind of situation where would you start? (RD Sishi, cited in Pace, November 1988, p.65)

It wasn't long after the arrival of the *kitskonstabels* that a group of women went to see the township mayor Rodger Sishi to demand their withdrawal. They claimed that the *kitskonstabels* were responsible for much of the violence (The Natal Mercury, 22 October 1988). When the promised meeting to discuss the violence in the township failed to materialise, they staged another protest over the *kitskonstabels*. In early November, in an attempt to get the issue addressed, they camped at the petrol garage owned by the mayor, asking him to make an

appointment on their behalf to see the police district commandant. When the police refused the request they decided to seek legal advice (The Natal Witness, 3 November 1988). Within three days five hundred residents had signed a petition for the *kitskonstabels* to be removed and replaced by the South African Defence Force (The Natal Witness, 5 November 1988). According to residents the *kitskonstabels*, described as ‘gangs armed with shotguns’, were conducting a reign of terror against them (City Press, 6 November 1988). The contents of affidavits made to Legal Resource Centre lawyers correlates closely with the description given by Khumalo in his evidence to the TRC (above) (The Natal Witness, 5 November 1988).³² At first the police refused to respond. But after a meeting between the police and the Mpumalanga Township Council on the 8 November, they agreed that twelve of the *kitskonstabels* who had been recruited from the Mpumalanga area itself would be withdrawn. The others, the police said, would stay until Inkatha and the UDF discussed peace (The Natal Witness, 9 November 1988). Despite being a councillor Nkehli did not attend the meeting. Inkatha did not oppose the deployment of the *kitskonstabels*, arguing that there had been a reduction in the violence since their deployment. In response Nkehli held a rally in support of the *kitskonstabels* (The Natal Witness, 10 November 1988). A further irony was that the police were represented at the rally by Major Deon Terreblanche from the Pietermaritzburg riot squad. He was in collusion with the *kitskonstabels* and often supplied them with guns and ammunition.

In spite of the removal of these twelve the intensity of violence in Mpumalanga did not abate, with the press describing it as the ‘bloodiest in the province (The Natal Witness, 7 December 1988). The number of internal refugees leaving Mpumalanga increased. On 15 November a delegation of women from UDF-areas again went to the mayor requesting that *oblom* should be removed and replaced by the SADF. Sishi planned a community meeting at the Mpumalanga Stadium to discuss the issue; it was postponed once and rescheduled for the 4

³² Amongst the official duties of the special constables was guarding the houses of officials, always affiliated to Inkatha, from attack by the UDF-aligned youth.

December, finally never taking place (The Natal Mercury, 23 November 1988). The last week of November was much quieter, with the number of killings and attacks decreasing.

To counter this, Nkehli called a meeting for 11 December at which a petition requesting that the special constables remain in Mpumalanga would be handed over. In defiance of the geographical division of the township and the UDF no-go zones he arranged bus collection points, to pick-up residents for the rally, throughout the township (Echo, 8 December 1988). According to the press the rally was attended by five hundred Inkatha supporters, Nkehli claimed that 13000 had signed the petition (The Natal Witness, 12 December 1988).

The relationship between Nkehli and the *kitskonstabels* was well-known. Many residents living in UDF-areas felt that if Nkehli could be removed the UDF would be able to subdue Inkatha and the violence would end. He invoked dread in the UDF sections of the township, both his powers and *umuthi* were feared and respected which had created an aura of invincibility around him. There had been numerous plans to assassinate him, all failing in the face of his powerful *muthi* (Interview Ngubane, JN1#1-2:12). On 19 December Nkehli was seriously injured after his car came under fire and smashed into an embankment. His sister was killed and his wife seriously injured (The Natal Witness, 21 December 1988). Shot in the neck, Nkehli was paralysed from the neck down. Residents in UDF-areas held street parties believing that he had been killed. In retaliation the UDF-area of unit three was attacked by a large group of Inkatha-supporting youths. A caller to *The Natal Witness* described the situation

Crowds of youths have just run past my front door. The house next door to me is burning. I am not sure if there are people inside. I can hear shooting, plenty of shooting. I am too frightened to go outside. (The Natal Witness, 21 December 1988)

In the aftermath of the attack on Nkehli violence continued unabated. Perhaps emboldened by the success of the attack on Nkehli UDF-youth attacked a number of houses guarded by special constables. But Inkatha also took its revenge. Over

the Christmas weekend six men were killed and another ten people injured in the fighting according to official figures (the mayor of Mpumalanga claimed that the figures were much higher) (The Daily News, 28 December 1988). In an attack similar to the one on unit three, armed men moved through Georgedale (also a UDF-area) shooting and killing seven men. Residents fled taking refuge in a nearby forest (The Natal Witness, 29 December 1988).

Once again women from UDF-areas intervened. About fifty women went to Rodger Sishi, again foregrounding the removal of the *kitskonstabels* and asking him to intercede to achieve this and end the violence (The Natal Mercury, 29 December 1988). Sishi responded by promising that the township council would attempt to bring together Inkatha and UDF, reviving the earlier peace initiative that had been put on hold after Nkehli was shot. He publicly joined the call to remove the *kitskonstabels* and replace them with members of the SADF as a first step towards peace (The Daily News, 29 December 1988). The meeting was cancelled after Mrs Xulu, the newly elected KLA member for Mpumalanga (replacing Nkehli), announced that she had not agreed to participate and that officials from Ulundi were not supportive of the meeting (The Natal Witness, 3 January 1989). Nevertheless, the campaign bore fruit when in early January 1989 it was agreed to remove the *kitskonstabels* from the township (The Natal Witness, 3 January 1989).³³

In these and other protests women were not acting in such a way as to renegotiate gender power relations. In many of these incidents (and others that were to come, see below) women acted through men. It was strategic for them to do these things, it was felt that they would have more chance of success. Outsiders (like senior police officials, attorneys) were seen as more likely to respond to women requesting assistance. Local men were occupied with defence, or else they inhabited the drunken 'don't care' world and would have been useless anyway.

³³ This should be read against the broader discussions between the security forces and Inkatha over the future of Operation Marion (see chapter five).

Mr Z: They [women] had a role, very important role, because they went to places like Durban, Pietermaritzburg. They were mostly worried about policing in the area ... I think they played a very important role. In some cases they won ...

Mrs N: [Mr] Khanyile lived here inside and he could see the situation, but in this area it was not going to be clearly understood if men came with complaints about this area here. He then spoke to the women saying 'women there is this department which can help you when you report that things are like this ... I can go with you and leave you there'. (Focus group interview, Mrs Mthembu's group, Mth2#2-3:9-11)

New social relations of power and exclusion maintained the boundaries of both the Inkatha and the UDF areas. While their construction had challenged patriarchal relations grounded in cultural practices like *hlonipha* (see chapter four) they were still essentially spaces of male power. Women challenged these constructions as well as what happened in those sites, verbally and through their physical presence. Furthermore, through their association with NOW (see below as well) they entered new spatial locations. While in UDF areas older men had become marginalised, the extension of women's role as mother (see above) allowed them to redefine their relationship with the youth.³⁴

6.6 From Defending the Borders to Invading Territory

Mpumalanga township entered 1989 with the reputation as the most unstable area in the province. As in the later half of 1988 much of the public activity of the year focussed on the activities of the security forces, particularly the *kitskonstabels* and later in the year the riot squad attached to the South African Police. Policing of the township shifted from the SAP to the KwaZulu Police, frequently assisted by Major Deon Terreblanche's notorious unit eight of the SAP's riot squad. Women were active in organising and participating in these protests.

Towards the end of the year the modality of the violence changed again. It shifted from being about attacks on individuals and households within a territory identified as belonging to either Inkatha or the UDF to being characterised by battles over territory fought by large numbers of male youth. The availability of

³⁴ The relationship of women, particularly older women to the youth is discussed further in chapter seven.

sophisticated weapons and security force assistance to Inkatha made these battles bloodier. These large battles turned into invasions of the 'others' territory. In some instances women and children were evacuated in advance, and in others, they fled in the wake of the battle. Much of the fighting, particularly towards the end of the year was concentrated in unit three and unit four, as first the UDF 'won over' unit four and then Inkatha fiercely contested this 'defeat'. Georgedale was also the site of continuous violence and unit one south was subject to a fierce invasion (see Map 7).

Alongside these attacks were the efforts to negotiate peace, both at the regional level and local level. By the end of the year, in the wake of these battles, a cease-fire agreement was signed in Mpumalanga.

Table 8: Incidents Associated with Political Violence in Mpumalanga Township, 1989 ³⁵

Month	No of Incidents	Deaths	Injury	Arson	Battles
January	25	6	7	28	
February		26 ³⁶			
March	7	7		1	
April		6+			
May	18	24	7	11	
June ³⁷	19	16	10	7	
July	11	36	3	3	1 - unit two and unit four
August	10	14	3	3	
September	12	13	9	6	
October	20+	46 ³⁸	10	6 ³⁹	2 - unit four & Georgedale, and unit three and four
November	19	24	4	19+	2 - unit three and unit one, and unit three/four
December	5	4	2		1 - unit three

Throughout 1989 the larger hand of the state, through covert activities, machinated behind the scenes in an attempt to ensure the success of the Inkatha-linked forces. In terms of policing support, Inkatha suffered a defeat when the *kitskonstabels* were withdrawn in early January. Initially there was a decrease in the number of deaths, but this also gave the UDF-youth opportunities to attack Inkatha-supporting households (see Table 8). The issue was a political hot-potato

³⁵ These figures are gleaned from newspaper reports. The same reservations about omissions and duplications apply.

³⁶ Official figures (The Daily News, 9 March 1989).

³⁷ Official figures of deaths are 8 and injuries are 13 (The Natal Mercury, 19 July 1989).

³⁸ Official figures of deaths are 30, (The Natal Witness, 21 November 1989).

³⁹ It is impossible to know how many houses were damaged in October and November, some newspapers report that one hundred houses were gutted in the attack on 22 November (The Natal Witness, 23 November 1989), others that 1000 houses had been damaged during 1989 (The Natal Witness, 30 November 1989).

between the two sides. Nqobizizwe Nkehli (Zakhele Nkehli's brother) claimed that since the withdrawal of the *kitskonstabels* fifteen houses had been attacked by the UDF and called for their return. Sishi responded that the number of deaths had decreased, and if the December peace meeting had gone ahead there would have been the opportunity to discuss these problems (The Natal Witness, 5 January 1989).

Once again attempts to 'talk peace' were thwarted. The UDF youth leader Bruce Buthelezi was detained on his way to a peace meeting with Inkatha (Interview, BB1#1-1). The 11 January meeting was cancelled. However, as the situation worsened, both Nkehli and Sishi decided to continue with the talks despite the detentions.

Despite the violence residents' efforts to bring about peace continued. A youth leader from the Pentecostal Holiness Church 'Thy Kingdom Come' organised a twenty-four hour prayer vigil at the Mpumalanga Training College. He distributed pamphlets door-to-door, and said that he

... was shocked at the number of houses that have been burnt down or vacated. Hundreds of people have fled from the area. Houses have no roofs, windows are smashed, doors are gone. It's unbelievable. You see hardly anyone outside. The shops are empty. You used to see Zionists going from house to house, but not any more. (The Daily News, 10 January 1989)

The prayer vigil was attended by only fifteen people. People expressed the view that if they attended they would be attacked. Public meetings were easy pickings. Press reports indicated that since the special constables were withdrawn on 30 December, thirty-five houses had been attacked (for the period 30 December - 9 January) (The Natal Witness, 12 January 1989).

On the 1 February the policing of Mpumalanga was handed over to the KwaZulu Police from the South African Police (The Natal Witness, 24 January 1989). The special constables who were attached to the SAP were to be removed. These

transfers of responsibilities need to be read against the national security discussions. By the end of 1988 serious tensions had emerged between the SADF and Inkatha over Operation Marion (see chapter five). Inkatha was complaining of insufficient support in concealing operatives who were facing legal action, while the South African Police were not prepared to assist beyond arranging bail and then helping to conceal bail-hopping members. As part of the way forward all Caprivi trainees, including those sent for special constable training were demobilised into the KwaZulu Police.

At first, the change in policing had little effect on the violence, with ten people killed in first ten days of February (The Natal Witness, 10 February 1989). However, by the end of the month community leaders were praising the KwaZulu Police, reporting that the violence had greatly subsided and that 'peace is now prevailing in the area' (Echo, 2 March 1989). Strangely enough, Lieutenant Sipho Makhatini, implicated by the Caprivi trainees in assisting them with their covert activities, was the station commander.

The drop in the number of incidents continued into March. However, two incidents towards the end of the month targeted community leaders involved in the peace talks. Firstly, the mayor's son was shot and killed and secondly, Rejoice Mcoyi's house was attacked and burnt down. Themba Sishi had no history of political involvement, and popular opinion suggested that his death was a way to 'get at' the mayor. Mcoyi was a prominent UDF and MPURA member, also involved in the peace talks (Echo, 30 March 1989). Many had thought that the relative quiet was evidence that the violence was over, these incidents showed otherwise.

The state's role in the violence is also demonstrated by the piggy-in-the-middle role played by regular South African Defence Force troops. South African Defence Force troops were used in many parts of the country as part of the state's armoury to quell 'unrest' and they were a key piece of the state's WHAM strategy

including the NSMS and JMC networks. Their role in Mpumalanga also demonstrates the tensions between different groups within the security forces, as well as, between the South African state and KwaZulu government.

At various times SADF troops were deployed to Mpumalanga as one strategy to subdue the political violence. But their power was limited, the SADF troops were obliged to work under the authority of the police. Furthermore, their deployment, was always contested by the KwaZulu government who demanded that they alone should be responsible for security in the area. Moreover, ordinary residents were also active agents, demanding that professional and neutral security forces be deployed. They intervened in their own local way when this didn't happen; organising protests and drawing in other outside groups (eg Legal Resources Centre, Black Sash, other UDF affiliates) to support them and publicise the events.

The events described below evoke the theoretical points discussed in chapter five. Particularly pertinent is the role that the 'struggle from below' plays in state policies and processes, and furthermore, that the contestation of state power, both organised and unorganised, disrupts 'the state's capacity to control its own destiny' (Posel, 1991:21). The power play and dynamics between these different groups 'within' the state security system (ie SADF, SAP, KZP, and more covert forces like military intelligence) enabled those on the ground (both UDF-linked and Inkatha) to find and exploit the spaces in between to their own advantage in this bloody battle.

In early April 1989 following the removal of African SADF soldiers from the township at the request of Buthelezi, there were further attacks (The New African, 9-11 April 1989).

At one stage we were guarded by soldiers who took no risks. Mischief-makers from both sides were punished. It was rumoured that the chief minister [Buthelezi] said they must go because they were not doing their work. ... Women approached soldiers, I was also there, and asked them not to ... At 9 pm we were there trying to prevent them from leaving. We obstructed their way. ... Just a day after they had left, we were attacked, or was it two days later? We were attacked, beaten up. (Focus group, Semelane Group,

Sme2#2-3:30).

Subsequent to their departure, houses were looted and burnt by Inkatha. The Cape Coloured Corps who were deployed in their place were not allowed to intervene without the permission of the South African Police. Furthermore, KwaZulu Police station commander Lt Makhathini, well-liked by the community, was replaced by Lt Ncube. By the end of April the *kitskonstabels* were back in Mpumalanga, in the interim they had been transferred to the KwaZulu Police (The Natal Witness, 26 April 1989). Their return brought more than one hundred women to the Mpumalanga police station in protest.

We women were there. We were complaining about the special constables *oblom*. Because they were killing in broad daylight, shooting people. ... Women were full in the police station that day, we went to the station commander complaining, still complaining, asking the station commander to tell the [unclear] that we don't want special constables. ... Me and Mrs Mvelase were take in and the police said we were ring-leaders. 'How can all these women come to be here?' Because the other women are from unit one, and other from two, the others, some from three and four. 'How could all the location know about the meeting here?' And I went up and said 'me!' [Laughter] I phoned Mrs Mvelase and said tell unit three and four should come to the police station, and I phone Mrs Nene and said tell the women to come to the police station. That's how we all came together here ... (Second focus group interview, Connie's group, Con2#2-2:6-7).

According to the police the *kitskonstabels* had been brought to the township because a big prayer meeting was planned. They were to remain until 'things are back to normal'.

The women were not prepared to leave it at that. They went back to the police station in larger numbers on Thursday, 4 May after a youth in unit four had been killed by the *kitskonstabels*. As with their previous protests, they directed their complaints through legitimate channels of governance consulting with the mayor, Rodger Sishi (The Natal Witness, 6 May 1989). Their complaint was that since the *kitskonstabels* arrived in mid-April violence in the township had once again increased. The following weekend (6/7 May) the women once again marched to the police station. Then they held a press conference, also attended by Black Sash and Legal Resources Centre, where they outlined a series of incidents involving the *kitskonstabels*. Their strategy was successful and the following week it was announced that the *kitskonstabels* had been withdrawn (The Natal Witness, 13 May 1989).

On 6 May Zakhele Nkehli died of pneumonia in Edendale Hospital, he was thirty-two years old. Nkehli's death heightened tensions in Mpumalanga. Inkatha youth patrolled sections of the township, threatening comrades that they were coming later to avenge his death (The Natal Witness, 12 May 1989). Those residents who refused to contribute towards Nkehli's funeral were singled out for attack. His funeral, which in contrast to UDF-funerals had no restrictions imposed, was attended by eight to ten thousand mourners.

Despite regional and national peace talks between Cosatu/UDF and Inkatha in May and June the violence continued in Mpumalanga. Ngobizizwe Nkehli had stepped into his late brother's shoes and was now a member of Inkatha's Central Committee and a member of the Inkatha negotiating team.

The *kitskonstabels* might have been withdrawn but within days they were replaced by the South African Police riot squad. Again they were accused of being partisan. On 22 June about fifty women went to the Mpumalanga police station to complain that they were siding with Inkatha members and involved in petrol-bombing houses. Two of the delegates met with the station commander Lt SJ Ndlovu but when senior members of the SAP riot unit arrived they ordered the women into the police station and told the journalists to leave the area. According to the South African Police the allegations were 'so far-fetched it doesn't deserve comment' (The Natal Witness, 23 June 1989).

By July 1989 the township's units, with the exception of two and four were neatly aligned to either Inkatha or the UDF. However in unit two and four there were

small sections of UDF and Inkatha supporters - sometimes just five or six houses at a time, or different streets ... neither side had been able to oust the other as the numbers were fairly equally balanced ... (Roy Ainslie, cited in The Natal Witness, 19 July 1989).

The sudden surge in violence in mid-July when twenty-five people were killed over the weekend of 16 and 17 July was attributed to this situation (see Table 7).

Amongst those killed was the brother of Rejoice Mcoyi, he was driving her car at the time (The Natal Witness, 18 July 1989). Residents barricaded the streets with car wrecks, fighting took place in the remaining 'mixed' areas of units two and four. This was the first of the battles that was to characterise the second half of 1989. The police, in response, sent reinforcements and established strong-points at strategic places. Women went to the police station threatening to blockade areas of Mpumalanga in order to protect them from attack (Unrest Monitoring Project records). According to Rejoice Mcoyi after the KZP took over the township in February everything was quiet, then they brought in a special unit and the South African Police began to monitor the township, the situation then deteriorated rapidly which was why the women marched on the police station (The New African, 24 July 1989).

Mpumalanga was not the only township to experience renewed violence in July. Reports of a resurgence in violence from most areas neatly coincided with national-level peace talks (The Weekly Mail, 15 September 1989). This led many to question the coincidence. In response senior members of the KwaZulu Police toured the township to review the situation. They launched a crime prevention exercise in Mpumalanga, arresting people on charges of public violence, erecting illegal roadblocks etc. In total eight were arrested (The Natal Witness, 25 July 1989). Incidents of violence decreased in August and September, with the number of deaths back to the three per week average. A review of newspaper reports shows that by late 1989 a broader group of actors were involved; more women were amongst the victims and most of the men were in their thirties. While the youth were still the main activists, no resident could avoid the violence.

In late 1989 Duloxolo Luthuli was once again deployed to Mpumalanga.⁴⁰

The situation was quite bad because Zakhele Nkehli had been killed. There was a vacuum that was left open. MZ Khumalo said I should go and assist there, because the IFP was being wiped out in the area. [My objectives] was to rebuild the IFP by trying to control the attacks, to regain the places or the area that had been taken by the UDF.

⁴⁰ By this stage the Caprivi trainees had been demobilised into the KwaZulu Police (see chapter five).

(Luthuli, TRC Amnesty Hearing, 7 April 1998, p.20)

From early October the death toll began to rise again. The hot-spots were unit four and Georgedale - Georgedale a strong UDF area and unit four still closely mixed. This round of tensions had their roots in a series of incidents in late September. A taxi taking people from unit two to work in Mophela⁴¹ was attacked as it passed through the Inkatha area of unit one north. In response Mophela residents launched an attack on unit one, this was followed by a counter-attack against Zondi's shebeen allegedly by the KwaZulu Police. Community organisations and residents attempted to renew peace talks (The Natal Witness, 22 September 1989) with little effect. Fighting started in earnest in response to the attack on a wedding party at the home of a comrade. The following day (Sunday, 1 October) the comrades retaliated.

... we planned for the whole night to attack unit four, we wanted to do away with Inkatha once and for all. Ja. And that day there was other group that we were waiting for that was supposed to come from a place called Mophela that was going to assist us. And that group never came, it was around eleven in the morning, we said, 'no if they don't come let's go and attack Inkatha'. By the time we came to Inkatha, Inkatha was ready for us. They whistled, they had whistles and then they started shooting. And most of people died in that fighting. (Interview Ngubane, JN1#1-2:14).

On Monday there were pitched battles when 'opposing armies totalling about 800 armed men squared up to resolve the situation (The Weekly Mail, 6 October 1989). Tents were pitched in unit four to house the Inkatha supporters bussed in from other areas to act as reinforcements (The Cape Times, 4 October 1989). Eight people were killed. Groups of armed men patrolled the streets and sporadic gunfire was heard (The Natal Witness, 6 October 1989). By Thursday the situation had quietened, residents began to return to work and some public transport was running. There were allegations of police involvement on the side of Inkatha and residents asked for the army to intervene.

The battle continued the following weekend. Streets were barricaded with burning tyres and running street skirmishes were fought between the comrades in

⁴¹ Mophela, a UDF-aligned area, is an informal/semi-rural area, next to Mpumalanga township, near unit one north.

unit three and Inkatha in unit four. Six more people were killed (The Natal Witness, 9 October 1989). These battles involved all residents, though in gender-specific ways. Women explained their role in these battles.

... on one day, it was a Sunday, we never went to church, we were forced, because the fight had taken two days. It took place on Friday, Saturday up until Sunday morning. We became forced to get up, all of us, girls, mothers and grannies, we were full on the streets and we looked like insane people so that our children can get to sleep and were hidden where they [police] wouldn't even know where the children had been hidden. We were fighting and chasing away the police, making noise, and we blocked the streets, chasing them away. (Focus group interview, Mrs Thusi's group, Thu2#2-3:26)

In response there were three interventions to broker a ceasefire. The first was a meeting between the senior police officers and a group of about fifteen 'prominent' people (including politicians, diplomats, business and church leaders). This was followed by a tour of the battle-zones, hosted by the mayor Rodger Sishi and the township manager. They then met with representatives of both Inkatha and the UDF/Cosatu (The Daily News, 9 October 1989; The Natal Witness, 10 October 1989).

The second was the organisation of a march to the local police station to hand over a petition demanding that the *kitskonstabels* and riot police were removed and replaced with the SADF (The Daily News, 9 October 1989). Thousands of people⁴² participated in the march, organised by local UDF leader Noel Ntseli on the 10 October. After a rally at the stadium, they delivered a petition asking for the policing of the township to be returned to the KwaZulu Police. UDF residents claimed that KwaZulu Police stood by helplessly while the South African Police assisted Inkatha (The Daily News, 11 October 1989). The march led by Sishi was also attended by other UDF affiliates, including the Natal Indian Congress and the Black Sash.

A third intervention, far more tentative and low-key than the others was an attempt to arrange peace-talks at ward level. A local peace committee - the Mpumalanga Joint Committee of Inkatha and UDF - had been set up the previous

month (Sunday Tribune, 15 October). Headed on the UDF side by Noel Ntsele, a personnel officer with a Pinetown firm, and by Ngobizizwe Nkehli on the Inkatha side they were not able to defuse tensions. While the battles might have ended, the incidents of violence and murder continued to be high.

In late November war broke out again.

On Saturday 18 November 1989, after the large Inkatha meeting at Kings Park, a large number of Inkatha supporters came into the township, and began a violent campaign against people in unit four. A number of people were killed over the weekend, in unit four.

On Monday (20 November) the Inkatha people moved their attention to ward nine of Mpumalanga. (Affidavit, Richard Ndlovu 24 November 1989)

This was preceded by a security force operation in ward nine (unit three) where about sixty young men were detained (The Natal Witness, 23 November 1989).

The operation was followed by the attack on ward nine where a large number of houses were damaged (The Natal Witness, 23 November 1989). Five days later unit one and unit three, UDF areas, were the site of more attacks (The Natal Witness, 28 November 1989). A group of people from Woody Glen, together with some of the special constables moved into the lower part of unit four (now aligned to the UDF) and began to attack people in the streets. Many of the residents fled towards unit three. When police arrived the attacking group split into four, with one section advancing into unit three. Houses were attacked and hundreds of people, particularly women and children fled leaving the streets deserted. In a now all-too familiar pattern there were allegations of South African police involvement on the side of Inkatha. And accusations of looting by all parties. Lawyers from the Legal Resources Centre were asked to assist in obtaining interdicts against the police (The Natal Mercury, 29 November 1989).

On Monday 23rd November 1989, a group of Inkatha supporters in a white kombi and a red car were driving around ward nine, carrying guns and shooting at people in this ward. I saw two vehicles and saw the occupants carrying pump action shot guns and others carrying hand guns. A number of people have been killed by these men since Monday 20th November. ... While this shooting and killing was taking place on 23rd November, the South African Police were standing by in two hippos and two yellow four-wheel drive vehicles. The vehicles were parked on a football field in ward nine. I saw the police standing next to their vehicles watching the Inkatha people, armed with guns, chasing people past the police vehicles down the road. The police took no steps to intervene ... (Affidavit, Richard Ndlovu 24th November 1989)

⁴² Estimates in the press vary from five or six thousand to twenty-five thousand.

According to Inkatha the attacks were a result of the UDF setting up roadblocks to stop them passing through UDF areas on their way to work (The Daily News, 29 November 1989). Sipho Mlaba, Inkatha branch chairman from unit one north, claimed that a group of about sixty UDF youth attacked his area. According to him, UDF-youth had set up roadblocks and were taxing people R2 or R5 to pass through (The Natal Witness, 29 November 1989). These incidents provide some insight into the balance of power in the township. Despite the assistance of the *kitskonstabels* and the South African Police, the UDF-youth controlled most of the township. Two small areas, unit one north and a small section of unit four, around Nkehli's house, and Woody Glen were still aligned to Inkatha. However, access into and out of these areas was controlled by the UDF, and they were slowly tightening the noose making it difficult for those living in the Inkatha-areas to get to work, obtain food and even bury their dead (see Map 7).

Much of the fighting on Monday 27 November happened in unit three. It started in the early morning when a crowd tried to stop commuters catching buses for work. A group from unit four then invaded unit three setting houses alight and attacking people in the street (The Natal Witness, 29 November 1989). Some houses in unit one south were also attacked. The next few days were chaotic as houses were looted and burnt, large groups of Inkatha *impis*, supported by the South African Police, moved through the streets shooting randomly, and people fled or milled about at vantage points watching the township for renewed outbreaks of fighting.

I was in my house [in unit four] at about 1.30pm on 27th November 1989, when a large group of black men armed with bush-knives, sticks and spears came to my house. They broke the windows with sticks and smashed the kitchen door. They entered the house and began removing my goods. (Affidavit Constance Mkhize, 28 November 1989)

I was walking back from work to my home [in unit three on 27th November] and I saw a group of white policemen on foot with some special constables walking the streets of ward seven. They numbered about thirty - forty altogether, perhaps more. They were carrying long pump action shot guns. They were shooting randomly at any young people on the streets, ...after they shot the people, they left them lying in the street. (Affidavit Monica Ntanzu, 28 November 1989)

At 8.30pm on the 27th November I was inside my house [in unit one south], when a petrol bomb was thrown through the window of my house. Part of the kitchen was burnt. I ran out of my house and I saw a group of white policemen and special constables dressed in blue uniforms standing in the yard of my house. They were watching as the house was burning. Once they saw that the house was burning, they moved to the next house ... that night nine houses in my road were burnt. (Affidavit Hamilton Molefe, 28 November 1989)

I was in my house this morning between 8 and 9am today - 28th November 1989. The Inkatha members dressed in blue came to my house. There were many, all men. It started yesterday. They took a sideboard, a TV, six dining-room chairs, a big radio. This was at about 12, 12.30pm. They took all my washing off the line ... They smashed the big windows. They left at about 1.30 having been in and out several times. They carried all my belongings away. The house was surrounded by white policemen. One stood in the doorway with a gun. ... They came back today ... (Affidavit Ida Ngubane, 28 November 1989)

No buses and taxis operated and residents did not go to work. Nine of the fifteen thousand strong Hammarsdale workforce did not report for work during this period (The Daily News, 30 November 1989). The violence was still continuing on Wednesday (29 November) - telephones were out of order, businesses were closed, there were power cuts, transport was still not running and residents were loading what they could onto private vehicles and leaving the affected areas (The Natal Witness, 30 November 1989).

A crowd of about 200 gathered on the top of a hill outside Mpumalanga KwaZulu Police Station and watched as a horrific scene of violence unfolded in unit three and unit four in the valley below. At 11.30am a group of about 100 people were seen running down into the valley. They swarmed into streets where SAP vehicles were seen patrolling. The sound of gunshots could be heard sporadically for about twenty minutes. ... (The Natal Mercury, 29 November 1989)

The attacks continued until Friday (1 December) with large groups from unit one and four fighting in unit three.

As a result of the residents' affidavits (see above) the Supreme Court granted two interim orders restraining the South African Police from assaulting, threatening, harassing, intimidating or conducting themselves in any unlawful manner towards four Mpumalanga residents and their families and property (The Natal Mercury, 2 December 1989). On the 29 January 1990 these interim orders were confirmed (The Natal Witness, 30 January 1990).

Workers began to return to work on the 1 December. The South African Police were withdrawn and replaced by the SADF (The Natal Witness, 2 December 1989).

6.6.1 A Cease-fire is Signed

On 30 November 1989 Inkatha and UDF leaders in Mpumalanga signed a cease-fire agreement (The Natal Mercury, 2 December 1989). The agreement included the appointment of a monitoring committee to investigate any violation of the agreement, and they committed themselves to further peace-talks to rebuild the community.

James Ngubane, vice-chairman of the Textile and Allied Workers Union was a key figure in initiating the cease-fire. The initiative was in response to increased tensions on the factory floor and the real possibility of violence in the workplace (The Daily News, 18 December 1989). The first meeting had been in early October.

We invited all union shop stewards to come to the meeting. It was my first step. In that meeting with the shop steward we decided to invite two leaderships, leader from the UDF and the Inkatha. We struggled to get leadership, as I said from the UDF. But at a later stage Boy Majola and Majoyce Mcoyi and that Reverend Ngcibi came forward as leaders of UDF. We signed a cease-fire agreement and the cease-fire agreement was communicated to people in the township and they were happy, there was a *toyi-toying*, becoming very happy about the peace process. (Interview Ngubane, JN1#2-2:1)

Industrialists from the Hammarsdale area, particularly the South African Nylon Spinning factory where Ngubane worked were also involved in the initiative.

Connie Myeni, a community leader from unit one south described how she was drawn into the peace meetings.

... on that day Johnson Dladla, who is manager for Hammarsdale taxis, he just came to me and said 'Samson is called you, he said I must come and fetch you.' I said, 'why?' And he said, 'no, come with me, you will know when we get there'. I just changed my clothes and got into a combi and we left. When we came there, Inkatha members were full there. There was a white man called Steve Simpson, from the IFP, he is the one who brought us together. He brought us together in a neutral venue so that we could talk peace. ... At Spinlon we revealed our secrets and what we used to do to each other. (Focus group interview, Connie's group, Con1#1-2:10)

Attempts to bring about peace signal the intergenerational tensions that existed in

the UDF-aligned areas. It is notable that youth leadership were not amongst those drawn into this process. On the one hand, it needs to be acknowledged that many amongst the youth leadership were in detention, Bruce Buthelezi being but one example (Interview, BB1#1-1). But on the other hand, many amongst the youth now had vested interests in the political violence. They were not prepared to give up until Inkatha was totally defeated – they had dropped out of school, and dedicated the past four years to fighting Inkatha. In the process, they had acquired power and status in the community. Political violence affirmed a particular type of masculinity that had flourished during the last four years. To cite, Xaba (2001:110)

Being a ‘comrade’ endowed a young man with social respect and status within his community. Being referred to as a ‘young lion’ and a ‘liberator’ was an intoxicating and psychologically satiating accolade.

Furthermore, amongst the comrades were the criminals who used the anarchy to further their acquisitive aims. Those who initially came forward to discuss peace were the ‘old guard’, older men and women who had been at the forefront of the community prior to the violence or those whose class and/or economic position was threatened by the violence.

On Monday 4 December workers in Hammarsdale, Pinetown, New Germany and Kloof stayed away from work to mourn the deaths of people in Mpumalanga and to protest at the presence of the South African Police (The Natal Witness, 5 December 1989). The stay-away organised by the union had one hundred percent compliance.

The Peace Committee held its first meeting held on Monday 4 December. At first those involved did not want to be named, the Inkatha team included Victor Dladla (chair Inkatha youth brigade), Frans Bamba, Siphon Mlaba, branch chairman and notorious warlord from unit one north and his brother Eugene Mlaba. They set up a committee to investigate the rebuilding of houses (The Natal Mercury, 6 December 1989). The Reconstruction Committee met again on 18 December. Hammarsdale industrialists had pledged financial assistance to reconstruction and

they had also enlisted the aid of the Urban Foundation. It was decided to do a quick socio-economic survey to ascertain the reconstruction needs.

Residents, concerned that the different sides would still want revenge, were sceptical that peace would last. However, by the end of January 1990 the agreement was still holding and no incidents had been reported (The Natal Mercury, 23 January 1990). The maintenance of peace was assisted by the SADF who had established strong-points on the dividing lines separating the territories (The Natal Witness, 23 December 1989).

6.6.2 Violence Erupts Again

The first few months of 1990 were taken up with attempts to contain the violence and maintain peace. Newspaper accounts suggested that the local leadership, perhaps with the exception of Nqobizizwe Nkehli, worked hard at this. In April the township once again imploded with invasions of the UDF-areas of unit four and three. Thereafter with much of the township deserted violence declined. The recognition, by the local role-players, of the part played by covert security force activity allowed the peace process to regenerate itself. This time peace was firmly on track and by early 1991 the situation had normalised sufficiently to allow refugees to return.

Many of the themes of the previous year's violence were present in this period. The major issue was 'battles' over the policing of the violence - the partisan role of the South African Police and *kitskonstabels*, calls for the deployment of the SADF, and women's protests. As in the latter part of 1989 the form the violence took were the large-scale attacks on UDF areas. There were a number of groups that actively worked against the establishment of peace, some have labelled these *com-tsotsies*, however, in the light of Luthuli's evidence to the TRC they could have been third-force military intelligence agents.

There were no reported incidents of violence in Mpumalanga until the end of

January 1990, when police found the bodies of a man and a woman (The Natal Mercury, 30 January 1990). The outbreak of violence followed in the wake of the withdrawal of the SADF. On Sunday, 3 February only hours after the SADF were withdrawn about thirty armed vigilantes from Woody Glen attacked houses in ward eleven of unit four (now an UDF area). Most were vandalised and looted, and three were gutted by fire. Allegations were that the vigilantes were supported by the SAP (The Natal Witness, 6 February 1990).

In response the peace committee condemned the violence and committed themselves to resolving the situation. It was agreed that the leaders, Nkehli of Inkatha and Willis Mchunu a Cosatu leader from outside Mpumalanga, 'would be seen in public together in a bid to show residents the accord is working' (The Daily News, 7 February 1990). On Wednesday, 7 February defence force troops were brought back to Mpumalanga.

Still it was not possible to contain the violence. On Saturday 10 February four people were stabbed to death when a group attacked their vehicle (The Natal Witness, 12 February 1989).

The only problem started when this car was attacked by a few guys from the UDF who were opposed to peace. ... They started the violence again. ... They didn't want peace, they wanted violence to go on, I think they were getting something out of it. And then after that fight. The fighting was now concentrated in unit three. The rest of the township was peaceful. (Interview Ngubane, JN1#2-2:1)

In the wake of Mandela's release on 10 February 1990, renewed fighting broke out in the province and Mpumalanga was not spared. At least ten men were killed in various incidents over that weekend (The Natal Mercury, 13 February 1990).

While most of the UDF-youth were at the funeral of one of their comrades Qina Nzimande attacks were launched on unit three and four by Inkatha members from Woody Glen (The Natal Witness, 13 February 1990; The New African, 19 February 1990). The fighting continued over Sunday and Monday with residents staying away from work. Both parties blamed each other for the resumption of violence, according to Inkatha it resulted from the Saturday attack on the car

belonging to their supporters, while the UDF claimed that Inkatha started the trouble by attacking their territory on Sunday killing nine people (Sunday Times, 18 February 1990).

This time the SADF could not to be relied upon, they were only allowed to support the South African Police and hence were required to take a SAP member with them on patrol. Their involvement had to be at the specific request of the police (The Natal Mercury, 15 February 1990). Residents were also concerned that, unlike previous deployments, all the troops were white (The Daily News, 13 February 1990).

Nqobisizwe Nkehli organised an Inkatha rally on an empty piece of ground between Woody Glen and Ward 10 (unit four). The choice of venue illustrated the limitations of Inkatha's spatial control of Mpumalanga township. Controlling small sections of the township, they were no longer able to command the stadium for their meetings. Newspapers estimated the meeting was attended by between five and eight thousand people (The Natal Mercury, 14 February 1990, The Daily News, 14 February 1990). The outcome was a decision to suspend their involvement in the peace talks with the UDF. The UDF delegation had been replaced at least twice, this they felt was an indication that they was not honouring the peace agreement. A few days later in an announcement suggesting divisions within Inkatha, Sipho Mlaba from unit one north proclaimed that the peace talks were back on track. According to Mlaba the

decision to suspend was taken hastily and emotionally. He slammed Nkehli's suspension of the talks, saying that 'people who run away to Ulundi the moment the fighting intensifies are not acceptable to the community'. (The Natal Mercury, 19 February 1990).

Despite the violence, at some point in 1990, the 'old Inkatha' began to reassert itself against the '*othelweni*'. Mlaba, originally associated with the 'Inkatha faction' and then aligned with Nkehli to become a feared warlord, began to organise to end the violence. Some claimed he was a realist, who recognised that

Inkatha areas were cut-off and marginalised with even personal survival threatened (Interview Thoko, Tsh1#1-2). Luthuli claimed it was his influence.

When we were at Mlaba's house, I then said to him that it is clear that the war is not just between the IFP and the ANC. I told him that from what the Major [Paul Berry] had been saying, it is clear that the Military Intelligence was behind the attacks. They were responsible for killing the members of the ANC or the IFP or the UDF. In the process they were using us, to kill each other. I then advised him that we should go speak to the UDF leadership, because we had heard that we are being destroyed by the Military Intelligence. We then did so. By then we embarked on a peace initiative. (Luthuli, TRC Amnesty Hearing, 7 April 1998, p.21)

The UDF held a rally in Mpumalanga on 20 February, which was addressed by senior Natal UDF and Cosatu leaders. The message for the youth was that violence was not part of the UDF agenda. The Inkatha and UDF/Cosatu peace talks continued the next day (The Natal Witness, 21 February 1990). This was followed by a visit from Walter Sisulu on Friday 23 February. As with the other high-profile visitors, it went through the official channels of local government. Mayor Rodger Sishi hosted the visit (The Daily News, 24 February 1990). However, in his speech Sishi acknowledged the powerlessness of his position and the council

... the township was now ruled by youths: 'They have taken over. You know, children are very powerful, they can direct their parents and that is what has happened. They are now ruling this township and I think this is the trend all over.' Parents are scared, he said: 'Because these little things are violent. You know, when they say they're going to burn you down, they burn you down; when they say they'll kill you, they kill you. They have their own committees and the parents submit to their discipline.' (Sunday Tribune, 25 February 1990).

Despite the power of the youth some of the older people who had played a role in shaping public life in Mpumalanga prior to the violence continued to contribute. The peace process bolstered their legitimacy. One such person was the mayor Rodger Sishi. He used the mantle of his office, empty as it might be, to mediate between the residents (predominantly women) and the authorities. In a sense he provided a conduit for non-violent methods of containing the violence. A second person was Rejoice Mcoyi. She played an active role in the peace process, acting

as spokesperson and making public statements on a number of occasions.

In March Mandela paid his first visit to Durban and addressed a large rally at Kings Park Stadium. Despite his call for ‘weapons to be thrown into the sea’ sporadic killings continued in Mpumalanga. The fighting intensified in the second week of March with attacks on Inkatha homes in unit one north, including that of the Inkatha chair Siphso Mlaba (The Natal Witness, 8 March 1990). There was also fighting between the squatter area of Mophelo (a UDF-area) and the more rural area of Mjobokazi. Residents from unit one north were not allowing people travelling from Mophelo to pass through their area. Other sections of the township were quiet. The local peace committee were concerned that the continued fighting would jeopardise the peace talks (The Natal Witness, 8 March 1990).

The Mpumalanga Branch of the Natal Organisation of Women, organised, in conjunction with the NOW central office, an all-night peace vigil on Saturday 10 March at the Roman Catholic Church in Mpumalanga. Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, chairperson of NOW recalled,

I remember being so aware of the pain of living under that situation of violence. ... We felt we had to do something. And we weren't very brave about it. (Interview Madlala-Routledge, NM1#1-2:3&4)

Many, including women and children had been killed during the large-scale attacks in February, and thousands others had fled as refugees. While at one level the vigil was about solidarity with the women of Mpumalanga, it was also about reclaiming the space from which they had been ejected.

... most of the women were not staying in their homes, they were staying in ... Pinetown, its Anglican church. We wanted women to go back to their homes. And we wanted children to go back to school. ... And some of the women could not bury their own kids because they could not go back to Mpumalanga, we wanted to be able to bury their kids, to be able to go back home and rebuild their houses, and also the children to go back to school. (Interview Phozo Zondo, Pzondo1#1-1:5)

An additional objective was to bring women together across political parties for peace. Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge referred to Mandela's call for women ‘to begin the work of bringing peace to Natal’ (The Daily News, 9 March 1990).

Among the women we had in NOW, a lot of them were church-going and the concept of prayer for peace had been part ... of the organisation. One of the organisation's strategies ... in fact the initial idea was that church is where women met from across the political divide. (Interview Madlala-Routledge, NM1#1-2:3&4)

This discourse, familiar to members of NOW, was somewhat different from that which characterised the other protests that had been organised by women in Mpumalanga.⁴³ Three hundred women attended the vigil; with other NOW branches also participating. Rodger Sishi, the mayor, welcomed them. During the evening women recounted their experiences of violence, it ended with an interdenominational service on Sunday morning (The Daily News, 9 March 1990).

The situation in Mpumalanga was still very tense. On the same weekend four people were shot and killed. Buses were shot at and four drivers had their vehicles hijacked resulting in KwaZulu Transport suspending its services. Attacks into unit three from Woody Glen continued. A number of unit three residents, amongst them local UDF-leader Noel Ntsele, received threatening phone calls ordering them to leave their houses (New African, 12 March 1990). Unexpectedly the SADF which had been acting as a buffer between unit three and four and Woody Glen was ordered to withdraw from Mpumalanga. Residents, predominantly women, gathered at their camp to plead with them not to withdraw. While negotiations were underway they were shot at by a busload of Inkatha supporters.

While we were still meeting at the grounds a car came. This car was a lookout car. After that it was followed by the bus, and people inside the bus opened fire seeing that there were women. Fortunately when they were shooting the police sergeant was there and he told us to lie down. The Captain instructed others to shoot at those people who were shooting us. The bus was destroyed by the shots, Inkatha people who were there were injured and others who were lucky enough managed to escape (Focus group, Edi1#2-2:8).

6.6.3 The Last War

In April 1990 Pietermaritzburg was engulfed in what was to become known as the 'Seven-Day War'. Thousands of Inkatha supporters were mobilised and in a well-

⁴³ NOW had been involved in other similar activities eg the Chesterville women's vigils (see

organised operation they attempted to clear the Edendale valley of UDF-supporting residents (Aitchison, 1991). At the same time Mpumalanga was subjected to similar attacks.

On Wednesday 4 April 1990 two youths were shot dead at Chief Luthayi High School in unit four. The following day it was reported that South African Police patrols had come under fire. The situation became more serious when on 6 April 1990 unit three once more came under attack. While the attacks were spearheaded from Woody Glen, it was claimed that the *kitskonstabels* were also involved. The death-toll mounted rapidly according to the press, from five, to fourteen and then to at least eighteen in four days (The Sunday Tribune, 8 April 1990), and close to one hundred houses were gutted. The comrades decided that it was too dangerous for the women and children to remain and they were sent from the area (The New African, 9 April 1990). An estimated two thousand fled (The Daily News, 7 April 1990). Allegations were made of security force complicity in the attacks

... I peeped out of the window and saw KwaZulu Police patrolling the streets in their vans, flashing their guns brazenly. The South African Police were doing the same. ... About 15 minutes after I heard the gunfire calmness had returned. I walked out of the house to assess the damage. Children - milling around in the streets - were recovering from teargas smoke. Then all of a sudden, I saw the Inkatha impi - they must have numbered between 200 and 300 - running down the mountain from Woody Glen, an Inkatha stronghold, into unit three and unit four, which are known to be UDF strongholds. All the people, from the youth to the old, began fleeing. ... Together with activists, I rushed out of the area and we secured a vantage point for ourselves. ... The Inkatha impi moved in. The SAP, the ZP and the South African Defence Force stood by and watched. Some 45 minutes later, the impi withdrew ... I saw them looting furniture, television sets and other belongings. In a closer investigation, I found some of the homes had been petrol bombed. (The New African, 9 April 1990)

Beall et al) and had organised other women's activities for peace eg Umlazi Peace March.

On the Monday following these attacks (9 April 1990) Cosatu called a provincial-wide stay-away to protest police action, not only in Mpumalanga but Pietermaritzburg as well (The Natal Mercury, 10 April 1990). Two days later a mini-bus was attacked and five people killed. Thereafter press-reports cease. In the wake of the April attacks units three and four were deserted, the residents who had fled as refugees did not return. There were renewed attempts to put the peace-talks back on track.

... the fighting was now concentrated in unit three. The rest of the township was peaceful. Ja. That's where Dr Radebe came in. Ja. He came in and intervened and there was peace again. He started by prayer meetings which were organised by the Reverend Madlanduna, Luthuli from unit, he has got a shop in unit three. He started going with, some other churches, going right around, making prayer meetings. In the prayer meetings one would stand up and speak against the violence. That is how people felt in the area, that there was a need for peace. And when those Inkatha people were also for peace. So they make a deal to come together and fight the *com-tsotsies*. So when the *com-tsotsies* were fought then the peace came into existence. People who were against the peace were the *com-tsotsies*. (Interview Ngubane, JN1#2-2:1)

According to Luthuli, friendships which somehow had survived the violence reinforced these initiatives (Luthuli, TRC amnesty hearing, 7 April 1998, p.21).

The people who were responsible for the initiative were Mr Mbambo from the IFP who had a funeral parlour in the area and his friend Boy Maqinga Majola, those are the people who started the peace initiative because they were friend. ... we told Mbambo that he should keep Majola with him, because we were also wanting to talk to him. Whilst they were busy with discussions, we also arrived. Majola was surprised to see us here but he trusted me because he is actually an uncle of mine. He asked me if we were there to kill him and I told him that we were there to discuss or to add on to the discussions, and he complained that he was the only one from the ANC or the UDF camp, but we explained ourselves. He then said that he should go and consult his colleagues. He did try, although it was difficult because some of the people were not prepared to accept this initiative. But Sipho Mlaba and Meshack Radebe managed to carry this through, although it was difficult.

According to Radebe they sat down in six-a-side teams to try to bring about peace (Echo, 18 April 1991). Ngubane explained that the power of the 'peacemakers' had a positive effect on the process.

Cause Majola and [?] was also estranged because other people wanted to go back and Majola was very brave. He was not scared of anything. And he had boys, who were very powerful, ja. Some of his boys were involved in this cash transits business, so he was a big man. (Interview Ngubane, JN1#2-2:2)

On 2 July a national stayaway over the violence in KwaZulu and Natal was called. Barricades were erected in Mpumalanga (Echo, 5 July 1990) but overall it was a

peaceful event. Both Inkatha and the ANC had endorsed the South African Council of Churches nine-point code of conduct. Three deaths were reported during July. All Caprivi trainees had been transferred to the KwaZulu Police by June 1989. In mid-July some of the special constables who had been recruited from Mpumalanga returned, this time in the uniform of the KwaZulu Police (Echo, 26 July 1990).

The Caprivi trainees, falling under the KwaZulu Police since June 1989, were removed from the township.

After the peace initiative in Mpumalanga MZ removed me from there and said that because there had been peace, there are still areas that were under siege, therefore I had to go and try to fix things in those areas, like eSikhaweni, Inkatha was being wiped out there, therefore I should go there to assist. (Luthuli, TRC amnesty hearing, 7 April 1989, p.22)

The death toll in Mpumalanga township was dramatically reduced. Three deaths were reported during July, nothing in August and a few more in September. Attacks focused on the rural areas adjoining the township for example Njobokazi and Mopela where there were attacks in early August 1990. Again there were allegations of KwaZulu Police involvement (The Natal Witness, 3 August 1990).

The efforts to promote peace in Mpumalanga were bolstered by the visit of a joint delegation of Inkatha and ANC leaders in October (The Natal Witness, 26 October 1990). Prominent in the Inkatha delegation was Nqobizizwe Nkehli, now living in Ulundi. Yet there were still elements interested in sabotaging the peace efforts. First Reverend Walasi Ngcibi, a UDF-member of the Peace Committee, was assassinated in Clermont (The New African, 29 October 1990). Then on 12 December 1990 Rejoice Mcoyi was shot dead (The Natal Mercury, 13 December 1990). Mcoyi aligned to the UDF and a key community figure from the days of MPURA, was also a member of the peace committee. She had embarked on a campaign to weed out the *com-tsotsies* in the township and had been warned by youths that she was a target. Her death, attributed by the Black Sash to in-fighting amongst the ANC resulted in revenge attacks and a twelve more people were

killed (Black Sash Bulletin, no 16, p.2).

The peace continued to hold in 1991. Inkatha and the ANC embarked jointly on campaigns to build peace. On 9 February 1991, following a meeting between Mandela and Buthelezi, a joint peace rally was announced in Mpumalanga. The rally, attended by more than two thousand people, was held on Saturday 18 May (The Natal Witness, 20 May 1991). Appeals were made to refugees to return to the area and to begin to rebuild the community. Regular meetings were held between Inkatha chairman Sipho Mlaba and ANC chairman Meshack Radebe. Officially all no-go zones had disappeared and schools and community facilities were open to all (The Daily News, 9 February 1991). However, it took some years for residents to feel comfortable going into an area that had been controlled by the other side.⁴⁴

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has a number of purposes. Firstly, it provides a detailed narrative of the political violence that engulfed Mpumalanga township from the mid-1980s until the early 1990s. In doing so, it maps and plots the details of the events that took place. As such, it provides a rich and textured backdrop against which the broader arguments can be understood and evaluated. In doing so it also demonstrates the importance of locality to an understanding of broader macro-political events. On the one hand, its dynamics were enmeshed in a web of local relationships; both organisational and personal. On the other hand, regional and national political interests as illustrated by the interventions of both the Caprivi trainees and *kitskonstabels* articulated with and attempted to contrive the direction of local politics. These trajectories intersected in Mpumalanga in early 1987 transforming previous conflicts into political violence.

The chapter shows quite conclusively that political violence was fundamentally

⁴⁴ I first visited Mpumalanga township towards the end of 1993. Residents were still not going into areas controlled by opposing groups. Refugees were beginning to trickle back and many

different both in character and form from the conflict that existed in the earlier period. Significantly different was its intensity (even more so in the later period), its modality and its technologies. Furthermore, it transformed the politics of the township, signifying a historic rupture with the past way of doing politics. It shows how political violence became fundamental to the politics of the township. In the process, the youth (on both sides) became the primary political actors. Over the next four or five years they dominated the politics of the township. In a sense, the peace was only successful once the older generation managed to wrest back control.⁴⁵

In establishing their political primacy the youth also engineered a generational revolt. Whether they were aligned to Inkatha or the UDF the youth challenged patriarchal authority and marginalised older men and women from public life. Older men were silenced by the political revolt of the youth and the violent politics that dominated. Their voices were not heard, and their presence in the conflict was limited. Towards the end of the period they began to reassert themselves and pushed forward attempts to negotiate peace, bring an end to the conflict and return politics to its previous modalities.

Women were also marginalised by the violence. As part of the older generation they were excluded from public spaces of politics. Their bodies, through rape and sexual assaults, became the ultimate terrain upon which the gender and generational conflicts were inscribed. These patriarchal techniques of violence were used to demonstrate the powerlessness of the other group to protect their communities. As the youth fought to protect their mothers and sisters, so women formed powerful alliances with them (this is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter). In their own right women also became political actors in the violence. They organised to rid the area of the security forces they felt were partisan in the violence. Nevertheless, their activities remained firmly within acceptable gender

houses were still burnt out and unoccupied.

⁴⁵ This statement does need to be read against the involvement of covert political forces and the

roles.

Furthermore, the chapter demonstrates that one of the distinctive dimensions of the political violence was its particular spatialised form. As the violence progressed so the spatialised form of the violence shifted – from targeting the body, to the household, to territory. The intensification of political violence was the result of a series of spatial reconfigurations over time, and similarly, spatial reconfigurations resulted in an intensification of the political violence. The consequence for residents was that political violence recast the spaces of everyday life. In the process the meaning and identity of space and place was remade. Through the creation of boundaries and the conquering of territory both parties attempted to stabilise the identity of places, and then claimed a right to that space. Thus space and place acquired the political identity of the party that controlled it. To accommodate the re-territorialisation of space the spatial practices (Lefebvre, 1991:16-18) of the township residents changed. As the objective of the violence became the pursuit of territory, so residents avoided certain areas of the township, transportation routes changed, and only pupils belonging to the associated political group could study at particular schools as they became associated with different political groups. This argument is elaborated upon in chapter seven.

The chapter has begun to demonstrate the way in which space was produced and reproduced during the violence. As argued in chapter one, the production of space is imbued with power relations. The territories controlled by either Inkatha or the UDF (or the police who moved across these spaces) were also reconstructed as sites of masculine power. Through their protests, women challenged this construction of space. Surveying the streets and confronting the police in a variety of locations they challenged the use of the street as a physical place of killing.

A broader argument of the thesis is that the construction of coherent places and identities are intertwined social processes. The re-production of the space of the

broader agendas of the apartheid and KwaZulu state.

township and the resulting re-construction of the meanings of place had consequences for the political identities of residents. Bodily survival depended upon a changed sense of self, and in the process a redefinition of one's political identity. The way in which the production of space and place articulate with the co-production of human subjectivities is explored in the following chapter.