

Feminisms, motherisms, patriarchies and women's voices in the 1950s

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It had the effect of making the people confident and fearless, prepared to defy the laws, to be prepared to go to jail and meet any situation. That was the importance of it. It was the beginning of a new situation, which led even to a person facing the death penalty with confidence. The Campaign brought about a situation in which people were not arrested just by chance but by plan. This meant organisation...The movement called for volunteers. In the Eastern Cape, it was called *Amadela Kufa*, the defiers of death. You can see from this that a revolutionary situation was emerging. (Sisulu 2001: 79)

The 1950s marked a decisive shift in the level, character and activities of the liberation movement, led by the African National Congress (ANC). This built on the foundation laid by the patient work of people like Reverend (later Canon) James Calata and Dr AB Xuma, who painstakingly built the organisation even in its weakest period. Calata took three years to complete his mandated organising tour of the country, visiting branches of the ANC, discussing conditions and what needed to be done. In those days, resources and travel were limited and difficult, quite unlike what we know today (Karis & Carter 1973: 408).

The emergence of the militant ANC Youth League (ANCYL), launched at the same time as the ANC Women's League (ANCWL) in 1943, is correctly credited with this dramatic shift which radicalised the ANC. However, it must be emphasised that the ANCYL's stance would have remained at the level of slogans, or at least that the Defiance Campaign would not have been as successful as it was, were it not for Calata and Xuma's patient organisational work that preceded it. This was a period of both rupture and continuities.

In the 1950s membership of the ANC rose significantly; it became a mass organisation both in its composition and its approaches (Karis & Carter 1973: 426).

Personal experiences and stories have also highlighted the mood of the period. For example, Vulindlela Welcome Zihlangu (my maternal grandfather) and his comrades

who were *Idela Kufa* routinely took the 'whites only' carriage on the train or used the 'whites only' entrance in the stores in Cape Town. They paid for it either by arrest or, at times, coming home with open and bleeding wounds from the beatings. The assaults emanated from the police, the station officials or white guards at the entrances, all of whom endorsed both the laws and the violent tactics used by the police.

'*Bayakusibetha basibulale, bazalise ijele zabo asibuyi mva*' (They will have to beat us to death, or fill all their jails, but we are not going back now), the man is said to have muttered to his wife, Dorothy Nomazotsho Zihlangu,¹ as she tended his wounds.

There was something in his eyes, in the eyes of all *Amadela Kufa*. UsekaNomathemba [Vulindlela], spoke of the dangers, knew the dangers and experienced some of them. But this thing in his eyes would not go away, even as he winced from the pain when I tended to the wounds. (pers. comm. Dorothy Zihlangu in the 1980s)

The approach of the ANC and its allies was occasioned by the change in state ideology and practices at the time. While throughout the early twentieth century there were various laws and experiments resulting in land dispossession and the banishment of Africans to the Native Reserves (the so-called Hertzog Acts of 1936 in particular), the level of intensity increased dramatically in the 1950s.

South Africa was going through industrial and economic changes that had an impact on the urban settlement of Africans. Against the backdrop of the Second World War, job opportunities for African men and women increased. Women entered the labour force. The industrial boom had an impact on the housing needs of Africans who were coming to the city. In the face of the war and the resulting need for labour to replace those doing service, the influx control laws were suspended in the Transvaal.

From 1939, the development of new townships was suspended. For women this freeze on building new settlements was particularly hard hitting. Women swelled the ranks of those who protested for housing. They were also found in their multitudes in squatter movements that emerged at the time. The strategy was simple: a group of Africans would appropriate available land and use it for housing. Initially, the Johannesburg City Council responded positively by supplying infrastructure such as water and toilet facilities, planning streets for the area and developing stands for people to use to build houses.

Despite the housing difficulties, women were at an advantage when it came to employment opportunities. The Union government had not extended passes to African women; they could move freely and easily secure jobs in the factories. Given the existing choices at the time, women could decide not to take employment in domestic service, which paid far less than the factories and where the hours and general conditions of employment were not favourable. Women in the factories joined unions since they were not affected by the laws prohibiting pass-bearing people from trade union membership.

While the Johannesburg City Council displayed some measure of flexibility, including suspending the influx control laws, their counterparts in Cape Town went the opposite way. In Cape Town, there was stringent application of the influx control measures,

targeting African women in particular. The city council recruited coloured people and reserved jobs for them. According to Julia Wells:

Cape Town chose simply to eliminate non-wage earning Africans. Preference was given to coloureds. Although passes for women had not yet been instituted, the city authorities fell back on previously unused regulations for residential permits contained in the Natives (Urban Areas) Act. Particularly harsh enforcement began in 1954, when authorities granted almost no permits to women to enter the urban areas unless they were bona fide work seekers. (Wells 1993: 106)

After various measures, experiments and laws had been tested and applied in different ways throughout the earlier period, the 1948 National Party (NP) victory changed things fundamentally. The Population Registration Act of 1952 consolidated all the earlier efforts, and consequently women and men of all races had to carry an identification card. The Native Law Amendment Act of 1952 forced every African woman, man and child to have a special permit to be in an urban area for longer than 72 hours (Wells 1993: 102).

The final nail was the Natives Abolition of Passes and Co-ordination of Documents Act of 1952. This is the law that sealed the fate of Africans, replacing the previous passes for Africans with the new reference document. Both African men and women were forced to carry this document at all times. Emboldened by its electoral victory in 1953, the NP announced its intention to introduce passes to African women from 1956, on a voluntary basis (Wells 1993).

Throughout the early to mid-twentieth century, there had been sporadic and spontaneous acts of resistance by women and men. While women tended to mount larger campaigns against passes, resulting in authorities being wary of African women, men also joined and at times initiated different forms of protest. Women were at the forefront of the Campaign to Defy Unjust Laws. This can be seen in the activities of women described in this chapter.

Corresponding to the dominant state ideology and practices at the time, which with the victory of the NP crystallised into co-ordinated efforts to drive Africans out of the urban areas (the few that were needed for purposes of labour were severely controlled), the black political opposition also took a different tone and texture. When the Bantu Education Act was introduced, many Africans withdrew their children from schools. Women were active in the alternative schools and also in other welfare services that black people (with their white left and white liberal colleagues) were putting in place for the benefit of Africans.

However, it became clear that none of these efforts could work successfully in the context of apartheid. The Campaign to Defy Unjust Laws was the first co-ordinated and national campaign of mass, countrywide scale and content mounted by the Congress Alliance – that is, the ANC together with the South African Indian Congress, Coloured People's Congress, the Congress of Democrats and the SA Congress of Trade Unions. As Walter Sisulu explained, the choice of the word 'defy' was used to provide a specific message:

The name 'defiance' was deliberately used to make a difference between passive resistance and the defiance campaign. The aim here was to incite the people to action so that they should be militant and no longer fear jail. They must go willingly to jail. That was the aim, to arouse the whole nation. (Sisulu 2001: 76)

It is against this background that women's resistance to the pass laws in the 1950s needs to be located. Of particular significance, this chapter looks at the manner in which that resistance has been understood, interpreted and written by historians and by feminist historians in particular.

Such a powerful shift in the liberation politics of the day was also manifested in the rise in organisation and the growing direct political involvement of women in the 1950s. Following the 1943 constitution, which changed the status of women in the ANC from auxiliary to full membership, women wanted to build their own organisation and continue with its mass campaigns.

While mass mobilisation was a new phenomenon for the ANC male political leadership, for women it had always been a feature in the anti-pass campaign and other expressions of public political anger. Ginwala comments that women have always organised from a mass base (Ginwala 2006).

The 1950s decade has received much academic attention, with a focus on the anti-pass campaign and the Federation of South African Women (FSAW) in particular. Some scholars have also attempted to look at the relationship between FSAW, an umbrella organisation formed in 1954 which brought together the women's structures of organisations affiliated to the Congress Alliance – including the Congress of Democrats (COD), the Black Sash, the ANCWL, Women in the Natal/Transvaal Indian Congress – and the broader Congress Alliance.

The intention of this chapter is not to repeat previous accounts of the anti-pass campaign, to narrate the events that led to the historic 1956 march or the details of the march itself, important as these are. That information can be found in a variety of texts, including Baard (1986), Joseph (1986), Walker (1991), Wells (1993), Sisulu (2002), and a host of other academic papers and theses.

Lauretta Ngcobo's novel *And They Didn't Die* (1990) also offers deep insights into the women's mood and uncompromising stance against the introduction of dipping tanks as part of livestock control and the *dompas*² in Natal. More than a narrative of the events, Ngcobo's historical novel also takes us into some of the psycho-sociological dynamics and the militancy of women's protest. While it is a novel and, as such, takes some creative liberties, *And They Didn't Die* is based on historic events and goes to a deeper level in its insights than many feminist and historical writings on the subject. Amongst other things, it brings out the personal cost paid by individual women.

Judging by the expansive literature on this period, a student of feminist history may be led to conclude that it is sufficiently documented. However, one must ask what the nature of this scholarship, biographical work and historiography has been. What theoretical tools and conceptual frameworks inform the reading and engagement with this period? What has been their relevance and success in unlocking our collective memory and in

understanding the meanings and the place of women's struggles and organisations in the mass mobilisation of the 1950s? And to what extent do these studies relate to, explain and understand the actual voices, actions, movements and character of the period?

This period, it will be argued, has not been studied in its own terms and for its own significance. The literature is often obscured by interpretations imposed on history and its meanings by a feminist historiography that intends to confirm one school of thought or the other. The theoretical tools deployed have often shown fidelity to a specific ideological framework of particular external origins and this has characterised much of the feminist scholarly work undertaken on the period.

While Walker is correct in saying that to use feminist lenses in looking at the history of women in the 1950s is not to impose a feminist view on the historical material (Walker 1991), I am concerned here not with the asking of questions *per se*, but rather with which questions are asked, what frames them and how they are answered. To some extent, this is in agreement with Walker's assertion that 'what makes research feminist is the type of questions one is asking...as well as careful attention to gender stratification and sexual division of labour in one's analysis of social relations and hierarchies' (1991: xxiii).

In this chapter, I demonstrate the inadequacy of the above approach, I argue that the feminisms prevailing in South Africa, and elsewhere, require a much deeper and more complex understanding than the one given above. While I am in agreement with Walker on the complexities of a 'global sisterhood' and the limitations of these assumptions (Walker 1991: xxiv), the limitations still prevail. However, this chapter attempts to unpack the very tools of analysis and the conceptual framework applied, not only in the earlier feminist engagement with the 1950s women's organisation, but also in the most contemporary work.

To illustrate this contentious matter, I want to look at a few significant issues in the 1950s. The first is the formation of FSAW, the second is the language of FSAW and its activists, and the third is the manner in which writers, especially Walker (1991) and Wells (1993), have written about this period. Although not writing about this period as such, Hassim et al. (1987) are also a critical point of reference, particularly in their analysis of the relationship between the national liberation struggle and women's liberation (including a feminist analysis of the latter).

Walter Sisulu's definition of the Defiance Campaign and its intentions and spirit resonates with the approach taken by women in the 1950s. However, it must be borne in mind that while Sisulu saw imprisonment as something that the defiers of death had to prepare for, many South African women had already tested this difficult terrain.

FSAW: some reflection

While women were acting alone in some aspects of their campaigns, it was often within the overall context of the ethos of defiance that characterised much of the decade.

Given the experiences of African women in Cape Town, especially overcrowding and the resultant exploitation of tenants by those who rented out rooms, it is not

surprising that Cape Town women were amongst those who led the call for a conference to fight for women's rights and for full economic citizenship. The conference took place in Johannesburg on 17 April 1954. About 150 delegates from all over the country attended (Zihlangu Papers).

This conference became a platform where women from all over the country and from different racial groups came together to share experiences and to map a way forward. The conference resolved to form FSAW and adopted a Women's Charter. Wells writes:

They also passed resolutions condemning the Natives Resettlement Bill, the Natives Land and Amendment Bill, the Bantu Education Act, the Separate Representation of Voters Act and the practice of using male pass law offenders as farm labour – in other words a solid rejection of all apartheid legislation. (Wells 1993: 107)

The details of women's contributions at this conference give the texture and a deeper understanding of African women's daily lives during that period. Louisa Metwana reported:

The raids create anxiety in many households and children are not spared from witnessing ill treatment of their parents. They see the powerlessness of their fathers and the indignities they suffer as a result of the inspection of men's income. Within a few minutes of inspection, a family could be literally ejected into the streets should the man's income be deemed not high enough to cover the rent...this can happen in the dead of the night, in the early hours of the morning...while it is still dark outside, the family is thrown out, their belongings scattered in the street. (Zihlangu Papers)

Florence Matomela shared the experiences and responses of women in Port Elizabeth:

They can kick the door open any time during the night. The father, mother, children and everyone else in the household had to produce their papers. Fed up of this treatment, we collected our resident permits and returned them to the local authorities. This was our protest against the raids. Give them their papers, so they do not have to come and bother us, they can just look through the documents in their keeping if they want to know anything about us and our families...That was the reasoning behind our campaign of handing over the papers...here keep your papers and let us sleep peacefully...Obviously this created more trouble for us. The raids continued, the harassment did not stop. But we had done something for ourselves. (Zihlangu Papers)

Amongst the clauses of the Women's Charter are two that I want to highlight because they speak directly to the issues raised in this chapter. Identifying obstacles to women's progress, the Charter stated:

The law has lagged behind the development of society; it no longer corresponds to the actual social and economic position of women. The law has become an

obstacle to the progress of women and therefore a brake on the whole society. This intolerable condition would not be allowed to continue were it not for the refusal of large sections of our menfolk to concede to us women the rights and privileges which they demand for themselves.

We shall teach the men they cannot hope to liberate themselves from the evils of discrimination and prejudice as long as they fail to extend to women complete and unqualified equality in law and practice. (FSAW, Women's Charter, April 1954)

FSAW: the language, thinking and approaches

The very conference where the formation of FSAW was decided is instructive. It called on women 'to fight for women's rights and for the full economic citizenship of all'. This put FSAW right in the centre of political struggles in the mid-1950s.

The narratives from women who shared their experiences and struggles in their communities also give an indication of the political thought processes that informed women's actions. It is therefore important to look at the characterisation used by Wells in describing the women's struggles of the period and to examine her statements against what we now know to have happened. Wells writes:

The tradition of women's energetic struggles in the past has been held up as inspiration and motivation for subsequent generations in their attempt to overthrow apartheid. On the other hand, under closer scrutiny a powerful conservative element emerges as the driving force of these movements. While the women effectively resisted oppression from a ruthlessly coercive state, they were at the same time defending the primacy of their roles as mothers and homemakers. Racial oppression was tackled while traditional gender-defined roles were reinforced. (Wells 1993: 1)

Similarly, even though Walker demonstrates a remarkable shift (and growth) from her earlier position in the first edition of *Women and Resistance* (1982), the preface to the 1991 edition is still riddled with remnants of her earlier arguments:

Today I would wish to look more carefully at the assumption that women's defence of their maternal roles constituted a negation of their rights as women – that women's rights somehow is at odds with the maternal role – and that organisation around the latter is evidence of an unproblematic conservatism and defence of patriarchy. (Walker 1991: xx)

Interestingly, despite a number of qualifiers and a substantive reconsideration as seen in the above quote, the dominant characterisation remains and shows the need to unpack these analytical tools and their framework:

For most members it was their blackness rather than their femaleness that ultimately determined their political practice – although the power of the anti-pass campaign to mobilise women undoubtedly lay in its fusion of those two elemental strands of African women's identity around a single issue. And much of the FSAW programme was directed at women in their role as mothers...

Inasmuch as discrimination against women was looked at it was often as the barrier to women's full participation in the national struggle – i.e. as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. Very few FSAW members would have described themselves as feminists and the formal commitment to women's emancipation was overshadowed by practices and ideas that could only be described as patriarchal...

Women's struggles against domination were always subordinated to the claims of national liberation. Women's struggles against male domination, whether in their families or political life, were for the most part private and riddled with ambiguity. Few have acknowledged them as 'political'. (Walker 1991: xiv)

This analytical approach is also evident in Walker's evaluation of the ANC National Executive Committee statement of May 2, 1990. It appears there is no escaping the either/or approach and the juxtaposition of the national liberation struggle and women's emancipation (Walker 1991).

This is at the centre of my argument against the limitations and deeply flawed approach employed by writers like Walker and Wells, amongst others. Why the Berlin Wall between blackness and liberation struggle on the one hand and feminism on the other? In 'Shouldn't we change the subject?' (Volbrecht & Gasa 1997) similar questions are raised which touch on the need for the connection between all forms of oppression experienced by women. Why should women look to the national liberation struggle for their emancipation in the first place, as suggested by Walker (1991) and Hassim et al. (1987)?

These are the kinds of binaries that are completely unnecessary and do not make sense of black women's experiences. For one, the defence of the home and women's role as homemaker does not automatically mean defence of all practices that may occur within the home, including experiences of abuse. In reality, women's lives are shaped by constant negotiation and self-redefinition within and outside the patriarchal system. But at the heart of the earlier struggles is the fact that African women were homeless by state design. They were defined by the economic and political activity of the dominant ethos and practices at the time. Their struggle against the pass laws, which were a tangible way of infringing their rights, was, in fact, a struggle to be in the public domain at the same time as it was a struggle for free movement.

Why is the defence of the family seen as deeply conservative? Is this taking the context into account? Young children of school-going age, who were harassed and raided for resident permits, were these women's children. How does feminism clash with the protection of one's children? Why does it have to?

Walker writes, 'Very few FSAW members would have described themselves as feminists' (1991: xiv). 'So what?' is the question that immediately springs to my mind. It is instructive that Walker described Ray Alexander Simons as a 'committed feminist' (1991: xvii) while exiling Dora Tamana from this description. This, in my view, is imposing a political identity/label. Those who are familiar with the work of Ray Alexander Simons, as I am sure Walker is, will agree that, while she put forward arguments for women's emancipation in her work, she always connected this to the broader struggle. I am not sure whether Alexander Simons herself would have used the label 'feminist' in the same way Walker suggests.

Reading *Class and Colour* (Simons & Simons 1983) and *All my Life and all my Strength* (Alexander Simons 2004), one is at pains to find a feminist analysis of the sort Walker would want. The mere fact that Alexander Simons's seminal work, penned with her husband Jack, is called *Class and Colour*, with gender left out, suggests an interesting choice of emphasis. It is a choice that I believe is indicative of its time, for both authors had a deep consciousness of the nature of women's oppression.

What and who is a feminist? This is a question that remains as important today as it was when Walker's (1991) *Women and Resistance* was first published in 1982. Important as this question is, this chapter has a different preoccupation – tracing the development of the political consciousness of South African women of the 1950s. I suggest that the manner in which the subject has been looked at has failed to place South African women in the discourse of feminisms. Like her comrades in FSAW, including Tamana, Alexander Simons had a different take from that of some of the leading feminist academics. This is eloquently captured by hooks:

We must understand that patriarchal domination shares an ideological foundation with racism and other forms of oppression, that there is no hope that it can be eradicated while these systems remain intact. This knowledge should consistently inform the direction of feminist theory and practice. (hooks 1989: 21)

It is also important to address another aspect of Walker's statement quoted earlier:

Women's struggles against male domination, whether in their families, workplace or political life, were for the most part private and riddled with ambiguity. Few would have acknowledged them as 'political'. These were 'struggles without a name', to adopt the phrase used by Betty Friedan to describe the roots of the contemporary women's movement in the United States. (Walker 1991: xiv)

However, for those who have studied FSAW and even the earlier struggles, there is evidence to the contrary. From their first entry into the political space, women resisted male domination, acting on their own, representing themselves directly to the Union government and even in their appeals to the empire. Chapter 5 of this volume has dealt with some of this. Of relevance here is the relationship between the private and the public spheres.

First, a word must be said about Betty Friedan's analysis and context. There is no doubt that *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) was a powerful intervention in its time. However, for African women, the gender struggles in the private domain have never been 'without a name'. There is the now famous statement by Lillian Ngoyi: 'the husbands speak of democracy but do not practise it in the home' (Zihlangu Papers).

The question of speech, articulation and silence has exercised many feminist writers. Both feminist academics and feminist academics who are also activists have cautioned against endorsement of one form of engagement at the expense of the other. They argue that often the response of women is informed by their prevailing conditions and the nature of the patriarchal oppression they are experiencing.

While the importance of speaking out against violence, abuse and oppression and a silencing authority, has been credited as a powerful form of self-liberation, it must be acknowledged that there are multiple forms this can take. It must also be acknowledged that silence, too, can be liberating, an exercise of self-authority and agency. Silence, *when chosen*, can be a powerful force (Motsemme 2004a, 2004b, 2004c).

For those women (and men) who were imprisoned, the decision to remain silent in the face of torture, taunting, interrogation and other bullying tactics was often extremely difficult. The decision to choose silence was a means of not only not saying that which was intended to be concealed but, at times, it was also a means of exercising authority, of refusing to be drawn out by the interrogators. The ultimate power, in such an interaction, resides with the one who chooses silence; she or he, by refusing to speak, is defying the powerful at a time when apparently most powerless, thus changing the balance of power. Also, silence may be chosen in order to conserve energy for survival. In this case, it may be argued that one is not silenced *per se*, but has *chosen silence*.

'What did you tell them?' was the question most activists heard when they came out of jail. 'Nothing,' would be the triumphant answer. Nothing was not really *nothing*, as in an absence of words. Often it could be a little and harmless revelation, a morsel given tantalisingly to the torturer to ease the pressure of torture. However, most importantly, below the surface lay a powerful, unspoken understanding between the torturer and the tortured: 'I hold the key to what you want.' Here, the interaction went far beyond what has often been looked at – the anxiety about betraying others. Here, the choice of silence (on some issues or even choosing what to tell) was an exercise of personal power and control; a fighting back with a weapon that lay way beyond the reach of the one who presumably held the power.

'What will I say?' was the question most activists asked themselves as they imagined and prepared themselves for the day they were arrested. Often they selected what to say, what information to give when they could no longer endure the pressure of torture. Silence/speech is a very complex realm into which feminists have just begun to delve. Many African feminists are familiar with this choice. '*Hayi ndikheth'ukuthula* (I choose silence),' they say, when words simply cannot carry the burden of their emotions or when they see that their words are carried away by the wind (*utheth'elemoyeni* or *uthethel'lilize*).

One recalls the defiant tilting of the head, the faraway look and deep concentration as women in rural Eastern Cape literally dragged smoke from the long pipe, their backs held straight against the wall, their legs stretched out and extended in front of them. When these women say, '*Andinawo amazwi okuthetha nawe* (I have no words for you),' it is often not indicative of a shortage of words, but rather a decision not to exchange on a particular subject.

Looking at another cultural context and power dynamic in the speech/silence discourse within the feminist movement, hooks writes:

Within feminist circles, silence is often seen as the sexist 'right speech of womanhood' – the sign of woman's submission to patriarchal authority...This emphasis may be accurate remembering of what has taken place in the households of women from WASP backgrounds in the United States. But in black communities (and diverse ethnic communities), women have not been silent. Their voices can be heard. Certainly for black women, our struggle has not been to emerge from silence into speech but to change the nature and direction of our speech, to make a speech that compels listeners, one that is heard...Our speech, the 'right speech of womanhood', was often soliloquy, the talking to thin air, the talking to ears that do not hear you – the talk that is simply not listened to. Unlike the black male preacher, whose speech was to be heard, listened to, whose words were to be remembered, the voices of black women...giving orders, making threats, fussing – could be tuned out, could become a kind of background music audible but not acknowledged as significant speech. (hooks 1989: 6)

I argue that the issue is not silence or speech but rather how the silencing takes place, its process and form. It follows, therefore, that we must also acknowledge the different forms of self-representation, the choices that are made available to women. Awareness of such nuances is of critical importance to feminist academia and feminist academic activism, not only to make women's voices heard and listened to but also ensure that our areas of emphasis do not reproduce the patterns of inequality within feminist circles.

It is not insignificant that Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* (1963) is silent on the specifics of black or ethnic minorities' experiences in the United States. Such cleavages continue to exist, not only in the United States but also in many parts of the globe, including South Africa.

Indeed, black South African women were not silent in the 1950s; they were very articulate, not only on the question of passes but also on cultural practices that discriminated against women. In the Women's Charter they resolved to:

struggle for the removal of laws and customs that deny African women the right to own, or inherit land...work for change in the laws of marriage such as are found amongst our African, Malay and Indian people, which have the effect of placing wives in the position of legal subjugation to, and giving husbands the power to dispose of wives' property and earnings and to dictate to them on all matters affecting them and their children... (Zihlangu Papers)

From the 1954 conference onwards, FSAW began its activities. When pass raids intensified in the period shortly after the conference, FSAW kept busy with its door-to-door campaign against the passes. They urged all Congress Alliance structures to start working against the pass laws for men (Wells 1993).

In preparation for the Congress of the People to be held in 1955, FSAW members went out to factories and worked together with *amavolontiya* (volunteers) who went around the country collecting demands to be included in the Freedom Charter at the pending Congress. Teams of women went to different parts of the country, talking to people, preparing for the congress. During these preparations, the Transvaal FSAW held a special conference for women on 8 March 1955 to hear women's demands. They were presented to the Congress of the People on 26 June 1955, the day the Freedom Charter was adopted. The women's demands – which were similar to those in the Women's Charter – were read out by Helen Joseph and Josie Palmer.

The first march: October 1955

In August 1955, a follow-up meeting was called by the Transvaal FSAW to popularise the Freedom Charter. However, matters took a different turn. Women talked of the worsening conditions and unrelenting harassment by police and local authorities. There was a permanent housing shortage crisis, with 'people on the waiting list forever', according to one speaker. There was evidence that those who lived in Sophiatown were being hounded out of their homes. Stories told of city officials who tore off their roofs, destroyed their backyards and harassed people relentlessly (Wells 1993).

Women decided to take drastic measures. News of a march planned by the then newly formed Black Sash at the Union Buildings, to protest against the proposed constitutional amendments, served as an inspiration to women. FSAW then worked with some allies in the Congress Alliance to organise the march.

The government tried its best to undermine the march. Large gatherings were banned. Other efforts to undermine the march were efforts to block sale of tickets to Pretoria by the agents of Putco bus company. Despite these efforts, it would appear the government had a knack of undermining its own efforts – a week before the march, the government announced its decision to issue passes to African women from the beginning of 1956. Thus, on 27 October 1955 a crowd of 2 000 filled the amphitheatre at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. They chose delegates from the four racial groups – African, Coloured, Indian and white – to present the petitions to government officers. When the delegates arrived, the body of women broke into song. They then left. The feared attack from the police did not take place, not that the women who had gathered in Pretoria seemed to have given this much thought. By now, the women were really angry. Returning home triumphantly, they resolved not to rest until the matter of the passes had been thoroughly buried.

Wathint'abafazi Wathint'imbokodo, Uzokufa

*Ndababona bephuma/Ndababona bephuma...
Ndasondela ndabuza, niphuma phina ningabaphina?
Bedlula bengumngcelele.*

*Besel'imibethe ngezandla, bevuka kusasa neentaka
Yiva phula-phula, nokunyathela komkhos'omkhulu
Yiva betsholoza, bevuma becul'ezongoma...
Bedlula bengumngcelele.*

(From *uMkhosi weMithika*, thought to be by B. Tyamzashe³)

I saw them come out, I saw them come out...
I came closer and asked, whence do you come?
They passed in single file.

They drank dew with their own hands, with birds they awoke
Oh come hear the footsteps of the great march
Oh hear the melody, singing their songs...
They passed in single file.

The narratives of the women's march to Pretoria in 1956 conjure powerful images. Many have written of this as the great march, signifying its importance not only in the history of women's resistance against the pass laws but also in the history of the liberation struggle itself.

Given the importance of the march, there are broadly two tendencies in telling the story of the event. One is the description of the great crowd of women, 20 000 having secured about 100 000 signatures – women who dared to go where no one had gone before. The sheer size of the march and the spirit of the women – women from different backgrounds and social strata (some had gone without even informing their husbands of where they were going, for fear of being stopped or exposing the men to danger) – make the march larger than life in the collective narrative psyche of feminist activists in South Africa. *Yho!* Where did they get the guts? It is not very hard, though, to imagine how a woman who has never been outside of her village could have decided to travel to so far a place. By then, no doubt, Pretoria and the passes had occupied an important place in the consciousness of South African women, especially African women.

The second response, perhaps overwhelmed by the symbolism of the march, tends to look at what it is that women achieved in that march. Given that passes were finally introduced later, it is easy to see how those who feel let down by this march can in fact end up being dismissive of it. There is a tendency to take the march and subject it to a blow-by-blow feminist analysis and impose meanings that were never intended by those women of 1956, and then judge it as having failed.

In between these two ways of looking at the march, there are, however, multiple other ways which can help us understand not only the significance of the march but the

very struggles which led to it. Its significance lies in what it achieved: bringing together women from such diverse backgrounds, and registering women's objections as women (and on so large a scale) to the encroachment of the state on all aspects of African women's lives.

The march is significant also for the manner in which it was organised, by women of different races, ideological backgrounds and social strata. There were Communist women, churchwomen, trade unionists, African nationalists, the peasantry, the upper middle class of black and white South Africa, rubbing shoulders, brought together by a common cause – the demands of women to have the passes removed. African women were not going to carry them. To these women, this was clear and non-negotiable.

But we cannot examine the importance of the march if we do not look at the women who got there in the first place. Not the actual journey, defying and tricking a government that had even stopped trains on some routes. That is remarkable in and of itself. But the journey began long before that – the march was the culmination of almost a year of preparations to get women to Pretoria. It was also a brave, heroic and powerful way of closing a struggle against passes which began perhaps long before some of the leaders of this march were born.

It is here, in this complex area of negotiation between women and the men in the Congress Alliance, in the negotiations between women themselves, in the different ways in which women outwitted both their husbands and the state, some sacrificing their last pennies and precious jewels to make it to Pretoria, that the complexities and nuances of the meanings of the march can be understood. It is also in understanding the dynamic connections between all of the above and more, in reading the march for its own importance and significance, that we can enrich our understanding of women's political history. These relationships, contestations and dynamics challenge the way in which we have understood feminisms, motherisms, patriarchies and women's voices and voicing in South Africa.

Preparations for the 1956 march

Following the October 1955 march, when 2 000 women gathered in Pretoria, the ANCWL held its first annual conference on 14 December 1955 in Johannesburg. Both the ANCWL and FSAW decided to intensify the campaign against the passes, whose introduction early in the following year the government had earlier announced. A national working committee was set up to co-ordinate preparations for the campaign.

Organisers of the ANCWL, the COD, the Coloured People's Congress, FSAW, the Black Sash and other affiliated organisations worked around the clock. The intensity of those months is aptly captured in Joseph's (1986) autobiography, where she writes about traversing the townships in the Johannesburg area with Bertha Mashaba.

On 11 March 1956, the Transvaal FSAW held a Women's Day meeting. Once again, women used this platform as an opportunity to share their concerns. In that meeting, women agreed to have smaller peaceful campaigns targeting all local Native commis-

sioners, in order to register women's objection to the pass laws in general and to stop the introduction of reference books to African women. The meeting also decided to have a major campaign, a march to Pretoria on 9 August of that year. The march was envisaged and planned along the same lines as the one in October 1955, only this time it would be on a national and therefore much larger scale.

Following the meeting, women worked tirelessly to prepare for the march. The Transvaal group was well organised in its network. In the Eastern Cape, women held fundraising activities, including selling scones and cupcakes to enable women to travel to Pretoria.

Once again, the government tried its best to frustrate the efforts of the women and to undermine the campaign. Some of the key activists, including Ray Alexander Simons, were either banned or their movements were severely curtailed. However, as Alexander Simons revealed later, women were very resourceful. 'I used to sneak to Langa township, hold meetings in unexpected places in disguise and our preparations continued' (interview with Alexander Simons, 1995). However, resourceful as they were, things proved difficult in the Cape, according to Dora Tamana (cited in Wells 1993). In the Transvaal, things were much more under control. Joseph, Ngoyi and Mashaba were amongst the main organisers there (see Joseph 1986).

No matter how hard the state worked to frustrate women, its very actions provided women with ammunition and its timing was simply wonderful, according to Ray Alexander (Interview with Alexander Simons, 1995). The proclamation of the Group Areas Act for Johannesburg was one such example. Sophiatown was marked as a place for whites. Now, even formal residents, not just squatters and backyard tenants, were to be affected by government policies.

Waphuma ngefestil'uStrijdom

The weight of resistance has been greatly increased in the last few years by the emergence of our women. It may even be true that, had the women hung back, resistance would still be faltering and uncertain...Furthermore, women of all races had far less hesitation than men in making common cause about things basic to them. (Luthuli 1962)

As preparations got under way and the day was getting closer, the male leadership of the ANC expressed its concerns. Joseph narrates the story of Ngoyi and others who were summoned to appear in front of the leadership, where they were asked, 'Are you aware of what you are doing? And what will happen if the leaders get arrested? Have you considered the dangers you are exposing the women to?'

Ngoyi's simple response – 'Yes we know what we are doing. We trust the women' – reveals not only the stealth of the women but also their fearless determination. Of course, as many would admit later, none of the women really knew the amount of work this would involve (Joseph 1986: 12).

It was clear that the male leadership had more than just anxiety about the possibilities of violence, arrest and other unforeseen tragedies and traps. They had serious reservations about women undertaking such a huge campaign on their own. Given the tense political atmosphere following the first years of the apartheid government, severe repression was not a remote possibility and, as it turned out, those who feared this response were proven correct; it was only a matter of time.

The 1950s women in the ANCWL did not consider it wise to enter into bitter exchanges with their leadership in the ANC and the Congress Alliance in general. True, despite trying smaller campaigns, they had no experience with this level of organisation. Besides, below the surface, ideological and patriarchal reasoning simmered. Women chose not to interact with these issues (analysis based on interview with Alexander [Simons], 1995).

For the women, the key task was getting to Pretoria. So, after telling the Congress leaders that they knew what they were doing, the women continued with their work. From time to time, these interactions with the male leaders would take place and women always answered in the same way, 'We trust the women.'

It was trust that proved to be entirely justified. Women turned out in their thousands on that day. Some travelled from afar – from the Cape, the Free State, Natal, and the northern parts of the country. Despite the cancellation of trains on some routes and buses that did not turn up, women made plans and got to Pretoria. Many were turned back or frustrated because of the transport.

On 9 August 1956, 20 000 women gathered at the amphitheatre of the Union Buildings. These were domestic workers who came with their employers' babies; seven of them were noticed on the backs of the women (Ntantala-Jordan 2006). 'Twenty thousand women in 1956 travelled to Pretoria to tell the white men they were fed up with the passes' (pers. comm. with Dorothy Nomazotsho Zihlangu in the 1980s). She would repeat the number slowly to me, holding up her ten fingers and flashing them twice, as if even 30 years after the march she had not lost her sense of wonderment at what women had achieved.

The women came in all manner of dress. There were those in green and black, the uniform of the ANCWL; in various blouses with black skirts and *izipece* (wide collars/'clubs'⁴) of various denominations; in bright saris; women who were dressed in their Sunday best; and those who simply came in their ordinary, everyday clothes.

Lillian Ngoyi, one of the leaders of the march, led the representatives of all races to the office of Prime Minister Strijdom. According to Wells:

She caught sight of her own daughter crying and thought it might be the last time they saw one another. A barrage of photographers met the delegation inside and pointed women to the right door. When Ngoyi knocked, a voice from behind the door told her she had been sent a letter saying she was prohibited from coming there. She answered, 'The women of Africa are outside. They built this place and their husbands died for this.' (Wells 1993: 112)

The women then went into the office and left the petitions there. They then returned to the crowd, slowly making their way down the steps. Women waited at the amphitheatre to hear what had happened. When the leaders arrived, they called out '*iAfrika!*' three times and the women responded, '*Mayibuye!*'

There was silence. For thirty minutes. The clock which struck three and then quarter past, it was the only sound. (Joseph 1986: 2)

Ngoyi then declared, 'Strijdom is too much of a coward to meet with us.' The crowd stood in silence, giving the Congress salute. And then she led the women in song, Nkosi Sikelel'iAfrika, softly at first and then the song rose louder and louder filling the place with women's voices.

After singing Nkosi Sikelel'iAfrika the women called out, '*Wathint' bafazi, wathint' imbokodo. Strijdom uzakufa*' (You touch the women, you touch the rock [dislodge a boulder]. Strijdom you will die); '*Malibongwe! Igama lamakhosikazi*' (Let the name of the women be praised).

The song uMkhosi weMithika, although believed to have been composed to mark another incident in black resistance in South Africa, the Bulhoek Massacre, conjures up the image of this crowd of women. The level of fearlessness and self-sacrifice is best captured by the symbolism in the song of those 'who drank dew with their own hands' and rose 'with birds'.

In the struggle parlance, *Waphuma ngefestil'uStrijdom* has been passed down to generations of women through the oral tradition, and composed into song in the 1980s.

Having registered their objections and left their petitions, the women returned in the same orderly manner as they had arrived.

The aftermath

The petitions signed by women were later to be used as part of the evidence in the Treason Trial. Also, immediately after the march, women were specifically targeted by the police and arrested for what seemed to be petty transgressions. Lillian Ngoyi was arrested for being in Moroka Emergency Camp without a permit. ANCWL and FSAW office bearers were amongst the 156 charged with treason.

The march managed to delay the extension of passes to African women. As was typical of the state's relations with women at the time, the state would backtrack a little and then still slowly press ahead with their laws. So, in the final analysis, the march did not stop the introduction of the passes. But the power of the march was far-reaching.

The women who were arrested refused to pay fines. A complex battle between women's leadership and the male leaders of the Congress Alliance ensued. Women did not want to back down. Later, after incidents of no minor confrontation between women and the Congress leaders, the fines were paid, especially by the leaders of the Congress on behalf of women who had been arrested for refusing to carry the pass (interview with Alexander [Simons], 1995).

Feminisms, motherisms and patriarchies in the women's struggle

hooks makes an instructive point in relation to race, gender and class:

Concurrently, they [black women] know that males in their social groups are exploited and oppressed; knowing that men in their social groups do not have social, political and economic power, they would not deem it liberatory to share their social status. While they are aware that sexism enables men in their respective groups to have privileges denied them, they are more likely to see exaggerated expressions of male chauvinism among their peers as stemming from the male sense of himself as powerless and ineffectual in relation to ruling male groups. (hooks 1981: 18)

The issue is not whether women's oppression exists. We know that the answer to that is that it does. We live with sexism and patriarchy every day and it takes different manifestations, just as we live with racism and experience its different manifestations in different contexts. The same can be said for homophobia. The question, however, is how we understand the liberatory political practice and process in the South African context. How possible was it for a black woman to imagine being free as a woman but oppressed as part of a racial community? Which part of the self would be free and which part would identify with the racial oppression? How do we divide the body – left/right, upper/lower?

Also, women of the 1950s and other generations that followed, did in fact have a much deeper conceptual understanding of race, gender, national liberation and other issues of social location and context than has been credited in feminist historiography. These have often become sharper in the ways in which women engaged both the apartheid state and the male dominated Congress Alliance. For example, the differences over the issue of fines for refusing to carry passes lie at the heart of the difference between women leaders and the male leadership of the Congress Alliance. Few academics have explored the nature and meanings of these differences.

Clearly, far from being submissive, the women of the 1950s had clarity of vision and thought and knew what they wanted and they got there. For example, it is of significance that women chose not to enter into major arguments with the Congress Alliance men before the march. They needed their support. And this they got, despite the reservations expressed by some men, partly because the men did not appreciate the scale of what the women had been planning.

It is also significant that women decided to strike out on their own in 1956, organised across racial lines. The multiracial character of the march is something that is often taken for granted. However, the very idea of the march itself was first raised by Margaret Gazo in relation to the white women's initiative in the Black Sash. 'White women did not invite us to their march...we must have our own march, invite white

women and march side by side, as women of this country...' (Zihlangu Papers) And thus women went to Pretoria, firmly putting themselves on the political stage during one of the most difficult decades in South Africa. They went to Pretoria despite the obstacles placed in their way.

They had come face to face with the different forms of patriarchy and they were not about to acquiesce without a fight. They simply defied both the government and the Congress male leaders. They adopted attitudes appropriate to whomever they were dealing with at a particular point in time.

A closer study of the march to Pretoria and other forms of resistance in other places afterwards, reveals the complex relationship between women and the male leadership, and amongst women themselves. Were they feminist? They probably would answer, 'And what is that?' This point is well captured by Joseph's (1986) choice of title, *Side by Side*, which is a line from the Women's Charter. It was also a slogan in the 1950s. It became a song in the 1970s and 1980s: 'Side by side, women of the world / side by side, fight for freedom / side by side, fight for freedom now' (sung by Amandla, the choral group of the ANC in exile). In the context of the song, 'side by side' refers both to women of all creeds, classes and colours, calling on them to fight side by side against common oppression. Side by side also refers to the position of women in relation to the national liberation struggle. 'Side by side, together with our menfolk, we will fight for freedom,' said the women of the 1950s.

It was not an easy alliance by any estimation. But it is also important to acknowledge the extent to which these women, conservative or not, cannot be characterised only on the basis of the defence of their homes and children. Nor can they be characterised only on the basis of their stand in relation to the national liberation struggle.

Despite the points of critical importance raised by Hassim et al. (1987), Walker (1991), Wells (1993) and a number of other scholars on the relationship between the national liberation struggle and women's struggle, it is an argument which in my view is based on a false dichotomy. Hassim et al. (1987) write:

The debate around women's oppression in South Africa has become artificially and unnecessarily polarised between those who see the emancipation of women as being secondary to and contingent upon the national liberation and those who separate women's emancipation from broader concerns.

And then they continue to state:

This is not to say, however, that we agree with the dominant position in South Africa which sees women's struggle as necessarily subsumed under national struggles. This position sees 'Western bourgeois feminism' as being hardly relevant to the lives of black women in South Africa. It defines the apartheid order as being the prime enemy and its abolition as the major political task. The position argues women are drawn into organisation on the basis of their opposition to racism in its various forms. Hence they seem to have 'communal' interest with men. (1987: 5)

The most revealing aspect in the argument by Hassim et al. is how it proceeds to produce the very same binary approach it earlier declared as ‘artificial’ and ‘unnecessary’. For many black women, the two positions presented above are simply not choices at all.

There is no question about which aspect of their identities – be it race, class, gender, sexuality, or religion – takes precedence. Of course, it is true that an aspect of one’s identity may be emphasised at a particular point in time, depending on the context in which one finds oneself. This may even be in relation to geographical location, for example, in a northern hemisphere context an African woman may suddenly feel very uncomfortable in the company of other feminists with whom she may share the same feminist vision, principles and even activism. The question is, what mediates that experience at that point in time? Does an African lesbian feminist identify less as a lesbian simply because an African aspect of her identity comes to the fore at a particular moment?

There is a need for a non-linear, nuanced approach that is informed by the understanding that women straddle many positions. Their lives defy the binaries that are dominant in the South African feminist academic ethos. The dominant ethos in fact disarms any attempt to comprehend the complex phenomena it analyses.

Similarly, motherist movements (by this I refer to movements that are shaped by the women’s identity as mothers, which are often women and mother-centred in their political approach) have played important roles in specific contexts. Far from limiting women, these movements may also be a springboard to a broader feminist agenda, although, in some cases, they are powerful in themselves. If we look at the role played by ‘the mothers of the disappeared’ in many Latin American countries during some of the most autocratic military regimes, it becomes clear that motherism, for all its limited focus, can play an important role. It is also obvious that this identity and social role is not a monolith. Issues of location, identity, history and context remain important starting points in feminist historiography and feminist activism.

Anti-pass campaign: Dinokana – a different dimension

To look at this question of identity and location from another perspective, let us visit very briefly the experience of the Dinokana community in Zeerust. Following the 1956 march, the government decided to press ahead with its extension of passes to African women in a low-key manner.

In 1957 Prime Minister Verwoerd sent a message to Chief Moilwa of Dinokana, ordering him to tell his wife to carry a pass. Chief Moilwa’s response was not the one the government had been prepared to hear: ‘Who the hell is this Verwoerd? I have never heard of him before. Why is the government interfering with other people’s wives?’ (Manson 1983: 64).

This led to a period of serious strife, with the NP government deploying all manner of tactics to depose Chief Moilwa. The women of Dinokana protested and refused to carry passes. They mounted a campaign both in support of their chief and also to protest against the ‘handling of women who fell into the hands of the police’. There was a report that a young woman had been raped when she was arrested for not possessing a pass. (Hooper 1989) Walker offers a somewhat static reading of the Zeerust resistance:

For the most part, opposition to passes was bound up with conservative defence of traditional institutions – chieftainship, the patriarchal family, established sex roles. The women who defied reference book units were not demonstrating consciously for freedom or equality; one of the strongest reasons why women were opposed to passes was that they were seen as a direct threat to the family. (1991: xix)

Could there perhaps be a different understanding? Is it true that defence of family is automatically defence of patriarchal values? Is it not possible that we may have a different interaction between Traditional Leaders and women's interests, even if it is limited to tactical alliances? Can women and men have no common interests that are of mutual benefit?

Paradoxically, Walker seems to be in a contradictory dialogue with herself. Of the very same situation in Zeerust, she writes:

Yet as was true of protests in urban areas as well, the effects of the anti-pass protest in Zeerust on the women involved politicising and radicalising. In organising to resist passes, women were learning new political skills...This pushed women into re-evaluating their own attitudes towards themselves and encouraged a greater feeling of assertiveness and solidarity with other women. (1991: 208–9)

In other words, the Zeerust experience, whose scale and characteristics go beyond that which is dealt with here, was *empowering to the women*. There is no doubt that there are ambiguities surrounding the chief's support of the women's resistance. However, as Walker shows, this campaign offered women an opportunity for direct involvement in political decision-making and for interaction with the chiefs and other male leaders. The significance of this, as well as the potential to change relations between women and men, must not be underestimated in the reading of these alliances, fluid as they may be.

The ambiguity, of course, lies in the fact that the chiefs may also have seen women as their property. But part of our reading must also take into account that whatever their motives or understandings, they stood as a barrier against an attack on African women.

The women were not passive, as it turned out. They were also not as unconscious of the linkage between their anti-pass campaign and freedom as Walker seems to conclude.

Conclusion

While there may be similarities in patriarchal practices, it is also true that patriarchy takes different forms. There may be numerous ways in which patriarchy is manifested. The response of feminist academics and academic feminist activists therefore must be informed by this consideration.

Recognising the importance of this complexity, many black feminists have been engaging with these different aspects of identity, race, gender, class and location for a while. Patricia Hill Collins has called for black feminist thought which connects itself

with other feminists but also with other forms of oppression (1990).

Walker makes an important point when she argues that those who are situated in the various African cultures are in a better position to understand and engage with the nuances. Although there is nothing wrong with this argument *per se* – yes, black women, as well as women in all other cultures and contexts, must speak for themselves and situate their own struggles in their own contexts – we must be careful of creating another form of ‘othering’. Walker is already engaging with the Zeerust situation, so why not engage fully and with sufficient depth and flexibility in order to understand its fullest implications, including the complexity and nuances?

Yuval-Davis (1997) also makes an important point when she cautions against positioning women as being in a dichotomous relationship to men.

We must probe discourse and ways of *being*, and representation of black women in the dominant feminist ethos. We must simply move beyond our line of vision and areas of comfort and look at the detail, the pattern as well as the big picture.

It is the connection between all these levels that will assist us in understanding our own location, developing tools of analysis that are appropriate to our own situation, and applying these in a way that illustrates and illuminates rather than obscures our real and lived experiences and their multiple meanings.

It must be made clear that I am not suggesting an essentialist approach, either in terms of race, gender, geographical or any socio-historical category. There is nothing wrong with Euro-American and Occidental feminist traditions *per se*. In the same way, there is nothing wrong with or limited about the Arab, Asian or African feminisms.

What must be acknowledged, however, are the different historical and situational realities and that these may call for a different approach and an adjustment of a particular framework. This is not a negation of any feminist tradition, whether it is from the northern or the southern hemisphere.

Our starting point is a search for tools, a fine-combing of historical archives and narratives, a fine-tuning of the ear, and the development of a wider non-linear vision that can read backwards, sideways and at all levels at any given point.

This chapter has located the growing political consciousness amongst women within a broader feminist and historical framework. It has looked at ‘motherism’, used here to refer to a form of identification in which women as mothers is central. As Cesaire puts it, ‘There are two ways to lose oneself: through walled segregation in the particular or through dilution in the universal’ (1955: 6).

It would seem that a revisiting and recontextualisation of the 1950s is warranted, in order to trace its place in South African women’s history of resistance. This may seem obvious. However, we must examine where we put emphasis and what is treated as significant and what is not.

The relationship between the universal and the particular is one with which feminist scholars must continuously engage. Cesaire’s approach is apt in capturing these connections and the dangers of emphasising one at the expense of the other.

NOTES

- 1 A famous activist honoured posthumously in 2004 by the state president.
- 2 Contemptuous word used by Africans to refer to passes.
- 3 *uMkhosi weMithika* is a choral song believed by this author to refer to the religious procession of AmaSirayeli who, following their prophet, went to the sacred land. This led to the Bulhoek Massacre just outside the small town of Queenstown in the Eastern Cape. Despite talking to musicologists who specialise in this genre, it has been difficult to ascertain the name of the lyricist. However, it is thought to be B. Tyamzashe, one of the Ginsburg Trio.
- 4 'Club' is the word used in most African communities. It is possible that the word is used to refer to the specific guild/*umanyano* and, as such, it is used in a colloquial sense.

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