

**A visual narrative reflecting on upbringing of Xhosa  
girls with special reference to '*intonjane*'**

by

**SIZIWE SYLVIA SOTEWU**

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**SUPERVISOR: DR NP MPAKO**

**CO-SUPERVISOR: DR AU KRAJEWSKA**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that A VISUAL NARRATIVE REFLECTING ON UPBRINGING OF XHOSA GIRLS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO 'INTONJANE' is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Solom', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

February 2016

## **SUMMARY**

### **A Visual Narrative Reflecting on Upbringing of Xhosa Girls with Special Reference to '*Intonjane*'**

The study unpacked the meaning and the value of *intonjane* in traditional Xhosa communities. It also provides a critical analysis and interpretation of the *intonjane* custom and in particular its impact on the upbringing of a Xhosa traditional girl child. It investigates the value of this practice, especially in relation to where it is still being performed, even in our modern times. I researched closely into all aspects of how the girls were brought up, and with what social values. The data collection has been conducted through interviews with the Philakukuzenzela group when they were in Grahamstown Art Festival in July 2011 who come from a place called Centuli, and other people (abaThembu) who practice and have knowledge of the different aspects of the *intonjane* process and observation during the actual ceremonies in O. R. Tambo district, and in Gemvale near Port St Johns in the Province of the Eastern Cape. Interviews were conducted in Xhosa and translated into English. This Visual Narrative investigates and contributes to the debate regarding the value of traditional African thought and how it can enrich our contemporary belief system. The objective was to investigate the essence and merit of the knowledge imparted by elderly women to young girls during the initiation period of *intonjane* within Xhosa traditional communities. This study provides a foundation and springboard for my practical artworks which utilized symbols and metaphors to express my understanding of the important events and stages associated with this traditional ceremony. Clay medium was used as the medium of expression, applying different techniques such as throwing, press mold, slab building, coiling, engraving, sewing and inlaying, with press mold being the main technique utilized. My artworks are of three different types, which are symbolic of the three

aspects or stages, of liminality, namely: pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal.

#### KEY WORDS

Liminal theory, *intojane*, *ukwāluka*, Victor Turner, Deborah Bell, Churchill Madikida, Nicholas Hlobo, Xhosa Culture.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this to all those who supported me from the beginning of this study to the end.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The Xhosa ethnic group forms part of the Nguni people of Southern Africa. The Xhosa ethnic group is further divided into various tribes that include “Mpondo, Bomvana, Bhaca, Thembu, Mpondomise, Xesibe, Mfengu, Hlubi, the Xhosa proper and others, which were bound century after century by ties of marriage, as well as by diplomatic, military and political alliances” (Pinnock 1994: 1). Through their cultural identity they practice a number of rituals and customs that are performed during various traditional ceremonies. According to Whisson (2004: i) “culture is about how human communities adapt to the changing material and social environments through their ideas, rules and actions”. Hornby (2006: 357) adds that culture is “the customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organization of a particular, country or group”. The rituals and customs sometimes vary from tribe to tribe. *Intonjane* is one such custom which is marked by a number of rituals and events signifying the rite of passage from girlhood to womanhood.

Mtuzze (2004: 28) states that the “*intonjane* custom is associated with marriage because it is in marriage that this custom comes into play, in most cases”. It usually culminates in a celebration ceremony where the girls are initiated and brought back to their families, whereby they are expected to behave differently from the way they did before the custom. African people are known for always having reasons to perform various types of rituals ranging from slaughtering of animals as sacrifice to body scaring, pouring of libations, offering of gifts and many more. These rituals are usually performed by senior members of a family usually a father or mother or uncle and aunt. This is because these rituals usually involve calling for the ancestors to be present by chanting or saying certain songs or words known to that family.

According to Turner (1973: 1100), a ritual is “a stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place, and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests”. Hornby (2006: 1264) writes that a ritual is “a series of actions that are always performed in the same way especially as part of a religious ceremony”. A

custom, on the other hand, refers to “an accepted way of behaving or doing things in a society or a community [or refers to] the way a person always behaves” (Hornby 2006: 361). Ceremony is a “public or religious occasion that includes a series of formal or traditional actions” (Hornby 2006: 228).

## **1.1 THE STUDY’S RATIONALE AND CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND**

*Intonjane* is a rite of passage from girlhood to womanhood practiced by Xhosa people from time immemorial. A girl was traditionally expected to attend the *intonjane* custom once she has experienced her first menstruation. In the past, girls experienced their first menstruation at about 14-16 years of age. But in this present era most girls begin menstruation as early as 11-12 years of age. Kama who cited Nini (2011: 1), stated that “sexual intercourse with people under the prescribed age of sixteen years is statutory rape, and under the age of twelve years is rape”. Thus, goes without saying that if the custom remains and is applied to this current generation without any consideration of modern practices and principles and problems are inevitably expected due to a number of factors which include: socio-political, economic and culturally issues.

The South African Constitution allows only girls above 16 years of age to have consensual sexual relationship. Meaning that any girl under the age of sixteen who might have started menstruation at tender age and partakes in *intonjane* rites with the assumption that she is ready for marriage, will go against South Africa Constitution, hence the need for this study.

Furthermore expenses associated with this ritual such as animals to be slaughtered or sacrificed for each girl who attends *intonjane* constitutes another problem of financial commitment to the parents. Likewise, the problem of stigma associated with traditional customs including *intonjane* by some modern elites and foreign religious believers, mistaking customs for barbarism and backwardness.

According to Delaney (1995: 2) rites of passage for adolescents have existed throughout human history and may be a significant factor in the development of a stable adult personality. Usually a rite of passage will involve:

- Separation from society;
- Preparation or instruction from an elder;
- Transition (in the case of adolescence, from child to adult); and
- Welcoming back into society with acknowledgement of the adolescent's changed status (Delaney 1995: 2).

Delaney (1995: 2) further asserts that the transition itself most often takes place within the format of some ceremony, many aspects of which are common to widely diverse cultures. These rites generally include literal and spiritual cleansing, physical transformation, offerings, prayers, blessings, traditional food and dress, and traditional musical instruments and songs (Delaney 1995: 2). *Intonjane* also involves teachings from elderly woman to young girls.

Maluleke and Troskie (2003: 57) stated that “the rite [*intonjane*] encourages the girls to maintain their virginity by stressing no sex before marriage”. The authors also state that “initiation rites are seen as an expression of fundamental social values, the focus of which is on relations established by marriage and the community”. Thus *intonjane* is part of a process of preparing girls for marriage and womanhood, as is confirmed by the Xhosa saying: ‘the home of a girl is in her marriage home’. This has also been confirmed by Hoza (2010: 145) who writes that “traditional African marriage ... [is] regarded as one of the most important rites of passage in her [black African feminist] society”.

Broster (1976: 39) states that the origin of the name and meaning of *intonjane* “is taken from the life cycle of the stick insect”. She asserts that at the end of the larval stage a caterpillar encases itself in a little grass mat where the cocoon rests until the adult is ready to emerge. During certain months of the year the trees in the veld and forest are decorated with these grassy cocoons, which Africans refer to as *ntonjane*. The kind of grass used for the mats laid on the floor of the special hut where the girls

are kept during *intonjane*, which is referred as *inkxopho*, resembles the cocoons encasing the caterpillar (Broster 1976: 39).

Xhosa people believe that the knowledge passed to the girls during the *intonjane* period is crucial because it prepares them to be responsible mothers and loving wives to their husbands. This information was confirmed during a focus group discussion the researcher conducted with a community group of women referred to as Philakukuzenzela (interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2011). These women also made a claim that girls who have not undergone *intonjane* custom usually behave in an unaccepted manner. They further attested that if the rituals related to *intonjane* have not been performed on the girl she might encounter a number of problems in her adult life especially during marriage. They said these problems range from having difficulties conceiving children, bed wetting, and having tooth pains. This group of women believes that if a married woman experiences some of the aforementioned problems, the only thing that could solve is *intonjane* rituals which can only be performed by her birth family.

## **1.2 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The main aim of this study is to cast light on the Xhosa cultural ideology that shaped the *intonjane* custom, and its value to the upbringing of the traditional African girl child. The study further unpacks the significance of rituals and other activities associated with the *ntonjane* custom by exploring Xhosa traditional customs and approaches to cultural unity, and revealing the influence of modern culture on this custom. The study also examines the essence and merit of the knowledge imparted by elderly women to the young girls during the *intonjane* period and seeks to provide a critical analysis and interpretation of this knowledge to the upbringing of Xhosa modern girls. In addition, by making reference to the differing opinions which arose from the Philakukuzenzela focus group discussions about *intonjane*, the study seeks to negotiate an agreement between the Xhosa traditional and modern point of views using Habermas's "critical theory of communicative action" as proposed by Brand (1990: 11). This is because the modern point of view which is supported by United

Nation Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as published in the Position Paper on Education Post 2015 (2014) urges that educating young girls should be one of the modern world's priorities. UNESCO (2013: 42) further "provides new evidence of education's positive role in changing lives, and points in particular to the unmatched transformative power of educating girls and women". Thus the essence of this study is to strike a balance between these differing ideologies towards the sustenance of positive traditional values whilst recognising constructive and relevant modern ways of survival.

Habermas considers any expression to be made up of three communication processes: "truth", which refers to having a good reason to believe; "rightness", which refers to the morals that justify the reason for belief; and "truthfulness", which refers to the normative expression that reflects authenticity (Ingram 1991; Hillar 2003). Habermas (1985: 20) further argues that any act of expression "can promote the acceptance of precisely those standards according to which it counts as an authentic" action or practice. In other words, the relevance of any cultural values or behaviour can be found in the beliefs associated with that culture. These values include customs and ritual practices such as rites of passage as well as language, dance, singing, poetry and dress codes acceptable to the class and gender of that culture. Cultural values "transform the African by making him [sic] adopt his traditional cultural heritage in which he realizes his authentic personal selfhood among others in his community" (Egbujie 1977: 144). Egbujie's argument may be an explanation for the prolonged maintenance of many African traditional cultural customs and rituals such as *intonjane* and many others which the Xhosa people of the Eastern Cape have upheld from generation to generation.

### **1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This research design adopted a qualitative approach in gathering, utilizing and analyzing information in order to form a foundation for the final visual symbols. The data was collected through key/elite informants and group interviews. The key informants include researcher's mother, aunt, a church member, some of my

students and my supervisor's insider knowledge as a Xhosa woman. Group interviews were conducted in various villages of the Eastern Cape, the people interviewed include late Jack Zankwenkwe, and his friend the late Evelin NoEast Ngogqoyi. The researcher conducted interviews with the *Philakukuzenzela* focus Group from Centuli in Mthatha when they were at the Grahamstown Arts Festival in 2011. Interview was also conducted with community members who produce traditional pots at Gemvale near Port St Johns and two female potters from Tombo, near Port St Johns were also interviewed. The information collected was utilized in the creation of the visual narratives presented in my exhibition.

The visual narratives which present the *intonjane* symbolism are explained using the theory of liminality as developed by Van Genep (1960: vii) and Turner (1967: 19). Symbols and metaphors from this research were used to express understanding of the importance of events and stages associated with this custom. This understanding is used as a foundation and springboard for the practical artworks. Based on the information emerged from this research the practical works focus mainly on the developmental stages of a girl from infancy right through the events leading to the *intonjane* custom up to the graduation ceremony as well as what happen after the girls' return from this initiation school.

#### **1.4 INFLUENTIAL ARTISTS**

The study refers to various artists whose work, in one way or another, relate to the concepts my research seeks to address. These are Deborah Bell, Churchill Madikida, and Nicholas Hlobo. Deborah Bell explores Africanness issues and her portrayal of the female figure ranges from small and intimate to life size and over life size bronze sculptures. Bells human figures are huge confrontation literalistic and mystical. All these inspired the researcher's interest

Churchill Madikida and Nicholas Hlobo on the other hand also explore African issues associated with rites of passage which have had a direct impact on them as individuals. These issues range from wanting to understand their lived experiences;



some of which do not make sense to them as individuals but had to comply by doing them due to cultural dictates. Their main subject matter was their personal experiences during their initiation custom from boyhood to manhood which is similar to *intonjane* for girls. The researcher's interest in choosing them as inspiration was to learn from artists who are reflecting on their lived experience regarding these customs. Nicholas Hlobo's work also features his sexual orientation, his language and culture. His work entitled '*umtshotsho*' refers to one of the Xhosa cultural events that accompanies the transition from youth to adulthood and is attended by both boys and girls after they have graduated from the rite of passage. Thus both artists have not only inspired the researcher by their interest in traditional custom but also by their urge to discover their identity by reflecting on their lived experiences through art practice. Due to researcher's interest in her culture as an African woman and in particular a Xhosa who was born in a rural setting, this research seeks to discover the many traditional customs the researcher missed due to early childhood relocation to urban settings.

## **1.5 PRACTICAL WORK AND EMERGENT VISUAL METAPHORS**

The information emerging from this research regarding Xhosa traditional life focusing on a girl's rite of passage into womanhood provides the information ('raw material') upon which researcher's artworks are created, and influence the choice of symbols and metaphors. Thus, they are infused with emerging symbols and metaphors influenced both by theory of liminality as well as information gathered from the subjects of this study. According to Turner (1967: 19) "symbol is the smallest unit of ritual which still retains the specific properties of ritual behavior; it is the ultimate unit of specific structure in a ritual context". The Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines a symbol as "a person, an object an event etcetera that represents a more general quality or situation". As explained by Turner (1967: 19), ritual "means prescribed formal behavior for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings or powers". The symbols and metaphors depicted in the body of artworks in this dissertation present my understanding and interpretation as a researcher of this phenomenon and its significance to Xhosa

culture. Framed by Van Gennep's (1960: VII) and Turner's (1967:19) "theory of liminality" my artworks present symbols of the three different stages of *intonjane* rite of passage. Turner (1967: 19) and Van Gennep (1960: vii), describe liminality as having three stages: pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal, that are presented in the artworks using clay medium

Clay in researcher's works is used as the medium of expression, applying different techniques such as throwing, slab building, press molds, coiling, engraving, sewing, and inlaying. Sewing, and cutting, has been used in most of my artworks. Sewing is a symbol of deconstruction for the purposes of reconstruction. Skin rope from a goat of an ox or cow is used as the sewing thread in most of my artworks and it represents our culture which binds everything together through animal sacrifice. These animals are used as sacrifice during the calling of the ancestral presence which is the most important part of these rituals. Among Africans ancestors are the link between people and God or any supernatural power which is believed to be watching over the wellbeing of mankind, hence the use of molds as a symbol of protection.

Mold making is the main technique used to produce the artworks. Buss (1979: 1) states that "clay is a natural earth, formed millions of years ago", so it is fitting to use clay to explore ideas and practices from long ago. Clay is also a medium that was used by children of long ago, and is still used in our day in making clay oxen and other toys. Other materials that are used include wire, metal, leather and found objects that were used during the duration of *intonjane*. The ceremonial objects associated with the practice are incorporated in the artworks because they are very important for the well-being of the initiates and success of the entire event.

## **CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND EMERGENT CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE ASSOCIATED WITH THE *INTONJANE* CUSTOM**

This chapter starts with articulating the theory of liminality and its relation to *intonjane* with a special focus on the significance of rituals associated with this *practice*. It ends with Habermas's communicative action and its relevance in interpreting the meaning of *intonjane* with a special focus on the significance of the knowledge passed by elderly woman to the young initiates.

Van Gennep's and Turner's theory of liminality which explain the stages of the rite of passage from childhood to adulthood are used to explain the *intonjane* phenomenon. As cited by Charles La Shure (2005), Van Gennep described "rites of passage such as coming-of-age rituals and marriage as having the following three structures: separation, liminal period and re-assimilation". Habermas's theory of communicative action attests that human communication is any act of expression be it verbal language or an action and is always used in a manner oriented to reaching an "agreement through reason" (Brand 1990: 11). Habermas's communicative action is applied in this research to explain the significance of the ritual expressions associated with the *intonjane* custom.

### **2.1 THE THEORY OF LIMINALITY AND ITS RELATION TO *INTONJANE***

This study seeks to explain the meaning of the different stages of the *intonjane* rite of passage by unpacking associated ritual practices. *Intonjane* is the Xhosa term for girl's rite of passage to womanhood. Van Gennep and Turner define liminality as the "state of being in limbo or the in-betweenness" (Van Gennep 1960: vii and Turner 1967: 19). Westerveld (2011: 3-4) states that "liminality is defined as a middle ground, a space and time where transformations take place, a transitional state filled with ambiguities and contradictions". The *intonjane* custom in its nature is meant to instill a state of instability in the life of the young girls who go through the process. Through enculturation these young initiates are being modelled and transformed to

accept and uphold culturally accepted norms and values regarding womanhood. Thus *intonjane* serves as a change agent to facilitate this cultural transformation.

Van Gennep (1960: vii), describes liminal theory by differentiating between three stages, namely, pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal. He further refers to the three stages as “separation or death; transition or passage, and incorporation or integration respectively. The first stage is a pre-liminal stage, which is associated with the death of a stage or, in the case of *intonjane*, separation from being a girl/child to becoming a woman/adult. The second stage is the liminal stage which refers to the transition/passage and or state of Limbo. Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines the state of being in limbo as a “situation in which you are not certain of what to do next, cannot take action etcetera especially because you are waiting for somebody else to make a decision”. According to my research informants the *intonjane* initiates can relate to this uncertainty as they are expected to wait for their parents especially mothers to make decisions on their behalf. When these girls are at the *intonjane* school or in a special hut where they live during the duration of *intonjane*, they cannot do anything without guidance from their mentors the elders. These girls have to conform to the accepted cultural teachings.

This idea of limbo can also be compared to the concept of a bridge, which represents the transitional state and a connection agent moving from one stage to another. When you are an *intonjane*, you are right at the bridge. For a traditional Xhosa girl, this liminal stage represents a period where she is “betwixt and between ... separated from (her) previous identity and not yet incorporated into the new identity” (Womack 2005: 19). The liminal stage situates the initiate in a state of “otherness” due to the feeling of being different and uncertain. *Intonjane* can be described as the intermediary, the place where changes happen. Liminal situations are about something dying, and something new beginning. In the case of *intonjane* a young girl's behaviour is going away, and a woman is being born through the various rituals and teachings that take place during this custom. There is a sense of leaving something behind, and acquiring something new. The third stage is post

liminal and this stage takes place when a girl comes out of *intonjane* and goes back to her family and the society.

*Intonjane* is a culmination of events associated with a Xhosa girl child's developmental stages. Thus explaining only the significance of *intonjane* will not do justice to the meaning of this custom as it is understood by the Xhosa people. In African communities the gender of a child creates different expectations in the family and the community at large. For example, a girl child is referred to as the flower of the family because she is expected to decorate the home by bringing wealth through lobola (dowry) to her own family and expand her husband's family through offspring. A boy child on the other hand is regarded as the heir/inheritor who will keep the family name as his offspring bears his surname. Thus from the day the child is born he/she is expected to conform to these socially constructed norms.

### **2.1.1 The significance of ritual performance within the Xhosa culture**

Xhosa culture like any other society has their distinct belief system which manifests itself in a number of ways within their ways of life. Culture, as described by Spradley (1980:6), means the "acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behaviour". This definition is derived from the "three fundamental aspects of human experience" which is what people do, know and the objects they make and use (Spradley: 1980:6). These are referred to as "cultural behaviour, cultural knowledge and cultural artefacts" respectively (Spradley: 1980:6). Ritual performance forms major part of Xhosa cultural behaviour and knowledge, and children go through a number of rituals which are transmitted through enculturation especially during the rites of passages. Browne (1980: 19) states that "phenomenological rituals are defined as culturally transmitted symbolic codes which are stylised, regularly repeated, dramatically structured, authoritatively designed and intrinsically valued". Among the Xhosa culture rituals are intrinsic and define the growing up process and other aspects of life experiences. This is because each stage of development from infancy through to adulthood until death is marked by various rituals.

Ingraham (2008: 1) stated that “culture instills meaning in our lives from the very first moment we enter the social world”, and that the behaviour of individuals and how they relate “is a product of the dominant culture and its social order”. Ingraham (2008:1) also makes the point that “it is this behaviour that to us becomes so natural and may be taken for granted that cultural construction appears to occur so naturally”. Ingraham’s statement is observed within the Xhosa through its spontaneous practice of various rituals associated with rite of passages such as *intojane* custom for girls and *ukwaluka* for boys. These ritual performances have become part of the Xhosa people’s way of life.

Turner (1967: 19) defined ritual as a “prescribed formal behaviour for occasions not given over technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical being and powers”. Thus, rites of passage constitute various routines that each member of a culture has to go through in their life cycle especially within the traditional Xhosa community. These ritual performances are usually associated with superstitious beliefs. In the case of *intonjane* Xhosa people who embrace these cultural beliefs believe that non-adherence to *intonjane* rituals may result to infertility and bed wetting problems (from an interview with Philakukuzenzela group). Durkheim (1995) asserts that there is a relationship between ritual performance and devotion to social order and that this cooperative adoration results in social unity. Thus, “ritual is central to the understanding... of society” (Durkheim 1995: 150) and it generates group emotions that are linked to symbols, forming the basis for beliefs, thinking, morality and culture (Summers-Effler 2006: 135).

Bell’s (1992 and 1997) states that rituals create a collective set of beliefs and that in an ever changing society they are bridges between tradition and constant social change.

Rituals and ceremonies form a part of the institutional arrangements which can be understood only in terms of the ideas, beliefs, attitudes and values, i.e. the ideological frameworks, which render them meaningful. The movements, gestures, instruments, times, places and words that constitute these rituals are expressions (Signs and symbols) of other aspects of society (Berardo and Vera 1981: 395).

In the case of rites of passage rituals are performed for a number of reasons including request for blessings and reverence in anticipation of good health and prosperity among other things. Rituals are “culturally constructed” tools of communication and they are transferred and sustained through being performed in their original format whenever there is a need (Tambiah 1979: 119). The need itself is determined by cultural beliefs and norms such as rites of passages to mention just one.

A ritual is performed as a physical or expressive experience intended to convince/prove to both the celebrant/believer as well as observers of the ritual practice that something meaningful is being performed (Schechner 2009: ). Thus, a ritual becomes the tangible aspect and a signifier of the milestone being confirmed and is an eternal reminder of that event. In the case of Xhosa rites of passages both boys and girls carry or are adorned with symbols associated with the ritual which identify them as having gone through a specific rite of passage. Schechner (1993: xviii) refers to these physical symbols as “make-believe”, because everyone who see and know their significance will react accordingly. One such reaction is the greetings using the name associated with these rites of passages, such as *bhut olikwala* and *Sisi oyintombi* referring to a boy and a girl initiate respectively, who have just graduated from these Xhosa rites of passages. These symbols also include their attire, which is usually new and distinct as well as the yellow or red clays which they use to smear their bodies. Thus, Xhosa people believe that the performance of rituals is a decree and consists of hidden meanings which do not have to be questioned, but have to be carried out for the welfare of the believers.

### **2.1.2 The meaning of Rituals Associated with *Intonjane***

Van Gennep’s (1960: VII) pre-liminal stage of the girl’s rite of passage has to be understood in context, which is that *intonjane* is the culmination of various growing-up events and thus, the “death or a separation from being a child to becoming an adult” refers to the death or separation from childhood experiences. This section

seeks to explain what it means to be a girl child in a traditional broader sense and in particular amongst the traditional Xhosa people. It discusses the cultural meanings of the knowledge associated with *intonjane* rituals. Kimball (cited in the foreword to van Gennepe 1960: vi) states that Van Gennepe “was insistent that ceremonies needed to be examined in their entirety and in the social setting in which they are found”.

According to one of this study’s key informants “*a girl retains the status of being a flower if she keeps her virginity until she is married*” (own translation). Xhosas, like every other African nation, adhere to certain norms and values in the upbringing children or in overseeing childhood training and education. From a very early age girls are groomed to perform motherly roles which involve the wellbeing and protection of their children, such as maternal customs and domestication. A girl child is taught by her mother certain norms and values such as caring for the entire family and domestic duties such as fetching water, fetching wood, grinding maize, separating grains from chaff, stamping maize, and cooking food, to mention few. Oakes (1994: 85) asserts that

“...between five to eight years old, children of both sexes underwent a ceremony in which their ears were pierced. From this time on, the girls were drawn increasingly into ‘women’s’ duties, working long hours in the fields and carrying out a variety of domestic chores. As they grew up, the children learned to eat, drink, dance, sit and sleep apart from the opposite sex. And there began the pattern of behaviour and taboo that would remain with them for the rest of their lives” (Oakes 1994: 85).





Figure 2.1: Siziwe Sotewu, *Xhosa traditional domestic chores for girls* (2012)

### 2.1.2.1 Rituals Associated with the Pre-liminal stage

When a girl reaches puberty which is usually marked by her first menstruation jewellery made out of grass (*imizi*) is placed around her neck and waist symbolizing that she is coming of age. The teachings regarding womanhood are intensified and preparation for *intonjane* begins. Mcimeli (1995: 94) confirms that “when boys reach adolescence and girls reach their first menstruation, parents stand up on their feet

and teach the children the difference between boys and girls”. Mcimeli (1995: 94) further adds that

it was supposed to be like that because the girls are expected to keep their virginity until marriage in honour of their mother’s teachings and to make their fathers proud. That is why they are sent to be tested; they have to keep their virginity, because if they marry with their virginity still intact, their fathers will get lots of cows or a lot of money.

Furthermore, according to Sityana (1978: 19), “a girl’s eligibility for initiation starts when she reaches her menstruation period”. Broster (1976: 40) states that “as soon as a girl had reached puberty and had her first menstruation, she was placed in ritual seclusion”. Van Gennep (1960: 65) states that “the physical puberty of girls is marked by a swelling of the breasts an enlargement of the pelvis, the appearance of pubic hair, and above all the first menstruation flow”. According to the *Philakukuzenzela* group when these puberty signs are observed the mother of the girl has to alert the father and a traditional gathering called *ibhunga* is called. This event is marked by preparation of traditional beer called *Umqombothi webhunga* (the beer of *ibhunga* gathering). During this event the girl is addressed by her father and uncles and told that she will be going to attend *intonjane*. This brief is accompanied by a ritual where a string made from a live ox’s tail hair is placed around the girl’s neck. The necklace is called *ubulunga* which can be translated to mean “all is well with our daughter”. *Ubulunga* can also mean that menstruation as a biological sign symbolises that the girl will be able to produce offspring. Thus the *ubulunga* ritual is to prepare the young girl for the *intonjane* period whilst the *ibhunga* gathering is an announcement to the community that the initiate to be will soon be ready for a man who wants to marry her. The necklace is an identification and invitation to any young man who is ready for a wife, and so when the girl wears this she has to expect several proposals for marriage (*Philakukuzenzela* focus group: 2011).

Broster (1976: 40) adds that after the events leading to *intonjane* such as the *ibhunga* gathering “many domestic duties are involved and the whole family participates. While women and girls re-plaster the huts and apply fresh whitewash, the men select the animals that will be needed for the *intonjane* rituals. An ox and

two goats are usually required for the sacrifices and sheep must be slaughtered to feed the guests”. The Philakukuzenzela group stated that two animals are needed for the sacrifice, namely, a goat and an ox.

*During the preparations her mother makes two new grass sleeping mats and prepares the white clay, clothing and utensils required for the intonjane. Together the mother and the father visit the trading store and buy all that is needed. At least five bags of mealies will be needed for food and the brewing of beer. For the initiate they purchase a black cashmere head cloth, a food basin, a wash basin, a cup and saucer, a knife, soap and a towel, [while the initiate is] engaged in making her bead dress. Proudly she chooses either green beads for new life or red beads for menstrual blood and works a bold design of the river of life (Broster 1976: 40).*

“A special hut, which is called *ejakeni*, is built, and a section of this hut is covered by a curtain made with *ingcongolo* (reeds) or with *ingca* (grass)” (Key informant Interview). This special hut is also called *entonjaneni* or *eludweni* (Figure 2.2). During modern times most people no longer build a special hut, but any available and strategically placed rondavel with grass thatched roof within the initiate’s homestead can be used. Strategically this hut/rondavel has to be out of reach of the public. “An enclosed section inside the special hut/rondavel is reserved for the initiate, and her mentor” (own translation from an informant), because the initiate should not be seen by other people until a certain period has lapsed. The partition (a curtain made out of grass), is called *umdiyadiya*. This first period is marked by ancestral worship and devotion whereby the initiate is presented for blessings and protection. In relation to Van Gennep’s concept of liminality (1960: vii) this period is represented by both the “pre liminal” and “liminal stages”. According to one of the informants of this study “the aunts of the initiates (either maternal or paternal) take care of the initiate during *intonjane*” (Philakukuzenzela focus group: 2011).



**Figure 2.2:** *The initiate inside the hut*

### **2.1.2.2** *Rituals associated with the liminal stage*

After all the preparations are done and a girl is about to enter the special hut, a liminal stage begins. A girl has to live a different life style. Rasing (1995: 47) explains that:

The girl has to be silent, to sit with her legs stretched in front of her, her hands on her legs and her head bowed. She is not allowed to do anything, and when she has to stand up, she is pulled up and down afterwards. This makes the girl understand that she has to learn to obey and show her that she is still a child, a non-person, who cannot do anything. She has to wear a citenge (cloth) around her abdomen, (they call this the clothes of the initiation) so that the rest of her body is naked. This is to show that she is different from the other women. It

also serves to humiliate her, to stress she is a non-person who should be tested and treated badly, in order to make her strong to bear all the disappointments and pains she will experience in life. It is also a sign of respect to the ancestors. She is in the liminal phase, but also symbolically secluded (Rasing 1995: 47).

According to one of the informants from the Philakukuzenzela group, during the first week of the *intonjane* period the initiate is placed behind the curtain made out of grass, with no clothes, except for a *black doek (turban) and inciyo* also called *Nomtishi*. All her body is painted with white ochre. According to Broster (1976: 43) “the white clay, the symbol indicating contact with the ancestral spirits and seclusion from normal tribal life, is applied to her face and every part of her body”. She is placed behind the curtain because she is not allowed to be seen by other people, except her assistants (*amakhankatha*, selected girls, and her aunt). If she wants to go out to relieve herself, she has to go at night or in early hours of the morning and if during the day she must be fully covered with a blanket as shown in Figure 2.2.

According to the Port St John’s informants and a “woman’s church group from the Roman Catholic Church in Zambia” (Rasing 1995) the initiate is not supposed to do any chores during this period; she just sits quietly, and does what she is told to do by her mentors. It has been said that even if the house is full of cow dung smoke from the fire that usually stays burning throughout day and night she has to endure the pain from the smoke, as she is not allowed to go out during the day.

A song called *Nongabe* is sung by the girls who attend *intonjane* throughout this period. Broster (1976: 42) confirms that “the *nkazana* ... starts to sing the *Nogabenge*, the lilting opening song of the *intonjane*. ‘Ah today the girl of this kraal is to be initiated into womanhood’. Then the girls and women, in chorus, sing the triumphant refrain:

‘A’h! The *Ntonjane* has commenced at this kraal. We rejoice, we rejoice. Oh-ho-Oh-ho Yo Ho-Yo’.

Another example of a song from Rasing’s (1995:49) study that is sung during girl’s initiation rites in Zambian urban Roman Catholic community is:

*'Walomba imisango kubakulu wemwana* (You child of the mbusa are asking)  
*Wambusa walomba imisango kubakulu'* (how to be an adult).

According to Rasing (1995: 49) "this song means that the girl has to acquire knowledge, she has to learn from older, experienced people, because they have gone through this. She has to learn so that she will have a good marriage and future". Broster (1976: 42) also stated that throughout the *intonjane* period "the women and girls form a circle beside the cattle fold where they dance, and sing the songs of the *ntonjane*." On the first or the second evening of commencement the girls enter the *intonjane* special hut and stay over until the following morning while the song (*Nongabe*) is sang and a "ceremonial goat is slaughtered" (Broster 1976: 42).

Simultaneously the men of the family, father sons, uncles and nephews appear. The father greets the women and girls ...The sacrificial goat is held by its horns and as the sun rises the father addresses the ancestral spirits. "Today as is our custom I sacrifice to you, for my daughter who has entered her initiation and I give notice that in ten days' time a full celebration (*umtshato*) will be held." He stabs the goat and at its cry the company call, '*Camagu!*' for its cry has called the ancestral spirits to their midst (Broster 1976: 43).

According to one of informants from the Philakukuzenzela group, after slaughtering a goat, which is the first ritual/sacrifice, a young man from the family who is selected by male parents, is given a piece of meat called *isiphika* to roast. When the meat is cooked he is instructed to pick it with a sharpened stick and give it to the initiate and her assistants. This stick is used by the initiate because she is not allowed to touch the meat with her hands. Broster's (1976: 43-44) research, which was conducted among the Tembu people of the Eastern Cape, confirms the Philakukuzenzela group's information about the meat ritual,

the goat is skinned and the right shoulder (*umshwamo*) is excised. Meanwhile the *nkazana* waits at the gate of the cattle fold for the father to hand her this meat. She takes it into the seclusion hut where she lights a fire. She cuts off thin strips of meat and roasts them lightly on coals. These she feeds to the initiate by placing a small piece of meat on a wood skewer and raising it to [her] mouth". During this time songs and dances are happening outside until

the initiate is finished eating. After that singers and dancers starts roasting their meat, eat it, and drink the beer (Broster 1976: 43-44)

One of the informants from the Philakukuzenzela group testified that during *intonjane* a girl has to live a different life style including sleeping on a grass called *inxkopho*, that breeds grass fleas. *Inxkopho* is fetched by village girls from the veld who come to participate in the *intonjane phenomenon*. This grass is placed on the floor of the special hut. Broster (1976: 46) confirms this that “during her absence fresh grass is strewn over the floor of the hut”.

In the afternoon of the fourth day as the Philakukuzenzela group explains, a second sacrifice is done, where an ox is slaughtered. They call this day, a day of marriage – marriage of *intonjane* not of going to a new homestead. It is a simulation of a marriage ceremony. They stressed that the day of slaughtering an ox must be an even number not an odd number, so they usually wait until the fourth day. It is said that the even number symbolises the two people and the two families that will result from a marriage union. Broster (1976: 45) confirms this information by saying “on the afternoon of the tenth day of her seclusion, many women and girls assemble for the sacrifice called *umtshato*”. One of the informants from Gemvale at Port St Johns also confirmed that they do the second sacrifice on a second day.

The right shoulder of the slaughtered ox, called *umshwamo*, is taken to a special hut usually the main house where it is believed to be under the watch of the ancestors, and stays there for the whole night. On the following day this right shoulder is cooked by one of the initiate’s assistants excluding those who have never been initiated, because they are not allowed to eat this kind of meat (key informant). One of the assistants feed the initiate with the same stick that was used when she was eating the goat’s meat. The Philakukuzenzela informants stressed that the *intonjane* is not successful without this second sacrifice, and Broster (1976: 45) declared that

...it is the main sacrifice. It must be remembered that the tribe depends upon the fertility of its women and children for the real wealth of the kraal. A woman’s value is related to her capacity to bear children. Thus fertility is always of paramount importance in choosing a wife

and so the sacrifice of *umtshato* assumes special importance. It is the sacrifice made for the blessing of children. During the feast [the girl] is adorned with a fertility doll necklace. It is made of a tiny bottle covered in green or yellow beads and is worn to ensure fertility (Broster 1976: 45).

It has been said by one of the informants from the Philakukuzenzela group that the initiate must keep this stick safe; if she loses it, she is going to be punished, because this stick is very important, as is still going to be used. It is believed that if she loses the stick before the completion of all the rituals something wrong will happen. After the initiate has eaten the ox meat they wait for one day, which is called a day of *ukuvundiswa* before they go to the veld to find *isicithi* (a place with grass) to throw and burn the stick. This means that *ukuvundiswa* is between the day of eating meat of an ox and of throwing of the stick as explained by Philakukuzenzela group (2011). The following day late in the afternoon, the initiate and her assistants go to the veld to look for a place to throw the stick. One of the assistants ties the stick inside a bunch of grass then lights the grass to burn the stick. When the fire is finished, the initiate and her assistants destroy the remains of the ashes by kicking them and dispersing them everywhere. This burning of the stick and dispersing of the ashes thereafter is symbolic of the end of the pre liminal stage, the childhood, and the beginning of liminal stage which is the gateway to womanhood.

After the stick burning ritual the initiate and her assistance have to run back home to the special hut. The initiate has to run very fast so that the girls who are participants at *kwantonjane* do not catch her, because if they catch her, she will have to stay more days inside the special hut. When they arrive at home they sleep over, and the following morning the initiate is dressed like a traditional bride. This clothing is symbolic of the anticipated new identity of married life and the initiate is taught to master special cleaning chores. She starts by removing the grass/*inxkopho* and the ashes from the *intonjane* house and then polishes the floor by smearing it with fresh cow dung. Late in the afternoon new grass/*inxkopho* is placed on the floor of the *intonjane* hut again, which symbolises the new stage of incorporation. (Philakukuzenzela focus group: 2011)



### 2.1.2.3 The significance of the Post-liminal stage Rituals

The informants further stated that the initiate has to stay another ten days in the special hut, but during this time there are no animal sacrifices. This period marks the end of both the “pre-liminal” and “liminal” stages (Van Gennep 1960) and the beginning of the post liminal stage of integration. During this stage the initiate is believed to be susceptible to any disposition and keen to learn and accept this newly imposed identity. According to the Ndevana focus group discussion the teachings during this period include how to sexually entertain the future husband and show respect to the future in-laws. This is done in a more relaxed manner than during the intense liminal stage and is accompanied by singing, dancing and eating normal food. This is because the initiate has to be fed and be healthy enough to entice a prospective husband hence the exaggerated female figures in the exhibition.



**Figure 2.3: Researcher performing as the initiate who is ready for integration, photograph, 2015**

The integration period takes ten days whilst the whole *intonjane* period varies between three weeks and six weeks. During this period the initiate counts down by painting a dot a day within a demarcated space on the wall inside the hut. The number of these dots represent days already stayed. If she forgets to put a dot,

days are added by the *intonjane* assistants and they become happy because they are enjoying themselves in the *intonjane* hut as there is now plenty of food and celebrations. It has been said that if it happens that the initiate menstruates again during her ten days, she will have to start counting from the beginning. “Before [a girl’s] seclusion period ends her parents arrange a very big beer party called *um-ngqungqo* for all women of the village. For the *um-ngqungqo* the women dress in their best brightest and are bedecked in beads” (Broster 1976: 46).



**Figure 2.4:** *Women’s traditional dress (back view)*

According to informants from Port St Johns, the initiate has to wash her body in running water, not still water. In the morning after the last day of *intonjane* the initiates goes to the nearest river to wash the white ochre which is now replaced a

yellow one called *Umdike*. On their return from the river they wear new clothes and the celebrations continue which marks the end of the *intonjane* custom. According to Port St John's informants the initiate receives household gifts from the well-wishers such as kitchen utensils, towels and clothes. On their return from *intonjane* these girls are expected to be ready for marriage and they are frequently reminded of this.

## **2.2 HABERMA'S COMMUNICATIVE ACTION AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE MEANING OF *INTONJANE* THEN AND NOW**

This section seeks to critically analyse and interpret the significance of *intonjane* rituals discussed in 2.1 using Habermas's "critical theory of communicative action" (Brand 1990: 11). This theory states that human's main element of communication is language and it is always used in a manner oriented to reaching an "agreement through reason" (Brand 1990: 11). Language in this case refers to all means of communication including cultural performance, knowledge associated with cultural behaviours and cultural use of objects. Through visual narratives which seek to masquerade the cultural meaning associated with *intonjane* rituals I present the contradictions upholding this practice within the modern society. The masquerading is not necessarily meant to ridicule this cultural phenomenon but to portray the sense of humour infused in some of the emergent artworks. Held (1980: 251) states that Habermas "finds it necessary ... to assess, and in fact reformulate, the major traditions of social thought ... [and believed in] expansion of the sphere of freedom and initiative".

Held (1980: 256-257, citing Habermas) says:

By examining the major stages of individual development and social evolution, he hopes to show that at both levels there is a growing capacity to master theoretical and practical discourse about rightness and correctness of norms. A reconstruction of communicative competence is needed for self-reflection and criticism – in order that an adequate basis be provided for an historically relevant critique and exploration of developmental possibilities (Held 1980: 256-257).

Habermas's theory is used to present my personal interpretation through a series of visual narratives exploring meanings of *intonjane* practices as was understood and performed in the olden days, and some of the challenges being experienced in present times. In other words in this study the researcher is critiquing this custom, and the associated rituals. The study also explains the significance of animal sacrifice during the *intonjane* rituals, as well as their impact on the teachings and instructions from elders to young girls before, during and after this custom.

The objective of using Habermas's "critical theory of communicative action" is to "logically" negotiate an agreement between the Xhosa traditional and modern points of view associated with the *intonjane* custom (Habermas 1984 & 1985; Brand 1990; Risse 2000). Risse (2000: 2) asserts that

Jurgen Habermas's critical theory of communicative action is helpful in conceptualizing the logic of arguing and can actually be brought to bear to tackle empirical questions in world politics. Thus, arguing constitutes a necessary ... step in a negotiating process. Arguing is also relevant for problems and for agreeing on a common normative framework.

The *intonjane* custom is a long standing socially constructed practice which by virtue of its existence seems to have remained unquestioned. Thus the main aim of this research is to tap into the unquestioned issues regarding this phenomenon specifically the merit of the knowledge imparted to the young initiates by their parents. This research seeks to analyse and interpret the authenticity of this knowledge towards determining its relevance in modern Xhosa society. This analysis is further meant to account for this knowledge "in a way that suggests a redirection rather than" its complete abandonment (Habermas: 1984: 1). In the case of this research the discussion of the *intonjane* discourse seeks to propose a dialogue on the merit of this information, its origin, progress made if any, and its consequences in modern Xhosa society. The issue of traditional and modern cultural ideological conflicts has placed contemporary Xhosa society into a "cultural liminality" (Zavala 1997: 9). Zavala (1997: 9) defines the concept of liminality in this context as "the paradoxical and potentially productive condition of being situated between two locations ... cultural traditions or stages of development".

It is hoped that this research will spark constructive debates towards intercultural tolerance by amending those values deemed necessary to be improved through “reason and rationalization” (Habermas: 1984). Duma (2002: 1) asserts that “the assumption of the communicative planning theory is that when there is a platform to participate people will argue, talk debate and negotiate” using argumentative rationality.

Argumentative rationality according to Habermas (1981: 209) “is based on several preconditions” including empathy and “common lifeworld”. Habermas (1981: 209) states that the common lifeworld “consists of a shared culture, a common system of norms and rules perceived as legitimate, and the social identity of actors being capable of communicating and acting”. Risse (2000: 10) describes Habermas’s concept of common lifeworld as providing the “arguing actors with a repertoire of collective understanding to which they can refer when making truth claims”. Risse (2000) further argues for the importance of the use of

... arguments to persuade or convince others that they should change their views of the world, their normative beliefs, their preferences, and even their identities .... Interests and identities are no longer fixed, but subject to interrogation and challenges and, thus, to change. The goal of the discursive interaction is to achieve argumentative consensus with the other, not to push through one’s own view of the world or moral values .... In this sense then, relationships of power, force, and coercion are assumed absent when argumentative consensus is sought (Risse 2000: 8-11).

Thus by applying UNESCO’s (2013: 42) “unmatched transformative power of educating girls and women”, “argumentative consensus” Risse (2000: 11) can be sought, because education is intended to instill logical development and critical thinking beings. Among African cultures respect instilled in children is usually associated with obeying rules prescribed by the culture. Questioning these rules is a taboo and thus people are rewarded for doing “the right thing” (Risse (2000: 4). Risse (2000) further asserts that behaviour gained as a result of conforming to cultural rules is through “normative rationality” because it is based on prescribed

cultural standards. In Xhosa culture the term “*Oonokhontoni*” loosely translated as “what will happen if I do it or do not do it?”, is used by adults to deter inquisitive children from questioning things. This means that for a traditional Xhosa child doing “the right thing” and showing respect to adults is associated with conforming to the cultural dictates whether legitimate or not. According to Risse (2000: 12) the communication between the actors belonging to a common lifeworld should be motivated by the desire to find out the “truth” with regard to facts in the world or to figure out “the right thing to do” in a commonly defined situation. “Communicative planning theorists claim that communication that meets Habermas’s validity claims of comprehensibility, sincerity, legitimacy and truth could result in consensus being reached which will reduce power and conflict between participants” as observed by Duma (2002: 1).

### **2.2.1 Significance of the knowledge imparted during *intonjane***

As indicated earlier the *intonjane* custom is a culmination of a number of activities/rites over time from infancy up to the time the parents of the prospective initiate come to terms with the coming of age of their daughter. Kimball (cited in the foreword of Van Gennep 1960: ix) states that Van Gennep considered initiation rites to be “primarily a rite of separation from a world [of childhood] followed by rites of incorporation into a sexual world [adulthood]”. The main aim of any education is to make known what is unknown from an authoritative point of view. Thus the educator is the authority with power to impart to the receiver/recipient the necessary knowledge needed at various stages of development in order to identify within a culture. According to this study’s informants regarding the meaning of *intonjane* it appears that sexuality in this traditional sense comes with expectations which are socially constructed. These socially constructed expectations are imposed through enculturation sometimes instilled with power and fear. This is because the ancestral reference during the *intonjane* rituals ceremonies can instill fear among the initiates which is against Habermas’s (1984: ) concept of “reason and rationalization”. This is because nowadays the initiate does not necessarily share a “common lifeworld”

with their educators/mentors and conforms to these culturally dictated norms and values in fear of the supernatural powers associated with the ancestral presence.

Whilst sex education is important in the upbringing of children however it should come naturally as it is part and parcel of our wellbeing. During *intonjane* in the previous era the girls were taught sex education in preparation for the anticipated cultural role sex plays in a marriage and in the society. This was important information that was meant to equip the young initiates as they carried the expected responsibility as members of society. Similarly during the modern time sex education is still important to equip children with information on how to behave as sexually active individuals. Thus this information is still equally important as it was seen during the previous era. It should teach the young adults to understand their anatomy so that they can carry themselves as sexual adults. I think it should also focus on teaching these girls to become independent. This is the case with Americans who are not accepting that marriage is just a sign of adulthood. They say “accepting responsibility for one’s self, making independent decisions, and financial independence” (Arnett 1998: 296) should be the elements that make a young girl to be a better person. There is nothing wrong in teaching young boys and girls about their sexuality; however it is important to allow them to discover it without fear of what it means to be sexual active.

Sex education has become important and modern parents teach their children about sex for a number of reasons pertinent to maturity and adulthood. Thus, sex education was important and is still important, but it must have a purpose and meaning which is based on facts. These facts are that these young girls must be able to discover themselves as individuals and decide when should they become sexually active and with who. Thus, the type of education needed for *intonjane* in this case should assimilate that which Habermas (1985: ) describes as insight gained through critical self-awareness where a person is taught to recognise the correct reasons for his or her aspirations and actions. Habermas further asserts that in this type of teaching knowledge should be gained through self-emancipation and reflection leading to a transformed consciousness (MacIsaac 1996: ). This is not to

say that these young adults should be left alone to discover themselves hence the *intonjane* school or a similar setup is still relevant to the upbringing of modern girls. Cultural values “transform the African by making him/her [sic] adopt his/her traditional cultural heritage in which he realizes his authentic personal selfhood among others in his community” (Egbujie 1977: 144). Egbujie’s argument may provide an explanation for the prolonged maintenance of many African traditional cultural customs and rituals such as *intonjane* and many others which the Xhosa people of the Eastern Cape have upheld from generation to generation.

### **2.2.2 The significance of Ancestral invocation during rites of passages**

This section focuses on the idea of enforcement of conformity to cultural practices through ancestral invocation to influence the entire belief systems of the participants. Within the African cultures in general and among the Xhosa people in particular there is an interrelationship between Man, Environment /Nature and the spiritual realm which is thought to bring balance into living world. This is supported by Weinberg (2006: 7) in the idea that the world within which is the spiritual realm and the tangible world are in a constant state of dialogue. Weinberg’s idea suggests that the spiritual world and the world we are living in are part of everyday living and are woven into the motions of social existence and survival.

The position of ancestors are an integral part of our life style, as Bae (2007: 23) postulates that archives of the deceased within communities are kept through the memory of the living within that community where they believe in the afterlife of their ancestors. In many African cultures, death is attributed as a portal into another realm, as such the individual moves from a tangible form of existence into an intangible form. The characteristic of the afterlife state in these situations have a heightened degree of influence over the society’s orientation to the deceased for protection. This orientation could be done individually or collectively as deceased is inducted into the status of ancestor which plays roles of significant influence within the belief customs of these communities.



African cultural belief systems are affiliated with the idea influence of the supernatural over situations in reality. This influence is viewed as a form of power that can intervene or intercede for individuals or the community as a whole in difficult situations. This belief in the supernatural is what propels the belief in the concept of ancestors and interaction with them. Thus, the tangibility of the ancestral presents summoned through invocation represents this supernatural power as a living thing. This is so because these ancestors are people who are known as they were part of the living before. In some instances they communicate with the living via other living beings through trances. Thus the ancestral influence enhances the view of them as intermediaries for humans with greater powers (Smith 1960: 26). The idea of ancestors does not have a negative connotation among these communities because it is believed that evil or bad people never enter into this state of being ancestors. The ancestors are believed to be spirits of those who led exemplary and influential lives as humans and transcend to honourable roles of spiritual influence at the end of their mortal existence. Idowu supports this in his statement:

...the deceased who are truly members of the families on earth; but they are no longer of the same fleshy order as those who are still living in the flesh on earth. They are closely related to this world; but are no longer ordinary mortals. Because they have crossed the borderland between this world and the super sensible world entering and living in the latter, they have become freed from the restrictions imposed by the physical world. They can now come to abide with their fold on earth invisibly, to aid or hinder them to promote prosperity or cause adversity (Idowu 1991: 179)

Although a lot of people live good lives it is those that have lived to a very old age that are not taken by illness and are thoroughly celebrated in burial rites that become these ancestors, such as parents and grandparents. Burial also has its impact on this belief system in that those who are not properly interred still hang around and proper burial brings peace in the community in that the state of the deceased has its effects on the people of the community. These ancestors however are not worshipped rather they are revered as part of cultural behaviour (Awolalu and Dopamu 1979: 274; Gyekye 1996: 163).

Ancestors retain their relationships and characteristics. They are believed to be communicating with their descendants and participate in their lives. They are aware of all that goes on due to their now supernatural capabilities. They lead the living relatives and direct them along the right path for the sake of generations to come. Their communication with their living relatives is what calls for consistent invocation. It is also believed that ancestors are aware of their roles and responsibilities for the survival of their descendants. They are constantly within alternate worlds and partake in activities of the living (Idowu 1996: 207). In many African cultures food and drink is presented to the ancestors before or after celebrations. Popularly in Xhosa culture traditional beer called *unqombhothi* is spilled to the ground similarly to the pouring of libation. This is usually done in front of the congregated community members to honour the presence of the ancestors before the celebration.

The influence wielded by the belief and respect for ancestors creates positions for them within the socio-cultural constructs of the society. In this way they have influence over issues of security, codes of conduct in various situations amongst other things. They are in the position of enforcers and meters of punitive measures in situations of offence, defaulter's grievous crimes, taboo breakings and the like. They serve as a measure for moral regulation and conduct. In this way they lay influence over rites of passage and the forming of orientations of growing youth. This leads to conform to social structures out of fear and respect for ancestors and also to avoid punitive measures. An analogy would be the Xhosa *ukungxengxeza* directly translated to mean asking for guidance or forgiveness in the case where an unintentional offence was caused. This unintended offence would emanate from either commission or omission of certain obligations. *Ukungxengxeza* is a ritual where the family slaughters an animal usually a goat or an ox depending on the extent of the offence as a token of repentance directed to ancestors. This ritual is normally conducted at night where the animal is slaughtered as sacrifice and the meat together with traditional beer are placed over night in a room symbolic of a sacred place epitomising a holy altar. The following morning the meat and beer is used to feed the members of the community who serve as witness to this event. Before the

feasting and celebration which is usually accompanied by singing and dance an announcement is made to the reason for the feast to conclude the ritual. This announcement also serves as a public reparation by the celebrant to the community.

During the rite of passages a similar process is usually followed where an animal is sacrificed a night before and traditional beer which would have been prepared three days before the event are consumed the following day during the celebrations. In some families the initiates has to wear a bracelet made from the slaughtered animal's skin symbolising the submission to and acceptance of all the obligations associated with the ritual. Thus, respect and adherence to first, to the family beliefs and secondly cooperation to accepted cultural norms and values are at the core of the ancestral invocation.

## **CHAPTER THREE: ARTISTIC INFLUENCES AND THE ARTISTIC CREATION PROCESS**

This chapter seeks first to unpack elements of researcher's artistic development emanating from the diverse artistic influences from the three chosen artists referenced in this study, namely, Deborah Bell, Churchill Madikida, and Nicholas Hlobo. Similarities and differences between their work and the researcher are explored. The second section of this chapter briefly presents the research methodology used in collecting the indigenous knowledge which informed the study.

### **3.1 ARTISTIC INFLUENCES ON CREATION PROCESS**

The main aspect of Deborah Bell's artistic creation which has inspired the researcher is her patience as demonstrated in all her art pieces in relation to her labourious developmental processes. John Martin Gallery (2012) describes Bell's work as being "both immediate and timeless, utilising a process of layering, shaping, erasing and reworking each piece until it resonates with the emotions that initiated the work". Her gigantic and confrontational sculptures appeal to the researcher the most. Bell's presentation of human figures through both two and three dimensional media is another aspect that appeals to the researcher. Most of her human figures are imbued with elegance and presence as can be seen in her Artemis/Diana the huntress (2010-2011) as well as in the five figures sculptural installation (2013-2015). In these sculptures she accentuates feminine and masculine characteristics such as breasts, bulging abdomen, broad shoulders and suggestive clothing so as to differentiate the gender. Bell, commenting on the five figures sculpture, said: "I didn't set out to make what these sculptures became. Their scale and presence surprised me" (Everard Read 2012).

She speaks of feeling the presence of the gods of antiquity, a powerful force driving her creative method. Each of the five figures in her latest body of work is "emerged from the seventh seal, with a fully realised counterpart". Both the masculine and the feminine are represented in these five figures (Everard Read 2012).

Another visible aspect in the five figures installation is the mystical element represented by the miniature figures crowning the heads of the sculptures. Combined with their scale this ritualistic presentation gives these figures an element of being imbued with supernatural power.

Of Bell's latest work, the artist has stated that she had not intended to create pieces at their current scale, but that her work has taken on a life of its own. Bell's creation of her spiritual and transcendental works take on a shamanistic process in which the beings emerge from her chosen medium, as if ritualistically summoned (Everard Read 2012).



Figure 3.1: Deborah Bell, *Return of The Gods: The Ancient Ones I-V*, Bronze, 2013 - 2015

Bell's magnificent, towering and twisted figure Artemis/Diana the Huntress with exaggerated hips also inspired researcher's post-liminal stage figures in which she depicted girls who have just graduated from *intonjane* custom. These girls, as discussed in Chapter 2, are characterised by well-formed female bodies as well and developed reproductive organs partly due to the way they are fed during *intonjane*.

In the researcher's exhibition these feminine sculptures which represent *intonjane* graduates are poised with confidence and arrogance as if they are deliberately enticing men. This pose is similar to Deborah's presentation of female figures which are imbued with elegance and presence, some of which are presented in an erotic position.



**Figure 3.2:** Deborah Bell, *Artemis/Diana the Huntress*, bronze, 2010-2011

In the researcher's figures she only accentuates the feminine features associated with sexuality such as exaggerated breasts and bulging buttocks and hips. This is because *intonjane* is preparation for marriage in which sexuality plays a major part. The absence of limbs and heads in researcher's figures represents these girls' conformity to cultural dictates which sometimes comes with lack of power as they have to do as they are told. Thus, the researcher's figures, although massive and

confrontational, are deliberately presented as having lack of freedom and having to be dependent on the metal pedestals for support. Unlike Bell's installation in which the figures are free standing as if they are in a procession and are oozing with power, the researcher's are presented as if they are commodities waiting to be snatched or possessed by someone. This pose was influenced by the information the researcher heard from her informants which confirmed that when the girls return from *intonjane* they are consistently reminded that they are ready for marriage. Apart from the elegant and confrontational sculptures the researcher's inspiration from Bell's feminine figures also arises from those expressed in various two dimensional forms such as prints, drawings and paintings. Most of these two dimensional pieces are accompanied by words, especially her earlier prints. Bell stated that "there's a quality of silence in my works and this is why, if there is a word, the word mustn't be descriptive or suggest a narrative. It has to be a word that reverberates with the silence of the work" (Everard Read 2011: 19). Thus words in Bell's works are not meant to be independently expressive, but expand the expressive power of the work. Unlike in Bell's works in the researcher's works words/text seek to add another layer of expression and sometimes they carry important narrative which is better expressed in words than through visual metaphors, such as in the pre-liminal stage, where text is used to depict young girls' teachings during developmental stages leading to the *intonjane* custom. The text is presented as pages of a book, and these references slate sheets, which were traditionally used at lower classes for writing.

In her earlier works she presented human figures in an erotic position depicting female figures in a vulnerable state as seen in *Mediterranean Affairs III* (1982) (Figure 3.3), an untitled enamel on paper painting with a nude female sitting on a bed covered with red and white linen while a male figure stands naked on the same bed in front of the female figure, and in *Awakening the Motherland* (1989) (Figure 3.4). Vulnerability in the researcher's artwork is expressed through nudity as well as lack of limbs and heads. The coming of age girls of *intonjane* are depicted with no clothes and with exaggerated feminine sexually appealing organs to expose the

concept of the “male gaze” as articulated in visual art and magazine advertisements (Mulvey 1957). Male gaze in this case refers to the presentation of a female as an enticing object to arouse a man’s sexual feelings. For Mulvey (1975: 14), the male gaze may also be fetishistic: “fetishistic scopophilia builds up the physical beauty of the object, transforming it into something satisfying in itself.” As Neale (1983) points out, Mulvey is adamant that “physical beauty” is interpreted as a female trait. The nudity in the researcher’s artworks further represents the helplessness the *intonjane* initiates experience due to obedience to cultural expectation which is associated with self-respect.

The researcher’s artworks are also presented more like fetishes sometimes adorned as flowers or represented as ornaments. Unlike in Bell’s paintings and prints where she portrays female figures with facial expressions and limbs that denote assertiveness, in the researcher’s works she portray the female figure as a dependent being. This notion of dependency is based on the information that the *intonjane* girls have to rely on what they are told by their mentors, and the fear of non-conformity enforced through ancestral evocation during the various ritual practices associated with *intonjane*.



**Figure 3.3:** Deborah Bell, *Mediterranean Affairs III*, Enamel and oil paper, 1982





Figure 3.4: Deborah Bell, *Awakening the Motherland*, Pastel on paper, 1989

Another aspect of Bell's work is that it "incorporates multi-layered references to past and present worlds" (Stein 2004: 5). In a conversation with Sandra Klopper entitled "looking back", Bell explained that "academic writers and art critics have been nervous about [her] work partly because of the spiritual aspect which they consider to be soft, romantic" (Everard Read 2011: 17). She further asserts that "they're also afraid that [she is] approaching images from other cultural contexts in a way that are politically problematic" (2011: 17). She defends herself by stating that the cultures she looks at ...all "share the notion that art has the power to influence and change the world" and that she "is not interested in narrative, or political commentaries or satire, but in the physical presence of these works" (2011: 17).

I actually have to pull something out and make it present, and only when I recognise it and say, 'Aha, it is!' is it done. I might paint a face twenty, thirty times – and people will wonder why I got rid of the previous one – but this means that it wasn't the one that was demanding to be. I never know what it's going to be until I do it (Everard Read 2011: 17).

While Bell asserts that she is not interested in narrative but in the physical and symbolic presence her works carry, in the researcher's work she is equally interested in the narratives/symbolism as well as the physical presence of the emerging artworks. The narratives of these works are informed by the plethora of ritual performances that form a major part of the *intonjane* custom, while the physical presence is a result of a meticulous and pedantic creation process. Thus, process through various levels of experimentation formed the major aspect of the researcher's art creation.



**Figure 3.5:** Siziwe Sotewu. *Girls like Flowers* work in progress, 2011 - 2014

The researcher's art creation process also became a metaphor for growth and enculturation, due to the meaning of *intonjane* custom within Xhosa communities. Growth on the part of children is associated with uncertainties and fears from not knowing what to expect. These uncertainties are as a result of cultural expectations which sometimes interfere with children's innocence. Thus, in the art creation process the researcher became aware and embraced uncertainties brought about by breakages and distortions during various developmental stages of the ceramic sculpture as part of the process. Just like Bell, when the researcher started her art creation she was trying to "pull something out" of the whole process moving between the fieldwork where she was being educated by various informants through to casting moulds from friends and relatives and finally working in her studio, where she was translating the emergent knowledge to meaningful artworks.



Figure 3.6: Siziwe Sotewu. *Girls like Flowers* work in progress, 2014 - 2015

The researcher's mind was focused on producing artworks with presence that will influence not only her views of *intonjane* custom, but reveal how the significant aspects of this phenomenon can be upheld with dignity for the people who still practice it. The initial ideas the researcher held changed many times until that

moment she could feel that she has done it, and felt this was it. Furthermore, her art creation process was made difficult by the current Eskom (electricity supply) load shedding which resulted in a number of work in-progress items getting damaged in the kiln during firing and having to start all over again several times. Thus the final artworks were a combination of painstaking work and various accidents varying from cracking during the drying process through to under and over firing of these ceramic sculptures. Leading up to the solo exhibition which formed part of this study the researcher had created many pieces ranging from plastic to clay sculptures most of which were as a result of try-outs and errors and she still did not know which were going to be exhibited and in what way. Thus setting up the exhibition was another process of development which came with more surprises most of which was due to the gallery space, hence process has been the most important aspect of the art creation.



**Figure 3.7: Siziwe Sotewu, Final exhibition, all three stages, 2011 - 2015**

### 3.2 ARTISTIC INFLUENCE AND CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF CONTENT

Churchill Madikida and Nicholas Hlobo have had a big influence on the conceptual development of the subject matter of artworks emerging from this study. This influence emanates from their direct involvement with the rite of passage from boyhood to manhood within their Xhosa communities of the Eastern Cape. By virtue of both being born within the Xhosa culture they went through an equivalent rite of passage for boys called *ukwaluka*, which is parallel to the *intonjane* custom for girls. The difference between the boys and girls rites of passages is that boys also undergo a circumcision ritual which is usually done by traditional surgeon called *ingcibi*. The aspect of both Madikida and Hlobo's artistic practice which are of major interest to the researcher's conceptual development is that they are not only reflecting on something that they have experienced but are addressing a topic which has become contentious due to numerous issues surrounding the maintenance of traditional circumcision in its current state. This controversy emanates from media reports regarding the numerous deaths of initiates among other things.

Madikida and Hlobo's input is of great importance because it brings the insider's point of view to this contentious issue. Similarly the issue of *intonjane* has become embroiled with controversy such as the allegation that it is associated with the *ukuthwala* practice. *Ukuthwala* is a Xhosa term translated in modern times as 'forced marriage of young girls'. Other contentious topics related to *intonjane* are the Reed Dance or *Umhlanga* and virginity testing of young girls mainly practiced by Swazi and Zulu ethnic groups. Reed Dance/*Umhlanga* is an annual ceremony in which young maidens dance before their king. The king in turn chooses a new wife from the young virgins. Virginity testing is the practice and process of determining whether a girl or woman is a virgin; i.e., whether she has never engaged in sexual intercourse. The test involves an inspection of the hymen, on the assumption that it can only be torn as a result of sexual intercourse.

*Umhlanga* is an annual Zulu reed dance ceremony celebrating virginity. Those who participate must be 'certified' virgins and the process of certification has come under the spotlight in South Africa's new liberal democratic dispensation (Vincent 2006: 18).

Thus the researcher's interest in referencing these two artists is to tap into their insider's point of view as having been through this practice towards negotiating intercultural tolerance in a similar manner as they dealt with the Xhosa custom of circumcision and rite of passage for boys. Thus, their lived experiences reflected in their artistic expression have been the researcher's main inspiration for choosing them as points of reference for this study. One of the important factor that resonates with her regarding their artistic expression is the concept of 'presence' in 'absence' or 'absence' in 'presence', making 'absence' a reality in the viewer's experience of the artistic expression/artwork. Their live performances, in which they utilise their bodies to better capture the viewer's attention in order to experience the real thing, are magnificent. Another aspect that appeals to the researcher about these two artists is their use of real/actual objects associated with the phenomenon they are reflecting on. In trying to adopt the concept of 'absence' in 'presence' in the art creation process the researcher made casts from girls and women who were preparing to go or have been through *intonjane*. Thus, the resultant artworks in this case have the presence of the girl or woman as their bodies are imprinted onto the sculpture although they are not there in person unlike in Madikida and Hlobo's live performances. Cheddie (2000: 350) states that Shonibare utilises the concept of the absent body to erase markings/signifiers of racial, cultural and gender identity. In this case "by removing the physical body and presenting the viewer with a shell Shonibare suggests to the viewer that the social meaning of the body is constructed within a system of visual signification rather than on the material body itself" (Cheddie, 2000: 350). In the case of the researcher's work she has also removed the material body to emphasise the deindividuation emanating from cultural conformity. Thus the resultant shell sculptures depict cultural constructs of an accepted image of a young woman who is ready for marriage which is not necessarily their chosen identity.

### 3.2.1 Churchill Madikida

Churchill Madikida's describes his solo exhibition entitled *Liminal States* (2003) in which he was performing reflecting on his experience as a Xhosa initiate during his rite of passage as follows:

In my art I attempt to make society understand itself, to risk self-examination by addressing issues, attitudes and behaviours embedded in its construction, and to be open to change. I believe that in a society that preaches democracy and multiculturalism, it is important that art is free to express and illustrate diverse perspectives, even if this means having to deal with undesirable images. My art making is a way of rediscovering what I know, a way of uncovering how, where and why I learned it, and a way of unlearning it. The production and exhibition of *Liminal States* was not only my attempt to take a stand against this supposed desecration of the circumcision rite of passage, but also an effort to salvage representations of black cultures from misrepresentation and cultural domination (Mokoena 2006: 8)

Madikida's words resonate with Bell's notion that art must have the power to influence and change the world. The researcher believes that by presenting these burning issues such as traditional circumcision/*ukwaluka* custom, *intonjane*, reed dance, virginity testing etcetera so that they can be debated critically, an intercultural tolerance can be reached by respecting cultural differences. When Madikida was asked by Mokoena (2006: 8) why he creates the work he does his answer was: "I do the work for me first of all – the issue is always something I live with, that I need to understand and explore".

Another important factor that makes Madikida's work strong and relevant is his use of real objects during performance such as blankets, white clay to mask his face and eating hard porridge cooked from maize meal which the initiates eat during their first week after the circumcision. His use of language in particular Xhosa vernacular adds another dimension to his artistic expression especially during his performance.

Thus, in Madikida's live performances the act of performance in itself is a viable ground for influential discourse presented in a mundane set-up with humorous snippets and diagnoses of what needs to be attended to and pithy statements

conveying the essence of his message to the viewer. As such his performances can be a means of discourse that promulgates both what is good and bad within the phenomenon being presented for public scrutiny.

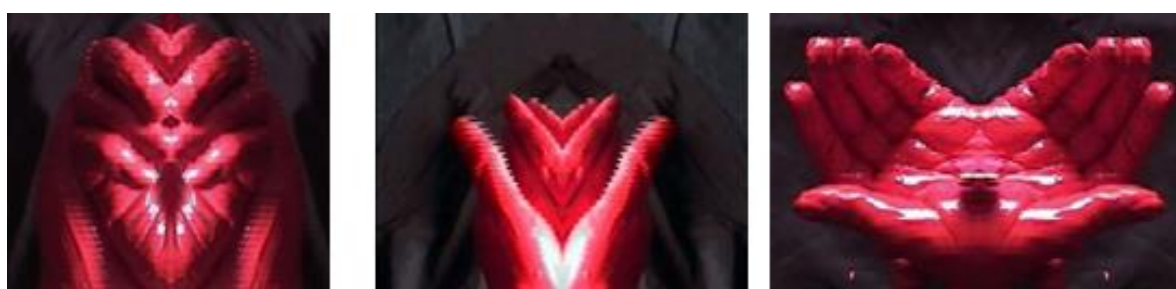


**Figure 3.8:** Churchill Madikida. *Liminal States*, Performance, 2003

In the *Liminal States* (2003) performance the artist appears as a Xhosa initiate covered in a white and red blanket which is used by boys during the initiation period. He also wears an artificial and big Afro wig on his head. This Afro addition is far from the actual appearance of initiates because their hair is usually shaved off to denote the end of boyhood in anticipation of the new self-emerging into manhood. Xhosa initiates have no hair and thus the artist artificial Afro wig is a prompt for a significant meaning and is visually striking to a person who is familiar with the appearance of Xhosa boy initiates. The artist's reason for wearing an Afro wig was to assert his African identity. Thus in this performance the artist's intention is not only to condemn what he considers unnecessary, but also to honour what is good and necessary about his culture. Richards (2006: 34) states that "the Afro wig was a humorous but emphatic response to this paling of African identity"



While in the Liminal States performance the artist's expression seems to have a sense of humour in the way he depicts and appeals for adherence and respect for his culture, his use of red colour symbolic of blood in *Skeletons in my closet* (2004) is confrontational, in your face and instills fear. Williamson (2009: 40) cited Madikida as saying: "in *Skeletons in my Closet*, a pair of blood-red hands wringing each other is shown in a digitally mirrored image that looks alternately like a red flower blooming and a gruesome piece of surgery. The work questions the inability to question tradition, such as whether customs that have long sustained a culture are still necessary and useful". Dreyer (2009: 13) adds "Churchill Madikida's sensuous *Skeletons in my Closet* (2004), tells a dystopian story of threat, fear and suffering due to the contraction of the HIV / AID virus.



**Figure 3.9:** Churchill Madikida. *Skeletons in my Closet*, DVD Frames projection, 2004

In the video and stills titled *Struggles of the Heart* the artist appears in a white masked face ingesting and regurgitating pap (maize meal).

The underlying concept is an attempt to reflect on the consumption of stereotypical images of black cultures. It is also an attempt to demonstrate the need for cultures, traditions and religions to adapt and transform for their own survival. On the other hand the regurgitating illustrates a need for cultures to rid themselves of elements that could jeopardise the continuity of such practices. The video stills are cannibalised from the video footage and this action is in itself a symbol of a culture cannibalising on itself and jeopardising its own survival (Richards 2006: 7).



Figure 3.10: Churchill Madikida. *Struggles of the Heart*, video installation, 2002

The issue of conformity and respect for culture is something that the researcher seeks to express in her artworks through the process of casting moulds from people. This process is usually cumbersome to both herself as the artist and the person she is casting from. Although the participants agree willingly, the process it still invasive as the model has to first strip to the underwear and lie still for the whole duration of casting which usually takes about two hours for silhouette moulds. While the

researcher works on the moulds the models have to lie still and allow her to pose their body similarly to the way the girls and boys have to obey their mentors during the rite of passage period. As discussed in Chapter 2 these initiates have to do “the right thing” (Risse (2000: 4) without questioning it. Thus, the researcher’s art creation process is a metaphor for conformity and for allowing processes to take place without external interference. During the first week initiates are secluded from the world and during this period they are under the care and supervision of a mentor called *ikhankatha*. The process of casting is similar to the process of seclusion where the artist spends time with the model in a secluded space and during this time the model conforms to the dictates of the artist.



Figure 3.11: Siziwe Sotewu, Casting process for liminal and post liminal stage, 2015

### 3.2.2 Nicholas Hlobo

In 2010, Nicholas Hlobo presented a sculptural installation in his Standard Bank Young Artist exhibition, titled *Umtshotsho*. In this installation, Hlobo engages his Xhosa heritage, interrogating the value systems associated with Xhosa traditions as cultures that evolve through time. The researcher's work also looks at her own identity, her gender, her culture and her age. She is interested in how traditional Xhosa practices like *intonjane* define people's identity especially that of girls as they grow up. Of equal interest to the researcher is how Hlobo works with his own sexual identity, and his place as a gay man within Xhosa culture. This ties in closely with how the title and theme of the researcher's work looks at how her Christian religion and her being a woman within the Xhosa culture is sometimes at odds with her traditional cultural practices. Thus, her work is in a way an attempt to find balance between her religious beliefs and her cultural heritage.

Maurice and Dodd (2010: 2-3), citing Hlobo, explain:

the term '*umtshotsho*' refers to a traditional party for young people. The focus is on that time when children are beginning to think and act like adults; the desire to explore life, dating, going out at night and all the consequences of wanting to do things older people do.

Ratele (2009: 19) adds to this by saying "in its original sense '*umtshotsho*' refers to a traditional Xhosa youth party where boys and girls got together to dance, sing and romance each other...". *Umtshotsho* rarely takes place in its old form anymore and young people have found alternatives such as going to bars and clubs. Hlobo's "works are not trying to tell a story about an old way of partying for teenagers but look at the new conventions and draw similarities between different times" (Maurice and Dodd 2010: 3). Likewise, in the researcher's work, *intonjane* is currently rarely practiced as a rite of passage in urbanised Xhosa societies, while *ukwaluka* which is a similar traditional ritual for boys is still widely practiced as one of the few traditional legacies that stood against "western influences" among the Xhosa people. The fact that *ukwaluka* is not conducted the way it used to be and that it has to some extent

become a hybrid of both western and traditional seems to have no bearing on its authenticity.

The researcher's work, like that of Hlobo is not only questioning our traditional practitioners as to what happened to *intonjane*, but is also a vehicle to advance the struggle for gender equality within the context of traditional and patriarchal societies. The researcher's work and that of Hlobo is questioning why it is that *intonjane* as a rite of passage is slowly fading away more so than its equal, *ukwaluka*. My interrogations to some degree reflect the value system entrenched within some traditional and patriarchal societies such as the *amaXhosa*, who seem to place more value on male compared to female related issues. Hlobo's seems to seek to locate his own position as a gay man within traditional Xhosa culture, which in its formation seems to have no place for such a group of people. This quest for identity and place within tradition of Hlobo's work greatly influenced the path of the researcher's own conceptual development.

Hlobo argues that "In my work I explore Xhosa traditions or African traditions, and gender issues, with an emphasis on masculinity and rituals. When I thought of making an artwork that is particularly masculine, I decided to make a kraal (titled *Umthubi* as seen in Figure 3.11) but also to challenge the purpose of the kraal" (Stevenson 2006: 1).



Figure 3.12: Nicolas Hlobo, *Umthubi*, installation, 2006

Holbo continues:

... a kraal is a space where, firstly, cows are kept, and secondly, certain rituals take place. When the boys come out of the bush and go to their final graduation, the celebration which they are introduced back to the family, they go to the kraal and get advice. They sit there and older men advise them on how they should carry themselves now that they're grown up (Stevenson 2006).

In the researcher's work *Pre-liminal installation* (Figure 3.13), she uses the same circular shape of a kraal but in contrast to Hlobo's association of a kraal as a space where men operate, the researcher presents an installation piece in a form of a kraal that is made out of female figures infused and engraved with both female and male reproductive organs. In Xhosa culture a kraal is a sacred place and women are not usually allowed inside because it is a place reserved for men.



Figure 3.13: Siziwe Sotewu, Pre-liminal installation, 2015



Figure 3.14: Siziwe Sotewu, *Tree carrying Objects*, 2015, tree detail



**Figure 3.15: Siziwe Sotewu, Objects on the tree installation work in progress, 2014**

In Xhosa society a kraal is also a space that symbolises wealth and the family's social standing within their community. The size of your kraal is said to show your wealth, as traditionally African wealth is seen through the number of cows or sheep that the family owns. The incorporation of female figures in this artwork of a kraal begins to highlight the importance of women and heightens their value within Xhosa traditional society as a contradiction to the culture of blindly following patriarchal practices that continue to entrench inequality between men and women in the name of African culture. This installation with a tree carrying objects becomes a symbol of contemporary women who are willing and capable of adding value to all social, religious and cultural aspects of the society and not to be seen as subsidiary to men as both *intonjane* (rite of passage for girls) and *ukwaluka* (rite of passage for boys) customs are still entrenched within a patriarchal belief system.



*Umthubi*, the title of Hlobo's installation work depicting a kraal, is a Xhosa term for the milk produced by a cow a few days after giving birth to a calf. This milk is usually thick and yellowish and when is boiled it curdles instantly. In Xhosa culture this milk is usually eaten by boys. Stevenson (2006:2) quoted Hlobo explaining that the origin of the *Umthubi* installation was inspired by the boys who go to a house where a cow has given birth to a new calf. For about three days after the birth, these boys help to feed the calf by cooking the cow's milk which becomes like porridge, and is called *umthubi*. It is almost like cheese and is very rich and very delicious. Thus the meaning of the work is about helping, giving a hand to someone else and is a celebration of new life. In the researcher's work the tree is inspired by the first stage (pre-liminal stage) of the three phases of liminality that a girl undergoing *intonjane* goes through.

The pre-liminal stage is when girls are taught by older women including their parents how to behave. This stage is important for this work because it is at this stage that the existing patriarchal system is perpetuated through the division of labour differentiated by toys that boys and girls are encouraged to play with, which are kitchen utensils for girls and cattle for boys. This work challenges gender divisions by presenting the structural formation of a kraal made up with objects associated with femininity. The significance of the circular shape within the Xhosa society is also evident during story telling time, which, through the centuries, was the only means of documenting our history and heritage. During storytelling, people would normally sit in a circular formation around a fire and an elder, usually a grandmother, would tell stories for the younger generation to learn about the history, culture and heritage of their societies. The researcher's work is also in a way a form of documenting a disappearing ritual (*intonjane*), capturing instances of the rite of passage for future generations that might want to find out more about it. The title of the work *Pre-liminal installation* Figure 3.13 seeks to invoke this traditional way of teaching and learning, which the researcher believes is still pertinent not only to teach children to behave, but for modern society to learn the value of relevant cultural traditions.

Hlobo's *Umtshotsho* exhibition was presented in a darkened room the *Izithunzi* (Figure 3.16). This installation presented a strange gathering of eight shadowy figures. Some of these were freestanding, while others were suspended on the ceiling and a few seated on a sofa. The representation reflected an artist who is aware of space, an artist who attempts to occupy real space, and when his audience walked among the sculptures they also became part of the installation. In the researcher's exhibition the range called *The bulges: African girl's natural endowment* also presented a similar environment, where the audience was allowed to directly interact with the work by walking between and around the individual sculptures as if they were in a conversation with them.



Figure 3.16: Nicholas Hlobo, *Izithunzi*, 2009



Figure 3.17: Siziwe Sotewu, *Ukutshila at the Bridge*, 2015

Where the researcher's work differs from Hlobo's work is in the medium used for production. Hlobo's work is primarily made out of rubber inner tubing. Figures are individuated with details of lace, organza and ribbons as seen in Figure 3.16, which are his signature materials. Considering he is a male artist, society would regard Hlobo's choice of medium to be very soft and thus feminine. Maybe, this is exactly the reason his work is so effective. The researcher's sculptures are made out of clay and hard cattle hide presented on steel rods of metal (Figure 3.13 and 3.14), which are sometimes hard to work with especially bending the metal rods to the required shape. This is intended to question societal stereotypes and presumptions of associating specific materials with specific genders in art production similarly to the division of labour instilled in traditional Xhosa children as they are encultured within their communities. Hlobo uses silk and soft rubber to sew parts of his sculptures together (Figure 3.16 and 3.18) while the researcher uses tough cattle hide with thongs to put together her ceramic pieces (Figure 3.17 and 3.19).



Figure 3.18: Nicolas Hlobo, *Ndimnandi ndindodwa*, Sculpture (vinyl, rubber inner tube, ribbon, organza) 2008



Figure 3.19: Siziwe Sotewu, *Breast and Bulges*, 2015

As insiders, Hlobo and the researcher both speak the vantage point of personal experience. As much as their mediums are different, the materials used in their work is not only a means to an end but the medium also doubles up to act as metaphors representing sexuality in Hlobo's work and power associated with gender in the researcher's work, as seen through the lens of some traditional social practices.

### **3.3 THE DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY**

This research has leaned towards phenomenological enquiry into the issues under consideration, thus employing qualitative method of research. The practical productions are a result of triangulation of literature reviews, observation techniques, interviews with informed participants and data gathered through informal interviews.

The 'key informant' technique was employed in selecting the person to be interviewed, ensuring that they were an expert source of information either as a result of their study or experience. This type of technique is an ethnographic research method which was originally used in the field of cultural anthropology and is now being used more widely in other branches of social science investigation (Marshall 1996: 92)

These key informants were a major aspect of the researcher's field work; the information gathered from them were their stories and memories of growing up and the traditional Xhosa toys and objects that they encountered at different stages in their growing up. The inclusion criteria for interviewees were as follows:

- They are Xhosa.
- They grew up exposed to Xhosa culture.
- They had contact with Xhosa developmental toys either physically or ideologically.
- They are above 18 years of age.
- They do not have to be female (though mostly females were open to discussions about their experiences of growing up).

- They were not categorised by status, education or occupational sector.

The informal interviews in the field work for this research were conducted with people in Xhosa society of Xhosa heritage. The focus of these interviews was the experiences and memories of the individuals and how they have come to understand what these experiences prepared them for and how they influenced them in hindsight. The researcher also drew on her own direct experiences and observations as a Xhosa woman that has not gone through these developmental stages culturally. In this fieldwork the researcher gathered as much information as possible in informal settings and involved some of these people in her practical production to become living archives of information as she took direct body casts from them for her creative production.

For these interviews the researcher assured the participants of their anonymity in her documentation which encouraged them to freely discuss their experiences in candid terms which shed more light on their personal stories than if anonymity was not guaranteed. The researcher ensured that their participation was restricted to informal interviews and aspects of the creative production so that there are now very few identifiable documents or records collected for this research in relation to them. The images taken during the practical participation excluded identifiable features of the participants and there were no facial features involved in the production. An informed consent form was prepared for the research as seen in Appendix B. This consent form explained the intent and desired outcomes for the informal interviews to the individuals so that they completely understood what their involvement would entail and the effects or lack of effects of the actual research on them.

### **3.3.1 Goals of the Research Information Sheet**

- To highlight how ritual and customary practices help generate a fertile environment where male power is reproduced by being woven through all ramifications of society in the grooming and orientation of females in Xhosa culture.

- To show the pre-liminality, liminality and post-liminality in the objects, rituals and events signifying the rite of passage from girlhood to womanhood in the Xhosa cultural environment.
- To establish the power of Xhosa traditional developmental toys as a tool in the influence and orientation of females from infancy all the way through to the *intonjane* custom and its culminating graduation ceremony.

### 3.3.2 Scope and Outcomes

Randomly sampled individuals from Xhosa society were informants for the conducted interviews. These were focused on the three stages of the *intonjane* rite of passage. The researcher examined how rituals and traditional toys function in the development of females within this community. She also explored the impact of this on females in shaping what they perceive to be their responsibilities, social order and cultural etiquette.

The practical productions in the visual discourse highlight the concept of liminality in the progressive stages of the rituals of the *intonjane* rite of passage. Group interviews were conducted in various villages of the Eastern Cape including with the late Jack Zankwenkwe, my paternal uncle and his friend late Evelin NoEast Ngogqoyi. The researcher conducted interviews with the Philakukuzenzela focus Group from Centuli in Mthatha when they were at the Grahamstown Arts Festival in 2011. She also conducted interviews with community members who produce traditional pots at Gemvale near Port St Johns and includes two female potters from Tombo, which is also near Port St Johns. The information collected was then utilised in the creation of the visual narratives presented in the researcher's exhibition.

Finally, the visual narratives which present the *intonjane* symbolism are explained using the theory of liminality as developed by Van Gennep (1960: vii) and Turner (1967: 19). This theory provided a foundation and springboard for the researcher's practical artworks which utilised emerging symbols and metaphors from this research to highlight the importance of events and stages associated with this

custom. Based on the information that emerged from this research the practical works focus mainly on the developmental stages of a girl from infancy right through to the events leading to the *intonjane* custom up to the graduation ceremony as well as what happens after the girls' return from this initiation school.



## CHAPTER FOUR: PRACTICAL WORK AND VISUAL METAPHORS

The information emerging from this research about Xhosa traditional life focusing on girls' initiation rites of passage into womanhood has thus provided information upon which the researcher's artworks were created, and has influenced her choice of symbols and metaphors. According to Turner (1967: 19) "symbol is the smallest unit of ritual which still retains the specific properties of ritual behaviour, it is the ultimate unit of specific structure in a ritual context". Hornby (2006:1500) in Oxford Learner's Dictionary defines a symbol as "a person, an object an event etc., which represents a more general quality or situation". As explained by Turner (1967: 19), ritual "means prescribed formal behaviour for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical beings or powers". The symbols and metaphors employed in this body of work propagate inferences of liminality and its significance to Xhosa culture. Therefore, the researcher's artworks are infused with emerging symbols and metaphors influenced both by the theory of liminality as well as the information gathered from the informants of this study including the artists who are referenced in Chapter 3.

The stages of development of girls as symbolised by the *intonjane* custom are unpacked in the remainder of this chapter's following section and are Pre-liminal, Liminal and Post-liminal stages.

### 4.1 PRE-LIMINAL STAGE

The works related to the pre-liminal stage of childhood development are a collection of vessels and vessel pieces and assemblages most of which are configured in a form combining both female and male reproductive organs. The male organs further reference a fresh and budded protea flower sometimes depicted dried with opened petals. These vessels are also engraved/carved or painted with the similar male and female reproductive organs and with other symbolism associated with Xhosa cultural meanings and beliefs relevant to *intonjane* custom. The female reproductive organs

are represented by oval shapes and bulges. In addition to the symbolic representation of female reproductive organs an oval or a circle also signifies unity and stability associated with a kraal as a symbol of wealth as already discussed in Chapter 3. The vessels are similar in shape although they are in different sizes representing three groups. The three groups signify the different ages of girl children and their developmental stages. They are cast in multiples and embellished and manipulated in various ways in order to address different elements of the research information.

A noticeable representational metaphor in these ceramic vessels is that of trees with roots. Roots depict the process of moving from a place under the ground; coming out of the ground just like when a child is conceived and grows inside the mother's body until he/she is born. Until he/she is born there are usually moments of uncertainty, fears and anxieties for the awaiting family, which is a sense of liminality. This is similar to the case of a tree moving between the state of being under the ground, still becoming, and then sprouting and being out of the ground, and becoming a developed tree.



**Figure 4.1: Siziwe Sotewu, Casts for the pre-liminal stage in progress**

I used black copper oxide in some of the vessels, which symbolises death. Death symbolises separation from one stage to another right through to girlhood up to womanhood, and readiness for marriage. I have also used the colour of brown

leaves which fall from deciduous trees during winter to symbolise death, but then green leaves grow again in summer as trees represent the cycle of leaving something behind and acquiring something new throughout their existence. In some of the pieces the trees are cut into the clay vessels in reference to the definitive markings of the effects of space within movement from root to branches as seen in Figure 4.2.



Figure 4.2: Siziwe Sotewu, Flower vessels in progress, 2014

According to Turner (1967: 20), the Ndembu people who live in Zambia, when performing a “girl’s puberty ritual” wrap the novice “in a blanket” that is “laid at the foot of a muddy sapling”, which is a tree. Turner (1967: 20) calls this tree “the milk tree”, which is one of the dominant symbols of this ritual. He explains that the “*Nkanga*, [which is a girl’s puberty ritual, known to the researcher as *intonjane*,] is performed when the girl’s breasts begin to ripen, not after her first menstruation”. There are different types of trees, like the tree of life or the tree of knowledge. In the final installation (see Figure 3.7) the tree is dressed with symbolic objects that are used to teach these young girls and is placed in the centre surrounded by vessels, that represent young girls in a circle as if they are listening to a mother speaking or to an authority that is teaching them something. In Xhosa tradition children would surround a grandmother and listen to the knowledge being imparted, similar to a class room situation where the teacher teaches in front and children listen. The researcher has worked with the concept of a child that is being taught while she is still young. Thus, the installation also epitomises children who are continuously

being taught from a young age ranging from infancy through to toddlers right to puberty. Some of the vessels are poised like crawling children and some like twins. They are decorated with a plethora of symbols similar to those which are hung on the metal tree included in the installation. These symbols represent various Xhosa cultural meanings such as a calabash (a female parent), smoke pipes (male parents), drums and sticks (music), bottles (medicines used during *intonjane*), various household chores associated with girls' developmental stages, such as grinding/stamping maize and many other duties. Crafted bottles and pens represent modernism.



**Figure 4.3:** Siziwe Sotewu, Pre-liminal stage, ceramic sculpture, 2014

The researcher has also made use of textual utterances which are usually uttered to children when they are taught how to behave as members of their community. These utterances include statements such as “girls don’t sit with legs open, put your legs together”; “don’t hold your baby (doll) like that you will break her arm”; “keep your virginity intact to make your father proud” etcetera.

Stitching has been used throughout the researcher’s artworks; however, in this category it symbolises childhood teachings that continue progressively through to adulthood. An individual is expected to grow along with family values and beliefs which are instilled from childhood. This informs how several pieces in this category are stitched and sometimes placed together in distinct groups. They symbolise all the teachings from different stages as being culminated in the *intonjane* custom. Thus, text is symbolic of the knowledge that is imparted to make change and signifies the teachings children receive as they grow up. Knowledge during modern times is written down and transferred from one person to another. So the tree also represents the knowledge that is imparted to these children. The text represents the emergent cultural knowledge which the researcher has referenced in a book form presenting various utterances that are made in the oral education of the girl child as seen in Figure 4.4. This knowledge is imparted informally and formally, but the tree in the centre symbolises how this knowledge is an anchor to children’s development. I have centred this tree because traditionally children sit around a fireplace and listen to folklores stories not only for entertainment purposes, but also as a source of education.



Figure 4.4: Siziwe Sotewu, *The book of teachings*, 2015

The researcher has also been influenced by the saying that literally translates as ‘the world is beautiful like a girl’. She has harnessed this in a metaphor that has a worldwide understanding which is flowers as a metaphor for beauty. This metaphor is also used to refer to females hence she has referenced protea flowers in these vessels to represent young girls in different shapes, sizes and stages of development and to represent girls as flowers of the nation. The researcher has singled out the protea flower because it is accepted as the national flower of South Africa and as a symbol of cultural identity. Thiong’O (1993a: 56-57) compares culture to a flower by saying:

Culture has rightly been said to be to society what a flower is to a plant. What is important about the flower is not just its beauty. A flower is the carrier of the seeds for new plants, the bearer of the future of that species of plants.

In the same sense that culture can be regarded as the bearer of certain beliefs and practices associated with that culture, a protea flower can be regarded as a metaphor for the creation of offspring and the sustenance of cultural identity represented by the *intonjane* custom.

Reference is also made to the physical features of this flower in relation to the subject of sex education in the Xhosa community during these *intonjane* ritual processes. Unopened protea flowers resemble the tip of a phallus or a penis. When

it starts opening it looks like a circumcised penis, and then when it is open it becomes ripe, and when it is ripe it looks like a flower. When it is a flower some of the petals curve like buttocks and thighs with the bottom part of the flower shaped like an oval and a womb. Furthermore, the developmental stages of a protea flower are interesting and progress through various stages, just like a child.



**Figure 4.5:** Siziwe Sotewu, Protea flowers, photograph, 2014



Figure 4.6: Siziwe Sotewu, Referencing protea flowers, 2014



Figure 4.7: Siziwe Sotewu, Referencing dry and open petal protea flowers, 2015





**Figure 4.8: Siziwe Sotewu, Preliminal stage, ceramic sculpture, 2011-2015**

These vessels are placed on a white cloth (Figure 4.9) in the installation to reference the innocence of this stage of development, where the minds of girls are malleable and open to the experiences of transitioning from stage to stage.



Figure 4.9: Siziwe Sotewu, *Pre-liminal stage*, installation, 2015

Finally, pieces of fired casts are also included in the final installation and they are juxtaposed with the vessels surrounding the tree and in so doing referencing the space between transitions where identification is blurred. They are not one thing or another but they still exist within the space of liminality. These odd shapes are seen in Figure 4.9; they are not necessarily uniform in terms of hue, but assembled with the other vessels they are unified by medium and aspiration to become the next stage in the cultural development plan.

## 4.2 LIMINAL STAGE

The second category of artworks represents the liminal stage. As already alluded to earlier the liminal stage refers to a state of limbo. The idea of limbo is also synonymous to the concept of being at a bridge. When a girl is at *intonjane*, she is right at the bridge. She is being moulded so that when she goes back to the community she is incorporated as an adult woman who is expected to play a new role. The researcher has created moulds from human bodies epitomising the moulding these girls undergo through enculturation especially during initiation school. A bridge has been used as a symbol of moving from one place/stage to another. The one side of the bridge is represented by the flower vessels which were discussed under the pre-liminal stage and the other side by sculptures depicting fully developed female figures. In the middle/bridge is the liminal stage presented by sculptures of girls in their puberty stage. The bridge itself is the place where changes happen. The researcher has referenced traditional pots, buttocks, and bellies to represent these girls at their liminal stage.



Figure 4.10: Siziwe Sotewu, Liminal stage (torsos with copper oxide), 2014

The noticeable symbol in most of her artworks is the gap between the back and front profiles of these human figure and there is a tension in-between, moving from one side to the other. The gap represents the liminal space, because the liminal is that threshold of tension. These artworks seek to present the tension of an in-between state, and is referred in this study as the *intonjane* custom.



Figure 4.11: Siziwe Sotewu, *Ukutshila* with gap in between, 2015

The category of works representing the liminal stage is entitled *ukutshila*. “*Ukutshila*” is literally translated from the Xhosa language as “the last joys of being a girl”. Puberty stage is presented by the moulds of a torso and the top lower body, which are either finished with black oxide or made from white or red clays. The black colour symbolises separation or death or leaving the previous stage and entering the next one. White symbolises the white clay called *ingceke* which the initiates smear on their bodies during the whole period of *intonjane*. The red sculptures are symbolic of the red clay called *umdiike* which the girls smear on their bodies during the graduation ceremony.

Sewing is another noticeable symbol throughout the researcher’s work, and is done using electric wire, wool and string made from ox skin. This can be seen in her

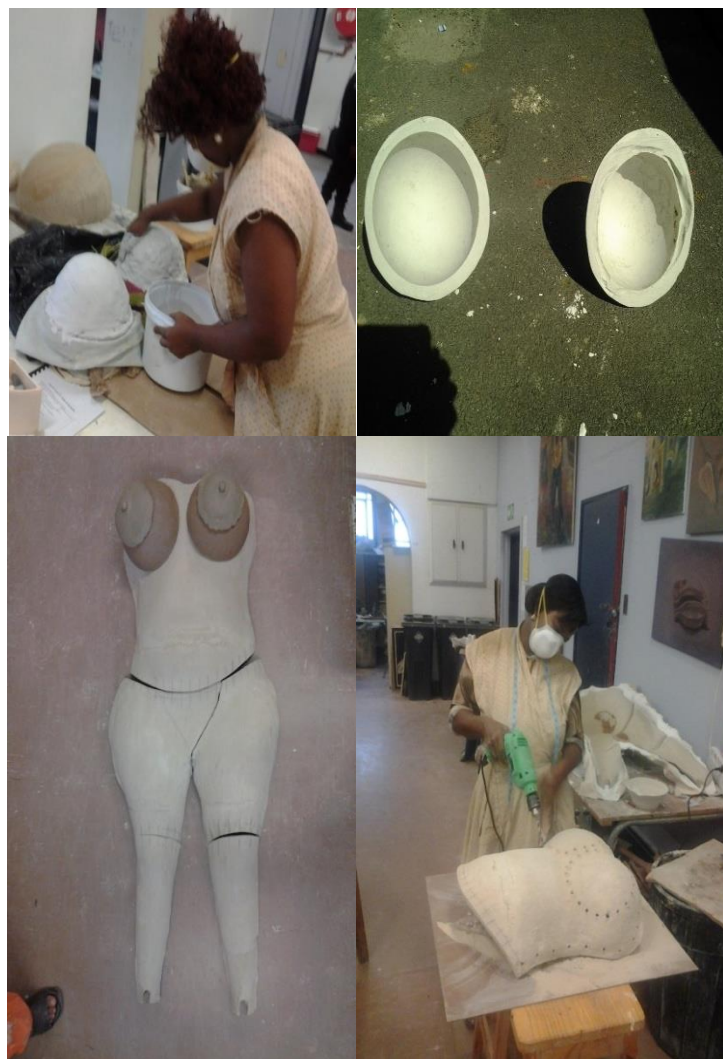
process of drilling holes in the casts that are later sewn together. Sewing symbolises the process of deconstruction for the purposes of reconstruction which are exemplified in the enculturation/teaching process. It also is a metaphor for synthesis and unity as the process culminating in *intonjane* combines a number of procedures infused with Xhosa values and beliefs. Wool and electric wire are modern metaphors for protection and development respectively and are used here to symbolise the sustenance of this cultural heritage and associated values. Hlobo once said that “the process of stitching is the process of subtracting and adding. Trying to find your identity is about cutting things off and bringing them back; sometimes you don’t know what you want to keep....” Maurice and Dodd (2010: 3). Thus, the researcher’s art creation process epitomises the developmental process *intonjane* girls go through which involves unlearning and re-learning of cultural values in order to identify with their cultural group. “While customary practices are changing, cultural processes weave through schools, family contexts and the social location, helping generate a fertile environment where male power is reproduced” (Bhana 2012: 354-355). Apart from the patriarchal modus-operandi which is the order of day in this belief system, in researcher’s visual metaphors She has also incorporated the dynamics brought about by modern value systems, which includes ambivalence.

### **4.3 POST-LIMINAL STAGE**

The post-liminal stage begins after a girl has undergone all the rituals associated with the liminal stage and has burnt the stick which she used to eat the meat from the various ritual performances as explained in Chapter 2. This stage continues after the girl graduates from *intonjane* and goes back to her family and society. After initiation the girls wear dolls which symbolise their readiness for marriage. These dolls bear both female and male reproductive organs, hence in the researcher’s artworks she has also used bellies to symbolise fertility. Post-liminal is depicted by artworks entitled “*The Bulges*”. “*The Bulges*” are represented by big female figures with exaggerated breasts, a symbol depicting Xhosa girls’ readiness to bear children. The researcher’s has remodelled the breasts on top of the model that she has cast

to emphasise the breast, because breasts, for Xhosas, are one of the important signs of a ripe girl.

The breasts in these sculptural pieces are stitched onto the body after the cast of the main body has been dried to emphasise the importance of breasts. The idea of the bulges (breast, thighs and buttocks) refer to the physical changes that happen during puberty and adolescence. These are the attributes that affirm the transition from stage to stage in development, which is why the researcher has used bulges as a metaphor for change and the space in between. She achieved this by casting the elements of these bulges such as breasts and buttocks and sewing them on to the forms as seen in the Figures 4.12 and 13.



**Figure 4.12: Siziwe Sotewu, Creation process, 2015**



**Figure 4.13: Siziwe Sotewu, Breasts making process, 2015**

Some of the sculptured figures are dressed in the Xhosa traditional skirt called *inciyo* made of wool instead of beads (Figure 4.14). *Inciyo* is intended to cover the private parts of the girl. Sewing is also used in these pieces using animal skin. Rope from animal skin is a symbol of culture that binds everything together. Headless, armless and footless represents lack of freedom.



**Figure 4.14: Siziwe Sotewu, Inciyo, photograph, 2015**



**Figure 4.15: Siziwe Sotewu, Post liminal stage dressed in inciyo, 2015**

The researcher's work has also been influenced by an exhibition called "Black Womanhood: Images, Icons, and Ideologies of the African Body" held at the Hood Museum at Dartmouth College under the curatorship of Barba Thompson (Becker 2009: 82). For this exhibition female potters created "round vessels that suggested the form of a woman's fertile body, and often added breast-like protrusions on the body of these vessels, such as those seen in Nupe vessels from Nigeria". Becker (2009: 82) also commented that "scarification publicly declared young girl's sexual maturity; taught them about social roles, and prepared them for the challenges they faced as adults and mothers".

These ideas are also connected to the researcher's project because female figurines are a universal symbol of fertility, and are often used in rites of passage. Such figurines, for example, have been excavated in Southern Africa, as has been observed by Steele (2006: 33) who cited France Prins (1993: 153) as noting that figurines discovered at Ntsitsana, near the town of uMzimkhulu in the Eastern Cape,



show “striking similarities to clay human figurines made as toys by *Mpondomise* girls in the former Transkei region of the Eastern Cape”.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

This study is very important to the Xhosa speaking community considering how advantageous it is for anyone to know about their background, heritage and culture. Suffice it to say that most parents want the best for their daughters in whichever way they know best. They also see it as a step which will in turn help them with their own children in the future. The information gathered was beneficial to both the participants and to the researcher. In particular, recalling conversations from her interviews with informants from Gemvale, one old woman said that “some of the things that I hear now, I hear them for the first time” (Gemvale interview: 2011). The interviews proved very enlightening about this custom, especially to the researcher who is of Xhosa descent and had never attended the *intonjane* cultural process. The knowledge gathered can also influence the learning/teaching process from a parent to a child as children usually try to emulate their parents’ customs and beliefs.

Naturally children are born and grew up in environments they do not personally choose, eventually assuming an identity that is influenced by the parent’s belief systems. Being born into a particular family means attachment to family and a place called ‘home’ is normal. But because people change places and environment also changes, identity is also bound to change. Some elements of culture and tradition can be preserved and some can be changed according to the person’s new environment (Lappegard 2008:8).

The issue of cultural identity is at the centre of most of the traditional and ritual practices such as *intonjane*. People practice these traditional rituals to claim their cultural heritage and to ‘belong’ and therefore as a form of emotional stability. Thus customs such as *intonjane* and *ukwaluka* enable those who practice them to belong to and associate with their respective cultures and to boost their self-esteem as members of that community.

It is hoped that the artworks, discussions, different views, and resolutions that have resulted from this research could be helpful to the Xhosa community, both nationally and internationally, because readers and viewers who are exposed to this information get to know more about what was done in the past and can decide to

make informed choices and take relevant parts of this custom and implement those positive aspects of the practices in present times. REPETITION UNDER LIMINAL STAGE. As noted in the discourse of this dissertation, there are things that change and evolve in the process of time. There are issues which have tainted traditional practices which now require re-examination towards a constructive change that honours and respects what is good about these customs. According to Dowling (2011: 1),

Constructing identity literally involves life experiences, relationships and connections, a solid mental or emotional stamp on a human. Constructing identity figuratively involves metaphorical or symbolical representation of thought or emotions in an expressive way, creating a conceptual visual representation.

The artworks resulting from this exercise are not meant to ridicule the sentiments associated with these customs but to open a constructive dialogue towards finding a balance between traditional and modern points of view. "While there is a need for cultures to reach out to one another and borrow from one another, this has to be on the basis of equality and mutual respect" (Thiong'O 1993a: xvi). This means that for these varying points of views to be coordinated in harmony the people who practice traditional ritual should do so out of their own will and understanding and not from being coerced through conforming to cultural dictates. Educating children to be critical beings and to reach a common understanding of the significance of these cultural customs should be at the core of this traditional training. This common understanding is similar to what Habermas (1985: 209) and Risse (2000: 10) refers to as the "common lifeworld". Habermas (1985: 209) defines the common lifeworld as consisting of "a shared culture, a common system of norms and rules perceived as legitimate, and the social identity of actors being capable of communicating and acting". Risse (2000:10) on the other hand stresses the idea that the "arguing actors" i.e. the people who are negotiating an agreement towards a common understanding on what should be perceived as right or wrong must be on the same level of intellectual maturity.

There are other aspects which require change in the context of the contemporary society that we live in, such as sex education for example. This kind of education should be taught to young girls as early as possible to avoid them indulging in sexual intercourse at a young age. This training has also been made necessary and relevant due the scourge of HIV Aids. Domestic duties and life skills are still relevant and should be encouraged for all children irrespective of gender.

Alcohol and traditional beer were and still are being used during these ceremonies. This is overdone in many cases and needs to be curbed because it can negatively affect the occasion; for example, *amakhankatha* (the mentors and carers) who look after the initiate sometimes drink too much beer and end up disappearing from their caretaker's duties leaving the initiate alone. Alcohol abuse also affects people's lives, especially the youth and their entire moral fibre. This issue is addressed in this comment by Professor Siyabulela Phopho Botha (2014: 2) in a newspaper article: "many young people meet at their favourite drinking spot, be it a shebeen ... young men play loud music in their beautiful cars, while young girls holding bottles of cider in their hands dance in a circle formation". He goes on to say that "most of these girls are not on any company's payroll. Therefore, the young men buy the booze the girls drink". This forms part of an unofficial agreement: "I buy you booze and you go home with me" (Botha 2014: 2). Makhanya (2015: 1) also commented by saying:

Misogyny on its own is not enough; it needs a violent edge, which often leads to the abuse and murder of girls and women. Even when we have drunken fun, we are compelled to maul, stab and shoot each other just to put a cherry on top of a great evening.

During the researcher's interview at Gemvale, it was said that girls of the olden days looked after themselves by not letting boys have sexual relations with them. One informant from Tombo added that it was not only the girls who were looking after themselves, but the boys were also careful because if they wanted they could have removed *iinciyo*, and had sex with girls by force which is what is happening in these modern days. In that case, it suffices to say that both boys and girls were guarding against participating in sexual intercourse, because they were ingrained with the

teachings that they received from their parents especially during the rite of passage customs. Things are however different in this contemporary time where both men and boys pursue relationships with young girls and women for reasons of sex rather than marriage or even love. In these days there is no interest in the welfare of these females or in their personal character outside of the satisfaction of lust. This is evident in incidences witnessed particularly at night in some townships in East London where the researcher lives and work. Young girls are often seen being manhandled and dragged away in tears to be raped, abused or molested. Also of note are lifestyles where a man consistently brings multiple sexual partners into his apartment within a communal living situation. Although women have power over the nurturing of other people, there is still little respect for women's power on other levels especially when they are powerless due to circumstances beyond their control. Thus, the training which is imparted to boys and girls during traditional rites of passages is an opportunity to affect orientation towards an exemplar moral fibre for the modern generation. Such knowledge will inform the modern youth early in their development when they are more likely to imbibe these teachings, and make positive choices as a result.

Furthermore this youth education could assimilate the communal parenting which was traditionally practiced during the olden days where parents would exercise parenting to every child in the community, not just their biological children as it is the case during these times. Whilst the olden days communal upbringing of children is no longer in its original conception, however the modern ways of life have resulted to another shift where the up-bringing of children is not only the responsibility of the biological parents, and is extended to other family members such as grand parents or even employed child minders. This is due to employment or business responsibilities where parents work for survival. Walker (1995: 425) states that

thus in South Africa, physical care of the children is often not the sole or primary responsibility of the mother, but is delegated – for instance, in the case of many middle – class women, to a domestic worker or nanny, or in the case of many working class women, to other family members, such as grandmother or elder female siblings.

In this case family members who are not necessarily biological parents can also act as parents to children. In a discussion with Mother Bishop from Bantu Church of Christ at Port Elizabeth during Women's day celebration in 2013, when she was advising women on how to behave and how to raise their children she said:

*A mother has a big role in building the nation, she does not end at looking after her house, she is a mother to all children. When you see a child taking a wrong direction, doing things that are not building him or her, you don't say no he or she is not mine, I am not going to stop him or her, he or she must be stopped by his or her own mother. You mothers, you do have a right to discipline this child, and show him or her right direction. We are living in corrupt times, where our children are being controlled by drugs. They are having babies while they are still young, while HIV/AIDS is killing them, taking them to the graveyards. Mothers, the time of saying we are going to let the teachers to discipline our children has come to an end. That time has come to an end mothers. Do not leave your children without disciplining them, speak to your child, he or she is your child. A teacher is being employed to educate your child, and become educated. You parents raise your child, so that when he or she goes to school he or she knows the line of school. Speak out with your child from the very time he/she is able to listen to you and discuss the things that he/she is facing especially at this time of technology, where our children are always busy pressing their cell phones on whatsapp, and facebook. Through these phones, they are being dragged to wrong places, where they ended up being killed. Parents, lets help each other, so that our children do not become victims.*

Pupils from Sophathisana Senior Secondary School in Reeston near East London were cited by Fuzile (2015: 1) saying "the teachers didn't say a word about the pregnancies. They were never harsh and many of us thought this was fine. Many thought getting pregnant was cool – there's just no guidance". What this means is that during the modern times the communal upbringing which used to take place in traditional communities is no longer being practiced or cannot be trusted and therefore parents have to take it up on their selves to teach their children survival skills and moral values pertinent to their well-being.

The issue of ritual practices which are accompanied by ancestral invocation needs to be left unchallenged as it is a very personal and sensitive concept which for most Africans is similar to the worship of God as a supernatural being which we depend

when we are helpless. Most Africans what I discovered through this study is that the most significant aspect of the ancestral invocation and ritual performances is that they instill respect by being exemplary as the parents still show respect to their departed parents through this ancestral invocation.

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## APPENDIXES

### APPENDIX A : INFORMATION LETTER REGARDING RESEARCH PROJECT

#### INFORMATION LETTER REGARDING RESEARCH PROJECT

#### UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Department of:** Art History, Visual Arts and Musicology

**Degree of study:** Master of Visual Arts (98573)

**Title of research study:**

**A visual narrative reflecting on upbringing of Xhosa girls with special reference to '*intonjane*'**

**Name of the supervisor:** Dr N Mpako

**Name of the researcher/student:** Siziwe Sylvia Sotewu

I am currently undertaking this research study with the aim to investigate the **A visual narrative reflecting on upbringing of Xhosa girls with special reference to '*intonjane*'**. Through the qualitative approach I would like to interview traditional leaders, community members, artists and media communicators.

I would like to appeal to all of you to assist me by participating in this research. Participation is not forced, as you can withdraw any time. I will use the information for study purposes only.

Thus, your participation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Siziwe Sotewu Cell: 0836040046

**Consent Form**

I .....have received the request information about the research by Siziwe Sotewu for Master in Visual Arts at the University of South Africa.

I am aware that the interview may be included in the research and was inform that I may withdraw my consent at any time and aware that my participation is voluntary.

I am aware that all data collection will be kept safe and confidential. No information that is confidential will be published with my consent.

I agree/ disagree freely to participate to his research.

.....

Participant signature

Date:.....

Researcher contact details: Siziwe Sotewu Cell: 0836040046

## **APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR KEY INFORMANTS**

#### **QUESTIONS FOR NDEVANA FOCUS GROUP**

1. Yayiyeyiphi imisebenzi yamantombazana? (What were girl's duties?)
2. Eyamakhwenkwe yona? (And for boys?)
3. Ingaba abantwana bakudala babebathatha abazali abangengobabo njengokungathi ngabazali babo na? (Are the children or the previous eras see other parents as their biological parents?)
4. Umntwana oseyimveku wayeqeqeshwa njani na? okanye wayeye athini ukuze azi into erongo wayeye athini? (How was an infant disciplined by the parents?)
5. Oonotsibidyokhwe (amantombazana) ngabantwana abangakanani? (How old the girls named (oonotsibidyokhwe)?)
6. Bhotyumpha (amakhwenkwe) ngabantwana abangakanani? (How old the boys named (bhotyumpha)?)
7. Zeziphi iimfundiso enanifundiswa zona ukunqanda ukwenza umonakalo ebantwaneni abangamantombazana? (What are the teachings that you were taught to avoid you not to let girls pregnant?)
8. Zeziphi iimfundiso enanifundiswa zona ukukhusela ubuntombi benu? (What teachings were you taught to keep your virginity?)
9. Amantombazana okanye abafana abasele bekhulile ayenalo igalelo ekukhuliseni abantwana abasebancinci? (Were older girls and boys involved on raising younger ones?)
10. Yayiyintoni injongo yeNtonjane? (What is the reason for *intonjane*?)
11. Kwakusenzeka ntoni eNtonjaneni? (What happened during *intonjane*?)



## QUESTIONS FOR PHILAKUKUZENZELA FOCUS GROUP

### Video Transcription No. 3

1. Ngumsebenzi wabo? (Is it their duty?)
2. Ok, amagama abo ngobani bona? (What are their names?)
3. Umbuzo olandelayo bendizakubuzwa into yokuba ingaba eli silo bakhona abantu abasalenzayo ngoku okanye layekwa? (Are there any people who still performing *intonjane*? Or it has been stopped?)
4. Yintoni isizathu, into eniyicingayo ebengela ukuba bona babekanti baliyekile? (What is the reason for them to stop performing it?)
5. Umzekelo, although besele niyi mention (ile) umbuzo olandelayo xa lithe alenziwa kuye kwenzeko ntoni?, umention(e) la ndaba, iye intombazana ichama . (What happens if the *intonjane* is not performed?)
6. *Ubulunga* yintoni? (What is (ubulunga)?)
7. I vele ixhwithwe ihamba? (It has been pulled while it is walking?)
8. Obo *bubulunga*? (Is that (ubulunga)?)
9. So iyenzeka into yokokuba umntu angayenzi? (Does it happen for the girls not to perform *intonjane*?)
10. Ayingawokukhutshwa? (Are they not to be pulled out?)
11. Namazinyo aye aqaqambe? (Are the tooth become painful?)
12. Engakhange abe atsaliwe? (Even if they are not pulled out?)
13. Makhe siye, makhe kubekho umntu ochaza okokuba kuqa ngala bhokhwe, kodwa ndiyazi ukuba umama ebesele etshilo, kodwa ibingase ndifumane idetails ke ngoku uchaze ukuba iqala phi, umzekelo kuqala abazali badecece ukuba intombi yabo bazakuyithombisa and then emvakoko? Abazali baye babize izihlobo? (Can you please give me details of how *intonjane* starts?)
14. Sebexelelwe? (Are they already been told?)
15. And then, masiqhubekeke, emveni koko? (Let's move on, and then after that?)
16. And then ukufika kwayo la date? (When the date arrived what happened?)
17. Zizihlobo okanye ziifamily? (Are they friends or family members?)
18. Azakubuzisa apha? (Are they going to bring it here?)

19. So le bhokhwe uthethangayo yila bhokhwe yokuqala, yile ibalulekileyo? (So, the goat that you are talking about is the first one?, and the important one?)
20. La ndlu seleyakhiwe? (Is the special hut been built already?)
21. So kuye kwakhiwe indlu entsha? (Do you build a new one?)
22. Oh! Endala? (Oh! An old one?)
23. Ok. So iyalungiswa nje ukuba kungene intonjane? (So it has been renovated for intonjane?)
24. Kufuneka iyokungena koo ronta? (Does an initiate stay inside the rondavel?)
25. Kulo ufulelwe ngengca pha phezulu? (The one with the grass on top?)
26. Noba yakhiwe ngezitena noba yakhiwe ngantoni? (Even if it has been built with bricks?)
27. As long izakube ifulelwe ngengca? (As long it has grass on the roof?)
28. And then emvakwalabhokhwe kuthiweni na? (What happened after the goat?)
29. Kuphi eludweni? (Where is (eludweni)?)
30. Ebuhlanti? (In the kraal?)
31. Oh, lelinye lamakhankatha lo uyokukha pha? (Oh! she is the one of the mistresses?)
32. Ngubani lo unika la ntonjane elakhuni linyenama? (Who give an initiate a stick to eat?)
33. Ayinguye omnye wamakhankatha? (Is she not the one of the mistresses?)
34. So uye ayokungena pha? (Is she also going inside?)
35. Ayokumtyisa? (To feed her?)
36. Oho, umnika ela khuni ngokwakhe? (Oh! does she give an initiate a stick?)
37. Ithathe intonjane incuntse ngokwayo? (Does an initiate pick the meat up by herself?)
38. Kutheni le nto engenakuyibamba ngesandla? (Why is she not allowed to touch the meat by her hands?)
39. Umitha xa bekutheni? (How did she fall pregnant?)
40. Namantombazana? (With girls?)
41. Xa usithi ukuba ukhona okhulelweyo bebenganyanzelekanga into yokokuba mabalale nabafana? (Were they not allowed to sleep with boys?)

42. Oho, bavumelekile ukuba mabadlale? (Oho! Were they allowed to play?)
43. Kufuneka wena ungavumi? (A girl was supposed not to allow a boy to enter her?)
44. Nini nodwa? (Only you?)
45. Wamitha usetyaleni? (Were you in trouble once you fall pregnant?)
46. Ubusatsho ke ukuba kuthe kwenzeka kwakho okhulelweyo? (If one of them fall pregnant what happened?)
47. Isazela sakhe sizakumxelela, kodwa ubuye wakhulula? (Her heart is going to tell her, but what if she also took off her clothes?)
48. Ok. Bendikhe ndafunda kwenye incwadi, kuthiwa phambi kokuba kwenziwe yonke laa nto, kuthethwa ngamakhwenkwe, amanye ngawentlombe, amanye ngawomtshotsho. Kuye kuthiwe abentlombe bakhuphe i5c, abomtshotsho..., kodwa kuthiwa ibakhona imali ebhatalwayo. Iyenzeka loo nto kuni? Kukho nabantwana bona bakhupha i1c. Kuthiwa kukhutshwa 5c, i10c. (Are different types the boys pay money before they play at night with girls?)
49. Noba ibimvumile ukuba athandane nayo kufuneka angavumi qha? (Even if she accepted his proposal, she must not allow him to enter her?)
50. Bazokufuna ntoni apha? (Why are they here?)
51. Bazokwenza ntoni apha? (Why are they here for?)
52. Oho, bazokugeza? (Oho! They are here to be silly?)
53. Oho, umzekelo umfana ebeye azikhethele intombi, okanye ibiba yintombi ebeyazi kwangaphambili for intonjane? (For an example the boy used to select the girl for him at kwantonjane, or is it the girl that he knew before?)

#### Video Transcription No. 4

1. Oho yayindlela ekwakutshelakishwa ngayo? (Is this how the girls were checked?)
2. So yena akazukuphinda eze apha? (So, is she not going to come back here?)
3. Otherwise uyakwazi ukuba abekhona apha entonjaneni mhlawumbi phangaphandle? (Is she allowed to attend *intonjane* or she is allowed to stay outside?)
4. Yintoni isiqova? (What is (isiqova)?)

5. Oho ezaqhiya? (Oho! Those doeks?)
6. And then emvenikoko ke, sendisitsho kusuku olulandelayo? (What happened on the second day?)
7. Igadi? (The garden?)
8. Yenziwa ngantoni le gadi? (Which material is used to make this garden?)
9. Ibale intsuku? (Does she count days?)
10. Nezenu iintsuku ziyabalwa pha? (Have your days also been counted there?)
11. Usuku odibene nalo? (The day you meet?)
12. Oho ubhala ngembola emhlophe? (Oho! Is she uses a white ochre?)
13. Emva kwentsuku ezine kuxhelwa la nkomo? (Is the cow slaughtered after 4 days?)
14. Emva kwentsuku lwesithathu? (After 3 days?)
15. Izipheko yintoni? (What are (izipheko)?)
16. Kuyaphekwa? (Are they cooking food?)
17. Kuyaphekwa kuba kungaphekwanga? (They cooked because there was no food or they cook food as part of the *intonjane*?)
18. So yilanto kuthiwa kukuqhotsa? (So it's what they called (ukuqhotsa) frying?)
19. Yima ke ukuqhotsa nithe yintoni? (Wait, what is (ukuqhotsa) frying?)
20. Kuthathwa la mkhona kuthiwe uyashwama? (They took that shoulder, which is called (uyashwama)?)
21. So wenziwa njani wona? Usikiwe wamiswa pha ngobusuku? (How do you do (umshwamo)? Has it been cut and hanged for the whole night?)
22. And then ayokutyiswa? (And then she has been fed?)
23. Uphekwa nguye? (Does the girl cook it?)
24. Sisaya apho ne, then emvemi kwale nkomo, kuzakuphekwa pha atyiswe? (After the cow, is she going to be fed?)
25. Uwutya yedwa na la mkhono ungakaya? (Does she eat the whole shoulder alone?)
26. Oho, bazakutya bonke? (Oho! Are all of them going to eat?)
27. Ongekhoyo pha? (What about those who are not present?)
28. Ongazange athombe, nokuba ukhona pha? (The ones who never been initiated, even if she is present?)

29. Kufuneka angawutyi? (She must not eat it?)
30. Umntu uyazazi ngokwakhe, Ok. And the emveni koko, emveni kokuba kutyiwe la nyama yokushwama, into elendelayo? (What next after umshwamo?)
31. So ukuvundiswa kwenzeka ntoni xa kuvundiswa? (What happens during (ukuvundiswa?)?)
32. Alright, ukuvundiswa sukube kuyokulahlwa ela khuni? (Alright, it's when they go to the veld to throw the stick?)
33. Oho kuzakusa? (Until sunrise?)
34. Kuvundiswa ntoni xa kunamhlanje kanti ikhuni lizakulahlwa ngengomso? (What do you do today if the stick is going to be thrown the following morning?)
35. Kuvundiswa ela khuni, ukuba malihlale? (Is the stick kept until the following day?)
36. Ok, ndiyifumene ke ngoku la mpendulo. Then xa kuyokulahlwa ikhuni kuthiwani na? Uyaziphumela ahambe ayokulahla ela khuni? (What happens during the day of throwing a stick? Does she go out and throw the stick?)
37. Ukutshona kwelanga? (At sunset?)
38. Isicithi yintoni? (What is (isicithi)?)
39. Ulayite le ngca? (You lit the grass?)
40. Unyathela lo mlilo? (She puts her feet on fire?)
41. Ok. Kule ngoku seyikliniwe kwakhona? (Ok, the one that has been cleaned?)
42. Ngokwayo? (By herself?)
43. Akukho semini ngelo xesha? (Is it not during the day?)
44. Uallowed ngoku ukuba angaphuma? (Is she allowed to go out now?)
45. Kuphi evasini? (Where is the place called (evasini)?)
46. Kuphi ewashingini? (Where is at ewashingini?)
47. Oho, iphela ngelaa xesha? (Oho! Does it end at that time?)

## **VIDEO TRANSCRIPTION NO. 5 – GRAHAMSTOWN**

1. Bayala xa kutheni? (When did they (men) pass instruction?)

2. Nhoba le nto ingqamene nobumama? (Even though it involves women)
3. Besiphi kanene? Oho, ngela xesha etsiba. (Where were we? Oho! When she was jumping.)
4. Kuvela kutshiswa la ngca. Then ukufika kwakhe phaya endlini? (When they come from firing the grass, and arrive in the hut what happens?)
5. And then?
6. So iphelele apho? (I that the end?)

#### Video Transcription No. 7

1. Alright, umbuzo wokuqala endinawo mzekelo eli siko leNtonjane lisuka phi?, okanye laqala nini?, mhlawumbi injongo yalo laliyintoni, ukwenziwa kweNtonjane.
2. kutheni eli leNtonjane liyelayekwa lona?
3. Umzekelo ke liqala kweyiphi iage okanye kwiminyaka emingaphi?
4. So liqala pha xa intombazana iqala uku menstruater?
5. So ayina age ithile mhlawumbi kuthiwa iqala ku 13 okanye ku 12 yrs?
6. So umzekelo xa immediately egqiba kwenza intonjane kunyanzelekile into yokuba kufuneka atshate?
7. Hee! Mna ngokolwam ulwazi, umtshato kukuba umama abheke emzini wakhe. Umtshato nomendo zizinto zahlukile ezo?
8. Umzekeklo xa iqala intonjane ithatha ixesha elingakanani?, mhlawumbi ithatha intsuku ezingakanini?
9. And then emveni koko?
10. Kupheka yena?
11. Oho, intonjane iphekela ababantu, bendicinga ukuba amankazana, kukho abantu abangamankazana? Bendicinga fanukuba ngamankazana la aphekayo. Bendicinga ukuba intonjane yenzelwa yonke into.
12. Yila mini ebeqala ngayo?
13. Kule gem yesibini ayixhelwa?
14. Le ebetshatelwa ngayo?

15. Iyafakwa nayo?
16. Ohoo, so umensile okokuqala, kwaphinda kwafika, sendisitsho umensile okokuqala, kwathiwa uzakuthonjiswa?
17. Ohoo, kuyacaca uye aphinde eme okanye ayeke?
18. So ngelishesha ke ngoku ephinde wamensa?
19. Akazukuphuma, kuzakuqhutyekwa kusenziwa yonke la nto ibisenziwa?
20. So kutshukuthi yinyanga?
21. But ukuba kwenzekile wamensa?
22. Kuyekongezwe iintsuku ezingaphi?
23. Ubaleka xa esuka phi?
24. So kufuneka abaleke ayokungena endlini?
25. Niyamwisa?
26. Kufuneka abalekele oogqirha nezicaka?
27. Xa sel'epha ubizwa ngokuba yintoni?
28. Yintonjane? Ngoba kwenye incwadi kuthiwe yintonjana.
29. And then I language ayithethayo ithini, uthetha isiqhelo?
30. Khandinike umzekelo wamagama ekufuneka engawabizanga.
31. So la magama ayafana?
32. Kanene besenizimentionile, nithe zingaphi iznto ekufuneka zixheliwe? Okokuqala yila bhokhe nhe?
33. Yile uthi ibalulekile?
34. And then elandelayo?
35. Yibhokhwe nenkomo?
36. Umzekelo iyenzeka into yokuba kuthiwe ibhokhwe ayikho, mhlawambi kuxhelwe igusha?
37. Sowuxhelile?
38. Not kweyomnye umzi?
39. Ok. Sowuphendulekile lo umbuzo. Ok, isizathu sokuba intombazana ifakwe kula mkhusane yintoni?
40. So uyakwazi ukuba umntwana azifunele, ingade ibe sisigqibo sabazali?
41. So, yima ke, ndifuna ukuqonda okwakufakwa kwakhe pha?
42. Isizathu sokokuba makakhuswe?

43. Kufuneka angabonwa ngabanye abantu?
44. Abazali?
45. Ukutya okuphekwe kwantonjane kutyiwa yintonjane namankazana qha?
46. Kutheni bengenakungena pha?
47. Kuba ilisiko lakhe?

S.S. Sukube xa kuthe kwenzeka into?

Video Transcription No. 8 – GRAH. II

1. So ukuba useyintombi uzakuthi xakusithiwa axhume?
2. Ukuba akuyiyo?
3. Kwakungekhonto uyoyikayo?
4. Kodwa ngoku ungayenza loo nto?
5. Ngoba?
6. Kanene benithe ukhona umama owakhe wathomba?
7. Ngela xesha mama ufilisha njani xa uphaya kwantonjane? Uva kamnandi okanye lubakhona olwaloyiko okanye ixhala lezinto ezizakwenzeka pha?
8. So akukho xhala lanto?
9. So lumele ukuba lubekhona olwaloyiko?
10. Into endingakhange ndiyifumane zii mfundiso, abantwana babefundiswa ntoni?
11. Ewe, sendisitsho xa be pha phakathi kwantonjane babefundiswa ntoni, umzekelo uzuziphathe kakuhle kwathini?
12. Nimnka ekuseni?
13. Alright. Intonjane pha yona ayinikwa zimfundiso? Ayiyalwapha xa sele ipha phakathi?
14. Ungatsho tata sendisitsho ezinye zezinto?
15. Alright. So xa sele ephumile kuthiwani ke ngoku?
16. Uye aphile njengamanye amantombi?
17. Otherwise ndiyabulela, ndibulela kakhulu, umzekelo ngaphandle kwenu le information ndinayo ngoku ngeyingakhange ifumaneke, and ngoku into endiyithandayo ndiyifumana kuni ningomama besixhosa. Phambi kokuba ndivalelise kuthiwa, uyakhumbula umbuzo wam wokuqala obusithi eli siko



lively phi? Kukho incwadi ebhalwe ngabanye abelungu bathi eli siko lisuka, bathi kukho isinambuzane esikhula ehlathini, esi sinambuzane siye senze, iformishe ingca.

18. Ithini?
19. Ithini? Isininambuzane?
20. Ayinamilenze?
21. Ukuba ukhona umama okanye utata ofuna ukuphosa nje amanye amazwi phambi kokuba sivale?
22. Ukhona omnye?

### QUESTIONS FOR GEMVALE FOCUS GROUP - FIRST DAY

#### Video Transcription No. 1

1. Okokuqala namhlanje ngumhla wesi 15 ku July 2011. Silapha e, yintoni igama lale ndawo? (What is the name of this place?)
2. Ok, umzekelo lo mbuzo wam umalunga nentunjane. Ndifuna ukwazi ukuba intunjane isukaphi? Okanye yaqala nini? (My question is about *intonjane*, where *intonjane* comes from or when did it start?)
3. Ufuna eyiphi ke wena? (Which one do you want to know?)
4. So uthi zimbini ezi ndidi zentunjane? (Are you saying there are two types of *intonjane*?)
5. Oho. Yimake, yeyiphi le kuthiwa iqala xa ufikelele kula period yokuya ezigemini? (Which is the one that starts at the first menstruation?)
6. Imizi? (Grass?)
7. Imizi le yokwenza ikhuko? (Grass for making traditional mat?)
8. So ngeli xesha umane usiya kukha ezinkuni umana uyokutheza upheka uyenza le nto ngelishesha usesezigemini? (When you went to the veld to fetch wood, and when you cook food, were you still under menstruation periods?)
9. Oho, so ufundiswa ukwenza umsebenzi wabantu abadala? (Oho! You are taught how to women's duties?)
10. Ok, and then, uthini ke ngoku xa sele iphelile? (What do you do after that?)

11. So eza ntsimbi ubuzifaka apha bezifakelwa ntoni? (What was the reason of wearing a necklace on your neck?)
12. Yindlela ebebonakalisa ngayo? (Is this the way of showing it?)
13. Umzekelo xa sele iphelile ke ngoku la period, xa sele ifikelele esiphelweni? (What happens after the end of it?)
14. Ipali, eyiphi ipali? (A pole? Which pole?)
15. So awazi ukuba zazifakelwa ntoni? (Do you know why they put this necklace on your neck?)
16. Uthini mama? (What are you saying mom?)
17. So yaphelela apho. So kwigemu elandelayo zange kuphinde kwenziwe nto. (So that was the end? When you were under menstruation for the second time, did they do the same thing again?)
18. Akuxhelwa na? (Are there any animal sacrifice?)
19. So zange kuxhelwe nangela xesha? (So there was no animal sacrifice even then?)
20. Ngela xesha lokuqala? (During the first menstruation period?)
21. Kona ngokomo bekufanelukuba kuyaxhelwa?
22. Ok, so akakho omnye umntu ofuna ukwengeza kule, akukhonto ayishiyileyo kule nto ebeyithetha? (Originally, were they not supposed to do animal sacrifice?)
23. So wenzelwa wena, yayisenziwa kuwe. Makhesive kule yesibini, sendisitsho iqala phi yona kuthini, xa kutheni? (Let's hear the second *intonjane*, when does it start?)
24. Yima ke ngelixesha kuqalwayo ubusowuyile na ezigemini? (When they start it were you under menstruation period?)
25. Oho ubusowusuka emzini? (Oho! You were coming from your homestead?)
26. Ewe, uyigulele? (Yes, you were sick for *intonjane*?)
27. Kuwe la mzi ubotshwe apha entloko? (In your case the grass was tied around your head?)
28. Kuwe la mzi ubotshwe phi? (And on you?)
29. Yintambo? (A wire?)
30. Ephempeni kuphi? (Where is at (ephempeni)?)

31. Nguwe wedwa? (Only you?)
32. Nabo babenzile? (Were there any who attended it?)
33. Iinkomo ezintathu? (Three cows?)
34. Kutheni zintathu kodwa abantu abangenileyo bayi 4? (Why are they three, but there were 4 initiates?)
35. Aba badityanisiweyo ngabatheni? (Why two of you used one cow?)
36. And then kwathini ke ngoku? (And then what happened after that?)
37. La mlilo wokutshiswa kwengca? (The fire of firing the grass?)
38. Zintoni iingqwamba? (What are (iingqwamba)?)
39. Ezinyaweni azikho? (On your feet?)
40. And then xa senigqibile ukutshisa la ngca nithini? (After firing the grass what do you do?)
41. Xa nitsiba pha nitsiba nihamba ze? (Were you naked when you jump over the fire?)
42. So nithi ibiyipeyinti not i, yintoni la nto? (Are you saying it was a pant, not what do you call it?)
43. Isiyaca? (Isiyaca?)
44. So kuba kule lixesha? (Is it because it's the current time?)
45. So le ngca itshiselwaphi? Itshiselwa kule ndlu? (Where do you fire the grass?)
46. Ethubeni? (Ethubeni?)
47. So yonke le nto yenzeka xeshaliphi? (At what time does this happen?)
48. And then nibuye, ukubuya kwenu emlanjeni nithini? (When you come back from the river what do you do?)
49. Aniphindi niyokungena kula ndlu? (Are you not going back to the house?)
50. Oho. So ningena kube kanye pha? (So you go inside that house once?)
51. So Friday to Sunday. Anihlali i 21 days? (Are you not staying for 21 days?)
52. Oho. So abanakuhlamba nje emanzini amileyo? (They must not wash their bodies on standstill water?)
53. Kutheni le nto benganakuhlamba emanzini amileyo? Yayiyintoni isizathu sokuba kuhlanjwe emanzini ahambayo kungahlanjwa noba kuphi? (What was the reason for using running water?)

54. So akakho omnye umntu onokucinga enye into? (Anyone who can tell us more about that?)
55. Ezindala? (Old ones?)
56. Yimake ndizakubuza ke sisi (utsho ebhekisa kumama uHashibe), Yingca le nanihleli kuyo okanye yinkxopho? (Inside the special hut, were you using any grass or (inkxopho)?)
57. Yimake, ngela xesha beningekangeni ibiyokukhiwa ngubani le nkxopho? (Who fetched this type of grass?)
58. Angangenanga? (Girls who were not the initiates?)
59. Ezi ntombi (utsho esalatha umama uHashibe) zikha ukhwama, ize abanye aba (ukhomba kwintombi encinci) bayokukha inkxopho. Ngeli xesha bayokukha inkxopho akukhonto yenziwayo apha ekhaya? (While they go to fetch the grass, what was happening at home?)
60. Ikhwama yinto enjani? (How does (ikhwama) look like?)
61. Uyabona pha ngezantsi? (Can you see down there?)
62. Ininzi le nto ilapha. Uyalazi na ikhwane wena? (There is a lot of it, do you know it?)
63. Oho esi ufika sijinga emthini? (Oho! The one (insect) that normally hang on trees?)
64. So niyayazi loo nto? (So do you know it?)
65. So nina benisithi yintoni xa niyibiza? (What do you normally call it?)
66. So uyayazi mama? (Mother, do you know it?)
67. Awazi ukuba kwakuthiwa yintoni xa ibizwa? (You do not know what they use to call it?)
68. So uyayazi loo nto? (But you know it?)
69. Iyazifulela mos? (It creates his own place)
70. Kukho eminye imibuzo ebendiyiphosile ukuyibuza kwenye I interview ebendiyenza pha. KwiNtonjane ingaba ikhona into mhlawumbi eyithungayo okanye eyenzayo mhlawumbi iintsimbi for ukuba izakunxiba yona, ilungiselela yona njengokuba izakuba yintonjane nje? (Does an initiate create something to wear during *intonjane*?)
71. Ngaphandle kwala mzi uphothiweyo? (Except for the woven grass?)

72. Zenziwa ngubani kakade? (Who made them?)
73. Nguye lo ebesenza ezangqwamba? (Is she the one who made those (ngqwamba?)
74. Ayenziwa apha? (utsho ekhomba ezinyaweni). (Do you do them here (pointing on her feet)?)
75. So nithi akukho mpahla ayenzayo, ayizithungeli nto? (So you are saying she is not creating anything for herself to wear?)
76. Mamela ke, kula, ikhona inkolo ethi, abanye phofu bathi, umzekelo xa iphumile intonjane kula ndlu yayo, iye iyokuhlala ecaleni kwendlu, apho utata aza nebisi, abanye bathi ngamasi, kunikwe le ntonjane ukuba mayisele. And then, but kuphinde kubekho into eyakhiweyo, yakhiwa ngobulongwe, yabekwa apha ecaleni kwayo then la masi awaselayo, kuba engalityi ibisi andithi akalityi ibisi umntu oyintombazana? (Does she drink milk?)
77. Asele asele and then akaliginyi alikhuphele pha. Niyayazi loo nto? (Do you know that?)
78. Ibunjwa before? (Has it been created before?)
79. Xa sele ezakugoduswa ebuyiselwa kokwabo eyigqibile yonke le nto? (What happens when she has to go back home?)
80. Bomile obabulongwe? (Was the cow dung dry or not?)
81. So aniyazi? (So you do not know it?)
82. So le ndlu angeni nje mhlawumbi kuthathwe le ndlu (nditsho ndikhomba uronda) for intonjane? (Is there any special house that she needs use or she can use anyone?)
83. Yakhiwa olwahlobo lwebhoma? (Does it look like a boy's circumcision house?)
84. Ayibikho apha eyadini? (Here inside the yard?)
85. Yenziwa kwalapha eyadini? (It has been created inside the yard?)
86. Ngobani abanelungelo lokungena kula ndlu yabo? (Who are allowed to enter the special hut of *intonjane*?)
87. Oho aphekhaya? (Oho! They are cooking?)
88. Abazali abangeni? (Are the parents allowed to enter?)
89. So uthi bayachokozwa? (Are they being decorated with dots?)

90. Phakubazali? (From the parents?)
91. Bobabini? (Both of them?)
92. Kumama notata? (To mother and father?)
93. Oho. Ibazidots ezingaphi, ibayidot nje enye? (Oho! How many dots? Only one?)
94. So ngu 1, 2, 3, 4? (4 dots?)
95. Kuthiwa ubeka ichaphaza apha (nditsho ndisalatha ebunzi) abeyi 4. So la nto yeza dots yenzelwa ntoni? (What is the reason behind these 4 dots?)
96. Mamela ke, yintoni umsebenzi wakho, uye wenze ntoni pha, phakathi kwantonjane pha kula ndawo, kula ndlu, ukhona umsebenzi owenzayo? (What duties does an initiate do inside the special hut?)